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**Braintree District Settlement Fringes
Evaluation of Landscape Analysis Study of
Witham**

for

Braintree District Council

June 2015

Final

Contact:

Simon Neesam, Technical Director

The Landscape Partnership
The Granary
Sun Wharf
Deben Road
Woodbridge
Suffolk IP12 1AZ

t: 01394 380 509

e: simon.neesam@tlp.uk.com

w: thelandscapepartnership.com

The Landscape Partnership Ltd is a practice of Chartered Landscape Architects, Chartered Town Planners and Chartered Environmentalists, registered with the Landscape Institute and a member of the Institute of Environmental Management & Assessment and the Arboricultural Association.

The Landscape Partnership Limited
Registered Office:
Greenwood House
15a St Cuthberts Street
Bedford
MK40 3JG.

Registered in England No 2709001

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1 Introduction

Background to the study

- 1.1 In November 2014 Braintree District Council (BDC) commissioned The Landscape Partnership to undertake an evaluation of the findings of a suite of documents that analysed the capacity of the landscape around nine settlements within the District to accommodate new development. The results of this study are to be used as part of the evidence base to inform the forthcoming Local Plan, which will set out the Council's strategy for future development and growth up to 2033.
- 1.2 Eight of the Landscape Capacity Analyses were prepared in November 2007 by Chris Blandford Associates, and a ninth (Sible Hedingham) was commissioned in November 2014 and prepared by The Landscape Partnership. The nine settlements comprise:
- Braintree and environs
 - Coggeshall
 - Earls Colne
 - Halstead
 - Hatfield Peverel
 - Kelvedon and Feering
 - Sible Hedingham
 - Silver End
 - Witham

Objectives

- 1.3 The Council has commissioned this study to help determine the most appropriate directions for future residential and employment growth in the District, by providing an up to date evidence base for the new Local Plan. It will also support policy in the new Local Plan relating to Landscape Character Areas, biodiversity and the environment.
- 1.4 As development within the existing towns and villages on brownfield sites is reaching saturation point, it is inevitable that future development will be required to meet the District's Objectively Assessed Housing Needs (OAHN) figure, and that such development will need to be accommodated on the periphery of the main towns and larger settlements, in sustainable locations.
- 1.5 The Landscape Capacity Analyses identify the capacity of broad parcels of land (termed Landscape Setting Areas) around each of the settlements to accommodate development. Each Landscape Setting Area was graded as having one of the following levels of capacity: Low, Low to Medium, Medium, Medium to High or High.

1.6 The aim of this study is to undertake a clear and concise evaluation of these findings in order to provide a finer grain assessment of Landscape Setting Areas identified as having a 'Low' or 'Low to Medium' capacity to help determine which parts of these areas could absorb development with appropriate mitigation measures and minimal impact on the landscape.

1.7 This report sets out the findings of the survey and evaluation work for the Landscape Capacity Analysis for Witham.

Approach and Methodology

1.8 The methodology to evaluate the findings of the Landscape Capacity Analysis studies was based on the approach promoted in Topic Paper 6, 'Techniques and criteria for judging capacity and sensitivity' published in 2002, which forms part of the Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage guidance 'Landscape Character Assessment Guidance for England and Scotland'. The paper explores thinking and recent practice on judging capacity and sensitivity. The recommended methodology developed for this study adopted the following premise from Topic Paper 6:

"existing landscape character sensitivity + visual sensitivity = Overall Landscape Sensitivity"

1.9 Alongside the development of the methodology, a desk-based study was undertaken, which involved gathering and reviewing current and background information, including the datasets and mapping that informed the original Landscape Capacity Analysis studies. This included an understanding of the current planning policy background, and in-depth review of the existing Landscape Capacity Analysis studies, including the Landscape Character Assessment 2006 (Chris Blandford Associates), and:

- Protected Lanes Assessment July 2013 (Essex County Council)
- Braintree District Historic Environmental Characterisation Project 2010 (Essex County Council)
- Dedham Vale and Stour Valley Project Management Plan
- Braintree District Core Strategy 2011
- Braintree District Local Plan Review 2005

Field survey work and results

1.10 The field survey work utilised information gathered from each of the Landscape Capacity Analysis studies, and involved a systematic survey of the Landscape Setting Areas identified in the studies as having Low or Low to Medium capacity for development.

1.11 The existing Landscape Setting Areas were 'drilled down' to create a finer sub-division of the landscape into 'Parcels' with common characteristics. This was based on desktop research that was then refined and adjusted in the light of findings in the field if necessary. Characteristics that informed the identification of the Parcels included:

- landform
- landscape designations
- hydrology
- landscape scale
- vegetation cover
- land uses
- pattern of settlement
- presence of views and landmarks features
- communications

1.12 These Parcels largely reflected the main natural elements of the landscape, such as rivers and floodplains, tributary valleys, valley slopes, ridgelines; and elements relating to land use, human influences, etc. The original assumption had been that each of the Landscape Setting Areas would be subdivided into, on average, four Parcels of various sizes but consistent character. A consequence of the desktop and field work was that, where the landscape was more complex in both the underlying natural elements and overlying land uses, up to seven or eight Parcels were identified in more complex landscapes.

1.13 The drawing of boundary lines was a necessary part of the process, but did not always mean that Parcels were dramatically different to either side of the line, as it is more typical for change to be a more gradual transition. The boundary lines for some Parcels mark more a watershed of character, where the balance of the defining elements has shifted from one landscape character to another. For practical purposes, the boundary was aligned on features that could be identified on the ground, such as boundary features or landscape elements.

1.14 This analysis was typically at the field level scale with, where appropriate, some aggregation of field and landscape units of a similar character. Such a fine-grain study was required in order to identify any parts of the overall Landscape Setting Area that have the potential to accommodate development.

1.15 The field survey work was carried out by a team of Landscape Architects who used a standard proforma (see Appendix A) to record data in a consistent manner. The Parcels were photographed (where relevant) to capture landscape character, for internal purposes when reviewing and evaluating the character and analysis studies and compiling the report. The fieldwork confirmed important views that had been identified in the Landscape Setting Areas in the previous studies, as well as identifying further important views – both close and distant. It also verified and assessed landmark landscape features and sensitive routes/corridors and their corresponding sensitivity to

change. Information was also gathered around opportunities for landscape enhancements in keeping with local landscape character, and the potential for green infrastructure provision.

- 1.16 Following the fieldwork the Parcels were reviewed, mapped and the field survey notes written up to provide a general commentary to describe and assess the key characteristics, distinctive features and landscape elements, as well as an indication of the 'Strength of Character' and 'Condition' of each Parcel.
- 1.17 The Parcels were assessed for their landscape sensitivity and capacity, based on a pre-defined set of criteria. These criteria reflect both the national guidance in Topic Paper 6 and the particular circumstances for the rural landscape of the Braintree District.
- 1.18 The criteria were grouped into primary factors (representing features that are more permanent in the landscape, such as landform, or those that would take a substantial period of time to vary) and secondary factors (representing features that are of a more temporary or transient nature or that could be subject to relatively rapid change or improvement).
- 1.19 The following criteria have been selected to reflect existing landscape features:
- slope analysis (primary)
 - vegetation enclosure (primary)
 - the complexity and scale of the landscape (secondary)
 - the condition of the landscape (secondary)
- 1.20 The following criteria have been selected to reflect visual sensitivity:
- openness to public view (secondary)
 - openness to private view (secondary)
 - relationship with existing urban conurbation (primary)
 - safeguarding the separation or coalescence between settlements (primary)
 - scope to mitigate the development (primary)
- 1.21 It is recognised that Topic Paper 6 refers to a wider range of factors within what is termed 'Landscape Character Sensitivity'. However, in the context of this study these are not considered to be relevant and would be picked up as part of other evidence base work, e.g. nature conservation or cultural heritage. It is considered that for the purpose of this evaluation, the main relevant existing landscape and visual factors are addressed in the above categories. These have been incorporated into the field survey forms used for each Parcel (refer to Appendix A).

1.22 The Overall Landscape Sensitivity provides an evaluation of the sensitivity of a Parcel in broad strategic terms. In order to assess the Overall Landscape Capacity of a Parcel, 'landscape value' was added to the equation, as follows.

$$\textit{"Overall Landscape Sensitivity + Landscape Value = Overall Landscape Capacity"}$$

1.23 Landscape value can be measured in a number of ways e.g. statutory landscape designations, local landscape designations, other ecological/cultural heritage designations, and local perceived value. There are no consensus studies as informed by stakeholders. Consequently, the value of the landscape has been scored based on the presence of: landscape designations (of which there are few, if any, in the study area), Conservation Areas, Listed Buildings, the extent of public rights of way, perceptual aspects such as scenic beauty, or the presence/influence of other conservation interests within the Parcel or its setting. Landscape Value is determined on the basis of the same five point scale as the other criteria, using a score of C as the default starting point for a Parcel with no positive or negative landscape-value attributes. This corresponds with the approach adopted by Chris Blandford Associates in the previous Landscape Capacity Analyses for each of the settlements, in which the methodology was based on the evaluation of landscape value as medium, unless an obvious reason existed to elevate or reduce it.

1.24 To assess the landscape capacity of a Parcel to accommodate development, certain assumptions need to be applied. For the purposes of this study it is assumed that development will include mainly two to two and a half storey residential units and commercial units of a similar height. It is not anticipated that there would be a need for taller structures, but if a Parcel is considered able to accommodate such structures, this is identified in the description of the Parcel.

1.25 Each Parcel was assessed against the criteria noted above, using a five-point scale from most suitable to least suitable (A to E), guided by a set of definitions/descriptions that have been developed for this study to reflect local characteristics (see Appendix B). An assessment has been made of each Parcel in order to determine a score for: Landscape Sensitivity Profile and Overall Capacity Profile. To build in weighting for the primary and secondary factors, a 1.5 x weighting is applied to primary factors.

1.26 The results were recorded on a set pro forma to provide a consistent approach reflecting each of the criteria.

1.27 The Overall Capacity Profile score identifies the Parcel's capacity based on the following range:

27 – 33.5	Low Landscape Capacity
34 – 40.5	Medium-Low Landscape Capacity
41 – 47.5	Medium Landscape Capacity
48 – 54.5	Medium-High Landscape Capacity
55 – 61.5	High Landscape Capacity

- 1.28 The principle of applying a numerical scale to define landscape capacity, has been used to help provide transparency through the field judgement process. However, it should be emphasized that scores should not be regarded as a precise and definitive judgement, but merely as a means to establish relative capacity and no absolute conclusion should be drawn from the numerical totals. The influence of individual criteria in a given Parcel and in the context of the wider landscape character should also be given due consideration. Those Parcels that are borderline in terms of suitability, are considered in more detail based on the overall spread and balance of the profiles and scope to mitigate in making a final judgement. To aid these considerations a commentary of the key points has been provided for each Parcel.
- 1.29 A general commentary has been provided for each Parcel based on the key characteristics and distinctive features. Parcels that have a Medium, Medium-High or High landscape capacity are considered to be the most likely to be suitable as a potential location for development. Where appropriate, further detail regarding the type, nature and principles for development are described for each Parcel to help provide guidance in identifying the most suitable locations and/or layouts for future development.

2 Summary of Landscape Capacity Evaluation, November 2007

- 2.1 The CBA study reached conclusions around the capacity of the landscape to accommodate change without significant effects on its character. This work involved making a judgement around whether the amount of change proposed can be accommodated without having unacceptable adverse effects on the character of the landscape (relating to *landscape character sensitivity*) or the way that it is perceived (relating to *visual sensitivity*), without compromising the values attached to it (relating to *landscape value*).
- 2.2 The summary schedule for levels of landscape character sensitivity, visual sensitivity and landscape value revealed that all the Landscape Setting Areas wrapping around the town have an overall **Low to Medium** Capacity to accommodate a settlement extension. The evaluations for the areas were reflected on Figure W-05: Landscape Capacity Evaluation Plan appended to the report.
- 2.3 The report concludes that levels of landscape capacity may not be uniform across any one setting area. It acknowledges that the Low to Medium capacity setting areas around Witham may include specific locations therein that are more suitable for limited development in landscape or visual terms, (e.g. minor settlement extensions) which would typically be small in scale and have a moderate amount of visual enclosure. Where capacity within the setting areas varies, any development proposals would need to respond to the inherent landscape sensitivity and take account of both the setting and potential impacts on the surrounding landscape.
- 2.4 The report concluded that although potential opportunities for accommodating new built development around Witham are limited, there may be capacity within even moderately sensitive or highly valued landscapes to accommodate some well-designed and appropriately located built development.
- 2.5 CBA's evaluations for each of the Landscape Setting Areas are summarised below, including the broad locations within which the study suggests that residential or employment development could be accommodated.

Landscape Setting Area W01

- 2.6 Landscape Sensitivities & Value:
- The visibility of the Area from the wider landscape is restricted due to enclosure provided by the ridgeline along the western boundary. The combination of a rising landform and some loss of the hedgerow structure results in good visibility in western parts, allowing expansive views to Witham and onwards to the well-treed ridge of land south of the Blackwater. The Area is fairly well enclosed from the wider landscape and the small number of public footpaths and roads within or in the vicinity of the Parcel are not well used. The northern and southern parts of the area are low-lying and have views to housing on the settlement fringe. Sensitivity is increased in northern and western parts due to elevated land and along central part of

settlement fringe due to sense of visual continuity between open countryside and the wedge of open space that extends into town. The visual sensitivity is also increased in the vicinity of the moated grounds of Blunt's Hall. The Visual Sensitivity is Low to Medium overall due to the enclosure provided by the low landform and hedgerows.

- The enclosed nature of the landscape provides only a moderate contribution to the wider rural landscape. However, the local area provides a distinctive rural approach and setting to western Witham with its medium to large scale arable fields, scattered blocks of woodland and farmstead clusters. The area contains limited semi-natural vegetation. There are few landscape detractors within the area and it is considered to have a moderate strength of character. The sensitivity increases in the eastern part due to Blunt's Hall and its historic buildings.
- The Area contains no nationally or locally designated landscapes but has a Medium Landscape Value overall on account of its small number of public footpaths; Ancient Monument at Blunt's Hall; Listed Building at Dancing Dicks Farm; moderate to high sense of tranquillity away from the urban fabric and the sense of remoteness.

2.7 The study identifies that the area to the south of the railway may provide opportunity for necessary residential or employment development with appropriate mitigation planting. The area to the south of Terling Road could also have potential provided adverse impacts on the setting of Powers Hall were avoided, the wedge of open space adjacent to Blunt's Hall retained and enhanced as a recreational corridor, appropriate landscape mitigation planting is provided and the existing narrow, winding lanes are retained.

Landscape Setting Area W02

2.8 Landscape Sensitivities & Value:

- The visibility of the Area from the wider landscape is fairly restricted due to a strong vegetation structure and gentle undulations within the river valley landscape. The Visual Sensitivity is Medium overall with the elevated western parts more visually prominent on the approach to Witham and from the railway corridor. The visual sensitivity increases in areas associated with the visual continuity of the river corridor and within the visual setting of Powers Hall. The settlement fringe is generally well contained and enclosed by woodland and a robust structure of trees and shrubs to field boundaries and settlement edges.
- The Landscape Character has a Medium to High Sensitivity overall on account of the semi-natural vegetation and species-rich grasslands lining the river; the generally intact field pattern, mature blocks of woodland and the contribution to the well-integrated setting to Witham. There are distinctive buildings at Warren Farm and The Old Rectory, which about pre-

18th century field enclosure, woodland and some intact hedgerows. The sensitivity is reduced in western parts by some loss of hedgerow structure.

- The combination of Listed Buildings within Warren Farm and Powers Hall Cottages, Witham Marsh Local Wildlife Site, limited public footpaths, allotment gardens and a Medium to High sense of tranquillity all contribute to a Medium to High Landscape Value.

2.9 The northern edge of Terling Road is identified as having capacity to accommodate development with appropriate landscape mitigation planting and any adverse impacts on the setting of Powers Hall avoided. Mitigation opportunities include extension of the existing group of mature trees and woodland around Powers Hall eastwards to help enclose any new built development.

Landscape Setting Area W03

2.10 Landscape Sensitivities & Value:

- The Area has Medium Visual Sensitivity overall due to enclosure provided by landform, woodlands, tree belts and hedgerows. The western parts of the area are elevated and open in nature with expansive views across arable fields, leading to increased sensitivity to these parts. Inter-visibility between the south-eastern parts and the upper river valley slopes of Witham also increases the sensitivity. The Area forms part of the visual setting to The Old Rectory.
- The landscape character is of Medium to High Sensitivity due to the contribution to the open, rural setting of the northern and north-eastern fringes of Witham; the physical and visual separation it provides between Witham and Rivenhall End/ Rivenhall; the strong rural character of the western parts of the area; and generally intact and moderate condition of vegetation and field structure.
- The network of public footpaths and golf course, moderate sense of tranquillity, Listed Buildings, Local Wildlife Site within the grounds of The Old Rectory and the adjacent ancient woodland all contribute to a Medium to High Landscape Value overall.

2.11 The study identifies development potential between Yew Close and the south-western edge of the Rivenhall Oaks Golf Course within Landscape Setting Area W3. This would be in correspondence with landscape mitigation planting and tree and shrub belts to the periphery of the golf course in order to help enclose any proposals.

Landscape Setting Area W04

2.12 Landscape Sensitivities & Value:

- The rising landform and trees and woodland in the western parts of the area provide enclosure to the area and result in a Medium Sensitivity overall and a limited visibility within the wider landscape. The sensitivity is increased in localised areas due to open expansive

views from eastern parts, low-lying western parts which contribute to the visual continuity of the river corridor, the sensitive visual setting of Little Braxted Hall, open views from the A12 and the inter-visibility with open countryside between Witham and Rivenhall End.

- The qualities of the landscape all combine to form a rural river valley setting to the town. The Area comprises a wooded farmland landscape, with numerous woodland blocks and plantations. River valley has a strong character and sense of place, with narrow rural lanes and historic buildings. The Landscape Character is considered to be of Medium to High Sensitivity overall with increased sensitivity to central parts due to the sequence of pre-18th century field enclosures around Braxted Hall and alongside the River Blackwater.
- The Landscape is of Medium to High Value given its Local Wildlife Sites, Whet Mead Local Nature Reserve, the strong sense of tranquillity away from the roads, scattered Listed Buildings, the ancient monument at Little Braxted Hall and the site of a medieval water mill at located on the River Blackwater: Machin's Mill.

Landscape Setting Area W05

2.13 Landscape Sensitivities & Value:

- The Area has limited visibility in views from the wider landscape due to the enclosure provided by landform, well-treed embankments of the A12 motorway and robust mature woodland to the south and east. There is a well-treed skyline to most parts of the area, with the exception of visually prominent and recently developed housing on the northern edge of the A12 which is seen above the highway embankments. These elements combine to result in a Low to Medium Visual Sensitivity overall.
- The area contributes to the setting of Witham and the physical and visual separation between Witham and Hatfield Peverel. Significant groups of 18th-19th century field enclosure and the distinctive, well-treed approach road to southern Witham along Maldon Road also contribute to a Medium to High Landscape Character Sensitivity overall. The sensitivity is reduced in parts by open and partial views to residential buildings along the northern edge of the A12, a fragmented landscape structure and the limited presence of semi-natural vegetation.
- Public footpaths in the western and eastern parts, the former Special Landscape Area designation to part of the area, the Country Park on the periphery, and the moderate sense of tranquillity contribute to a Medium Landscape Value overall.

2.14 The area to the north of Oliver's Farm and to the east of Spring Lane in the far east of the Landscape Setting Area is identified as having potential to accommodate development with appropriate landscape mitigation planting.

2.15 The potential development opportunities described above are proposed on the basis that they are verified by the finer grain assessment of the setting areas carried out in this Landscape Capacity

Analysis. The study contains a further recommendation that any development would need to be consistent with the scale and form of the existing settlement fringe, and that the recommended tree and shrub planting areas are sufficiently robust where new employment development is a possibility. Enhancing the local hedgerow structures, providing additional tree and shrub planting to help soften the appearance of some fringes of the settlement and building in the local vernacular style would also provide opportunities to help accommodate built development within landscape setting areas W01 to W05. The report makes further recommendations around the development of recreational corridors along the River Blackwater and the River Brain which pass through Landscape Setting Areas W2 and W4.

- 2.16 The study concludes that the landscape sensitivities and values it identifies should guide the subsequent land use distribution and development proposals, ensuring that they build on existing form and character, and minimise impacts on the landscape setting of the existing settlement. The recommendation around the preparation of landscape strategies addressing land use, built form, landscape character, minimising impacts on the surrounding landscape and heritage assets also references the need for development proposals to consider the setting of, and separation between, existing settlements in the District.

3 Evaluation of Landscape Capacity Analysis

3.1 The completed Landscape Capacity Analysis forms for each Parcel can be found at Appendix C.

4 Findings of evaluation of Landscape Capacity Analysis

Identification and arrangement of Parcels (See Figure W-04 Parcel Arrangement)

- 4.1 As described in the methodology, a combination of desktop and comprehensive fieldwork was used to 'drill down' the Landscape Setting Areas into Parcels with common characteristics. This involved a systematic survey of the natural elements of the landscape and overlying elements relating to land uses.
- 4.2 Although it has been assumed that no development would occur within the floodplain of the River Brain which runs through the town, and the River Blackwater which runs through Landscape Setting Area W04, the mapping and subsequent analysis of Parcels within the Setting Areas included the valley floors of both these features and minor tributaries associated with them.
- 4.3 It had been anticipated at the outset that approximately four Parcels would be identified in each Setting Area. However, the subtleties of the valley landscapes of the River Blackwater and variations in land uses and topography on the northern fringes of the town, translated into more complex landscapes across Setting Areas 01, 03 and 04, with six to eight Parcels being identified in these areas as a consequence. Setting Areas 02 and 05, based around the north western and south western fringes of the settlement are more uniform, with five Parcels identified on gently falling valley slopes which rises gently away from the towards the plateau landscape to the south.
- 4.4 An overview of the scale and arrangement of the Parcels reveals that they are smaller in scale and more geometric in form where they abut the northern fringes of the town, where the boundaries are responding changes in landform and heavily dissected by major transport routes which form prominent physical boundaries in the landscape. Areas of historical significance also define sensitive small scale Parcels with enclosed grounds such as the Registered Park and Garden at The Old Rectory within Parcel 2c.
- 4.5 Landscape Setting Areas W01 and W04 are generally larger in scale where the landscape is less influenced by development and retains a largely rural character. As an example Parcel 4c comprises a simple farmland landscape which occupies the west facing valley slopes of the River Blackwater, based on arable fields with largely intact pre-18th century field enclosure structure.
- 4.6 Similarly, the form of the Parcels differ where they are based around the floodplain and slopes associated with the River Blackwater and the River Brain. These meandering valley forms result in slender and sinuous Parcels that dissect Setting Areas 2 and 4, such as the meandering path of the river to the east of Witham in Parcel 4b.

Parcel analysis

- 4.7 Six inherent landscape characteristics of the Parcel (comprising the impacts of landform and landcover; historic pattern; discordance or tranquillity, frequency or rarity, and visual unity) were reviewed and scored with the criteria 'Weak – Moderate – Strong'. The landscape condition, partially

reflecting the active management of the landscape for agriculture, amenity uses or nature conservation, together with the impact of development on the landscape, was similarly assessed and scored as either 'Poor – Moderate – Good'.

- 4.8 A range of landscape and visual criteria were identified, assessed and scored in order to evaluate the capacity of the landscape, Parcel by Parcel, to accommodate development. The potential to alleviate the effects of built development on each Parcel was considered, based on the ability of the landscape to provide effective mitigation across the short – medium – long term. The consideration around mitigation was undertaken as part of the fieldwork, and based on factors such as scale, enclosure, pattern, type and maturity of vegetation, movement and visibility of each Parcel.

Description of results (See Figure W-05 Parcel Evaluation)

High Landscape Capacity

- 4.9 Evaluation of the landscape features, visual factors, potential landscape features and landscape value revealed that there are no Parcels with High capacity to accommodate residential or commercial development within the Landscape Setting Areas around the fringes of Witham.

Medium-High Landscape Capacity

- 4.10 One Parcel has been identified as having Medium to High capacity. Corresponding with the findings of the earlier Landscape Capacity Analysis, this is located immediately adjacent to the existing settlement fringes, where it responds to the existing form and function:

- Parcel 3a Conrad Road

- 4.11 Occupying a gently sloping landform to the north-western fringe of Witham, the Parcel comprises a single arable field. Southview School abuts the south-eastern boundary and housing arranged along Conrad Avenue and a series of cul-de-sacs connecting with it face onto the south-eastern boundary. A geometric belt of planting lines the north-western boundary and encloses the access route to Elm Hall Cottages. This provides visual containment to the Parcel from the wider landscape to the north. There are open views from the Cressing Road and houses facing the Parcel have views over and filtered through the well maintained hedge and intermittent trees on the south-eastern boundary. The Parcel has strong connections with the settlement fringe and is largely contained in the wider landscape by built development and vegetation to the north-east and north-west.

- 4.12 The analysis highlights that development should be at an appropriate scale and form to the adjoining settlement fringes. The opportunity to improve the relatively abrupt edge to development in this area with mitigation planting and integrating open space into development proposals also exist with the continuation of grass verges and open space reflecting patterns in existing housing areas. Development should incorporate vernacular features and characteristics present in existing areas of Witham.

Medium Landscape Capacity

- 4.13 Seven Parcels have been identified as having Medium capacity to accommodate development. Corresponding with the findings of the earlier Landscape Capacity Analysis, these are located immediately adjacent to the existing settlement fringes, where they respond to the existing landscape features and visual characteristics:
- Parcel 1b Chipping Hill
- 4.14 Consisting of four medium to large size arable fields on the western fringes of the town, which fall towards a small stream valley on the southern boundary, the Parcel abuts the strong geometry of the residential estate which wraps around Powers Hall School on Spa Road. The visibility of properties and rear garden boundaries create a close connection between the Parcel and the existing settlement edge, particularly in the south-eastern corner where a footpath link provides a connection with the sports pitches adjacent to Witham Town FC.
- 4.15 Although views into the Parcel are possible from roads wrapping around the boundaries such as Humber Road and Yare Ave on the eastern boundary, as well as from more distant lanes such as Dancing Dicks Lane alongside Parcel 1c to the east, such views are frequently limited by the undulating topography, with views from Powers Hall on the northern boundary obscured by the combination of underlying topography and vegetation.
- 4.16 New built development in the Parcel has the potential to integrate the existing abrupt urban edge with the adjacent landscape, responding to the subtle undulations and corresponding views to and from. Locating any development on the lower valley slopes adjacent to Humber Road would limit the visibility from the wider landscape beyond, with a framework of new hedgerow and tree planting on the western fringes of the Parcel reinforcing the local landscape character and providing an additional layer of visual screening in views from the west. There is an opportunity to improve the existing but limited footpath network with new paths that create connections between the residential fringes of the town and the adjacent rural landscape.
- Parcels 1g Lodge Farm and 1h Wood End Farm
- 4.17 Located between the main Chelmsford to London rail line and the B1389 Hatfield Road which runs parallel, the Parcels comprise five medium sized fields around Lodge Farm in Parcel 1g, and a large single arable field set behind Mayfield Nursery and wrapping around the east side of Wood End Farm in Parcel 1h. The rear gardens of properties in the residential areas around Witham Lodge and Allectus Way define the north eastern boundary, the geometry of the boundary in keeping with the adjacent road and rail corridors.
- 4.18 Falling very gently north eastwards towards the River Brain, the fields within the Parcel are divided by hedgerows and occasional groups of trees within the field pattern and around the boundaries. Views to and from the adjacent properties are limited by trees and shrubs on garden boundaries;

views from properties facing directly into the Parcel being filtered by this vegetation. Clear views into both Parcels are possible for rail passengers on the main line on the northern boundary, with partial views possible for drivers and passengers traveling into Witham from the A12 where breaks in the roadside vegetation permit.

- 4.19 Despite the rural land uses, the presence of the intact pre-18th century field pattern within Parcel 1g and the farmstead at Lodge Farm being in keeping with the tranquil farmland landscape as in Parcels 1e and 1f to the north, the presence of the busy road corridor along the southern boundary, and the proximity to the intersection with the A12 greatly reduces tranquillity levels within the Parcels. This, together with the residential development underway directly to the south of the Hatfield Road, crates a strong association between the Parcels and the main part of the settlement to the north east.
- 4.20 There is an opportunity to improve the impression of the south western fringes of Witham as part of any development proposals, with a framework of vegetation creating a strong edge between the farmland alongside the A12 and rail corridor and the linear arrangement of the existing settlement fringes along the Hatfield Road. The retention and management of the vegetation on the south-western boundary of Parcel 1h would reinforce the sense of separation between Witham and Hatfield Peverel, and provide a robust landscape edge between built up areas and the adjacent countryside.
- 4.21 The creation of green corridors could provide connections with the footpath network south of the A12 corridor in the vicinity of Latney's, as well as extending along the rail line towards Hatfield Peverel, with potential linkages with footpaths north of the footbridge crossing at The Vineyards. This would continue the existing linear belt of informal green space north west of the Parcels, between the residential development at Allectus Way and the main line railway.
- Parcel 2a Faulkbourne Road South
- 4.22 Occupying the gently sloping valley sides to the River Brain adjacent to the north western development edge of Witham, the eastern and southern boundaries of the Parcel are defined by Faulkbourne Road and Terling Road respectively. A range of substantial barns and buildings associated with Powers Hall lie alongside the western boundary; as large farm reservoir north of the buildings contained by a geometric block of woodland.
- 4.23 The existing vegetation cover is inconsistent, with a recently planted tree belt on the northern boundary which provides strong enclosure from the north being in contrast with the more open landscape along the Terling Road to the south, where only occasional trees are present. Hedges to the internal field boundaries are either fragmented or occasionally open. Although there is no public access within the Parcel, moderately open views are possible from the roads along the boundaries, clear views also being possible from properties alongside the Faulkbourne Road.

- 4.24 Any new development proposals should be concentrated on the south eastern corner of the Parcel rather than on the upper valley slopes away from the settlement, to reflect the existing pattern of development and to provide connections with the existing urban fabric. A framework of new planting would be required, to reduce the visual impact on the rear gardens of existing properties, absorb such development into the adjacent countryside, and provide an attractive edge to the settlement on the approach from White Notley in the north. Such hedge and tree planting would be in keeping with local landscape character, and provide a definition between the settlement fringes and the tranquil rural landscape to the west. New green links would increase the range of walks available on the western fringes of the settlement, with the potential to extend the green corridor associated with the minor stream valley on the north eastern margins of the Parcel at Devil's Pit.
- Parcel 2e Cressing Road
- 4.25 Forming a slim band between the single track rail line between Witham and Braintree, the Parcel comprises two arable fields positioned north-south of each other, with a cluster of properties enclosed by mature vegetation separating them. There is a gentle rise away from the rail line and River Brain beyond, towards the higher farmland in the vicinity of Elm Hall Cottages in the adjacent Parcel 3b.
- 4.26 There are no public footpaths present; any new development proposals providing the opportunity to improve access between the northern fringes of the town and the adjacent rural farmland landscape. The vegetation along the rail line should be safeguarded through a mix of management and new planting, to provide a wildlife corridor and green links with adjacent landscapes. There is an opportunity for hedgerow planting along the Cressing Road corridor, to provide visual containment and habitat connectivity with the local landscape.
- 4.27 Potential development proposals should be concentrated on the southern fringes of the Parcel, adjacent to the existing settlement edge, where they would provide natural extension to the residential street at Longfields and Upper Acres. New planting would be required on the northern and southernmost edges of such development, to reduce the visual impact on existing properties, absorb such development into the adjacent countryside, and provide an attractive edge to the settlement on the approach from Tye Green and Hawbush Green in the north.
- Parcel 3g London Road
- 4.28 The Parcel abuts industrial development to the north-eastern edge of Witham and is contained to the north-west by the London to Colchester railway line to the south-east by the A12 (London Road). A line of agricultural buildings and storage containers and a residential property occupy the north eastern boundary, separated from the adjacent Parcel 3h to the north east by an intermittent band of vegetation enclose the north-eastern boundary.

- 4.29 The southern boundary is marked by the linear corridor of the busy A12 corridor, a dual carriageway following the line of the Roman road to Colchester. Views between the Parcel and road corridor are direct; the absence of any vegetation on the south eastern boundary allowing for clear views into the three medium sized fields within the Parcel. This lack of visual containment, and the presence of signage and lighting along the trunk road corridor, results in a discordant feel, the Parcel having as great a connection with the industrial units on the south western boundary as it does with the farmland in the adjacent Parcel 3h to the north east.
- 4.30 Development proposals in the Parcel would be limited by the practicalities of creating an access onto the A12 road corridor, the creation of a route via the industrial estate to the south-west being a more likely option. There is an opportunity to provide a landscape buffer on the south-eastern boundary, a substantial belt of trees and hedgerow planting having the opportunity to reduce road noise within the Parcel and limiting the visibility of any development proposals. The creation of a green corridor of vegetation and informal green space along the rail line would safeguard a pedestrian link between Witham and Rivenhall End in the future.
- Parcel 5b Oliver's Farm
- 4.31 Occupying the lower valley slopes of the River Blackwater at around 15m AOD, the Parcel comprises one large arable field that lies alongside the A12 corridor on the northern boundary, to the south of which a medium sized field stretches to the B1018 Maldon Road on the southern boundary. The fields are divided and framed by hedging and intermittent trees. In the south eastern corner of the Parcel, a range of commercial activities and business uses occupy a former field on the west side of Oliver's Farm, contained by the hedgerows to the former field on all boundaries. The farmstead itself lies west of the Maldon Road which meanders around the southern boundary, the farmstead enclosed by a range of mature trees and hedging.
- 4.32 Although the existing fringes of Witham lie directly to the north, the embanked corridor of the A12 trunk road provides a strong sense of separation, with views limited by the presence of a substantial belt of vegetation on the embankment sides. This has the effect of limiting views from the Parcel to the rooftops of properties in residential streets to either side of Gershwin Boulevard directly to the north, and taller structures in more distant views.
- 4.33 The existing vegetation along the western boundary, alongside the Howbridge Hall Road (track) leading to the sewage works and Dengie Farm, would require management and reinforcement with new tree and hedgerow planting as part of any proposals for built development within the Parcel. As well as reinforcing the level of vegetation cover, this would provide a physical and visual buffer with the more rural landscapes in the remaining Parcels in the Landscape Setting Area to the west.
- 4.34 Potential development should be concentrated on the eastern fringes of the Parcel, where they could form a natural extension to the cluster of properties arranged along the B1018 Maldon Road and in the vicinity of the junction with the minor road to Wickham Bishops. A framework of new hedgerow

and tree planting would be required, to reduce the visual impact on the rear gardens of existing properties, and absorb such development into the adjacent countryside. New green links within the Parcel would increase the opportunity for circular walks on the southern fringes of the settlement.

Medium-Low Landscape Capacity

- 4.35 The analysis found that the landscape around the more distant fringes of Witham have Medium to Low capacity to accommodate development. The gradual rise away from the town and Rivers Brain and Blackwater (at approximately 20m AOD) towards the adjacent undulating farmland landscape (which rises to approximately 50m AOD) results in the Parcels being visible in distant views across the valley landscapes.
- 4.36 The combination of a sense of a distinctly rural farmland landscape, a sense of remoteness and tranquillity away from the busy road corridors and existing settlement edges, the network of both pre-18th century and 18th-19th century field enclosure, and a framework of boundary hedgerows and woodland blocks reduce the capacity of the landscape to absorb new residential or employment development without significantly affecting these key characteristics.
- 4.37 The landscape framework of fields frequently reflect the pre-18th century and 18th-19th century pattern of enclosure, and are contained by well-managed hedgerows with associated trees, and woodland blocks which provide a sense of landscape in good condition. The distant views in and out of the Parcels are possible at local high points and at locations where the characteristic hedgerow enclosure is limited as at Parcel 1f (Dancing Dicks Lane).
- 4.38 The presence of landscape designations such as the County Wildlife Sites at the confluence of the rivers adjacent to the elevated corridor of the A12 in Parcel 4d, grassland alongside Rectory Lane in Parcel 3e, and pasture on the valley floor of the River Brain in the south eastern corner of Parcel 2d; the numerous Listed Buildings set within farmsteads in the gently undulating farmland such as Powers Hall in Parcel 2a and Benton Hall in Parcel 4d; the tranquil nature of the landscape around Dancing Dicks House and Dancing Dicks Lane in Parcels 1e and 1f; and presence of footpaths such as those south of the A12 corridor in the vicinity of Benton Hall and Ishams Chase in Parcel 4b, and adjacent to the New Rickstone's Academy on the northernmost fringes of Landscape Setting Area 03, further to reduces the capacity of the landscape to absorb new built development.

Low Landscape Capacity

- 4.39 The capacity of the lower valley slopes associated with the River Blackwater in Parcels 4a Rivenhall End and 4c Little Braxted is consistently Low, due to the strong rural character, nature of the landscape features and visual factors which underpin them, and the close associations with the corridor of the River Blackwater which runs between them. The Parcels are unaffected by any intrusive developments, with Parcel 4a providing separation between Witham and the small village of Rivenhall End to the north east. Development affect the distinctly rural characteristics of the Parcel

4c, which is isolated from the town and has only limited associations with the existing urban fabric, with the large scale industrial buildings on the northern fringes of Witham only visible beyond the vegetation lining the A12 road corridor.

- 4.40 Parcel 5c occupies the gentle east facing slopes of the River Blackwater, and as such its topography relates to the wider landscape. The footpath network and presence of the fishing lakes on the existing fringes of Hatfield Peverel would result in a clear impression of any new development in an otherwise open and rural farmland landscape.

Figures

Appendices

Landscape capacity analysis form

Parcel No.:

Settlement:

Landscape Setting Area:

Surveyor:

Date surveyed:

Parcel description

Strength of character/condition			
Strength of character	Weak	Moderate	Strong
S1/ Impact of landform	Insignificant	Apparent	Dominant/Prominent
S2/ Impact of landcover *	Insignificant	Apparent	Dominant/Prominent
S3/ Historic pattern *	Insignificant	Apparent	Dominant/Prominent
S4/ Tranquillity	Discordant	Moderate	Tranquil
S5/ Distinctiveness /rarity	Frequent	Unusual	Unique/rare
S6/ Visual unity	Incoherent	Coherent	Unified
Totals * Prime character if a tie			
Condition	Poor	Moderate	Good
C1/ Landcover change	Widespread	Localised	Insignificant
C2/ Age structure of tree cover *	Over mature	Mature or young	Mixed
C3/ Extent of semi-natural habitat survival *	Relic	Scattered	Widespread/linked
C4/ Management of semi-natural habitats	Poor	Not obvious	Good
C5/ Survival of cultural pattern (fields and hedges)	Declining/relic	Interrupted	Intact
C6/ Impact of development	High	Moderate	Low
Totals * Prime condition if a tie			

Strength of character/condition:	
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Capacity analysis

Criteria	Importance	A=5	B=4	C=3	D=2	E=1	Total
1/ Landscape features							
Slope analysis	Primary (x1.5)						
Vegetation enclosure	Primary (x1.5)						
Complexity / scale	Secondary (x1)						
Condition	Secondary (x1)						
Sub total							
2/ Visual features							
Openness to public view	Secondary (x1)						
Openness to private view	Secondary (x1)						
Relationship with existing urban conurbation	Primary (x1.5)						
Prevention of coalescence	Primary (x1.5)						
Scope to mitigate the development	Primary (x1.5)						
Sub total							
3/ Landscape value							
Presence of landscape-related designations	Secondary (x1)						
Sub total							
Overall capacity profile (1/ + 2/+ 3/) =							

Overall Capacity:

Guidelines for development and mitigation measures

Appendix B

Criteria group	Criteria	Measurement of criteria Scores: A = 5, B = 4, C = 3, D = 2, E = 1	Importance	Comments
Existing Landscape Features	Slope analysis	A = Plateau / gently undulating B = Rolling / undulating landform providing some enclosure C = Tributary valleys / lower valley slopes / gentle side slopes D = Valley floor / floodplain E = Elevated landforms, prominent slopes on valley sides	Primary (1.5x)	Higher capacity ↑ ↓ Lower capacity
	Enclosure by vegetation	A = Enclosed by mature vegetation – extensive tree belts / woodland B = Semi-enclosed by vegetation - moderate woodland cover, good quality tall hedgerows or hedgerows with hedgerow trees C = Moderate enclosure by vegetation - scattered small woodlands, fragmented shelterbelts and/or medium to low hedgerows D = Limited or poor hedges (with no trees) and/or isolated copses E = Largely open with minimal vegetation	Primary (1.5x)	
	Complexity / Scale	A = Extensive simple landscape with single land use B = Large scale landscape with limited land use and variety C = Large scale landscape with variations in pattern, texture and scale or medium scale with limited variety D = Small or medium scale landscape with a variety in pattern, texture and scale E = Intimate and organic landscape with a richness in pattern, texture and scale	Secondary (1x)	
	Landscape character – quality / condition	A = Area of weak character in a poor condition B = Area of weak character in a moderate condition or of a moderate character in a poor condition C = Area of weak character in a good condition or of a moderate character in a moderate condition or of a strong character in a poor condition D = Area of moderate character in a good condition or of a strong character in a moderate condition E = Area of strong character in a good condition	Secondary (1x)	The condition of the landscape partially reflects the active management of the landscape for agriculture, amenity uses or nature conservation.
Visual Factors	Openness to public view	A = Parcel is well contained from public views B = Parcel is generally well contained from public views C = Parcel is partially contained from public views D = Parcel is moderately open to public views E = Parcel is very open to public views	Secondary (1x)	Public views will include views from roads and railways, rights of way and public open space. Score will depend on the extent of the visibility from all the Parcel perimeters and the rights of way through Parcel.
	Openness to private view	A = Parcel is well contained from private views B = Parcel is generally well contained from private views C = Parcel is partially contained from private views D = Parcel is moderately open to private views E = Parcel is very open to private views	Secondary (1x)	This relates to private views from residential properties. The score will depend on the extent of visibility from all the Parcel perimeters.

Criteria group	Criteria	Measurement of criteria Scores: A = 5, B = 4, C = 3, D = 2, E = 1	Importance	Comments
	Relationship with existing urban conurbations	<p>A = Location where built development will form a natural extension of an adjacent part of urban fabric</p> <p>B = Location where built development will form some close associations with the existing parts of urban fabric</p> <p>C = Location where built development will form some moderate associations with existing urban fabric</p> <p>D = Location where built development will only form some limited associations with the existing urban fabric due to intervening features</p> <p>E = Location where development will be isolated from and not form any relationship with existing urban fabric</p>	Primary (1.5x)	Considers the relationship of the Parcel to the existing urban form. The intention it is to understand the relationship with the existing urban fabric of the settlements. Consideration is also given to the extent of openness of the urban fringe, and the density/scale of existing development, as well as location relative to settlement layout. This will also include existing levels of connectivity and potential for future connectivity.
	Prevention of settlement coalescence	<p>A = Development would not compromise any separation</p> <p>B = Development would have slight impact on separation</p> <p>C = Development would have moderate impact on separation</p> <p>D = Development would significantly compromise separation</p> <p>E = Development would cause complete coalescence</p>	Primary (1.5x)	Settlement in this sense was considered to be settlements that had developed from a core, over a period of time, as opposed to a single-age or opportunist development away from a main settlement edge.
Potential Landscape Features	Scope to mitigate the development	<p>A = Good scope to provide mitigation in the short to medium term in harmony with existing landscape pattern</p> <p>B = Good scope to provide mitigation in the medium term and in keeping with existing landscape pattern</p> <p>C = Moderate scope to provide mitigation in the medium term broadly in keeping with existing landscape pattern</p> <p>D = Limited scope to provide adequate mitigation in keeping with the existing landscape in the medium term</p> <p>E = Very limited scope to provide adequate mitigation in the medium to long term</p>	Primary (1.5x)	The ability of the landscape to provide effective mitigation that is not harmful. This is based on a number of factors including: scale; enclosure; pattern; type and maturity of the vegetation; movement; and visibility of the Parcel
Landscape Value	Strength of Character and Condition: Effect of development on the relative value attached to different landscapes	<p>A = -</p> <p>B = Landscape with initiatives promoting landscape enhancement</p> <p>C = Default position: Landscape with no positive or negative landscape-related designations</p> <p>D = Landscape with landscape-related designation(s) of local or regional importance</p> <p>E = Landscape with landscape-related designation(s) of national importance</p>	Secondary (1x)	

Landscape Capacity Analysis form

Parcel No.: 1a

Settlement: Witham

Landscape Setting Area: W1

Surveyor: IJ/LH

Date surveyed: 12/02/2015

Parcel Description

A gently sloping arable Parcel located next to the western edge of Witham in the south-east of Landscape Setting Area W1. The northern boundary is Blunts Hall Road, a protected lane with a rural character. The vegetated edge of the London to Colchester railway line marks the south boundary. To the east the Parcel wraps around the moated grounds of Blunts Hall Farm, including a Grade II listed building and scheduled monument. The western boundary separates it from the more enclosed 1e and is marked by a fragmented hedgerow with intermittent groups of mature trees. The landform falls north-east towards the town and the River Brain.

The Parcel comprises medium-scale arable fields divided by fragmented low clipped hedgerows. Farm access tracks run alongside the hedgerows. There are occasional mature trees along the boundary lines. On the eastern boundary there is a dense band of trees including conifers providing dense enclosure to the site of Blunts Hall.

A public footpath is located on the eastern edge of the Parcel beside the moated site of Blunts Hall. This provides views across the eastern fields. Public views are also available across parts of the Parcel from Blunts Hall Road and the railway line. Low hedgerows surrounding the Parcel and gently sloping landform allow relatively open views. A residential property located immediately adjacent to the north-east corner of the Parcel has views. Views from other properties to the east surrounding Blunts Hall are generally screened by tall vegetation. Residential development in Witham to the south of the railway line can be glimpsed in views from the Parcel. These properties would have filtered views to the farmland through vegetation.

The Parcel has some moderate visual connections with properties to the rear Blunts Hall on the western settlement fringe of Witham. However, the railway line forms a strong physical boundary preventing associations with existing development to the south-east. Despite the presence of the railway line and glimpsed views to surrounding residential development, the Parcel has a rural character and is relatively tranquil.

Strength of character/condition			
Strength of character	Weak	Moderate	Strong
S1/ Impact of landform	Insignificant	Apparent	Dominant/Prominent
S2/ Impact of landcover *	Insignificant	Apparent	Dominant/Prominent
S3/ Historic pattern *	Insignificant	Apparent	Dominant/Prominent
S4/ Tranquillity	Discordant	Moderate	Tranquil
S5/ Distinctiveness /rarity	Frequent	Unusual	Unique/rare
S6/ Visual unity	Incoherent	Coherent	Unified
Totals * Prime character if a tie		Moderate	
Condition	Poor	Moderate	Good
C1/ Landcover change	Widespread	Localised	Insignificant
C2/ Age structure of tree cover *	Over mature	Mature or young	Mixed
C3/ Extent of semi-natural habitat survival *	Relic	Scattered	Widespread/linked
C4/ Management of semi-natural habitats	Poor	Not obvious	Good
C5/ Survival of cultural pattern (fields and hedges)	Declining/relic	Interrupted	Intact
C6/ Impact of development	High	Moderate	Low
Totals * Prime condition if a tie		Moderate	

Strength of character/condition:

Improve and Conserve

Capacity analysis

Criteria	Importance	A=5	B=4	C=3	D=2	E=1	Total
1/ Landscape features							
Slope analysis	Primary (x1.5)			✓			4.5
Vegetation enclosure	Primary (x1.5)				✓		3
Complexity / scale	Secondary (x1)			✓			3
Condition	Secondary (x1)			✓			3
Sub total							13.5
2/ Visual features							
Openness to public view	Secondary (x1)				✓		2
Openness to private view	Secondary (x1)			✓			3
Relationship with existing urban conurbation	Primary (x1.5)			✓			4.5
Prevention of coalescence	Primary (x1.5)	✓					7.5
Scope to mitigate the development	Primary (x1.5)			✓			4.5
Sub total							21.5
3/ Landscape value							
Strength of character and condition	Secondary (x1)			✓			3
Sub total							3
Overall capacity profile (1/ + 2/+ 3/) = 38							

Overall Capacity:

Medium-Low

Landscape Capacity Analysis form

Parcel No.: 1b

Settlement: Witham

Landscape Setting Area: W1

Surveyor: IJ/LH

Date surveyed: 12/02/2015

Parcel Description

The Parcel is located adjacent to the western edge of Witham. Residential development forms much of the Parcel's east boundary. The boundary consists of private rear gardens, post and wire boundary fencing with standard trees along Humber Road, and some scrubby hedgerow with trees. The southern portion of the east boundary is a PRoW footpath adjacent to an existing sports ground. Terling Road, which connects Witham and Terling, forms the Parcel's north boundary, and is set at a slightly lower level. Blunts Hall Road, which links Dancing Dicks Farm with Witham and Terling Road, forms the south boundaries respectively. There is a low clipped hedge along this road. The western boundary is marked by a track lined by a hedgerow and Lombardy poplars.

The Parcel comprises four medium-large scale arable fields gently sloping down to a stream running west to east across the Parcel, as well as gradually rising to the west. There are internal hedgerows with occasional trees and stream side vegetation, including poplars. In addition to the hedgerows, there is a small area of woodland extending from the western boundary. Despite the vegetation internally and on the south and west boundaries, the scale of the fields give the Parcel an open character.

Publicly accessible views of the Parcel are from Blunts Hall Road, Terling Road, and from portions of the eastern boundary where Humber Road and the sports ground are adjacent to the Parcel. Distant views can also be gained from Dancing Dicks Lane to the west. A clipped hedge along Blunts Hall Road filter may filter some low views into the Parcel during the summer, but in winter views are largely unobscured. From Terling Road the topography obscures views to the lower elevations of the Parcel, including the stream and fields adjacent to it. Private views of the site may be gained from housing on Humber Road and from Blunts Hall Farm Cottage on Blunts Hall Road. Views from Powers Hall close to the Parcel's north-west corner are obscured by topography and vegetation. Oblique views may be gained from houses further east on Blunts Hall Road, but these would be filtered by vegetation.

Strength of character/condition			
Strength of character	Weak	Moderate	Strong
S1/ Impact of landform	Insignificant	Apparent	Dominant/Prominent
S2/ Impact of landcover *	Insignificant	Apparent	Dominant/Prominent
S3/ Historic pattern *	Insignificant	Apparent	Dominant/Prominent
S4/ Tranquillity	Discordant	Moderate	Tranquil
S5/ Distinctiveness /rarity	Frequent	Unusual	Unique/rare
S6/ Visual unity	Incoherent	Coherent	Unified
Totals * Prime character if a tie		Moderate	
Condition	Poor	Moderate	Good
C1/ Landcover change	Widespread	Localised	Insignificant
C2/ Age structure of tree cover *	Over mature	Mature or young	Mixed
C3/ Extent of semi-natural habitat survival *	Relic	Scattered	Widespread/linked
C4/ Management of semi-natural habitats	Poor	Not obvious	Good
C5/ Survival of cultural pattern (fields and hedges)	Declining/relic	Interrupted	Intact
C6/ Impact of development	High	Moderate	Low
Totals * Prime condition if a tie		Moderate	

Strength of character/condition:	Improve and Conserve
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Capacity analysis							
Criteria	Importance	A=5	B=4	C=3	D=2	E=1	Total
1/ Landscape features							
Slope analysis	Primary (x1.5)			✓			4.5
Vegetation enclosure	Primary (x1.5)			✓			4.5
Complexity / scale	Secondary (x1)			✓			3
Condition	Secondary (x1)			✓			3
Sub total							15
2/ Visual features							
Openness to public view	Secondary (x1)				✓		2
Openness to private view	Secondary (x1)				✓		2
Relationship with existing urban conurbation	Primary (x1.5)	✓					7.5
Prevention of coalescence	Primary (x1.5)	✓					7.5
Scope to mitigate the development	Primary (x1.5)			✓			4.5
Sub total							23.5
3/ Landscape value							
Strength of character and condition	Secondary (x1)			✓			3
Sub total							3
Overall capacity profile (1/ + 2/+ 3/) = 41.5							

Overall Capacity:	Medium
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Guidelines for development and mitigation measures

- New edge to improve settlement boundary interface with the adjacent landscape
- Development should be located in the lower valley slopes adjacent to Humber Road to limit the visibility from the wider landscape beyond
- A framework of new hedgerow and tree planting on the western fringes of the Parcel to reinforce the local landscape character and provide an additional layer of visual screening in views from the west.
- Improve the existing limited footpath network with new public rights of way that create connections between the residential fringes of the town and the adjacent rural landscape.

Landscape Capacity Analysis form

Parcel No.: 1c

Settlement: Witham

Landscape Setting Area: W1

Surveyor: IJ/LH

Date surveyed: 12/02/2015

Parcel Description

The Parcel is located to the west of Witham and centrally to the northern half of Landscape Setting Area W1. Minor roads form two of the Parcel's boundaries with Dancing Dick's Lane to the west and Blunts Hall Road to the south. Both of these are protected lanes. The northern and eastern boundaries are defined by vegetation with a row of poplars to part of the eastern boundary and a fragmented row of trees and hedgerow to the north.

The Parcel is set on gently sloping land on the broad valley sides of a minor tributary valley of the River Brain. The River Brain runs through the centre of Witham. The northern and southern fields within the Parcel are set on the facing sides of the valley. The fall of the side slope is slightly gentler to the southern side. The Parcel is slightly elevated from the western edge of Witham due to the wider fall of the landscape in an easterly direction towards the River Brain.

The Parcel comprises three arable fields. Wheeler's Farm and cottages are located within the southern field. Perimeter vegetation and internal field boundaries are generally in a poor condition. There are small stretches of fragmented hedgerows and many boundaries are open with only occasional trees.

There are no public rights of way through the Parcel. There are views to parts of the Parcel from the rural lanes on the south and western boundaries. Despite the open nature of the farmland, views to the urban edge of Witham are limited due to intervening landform and vegetation to the east. The protected lanes are quiet and the Parcels rural character is isolated from the urban fabric of the town.

Strength of character/condition			
Strength of character	Weak	Moderate	Strong
S1/ Impact of landform	Insignificant	Apparent	Dominant/Prominent
S2/ Impact of landcover *	Insignificant	Apparent	Dominant/Prominent
S3/ Historic pattern *	Insignificant	Apparent	Dominant/Prominent
S4/ Tranquillity	Discordant	Moderate	Tranquil
S5/ Distinctiveness /rarity	Frequent	Unusual	Unique/rare
S6/ Visual unity	Incoherent	Coherent	Unified
Totals * Prime character if a tie		Moderate	
Condition	Poor	Moderate	Good
C1/ Landcover change	Widespread	Localised	Insignificant
C2/ Age structure of tree cover *	Over mature	Mature or young	Mixed
C3/ Extent of semi-natural habitat survival *	Relic	Scattered	Widespread/linked
C4/ Management of semi-natural habitats	Poor	Not obvious	Good
C5/ Survival of cultural pattern (fields and hedges)	Declining/relic	Interrupted	Intact
C6/ Impact of development	High	Moderate	Low
Totals * Prime condition if a tie	Poor		

Strength of character/condition:	Improve and Restore
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Capacity analysis

Criteria	Importance	A=5	B=4	C=3	D=2	E=1	Total
1/ Landscape features							
Slope analysis	Primary (x1.5)			✓			4.5
Vegetation enclosure	Primary (x1.5)				✓		3
Complexity / scale	Secondary (x1)			✓			3
Condition	Secondary (x1)		✓				4
Sub total							14.5
2/ Visual features							
Openness to public view	Secondary (x1)			✓			3
Openness to private view	Secondary (x1)		✓				4
Relationship with existing urban conurbation	Primary (x1.5)					✓	1.5
Prevention of coalescence	Primary (x1.5)	✓					7.5
Scope to mitigate the development	Primary (x1.5)				✓		3
Sub total							19
3/ Landscape value							
Strength of character and condition	Secondary (x1)			✓			3
Sub total							3
Overall capacity profile (1/ + 2/+ 3/) = 36.5							

Overall Capacity:

Medium-Low

Landscape Capacity Analysis form

Parcel No.: 1d

Settlement: Witham

Landscape Setting Area: W1

Surveyor: IJ/LH

Date surveyed: 12/02/2015

Parcel Description

The Parcel is located to the west of Witham, some 540m west of the town's closest point of residential properties on Yare Avenue and Humber Road. This Parcel, consisting of two medium-large arable fields, is generally flat and follows a ridge that is aligned west-east and rising to the east. It is elevated relative to fields to its east and south, and Terling Road, along its northern boundary, is set at a lower level. The Parcel is contained by tall hedgerows with trees on its north, east and south boundaries. Half of these date from pre-18th century enclosure and are in good condition. Western boundary, formed by Dancing Dicks Lane, is open to the lane except for some occasional trees and a young planted woodland in the Parcel's north-west corner at the junction with Peg Millar's Lane.

There is a private house located within the Parcel at its north-east corner. Oblique views road and filtered by hedgerows from Powers Hall. The elevated landform with brow edges within the Parcel mean there are no views of the site from the town. There is no public access within the Parcel. Despite the proximity of Terling Road and Dancing Dicks Lane, these are quiet roads and there is a strong sense of tranquillity within the Parcel, both in terms of noise and visually.

Strength of character/condition			
Strength of character	Weak	Moderate	Strong
S1/ Impact of landform	Insignificant	Apparent	Dominant/Prominent
S2 Impact of landcover *	Insignificant	Apparent	Dominant/Prominent
S3/ Historic pattern *	Insignificant	Apparent	Dominant/Prominent
S4/ Tranquillity	Discordant	Moderate	Tranquil
S5/ Distinctiveness /rarity	Frequent	Unusual	Unique/rare
S6/ Visual unity	Incoherent	Coherent	Unified
Totals * Prime character if a tie		Moderate	
Condition	Poor	Moderate	Good
C1/ Landcover change	Widespread	Localised	Insignificant
C2/ Age structure of tree cover *	Over mature	Mature or young	Mixed
C3/ Extent of semi-natural habitat survival *	Relic	Scattered	Widespread/linked
C4/ Management of semi-natural habitats	Poor	Not obvious	Good
C5/ Survival of cultural pattern (fields and hedges)	Declining/relic	Interrupted	Intact
C6/ Impact of development	High	Moderate	Low
Totals * Prime condition if a tie			Good

Strength of character/condition:

Conserve and Strengthen

Capacity analysis

Criteria	Importance	A=5	B=4	C=3	D=2	E=1	Total
1/ Landscape features							
Slope analysis	Primary (x1.5)	✓					7.5
Vegetation enclosure	Primary (x1.5)			✓			4.5
Complexity / scale	Secondary (x1)			✓			3
Condition	Secondary (x1)				✓		2
Sub total							17
2/ Visual features							
Openness to public view	Secondary (x1)		✓				4
Openness to private view	Secondary (x1)		✓				4
Relationship with existing urban conurbation	Primary (x1.5)					✓	1.5
Prevention of coalescence	Primary (x1.5)		✓				6
Scope to mitigate the development	Primary (x1.5)				✓		3
Sub total							18.5
3/ Landscape value							
Strength of character and condition	Secondary (x1)			✓			3
Sub total							3
Overall capacity profile (1/ + 2/+ 3/) = 38.5							

Overall Capacity:

Medium-Low

Landscape Capacity Analysis form

Parcel No.: 1e

Settlement: Witham

Landscape Setting Area: W1

Surveyor: IJ/LH

Date surveyed: 12/02/2015

Parcel Description

The Parcel is located to the western side of the Landscape Setting Area and centrally within the gap between Hatfield Peverel and Witham. The northern boundary is formed by a farm track providing access to Dancing Dicks Farm and cottages from Dancing Dicks Lane. The western and southern boundaries follow further farm tracks on the outer boundaries of the landscape setting area, providing access to Termitts Farm.

The Parcel is located on a minor ridge line to the west of Witham. The relatively flat Parcel of land is slightly elevated from the surrounding fields leading up to the settlement. The Parcel comprises medium scale interlocking arable fields with an irregular field pattern. Much of the area retains a pre-18th century field enclosure pattern.

There is moderate enclosure to the Parcel through vegetation. Small blocks of woodland beyond the Parcel boundary to the north-west corner and Job's Wood to the south-east provide stronger areas of visual containment. The remaining Parcel boundaries are a mix of fragmented low hedgerows and individual trees and some denser groups of mature trees.

Views into the Parcel from publically accessible locations are limited. There are no public rights of way through the Parcel and views from adjoining rural protected lanes are restricted through boundary vegetation. A small block of woodland located within the Parcel also prevents further views. Views from private properties are restricted to Wheeler's cottages and a small number of isolated farmhouses.

The Parcel is isolated from the existing urban fabric of Witham and has a strong rural and tranquil character. It is centrally located within open farmland providing separation between Witham and Hatfield Peverel.

Strength of character/condition			
Strength of character	Weak	Moderate	Strong
S1/ Impact of landform	Insignificant	Apparent	Dominant/Prominent
S2/ Impact of landcover *	Insignificant	Apparent	Dominant/Prominent
S3/ Historic pattern *	Insignificant	Apparent	Dominant/Prominent
S4/ Tranquillity	Discordant	Moderate	Tranquil
S5/ Distinctiveness /rarity	Frequent	Unusual	Unique/rare
S6/ Visual unity	Incoherent	Coherent	Unified
Totals * Prime character if a tie		Moderate	
Condition	Poor	Moderate	Good
C1/ Landcover change	Widespread	Localised	Insignificant
C2/ Age structure of tree cover *	Over mature	Mature or young	Mixed
C3/ Extent of semi-natural habitat survival *	Relic	Scattered	Widespread/linked
C4/ Management of semi-natural habitats	Poor	Not obvious	Good
C5/ Survival of cultural pattern (fields and hedges)	Declining/relic	Interrupted	Intact
C6/ Impact of development	High	Moderate	Low
Totals * Prime condition if a tie		Moderate	

Strength of character/condition:

Improve and Conserve

Capacity analysis

Criteria	Importance	A=5	B=4	C=3	D=2	E=1	Total
1/ Landscape features							
Slope analysis	Primary (x1.5)	✓					7.5
Vegetation enclosure	Primary (x1.5)			✓			4.5
Complexity / scale	Secondary (x1)			✓			3
Condition	Secondary (x1)			✓			3
Sub total							18
2/ Visual features							
Openness to public view	Secondary (x1)		✓				4
Openness to private view	Secondary (x1)		✓				4
Relationship with existing urban conurbation	Primary (x1.5)					✓	1.5
Prevention of coalescence	Primary (x1.5)			✓			4.5
Scope to mitigate the development	Primary (x1.5)				✓		3
Sub total							17
3/ Landscape value							
Strength of character and condition	Secondary (x1)			✓			3
Sub total							3
Overall capacity profile (1/ + 2/+ 3/) = 38							

Overall Capacity:

Medium-Low

Landscape Capacity Analysis form

Parcel No.: 1f

Settlement: Witham

Landscape Setting Area: W1

Surveyor: IJ/LH

Date surveyed: 12/02/2015

Parcel Description

This Parcel comprises a large-scale field with isolated clusters of vegetation associated with ponds and a smaller field delineated by hedgerows in the south-east quadrant. The Parcel is flat or gently sloped east towards Witham. It is isolated from other urban areas, being 1.2km west of Witham, 1.4km south-east of Terling and 1.5km north of Hatfield Peverel. However it is bounded to the north by Witham Road, by Dancing Dicks Lane to the east and the access track to Dancing Dicks Farm to the south. A portion of the west boundary is formed by a track leading to Whitelands Farm and Taylor's Farm. In addition to these farms, which are all close to the site but not within it, Fardings Farm, Dancing Dicks Cottages and Wheeler's Cottage are in the vicinity but outside of the Parcel. The field extends further west to Whitelands Farm, but the Parcel is limited in extent to a maximum 650m width.

There is a plantation of alder in a corner formed by a bend in Dancing Dicks Lane. The bulk of the public roads bordering the site are unvegetated or are lined with low scrubby plants and occasional trees. Public views of the Parcel can be gained from Dancing Dick's Lane and Witham Road. There are no public rights of way in the vicinity or through the site offering public access and views within elsewhere in or around the site. Farmhouses associated with the farms and Dancing Dicks Cottages have views into the Parcel. Distant views may be gained from Wheeler's cottage. However these are generally oblique and/or filtered by intermediary vegetation.

Strength of character/condition			
Strength of character	Weak	Moderate	Strong
S1/ Impact of landform	Insignificant	Apparent	Dominant/Prominent
S2 Impact of landcover *	Insignificant	Apparent	Dominant/Prominent
S3/ Historic pattern *	Insignificant	Apparent	Dominant/Prominent
S4/ Tranquillity	Discordant	Moderate	Tranquil
S5/ Distinctiveness /rarity	Frequent	Unusual	Unique/rare
S6/ Visual unity	Incoherent	Coherent	Unified
Totals * Prime character if a tie	Weak		
Condition	Poor	Moderate	Good
C1/ Landcover change	Widespread	Localised	Insignificant
C2/ Age structure of tree cover *	Over mature	Mature or young	Mixed
C3/ Extent of semi-natural habitat survival *	Relic	Scattered	Widespread/linked
C4/ Management of semi-natural habitats	Poor	Not obvious	Good
C5/ Survival of cultural pattern (fields and hedges)	Declining/relic	Interrupted	Intact
C6/ Impact of development	High	Moderate	Low
Totals * Prime condition if a tie			Good

Strength of character/condition:	Strengthen and Reinforce
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Capacity analysis

Criteria	Importance	A=5	B=4	C=3	D=2	E=1	Total
1/ Landscape features							
Slope analysis	Primary (x1.5)	✓					7.5
Vegetation enclosure	Primary (x1.5)				✓		3
Complexity / scale	Secondary (x1)		✓				4
Condition	Secondary (x1)		✓				4
Sub total							18.5
2/ Visual features							
Openness to public view	Secondary (x1)			✓			3
Openness to private view	Secondary (x1)		✓				4
Relationship with existing urban conurbation	Primary (x1.5)					✓	1.5
Prevention of coalescence	Primary (x1.5)			✓			4.5
Scope to mitigate the development	Primary (x1.5)				✓		3
Sub total							16
3/ Landscape value							
Strength of character and condition	Secondary (x1)			✓			3
Sub total							3
Overall capacity profile (1/ + 2/+ 3/) = 37.5							

Overall Capacity:

Low

Landscape Capacity Analysis form

Parcel No.: 1g

Settlement: Witham

Landscape Setting Area: W1

Surveyor: IJ/LH

Date surveyed: 12/02/2015

Parcel Description

The Parcel abuts the south-western development edge of Witham. The northern boundary is formed by the Chelmsford to London railway line and the southern boundary the B1389 (Hatfield Road). To the north-east the Parcel abuts residential development surrounding Allectus Way and Witham Lodge. The western field boundary divides the Parcel from the larger scale field associated with Mayfield plant nursery within Parcel 1h.

The Parcel is set on land gently descending in a north-east direction towards the River Brain. The Parcel comprises medium scale arable fields divided by fragmented blocks of medium height vegetation and individual trees. The northernmost field and central field retain a pre-18th century field enclosure pattern. Lodge Farm, accessed from the B1389 is the only existing built development within the Parcel. There are small ponds surrounding the farm.

The Parcel is generally well enclosed by boundary vegetation with some denser shelterbelts to the south-east corner and alongside the railway line. The boundaries to the south-western corner are lacking in vegetation with no hedgerow and scattered individual trees.

There is no public access through the Parcel. Public views of the Parcel are limited to passing views from vehicles on the B1389 and from users of the railway. Residential properties on Allectus Way and Witham Lodge face the Parcel and first floor windows would have views filtered by boundary vegetation. From the Parcel views of the adjoining residential development are partially enclosed by vegetation to rear gardens and alongside access roads. However, the Parcel has strong connections to the edge of Witham with transport links and development to two sides. To the south-east of the parcel, to the southern side of the B1389 there has been recent residential development expanding the western edge of the settlement. The area is strongly influenced by its proximity to the busy junction with the A12 which greatly reduces tranquillity levels.

Strength of character/condition			
Strength of character	Weak	Moderate	Strong
S1/ Impact of landform	Insignificant	Apparent	Dominant/Prominent
S2/ Impact of landcover *	Insignificant	Apparent	Dominant/Prominent
S3/ Historic pattern *	Insignificant	Apparent	Dominant/Prominent
S4/ Tranquillity	Discordant	Moderate	Tranquil
S5/ Distinctiveness /rarity	Frequent	Unusual	Unique/rare
S6/ Visual unity	Incoherent	Coherent	Unified
Totals * Prime character if a tie		Moderate	
Condition	Poor	Moderate	Good
C1/ Landcover change	Widespread	Localised	Insignificant
C2/ Age structure of tree cover *	Over mature	Mature or young	Mixed
C3/ Extent of semi-natural habitat survival *	Relic	Scattered	Widespread/linked
C4/ Management of semi-natural habitats	Poor	Not obvious	Good
C5/ Survival of cultural pattern (fields and hedges)	Declining/relic	Interrupted	Intact
C6/ Impact of development	High	Moderate	Low
Totals * Prime condition if a tie	Poor	Moderate	

Strength of character/condition:	Improve and Restore
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Capacity analysis							
Criteria	Importance	A=5	B=4	C=3	D=2	E=1	Total
1/ Landscape features							
Slope analysis	Primary (x1.5)			✓			4.5
Vegetation enclosure	Primary (x1.5)		✓				6
Complexity / scale	Secondary (x1)			✓			3
Condition	Secondary (x1)		✓				4
Sub total							17.5
2/ Visual features							
Openness to public view	Secondary (x1)			✓			3
Openness to private view	Secondary (x1)			✓			3
Relationship with existing urban conurbation	Primary (x1.5)	✓					7.5
Prevention of coalescence	Primary (x1.5)		✓				6
Scope to mitigate the development	Primary (x1.5)		✓				6
Sub total							25.5
3/ Landscape value							
Strength of character and condition	Secondary (x1)			✓			3
Sub total							3
Overall capacity profile (1/ + 2/+ 3/) = 46							

Overall Capacity:	Medium
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Guidelines for development and mitigation measures

- There is an opportunity to improve the impression of the south western fringes of Witham, with a framework of vegetation creating a strong edge between the farmland alongside the A12 and rail corridor and the linear arrangement of the existing settlement fringes along the Hatfield Road.
- Development should be at an appropriate scale and form to neighbouring residential development and the rural context of the settlement fringe. The linear band informal open space could be continued along north-western boundary creating a continual buffer between the railway line and housing. The creation of green corridors could provide connections with wider public right of way network to the south creating links between the extended settlement fringe and the wider countryside.
- The separation between Witham and Hatfield Peverel should be maintained and defined through strong boundary vegetation to the south-west. This would also provide a definite edge to development and boundary with the surrounding countryside.

Landscape Capacity Analysis form

Parcel No.: 1h

Settlement: Witham

Landscape Setting Area: W1

Surveyor: IJ/LH

Date surveyed: 12/02/2015

Parcel Description

The Parcel is located to the south-west of Witham and abuts the A12/B1389 road junction to the south-east. The Parcel extends south-west to the boundary of the Landscape Setting Area. To the north-west is the vegetated path of the London to Colchester railway line which provides visual containment to the Parcel in views from the north. The north-eastern boundary is formed by an intermittent row of trees to the south and a hedgerow with trees to the north. This divides the Parcel from 1g, which contains an interlocking field structure partly retaining pre-18th century enclosures and abuts the settlement fringe. The landform gently slopes to the north-east towards the River Brain which dissects the centre of Witham.

The Parcel comprises a single arable field, with a small cluster of buildings at Wood End Farm. Mayfield Nursery is located to the south of the Parcel. There are tall bands of vegetation to parts of the south-west boundary, running parallel to the access track to Wood End Farm and along the boundary to the nursery. This includes lines of tall conifer trees. The tranquillity of the Parcel is largely reduced by the busy road junction and noise from the A12.

There is no public access into the Parcel and views are restricted to partial, filtered views from adjoining roads. Views from the railway line are screened by dense embankment planting. Views from houses along Allectus Way and Witham Lodge to the north-east filtered by staggered intervening hedgerows to field boundaries in Parcel 1g.

There has been recent residential development to the east of the Parcel below Hatfield Road. The Parcel has minor connections with this and the garage in addition to the vehicular links with the settlement fringe. The Parcel is located within arable farmland that provides separation between Witham and Hatfield Peverel. The visual connections with Hatfield Peverel are reduced by intervening landform and boundary vegetation. There is limited sense of arrival on approach to the town and strength of landscape character in this Parcel is relatively weak.

Strength of character/condition			
Strength of character	Weak	Moderate	Strong
S1/ Impact of landform	Insignificant	Apparent	Dominant/Prominent
S2 Impact of landcover *	Insignificant	Apparent	Dominant/Prominent
S3/ Historic pattern *	Insignificant	Apparent	Dominant/Prominent
S4/ Tranquillity	Discordant	Moderate	Tranquil
S5/ Distinctiveness /rarity	Frequent	Unusual	Unique/rare
S6/ Visual unity	Incoherent	Coherent	Unified
Totals * Prime character if a tie	Weak		
Condition	Poor	Moderate	Good
C1/ Landcover change	Widespread	Localised	Insignificant
C2/ Age structure of tree cover *	Over mature	Mature or young	Mixed
C3/ Extent of semi-natural habitat survival *	Relic	Scattered	Widespread/linked
C4/ Management of semi-natural habitats	Poor	Not obvious	Good
C5/ Survival of cultural pattern (fields and hedges)	Declining/relic	Interrupted	Intact
C6/ Impact of development	High	Moderate	Low
Totals * Prime condition if a tie		Moderate	

Strength of character/condition:	Improve and Reinforce
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Capacity analysis							
Criteria	Importance	A=5	B=4	C=3	D=2	E=1	Total
1/ Landscape features							
Slope analysis	Primary (x1.5)			✓			4.5
Vegetation enclosure	Primary (x1.5)		✓				6
Complexity / scale	Secondary (x1)			✓			3
Condition	Secondary (x1)		✓				4
Sub total							17.5
2/ Visual features							
Openness to public view	Secondary (x1)			✓			3
Openness to private view	Secondary (x1)		✓				4
Relationship with existing urban conurbation	Primary (x1.5)				✓		3
Prevention of coalescence	Primary (x1.5)			✓			4.5
Scope to mitigate the development	Primary (x1.5)		✓				6
Sub total							20.5
3/ Landscape value							
Strength of character and condition	Secondary (x1)			✓			3
Sub total							3
Overall capacity profile (1/ + 2/+ 3/) = 41							

Overall Capacity:	Medium
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Guidelines for development and mitigation measures

- There is an opportunity to improve the impression of the south western fringes of Witham, with a framework of vegetation creating a strong edge between the farmland alongside the A12 and rail corridor and the linear arrangement of the existing settlement fringes along the Hatfield Road.
- Development should be at an appropriate scale and form to neighbouring residential development and the rural context of the settlement fringe. The linear band informal open space could be continued along north-western boundary creating a continual buffer between the railway line and housing. Opportunities to connect the residential areas with the wider landscape could also be taken by improving the public right of way network and creating green corridors.
- The separation between Witham and Hatfield Peverel should be maintained and defined through preserving and enhancing the boundary vegetation to the south-west. This would also provide a definite edge to development and boundary with the surrounding countryside.
- Development in this location should be treated as a gateway to Witham providing a well-integrated settlement edge and enhancing the local landscape character and the setting of the south-western settlement fringe.
- Buffer planting should be provided to the south to reduce the impact of the busy B1389/A12 road junction.

Landscape Capacity Analysis form

Parcel No.: 2a

Settlement: Witham

Landscape Setting Area: W2

Surveyor: IJ/LH

Date surveyed: 17/02/2015

Parcel Description

The Parcel is located adjacent to the north-west edge of Witham. The eastern boundary is formed by Faulkbourne Road and the southern boundary by Terling Road, a Protected Lane. To the west of the Parcel are agricultural buildings and residential properties associated with Powers Hall, a small block of woodland, and a reservoir. The reservoir is set on elevated land compared to the Parcel with a row of solar panels to its northern boundary.

The Parcel is set on the gently sloping valley sides of the River Brain. There is also a localised valley to the centre of the Parcel associated with Devil's Pit and a stream to the opposite side of Faulkbourne Road that feeds into the River Brain. The Parcel is formed of medium scale arable fields with a linear pattern to fields to the north. There are two Grade II listed buildings at Powers Hall.

The vegetation enclosure to the Parcel is inconsistent. A recently planted tree belt provides relatively dense enclosure to the Parcel from the north. Alongside Faulkbourne road is a mix of low clipped hedgerows and intermittent mature trees. The Parcel is more open on the southern boundary with Terling Road where only occasional individual trees are present. Internal field boundaries are fragmented hedgerows or without vegetation.

There is no public access within the Parcel. However, there are moderately open views from Terling Road and parts of Faulkbourne Road. Residential properties to the east and a small number to the south have partial views across the farmland. These are partly contained with planting belts enclosing the residential development. There is a vegetated ditch which forms a strong intervening feature between the Parcel and development to the south.

The Parcel has some close visual associations with the developed edge of Witham and some other areas where existing residential development is well enclosed by vegetation and intervening bands of green space. The northern extent of the Parcel has reduced connections to the edge of the settlement.

Strength of character/condition			
Strength of character	Weak	Moderate	Strong
S1/ Impact of landform	Insignificant	Apparent	Dominant/Prominent
S2/ Impact of landcover *	Insignificant	Apparent	Dominant/Prominent
S3/ Historic pattern *	Insignificant	Apparent	Dominant/Prominent
S4/ Tranquillity	Discordant	Moderate	Tranquil
S5/ Distinctiveness /rarity	Frequent	Unusual	Unique/rare
S6/ Visual unity	Incoherent	Coherent	Unified
Totals * Prime character if a tie		Moderate	
Condition	Poor	Moderate	Good
C1/ Landcover change	Widespread	Localised	Insignificant
C2/ Age structure of tree cover *	Over mature	Mature or young	Mixed
C3/ Extent of semi-natural habitat survival *	Relic	Scattered	Widespread/linked
C4/ Management of semi-natural habitats	Poor	Not obvious	Good
C5/ Survival of cultural pattern (fields and hedges)	Declining/relic	Interrupted	Intact
C6/ Impact of development	High	Moderate	Low
Totals * Prime condition if a tie		Moderate	

Strength of character/condition:	Improve and Conserve
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Capacity analysis							
Criteria	Importance	A=5	B=4	C=3	D=2	E=1	Total
1/ Landscape features							
Slope analysis	Primary (x1.5)			✓			4.5
Vegetation enclosure	Primary (x1.5)			✓			4.5
Complexity / scale	Secondary (x1)			✓			3
Condition	Secondary (x1)			✓			3
Sub total							15
2/ Visual features							
Openness to public view	Secondary (x1)				✓		2
Openness to private view	Secondary (x1)			✓			3
Relationship with existing urban conurbation	Primary (x1.5)		✓				6
Prevention of coalescence	Primary (x1.5)	✓					7.5
Scope to mitigate the development	Primary (x1.5)			✓			4.5
Sub total							23
3/ Landscape value							
Strength of character and condition	Secondary (x1)			✓			3
Sub total							3
Overall capacity profile (1/ + 2/+ 3/) = 41							

Overall Capacity:	Medium
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Guidelines for development and mitigation measures

- Development should be concentrated in the south-eastern corner of the Parcel, rather than on the upper valley slopes away from the settlement, to reflect the existing pattern of development and provide connections with the existing urban fabric.
- A framework of new planting would be required, to reduce the visual impact on the rear gardens of existing properties, absorb such development into the adjacent countryside, and provide an attractive edge to the settlement on the approach from White Notley in the north.
- Hedge and tree planting would be in keeping with local landscape character, and provide a definition between the settlement fringes and the tranquil rural landscape to the west.
- Potential to extend green corridor associated with the stream to the east into the Parcel along Devil's Pit to contain any proposed development, continue the attractive edge on the approach to Witham, and avoid further encroachment into the rural setting to the settlement.

Landscape Capacity Analysis form

Parcel No.: 2b

Settlement: Witham

Landscape Setting Area: W2

Surveyor: IJ/LH

Date surveyed: 17/02/2015

Parcel Description

Linear Parcel of land located to the north-west of Witham and to the west of Faulkbourne Road which forms the eastern boundary. The Parcel is smaller in scale and slightly elevated from Parcel 2a to the south. The northern field boundary follows the northern boundary of the Landscape Setting area. The Parcel is set on the gently sloping valley sides of the River Brain and comprises a single arable field.

The Parcel has continuous enclosure by vegetation. There are dense tree belts to the southern and northern boundaries and low to medium height clipped hedgerows to the east and west. Both are maintained in a good condition. To the east of the Parcel is historical development with The Old Rectory and two listed buildings at Warren Farm. The surrounding landscape to the north of these comprises the Faulkbourne Hall Registered Park and Garden.

Both private and public views of the Parcel are limited due to no public access and mature trees preventing the majority of views from the small amount of residential properties to the east. There are some views above the hedgerow from Faulkbourne Road, but remaining boundaries are enclosed and adjoin agricultural land with no public access.

The Parcel is generally isolated from the built edge of Witham. Although there are a small number of properties to the east, these have a rural context and are not associated with the main urban fabric of the settlement. The Parcel is generally well contained and has potential access opportunities from Faulkbourne Road. However, the isolation from Witham reduces the scope to successfully mitigate development within the Parcel.

Strength of character/condition			
Strength of character	Weak	Moderate	Strong
S1/ Impact of landform	Insignificant	Apparent	Dominant/Prominent
S2/ Impact of landcover *	Insignificant	Apparent	Dominant/Prominent
S3/ Historic pattern *	Insignificant	Apparent	Dominant/Prominent
S4/ Tranquillity	Discordant	Moderate	Tranquil
S5/ Distinctiveness /rarity	Frequent	Unusual	Unique/rare
S6/ Visual unity	Incoherent	Coherent	Unified
Totals * Prime character if a tie		Moderate	
Condition	Poor	Moderate	Good
C1/ Landcover change	Widespread	Localised	Insignificant
C2/ Age structure of tree cover *	Over mature	Mature or young	Mixed
C3/ Extent of semi-natural habitat survival *	Relic	Scattered	Widespread/linked
C4/ Management of semi-natural habitats	Poor	Not obvious	Good
C5/ Survival of cultural pattern (fields and hedges)	Declining/relic	Interrupted	Intact
C6/ Impact of development	High	Moderate	Low
Totals * Prime condition if a tie			Good

Strength of character/condition:	Conserve and Strengthen
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Capacity analysis

Criteria	Importance	A=5	B=4	C=3	D=2	E=1	Total
1/ Landscape features							
Slope analysis	Primary (x1.5)			✓			4.5
Vegetation enclosure	Primary (x1.5)	✓					7.5
Complexity / scale	Secondary (x1)				✓		2
Condition	Secondary (x1)				✓		2
Sub total							16
2/ Visual features							
Openness to public view	Secondary (x1)			✓			3
Openness to private view	Secondary (x1)			✓			3
Relationship with existing urban conurbation	Primary (x1.5)				✓		3
Prevention of coalescence	Primary (x1.5)	✓					7.5
Scope to mitigate the development	Primary (x1.5)			✓			4.5
Sub total							21.0
3/ Landscape value							
Strength of character and condition	Secondary (x1)			✓			3
Sub total							3
Overall capacity profile (1/ + 2/+ 3/) = 40							

Overall Capacity:

Medium-Low

Landscape Capacity Analysis form

Parcel No.: 2c

Settlement: Witham

Landscape Setting Area: W2

Surveyor: IJ/LH

Date surveyed: 17/02/2015

Parcel Description

The Parcel is located to the north of Witham. It is composed of the arable fields surrounding The Old Rectory and Warren Farm, including its Grade II listed cottage and barns. The northern two fields, as part of the Faulkbourne Hall estate, are encompassed by a 'Registered Park and Garden' non-statutory designation.

The Parcel slopes towards the Brain River. The Brain valley bottom separates the Parcel from the western facing portion of Witham. The Parcel is separated, both physically and visually, from the Chipping Hill residential area of Witham on the western portion of the settlement's north boundary by Parcel 2d. This comprises a 150-170m approx. band of hedgerow, rough grassland with poplars following a stream and a young belt of woodland). The stream is located along a depression that acts as an intervening feature.

The fields are divided by a mix of boundary types, including a track which does not visually separate the two southern fields (despite the western of these fields identified as pre-18th century enclosure), hedgerow, a track lined by an avenue of planted trees, and semi-natural tree and shrub lined drains and stream.

Strength of character/condition			
Strength of character	Weak	Moderate	Strong
S1/ Impact of landform	Insignificant	Apparent	Dominant/Prominent
S2 Impact of landcover *	Insignificant	Apparent	Dominant/Prominent
S3/ Historic pattern *	Insignificant	Apparent	Dominant/Prominent
S4/ Tranquillity	Discordant	Moderate	Tranquil
S5/ Distinctiveness /rarity	Frequent	Unusual	Unique/rare
S6/ Visual unity	Incoherent	Coherent	Unified
Totals * Prime character if a tie		Moderate	
Condition	Poor	Moderate	Good
C1/ Landcover change	Widespread	Localised	Insignificant
C2/ Age structure of tree cover *	Over mature	Mature or young	Mixed
C3/ Extent of semi-natural habitat survival *	Relic	Scattered	Widespread/linked
C4/ Management of semi-natural habitats	Poor	Not obvious	Good
C5/ Survival of cultural pattern (fields and hedges)	Declining/relic	Interrupted	Intact
C6/ Impact of development	High	Moderate	Low
Totals * Prime condition if a tie		Moderate	

Strength of character/condition:	Improve and Conserve
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Capacity analysis

Criteria	Importance	A=5	B=4	C=3	D=2	E=1	Total
1/ Landscape features							
Slope analysis	Primary (x1.5)			✓			4.5
Vegetation enclosure	Primary (x1.5)	✓					7.5
Complexity / scale	Secondary (x1)				✓		2
Condition	Secondary (x1)				✓		2
Sub total							16
2/ Visual features							
Openness to public view	Secondary (x1)			✓			3
Openness to private view	Secondary (x1)			✓			3
Relationship with existing urban conurbation	Primary (x1.5)				✓		3
Prevention of coalescence	Primary (x1.5)	✓					7.5
Scope to mitigate the development	Primary (x1.5)			✓			4.5
Sub total							21
3/ Landscape value							
Strength of character and condition	Secondary (x1)					✓	1
Sub total							1
Overall capacity profile (1/ + 2/+ 3/) = 38							

Overall Capacity:

Medium-Low

Landscape Capacity Analysis form

Parcel No.: 2d

Settlement: Witham

Landscape Setting Area: W2

Surveyor: IJ/LH

Date surveyed: 17/02/2015

Parcel Description

A Parcel configured around two 'arms': a north-south orientated area of land following the floodplain of the River Brain which flows through the Parcel, and a west-east orientated portion around a tributary stream running east towards the River Brain at the southern end of the Parcel. The area associated with the river Brain consists of scrub and grass with trees on relatively flat land. The 'arm' along the tributary stream is a sloping area of rough grass and trees and shrubs associated with the stream. It also includes a band of recently planted woodland on the north side of the stream. Residential property boundaries on the northern edge of Witham forms the southern boundary of this parcel. Generally these are well vegetated and, along with the grassland and woodland planting of this parcel, they form a visual and spatial buffer between the built development of Witham and farmhouses set within arable land to the north, in Parcel 2c. Boundary planting filters most ground floor views from private viewpoints to the Parcel.

A portion of the river Brain floodplain, including within this parcel's south-east corner, is designated as a Local Wildlife Site. This designation, and the flood plain area, extends southwards into and through Witham.

There is public access through the Parcel via a footpath which cross the west-east orientate portion, connecting Honeysuckle Way Falkenbourne Road via the entrance to Warren Farm. Public viewpoints from here have some views but vegetation limits their extents. A public right of way exits the housing in Ebenezer Close at the south-east corner of the parcel and provides public access south along the River Brain valley bottom. Vegetation prevents views further into the Parcel from this point. There are no public rights of way leading upstream or linking to other rights of way that would provide access to other areas north of the Parcel.

Strength of character/condition			
Strength of character	Weak	Moderate	Strong
S1/ Impact of landform	Insignificant	Apparent	Dominant/Prominent
S2 Impact of landcover *	Insignificant	Apparent	Dominant/Prominent
S3/ Historic pattern *	Insignificant	Apparent	Dominant/Prominent
S4/ Tranquillity	Discordant	Moderate	Tranquil
S5/ Distinctiveness /rarity	Frequent	Unusual	Unique/rare
S6/ Visual unity	Incoherent	Coherent	Unified
Totals * Prime character if a tie			Strong
Condition	Poor	Moderate	Good
C1/ Landcover change	Widespread	Localised	Insignificant
C2/ Age structure of tree cover *	Over mature	Mature or young	Mixed
C3/ Extent of semi-natural habitat survival *	Relic	Scattered	Widespread/linked
C4/ Management of semi-natural habitats	Poor	Not obvious	Good
C5/ Survival of cultural pattern (fields and hedges)	Declining/relic	Interrupted	Intact
C6/ Impact of development	High	Moderate	Low
Totals * Prime condition if a tie			Good

Strength of character/condition:	Safeguard and Manage
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Capacity analysis

Criteria	Importance	A=5	B=4	C=3	D=2	E=1	Total
1/ Landscape features							
Slope analysis	Primary (x1.5)				✓		3
Vegetation enclosure	Primary (x1.5)	✓					7.5
Complexity / scale	Secondary (x1)					✓	1
Condition	Secondary (x1)					✓	1
Sub total							12.5
2/ Visual features							
Openness to public view	Secondary (x1)			✓			3
Openness to private view	Secondary (x1)				✓		2
Relationship with existing urban conurbation	Primary (x1.5)		✓				6
Prevention of coalescence	Primary (x1.5)	✓					7.5
Scope to mitigate the development	Primary (x1.5)			✓			3
Sub total							23
3/ Landscape value							
Strength of character and condition	Secondary (x1)				✓		2
Sub total							2
Overall capacity profile (1/ + 2/+ 3/) = 37.5							

Overall Capacity:

Medium-Low

Landscape Capacity Analysis form

Parcel No.: 2e

Settlement: Witham

Landscape Setting Area: W2

Surveyor: IJ/LH

Date surveyed: 17/02/2015

Parcel Description

A Parcel located adjacent to the northern edge of Witham, consisting of two arable fields that are positioned approximately north-south of each other. As a parcel they are enclosed by vegetation: to the north by a woodland block, to the east by a tall hedgerow with the Braintree-Witham rail track behind it, to the south by private gardens and to the west by the river Brain and associated vegetation. In addition, there is a copse of trees along the edge of a drain running between the two fields perpendicular to the river Brain, which screens some of the views over the parcel.

The fields are sloping, generally rising eastwards away from the river Brain. There is also a sub-valley between the two fields where a drain runs towards the river Brain.

Views between the parcel and its surroundings are gained to the west of the parcel, although these are filtered by existing vegetation within the river's floodplain and recently planted woodland to the north of the Chipping Hill area of Witham. There are views to the east, between the parcel and the B1018 and the rail line, which are filtered by hedgerows along the rail line and low, trimmed hedgerows along the B1018.

The existing edge of Witham in this area is formed by the rear gardens adjacent to the parcel. The vegetation on these boundaries, in addition to the layers of vegetation along the road, rail, and river, mean views of the existing edge from the north, north-west or north-east are softened and not unattractive.

Strength of character/condition			
Strength of character	Weak	Moderate	Strong
S1/ Impact of landform	Insignificant	Apparent	Dominant/Prominent
S2 Impact of landcover *	Insignificant	Apparent	Dominant/Prominent
S3/ Historic pattern *	Insignificant	Apparent	Dominant/Prominent
S4/ Tranquillity	Discordant	Moderate	Tranquil
S5/ Distinctiveness /rarity	Frequent	Unusual	Unique/rare
S6/ Visual unity	Incoherent	Coherent	Unified
Totals * Prime character if a tie	Weak		
Condition	Poor	Moderate	Good
C1/ Landcover change	Widespread	Localised	Insignificant
C2/ Age structure of tree cover *	Over mature	Mature or young	Mixed
C3/ Extent of semi-natural habitat survival *	Relic	Scattered	Widespread/linked
C4/ Management of semi-natural habitats	Poor	Not obvious	Good
C5/ Survival of cultural pattern (fields and hedges)	Declining/relic	Interrupted	Intact
C6/ Impact of development	High	Moderate	Low
Totals * Prime condition if a tie		Moderate	

Strength of character/condition:	Improve and Reinforce
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Capacity analysis							
Criteria	Importance	A=5	B=4	C=3	D=2	E=1	Total
1/ Landscape features							
Slope analysis	Primary (x1.5)			✓			4.5
Vegetation enclosure	Primary (x1.5)		✓				6
Complexity / scale	Secondary (x1)			✓			3
Condition	Secondary (x1)			✓			3
Sub total							16.5
2/ Visual features							
Openness to public view	Secondary (x1)		✓				4
Openness to private view	Secondary (x1)		✓				4
Relationship with existing urban conurbation	Primary (x1.5)				✓		3
Prevention of coalescence	Primary (x1.5)	✓					7.5
Scope to mitigate the development	Primary (x1.5)			✓			4.5
Sub total							23
3/ Landscape value							
Strength of character and condition	Secondary (x1)			✓			3
Sub total							3
Overall capacity profile (1/ + 2/+ 3/) = 42.5							

Overall Capacity:	Medium
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Guidelines for development and mitigation measures

- Development proposals should be concentrated on the southern fringes of the Parcel, adjacent to the existing settlement edge where it would create a natural extension to the residential street at Longfields and Upper Acres.
- New planting should be located on the northern and southern edges of any new development to reduce the visual impact on existing properties and to integrate the development into the adjacent countryside and provide an attractive edge to the settlement on the approach from Tye Green and Hawbush Green in the north.

Landscape Capacity Analysis form

Parcel No.: 2f

Settlement: Witham

Landscape Setting Area: W2

Surveyor: IJ/LH

Date surveyed: 17/02/2015

Parcel Description

A narrow Parcel contained between two transport corridors with the B1018/ Crossing Road on the eastern boundary and the Witham to Braintree railway line on the western boundary. Road southern boundary adjoins the development edge on the north-western side of Witham and is formed by a fragmented line of hedgerows and close board fencing to the rear gardens of properties on Longfield. Road Parcel extends north to the edge of the Landscape Setting Area where there is no physical boundary but two linear blocks of woodland to the east and west mark the edge of the area in adjoining Parcels.

Road Parcel comprises gently rolling linear arable fields. There is narrow valley associated with a stream that feeds into the River Brain to the centre of the Parcel. There is a large single residential property, Road Pump House located centrally within the Parcel enclosed by small blocks of woodland. There are fragmented tree belts to both sides of the railway forming some visual enclosure to the Parcel from the west. Along Crossing Road are fragmented lengths of low hedgerow with some areas completely open to the road. There is no vegetation on the northern boundary and variable enclosure to the south.

Road Parcel is not publically accessible but views are available from the road and trains. From the B1018 there are views across the Parcel to more elevated farmland within Parcels 2c and 2b. There are views from the residential properties adjoining the southern boundary and oblique views from properties on Conrad Road to the north-east.

Road Parcel has minor associations with residential development on the approach to Witham to the south which follows a pattern of housing contained within the strip between Crossing Road and the railway line. However, the Parcel extends a long distance away from the edge of Witham and associated urban fabric, into open countryside.

Strength of character/condition			
Strength of character	Weak	Moderate	Strong
S1/ Impact of landform	Insignificant	Apparent	Dominant/ Prominent
S2/ Impact of landcover *	Insignificant	Apparent	Dominant/Prominent
S3/ Historic pattern *	Insignificant	Apparent	Dominant/Prominent
S4/ Tranquillity	Discordant	Moderate	Tranquil
S5/ Distinctiveness /rarity	Frequent	Unusual	Unique/rare
S6/ Visual unity	Incoherent	Coherent	Unified
Totals * Prime character if a tie		Moderate	
Condition	Poor	Moderate	Good
C1/ Landcover change	Widespread	Localised	Insignificant
C2/ Age structure of tree cover *	Over mature	Mature or young	Mixed
C3/ Extent of semi-natural habitat survival *	Relic	Scattered	Widespread/linked
C4/ Management of semi-natural habitats	Poor	Not obvious	Good
C5/ Survival of cultural pattern (fields and hedges)	Declining/relic	Interrupted	Intact
C6/ Impact of development	High	Moderate	Low
Totals * Prime condition if a tie		Moderate	

Strength of character/condition:	Improve and Conserve
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Capacity analysis

Criteria	Importance	A=5	B=4	C=3	D=2	E=1	Total
1/ Landscape features							
Slope analysis	Primary (x1.5)		✓				6
Vegetation enclosure	Primary (x1.5)			✓			4.5
Complexity / scale	Secondary (x1)			✓			3
Condition	Secondary (x1)			✓			3
Sub total							16.5
2/ Visual features							
Openness to public view	Secondary (x1)				✓		2
Openness to private view	Secondary (x1)			✓			3
Relationship with existing urban conurbation	Primary (x1.5)				✓		3
Prevention of coalescence	Primary (x1.5)	✓					7.5
Scope to mitigate the development	Primary (x1.5)			✓			4.5
Sub total							20
3/ Landscape value							
Strength of character and condition	Secondary (x1)			✓			3
Sub total							3
Overall capacity profile (1/ + 2/+ 3/) = 39.5							

Overall Capacity:

Medium-Low

Landscape Capacity Analysis form

Parcel No.: 3a

Settlement: Witham

Landscape Setting Area: W3

Surveyor: IJ/LH

Date surveyed: 17/02/2015

Parcel Description

Occupying a gently sloping landform adjacent to the north-west fringe of Witham, the Parcel comprises a single arable field. It is approximately rectangular in shape, orientated north-east to south-west. The parcel also includes an irregular shaped corner plot enclosed by vegetation at its south-east corner. It is immediately north-east of the B1018 (Cressing Road) and the landform generally slopes down towards this road. This south-western boundary allows open views from the road. The south-eastern boundary is a maintained hedgerow with trees in front of Conrad Road and housing accessed from this. Housing on the edge of this residential area have views to the parcel, with the hedge largely filtering ground floor views. The eastern boundary follows the west edge of an education complex and is a continuation of the vegetation along the southern boundary. To the north is a tall dense Leylandii hedge and track leading to Elm Hall Cottages which overlook the plot. A recently planted tree band (including poplars) continues the northern boundary line eastwards. This belt and vegetation along the track contain views towards the parcel from the north.

There are no public access points to the Parcel, but it has other strong connections with the settlement fringe and is largely contained in the wider landscape by built development and vegetation to the north-east and north-west.

Strength of character/condition			
Strength of character	Weak	Moderate	Strong
S1/ Impact of landform	Insignificant	Apparent	Dominant/Prominent
S2/ Impact of landcover *	Insignificant	Apparent	Dominant/Prominent
S3/ Historic pattern *	Insignificant	Apparent	Dominant/Prominent
S4/ Tranquillity	Discordant	Moderate	Tranquil
S5/ Distinctiveness /rarity	Frequent	Unusual	Unique/rare
S6/ Visual unity	Incoherent	Coherent	Unified
Totals * Prime character if a tie	Weak		
Condition	Poor	Moderate	Good
C1/ Landcover change	Widespread	Localised	Insignificant
C2/ Age structure of tree cover *	Over mature	Mature or young	Mixed
C3/ Extent of semi-natural habitat survival *	Relic	Scattered	Widespread/linked
C4/ Management of semi-natural habitats	Poor	Not obvious	Good
C5/ Survival of cultural pattern (fields and hedges)	Declining/relic	Interrupted	Intact
C6/ Impact of development	High	Moderate	Low
Totals * Prime condition if a tie		Moderate	

Strength of character/condition:	Improve and Reinforce
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Capacity analysis							
Criteria	Importance	A=5	B=4	C=3	D=2	E=1	Total
1/ Landscape features							
Slope analysis	Primary (x1.5)	✓					7.5
Vegetation enclosure	Primary (x1.5)		✓				6
Complexity / scale	Secondary (x1)			✓			3
Condition	Secondary (x1)		✓				4
Sub total							20.5
2/ Visual features							
Openness to public view	Secondary (x1)			✓			3
Openness to private view	Secondary (x1)				✓		2
Relationship with existing urban conurbation	Primary (x1.5)	✓					7.5
Prevention of coalescence	Primary (x1.5)	✓					7.5
Scope to mitigate the development	Primary (x1.5)		✓				6
Sub total							26
3/ Landscape value							
Strength of character and condition	Secondary (x1)			✓			3
Sub total							3
Overall capacity profile (1/ + 2/+ 3/) = 49.5							

Overall Capacity:	Medium-High
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Guidelines for development and mitigation measures

- Development should be at an appropriate scale and form to the adjoining settlement fringes.
- Development should incorporate vernacular features and characteristics present in existing areas of Witham.
- Mitigation planting should be used to improve the relatively abrupt edge to existing development in this area
- Integrate open space into development proposals and continue grass verges and open space reflecting patterns in existing housing areas

Landscape Capacity Analysis form

Parcel No.: 3b

Settlement: Witham

Landscape Setting Area: W3

Surveyor: IJ/LH

Date surveyed: 12/02/2015

Parcel Description

The Parcel is located to the north-western edge of Witham. The B1018 (Crossing Road) which links Witham to Braintree forms the western boundary. Part of the southern boundary follows an access track to Elm Hall Cottages and The Willows. The north of the Parcel extends to the edge of the Landscape Setting Area. The Parcel is set on a rolling landform that provides enclosure to parts of the Parcel. To the east of the Parcel is an elevated plateau that Parcel 3d is located on.

The Parcel comprises medium to large scale arable fields, partially enclosed by vegetation. There are blocks of woodland defining the northern boundary and recent tree belt planting and dense lines of conifers defining the southern boundary. There are low clipped hedges to the boundary with Crossing Road. The internal hedges and eastern boundary are formed of fragmented hedges with intermittent mature trees in a varied condition.

There is no public access through the Parcel but views are available from the relatively busy Crossing Road. Parts are visually contained by intervening landform and boundary vegetation. Views of the Parcel from private properties are limited to the houses on the southern boundary. The tree belt on the southern boundary prevents the majority of views from the extensive residential development in Witham to the south-east.

Despite the relatively close proximity to edge of Witham, the strong bands of vegetation to the south and undulating landform reduce the visual connections to the town. The Parcel has a strong rural character connected to the surrounding rolling arable farmland to the north.

Strength of character/condition			
Strength of character	Weak	Moderate	Strong
S1/ Impact of landform	Insignificant	Apparent	Dominant/ Prominent
S2/ Impact of landcover *	Insignificant	Apparent	Dominant/ Prominent
S3/ Historic pattern *	Insignificant	Apparent	Dominant/Prominent
S4/ Tranquillity	Discordant	Moderate	Tranquil
S5/ Distinctiveness /rarity	Frequent	Unusual	Unique/rare
S6/ Visual unity	Incoherent	Coherent	Unified
Totals * Prime character if a tie		Moderate	
Condition	Poor	Moderate	Good
C1/ Landcover change	Widespread	Localised	Insignificant
C2/ Age structure of tree cover *	Over mature	Mature or young	Mixed
C3/ Extent of semi-natural habitat survival *	Relic	Scattered	Widespread/linked
C4/ Management of semi-natural habitats	Poor	Not obvious	Good
C5/ Survival of cultural pattern (fields and hedges)	Declining/relic	Interrupted	Intact
C6/ Impact of development	High	Moderate	Low
Totals * Prime condition if a tie		Moderate	

Strength of character/condition:	Improve and Conserve
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Capacity analysis

Criteria	Importance	A=5	B=4	C=3	D=2	E=1	Total
1/ Landscape features							
Slope analysis	Primary (x1.5)		✓				6
Vegetation enclosure	Primary (x1.5)			✓			4.5
Complexity / scale	Secondary (x1)				✓		2
Condition	Secondary (x1)			✓			3
Sub total							15.5
2/ Visual features							
Openness to public view	Secondary (x1)			✓			3
Openness to private view	Secondary (x1)		✓				4
Relationship with existing urban conurbation	Primary (x1.5)				✓		3
Prevention of coalescence	Primary (x1.5)	✓					7.5
Scope to mitigate the development	Primary (x1.5)			✓			4.5
Sub total							20.5
3/ Landscape value							
Strength of character and condition	Secondary (x1)			✓			3
Sub total							3
Overall capacity profile (1/ + 2/+ 3/) = 40.5							

Overall Capacity:

Medium-Low

Landscape Capacity Analysis form

Parcel No.: 3c

Settlement: Witham

Landscape Setting Area: W3

Surveyor: IJ/LH

Date surveyed: 18/02/2015

Parcel Description

The Parcel is located on rolling land at the north-east corner of Witham. It encompasses land to the north and south of Rickstones Road. New Rickstones Academy forms the Parcel's western boundary. The Parcel extends eastwards to the edge of the Landscape Setting Area. Part of the southern boundary to the east is formed by Rickstones Road, with the remainder formed by the access track to Glebe Farm. The northern boundary follows an irregular pattern of field boundaries and implied boundaries relating to the small scale parts of fields with connections to development along Rickstones Road.

The north-eastern field shows pre-18th century field enclosure. There are scattered ponds located at field boundary junctions. The large scale, industrial style building of the New Rickstones Academy is a prominent feature in views from the wider area. The Parcel comprises small scale arable fields, interspersed with ribbon development along Rickstones Road. There is also a school playing field within the Parcel to the west, belonging to New Rickstones Academy. Fields are reasonable well enclosed by hedgerows with trees.

Views to houses and the prominent school provide associations with Witham's built form to the Parcel. There is a small, well enclosed field to south of Rickstones Road with access from Rectory Lane, that is open to views from Rickstones Farm located opposite. There are also views into the Parcel from residential properties on Rickstones Road. A number of public footpaths cross the Parcel including a route to the southern and eastern boundaries of the playing field and one along the eastern boundary of the Parcel. Public footpaths set back from the Parcel to the north also provide some of the area.

Development along Rickstones Road extends beyond the Landscape Setting Area to where it is considered Rivenhall, The Parcel also occupies farmland that is important in retaining the separation between Witham and Rivenhall.

Strength of character/condition			
Strength of character	Weak	Moderate	Strong
S1/ Impact of landform	Insignificant	Apparent	Dominant/Prominent
S2/ Impact of landcover *	Insignificant	Apparent	Dominant/Prominent
S3/ Historic pattern *	Insignificant	Apparent	Dominant/Prominent
S4/ Tranquillity	Discordant	Moderate	Tranquil
S5/ Distinctiveness /rarity	Frequent	Unusual	Unique/rare
S6/ Visual unity	Incoherent	Coherent	Unified
Totals * Prime character if a tie		Moderate	
Condition	Poor	Moderate	Good
C1/ Landcover change	Widespread	Localised	Insignificant
C2/ Age structure of tree cover *	Over mature	Mature or young	Mixed
C3/ Extent of semi-natural habitat survival *	Relic	Scattered	Widespread/linked
C4/ Management of semi-natural habitats	Poor	Not obvious	Good
C5/ Survival of cultural pattern (fields and hedges)	Declining/relic	Interrupted	Intact
C6/ Impact of development	High	Moderate	Low
Totals * Prime condition if a tie		Moderate	

Strength of character/condition:		Improve and Conserve					
Capacity analysis							
Criteria	Importance	A=5	B=4	C=3	D=2	E=1	Total
1/ Landscape features							
Slope analysis	Primary (x1.5)		✓				6
Vegetation enclosure	Primary (x1.5)		✓				6
Complexity / scale	Secondary (x1)				✓		2
Condition	Secondary (x1)			✓			3
Sub total							17
2/ Visual features							
Openness to public view	Secondary (x1)				✓		2
Openness to private view	Secondary (x1)			✓			3
Relationship with existing urban conurbation	Primary (x1.5)		✓				6
Prevention of coalescence	Primary (x1.5)				✓		3
Scope to mitigate the development	Primary (x1.5)			✓			4.5
Sub total							18.5
3/ Landscape value							
Strength of character and condition	Secondary (x1)		✓				4
Sub total							4
Overall capacity profile (1/ + 2/+ 3/) = 39.5							

Overall Capacity:	Medium-Low
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Landscape Capacity Analysis form

Parcel No.: 3d

Settlement: Witham

Landscape Setting Area: W3

Surveyor: IJ/LH

Date surveyed: 18/02/2015

Parcel Description

A small to medium scale Parcel located to north-east of Witham and extending to the northern boundary of Landscape Setting Area W3. The north-eastern boundary of the Setting Area and the Parcel wraps around the corner of Tarecroft Wood, an Ancient Wood and Local Wildlife Site. The western boundary adjoins with the Land Parcel 3b. The southern boundary is formed by a post and wire fence, vegetated in parts which defines the boundary to Parcel 3c surrounding the New Rickstones Academy.

The Parcel is located on a plateau, elevated slightly from the surrounding areas of Witham to the south. The Parcel comprises small and medium scale arable fields, generally divided by low clipped hedgerows. There are taller hedgerows with trees internally, to both sides of a public footpath that crosses the Parcel extending from 3c. The north-eastern field has pre-18th century field enclosures.

Views out of the Parcel to the north and west are generally contained by intervening landform and vegetation. There are more long distance views from the elevated land across a tributary valley of the River Blackwater to the east. The New Rickstones Academy is a prominent and slightly intrusive feature in views to the south towards Witham. There is a public footpath located centrally and crossing the north-eastern corner of the Parcel providing moderately open public views across the agricultural land. Views from private properties are limited by vegetation on intervening field boundaries.

The Parcel has limited connections with the urban fabric of Witham. The associations are limited to the visual presence of the school and a small amount of ribbon development along Rickstones Road to the south-east within Parcel 3c. The Parcel occupies part of the farmland providing separation between Witham and the small village of Rivenhall to the north-east.

Strength of character/condition			
Strength of character	Weak	Moderate	Strong
S1/ Impact of landform	Insignificant	Apparent	Dominant/Prominent
S2/ Impact of landcover *	Insignificant	Apparent	Dominant/ Prominent
S3/ Historic pattern *	Insignificant	Apparent	Dominant/Prominent
S4/ Tranquillity	Discordant	Moderate	Tranquil
S5/ Distinctiveness /rarity	Frequent	Unusual	Unique/rare
S6/ Visual unity	Incoherent	Coherent	Unified
Totals * Prime character if a tie		Moderate	
Condition	Poor	Moderate	Good
C1/ Landcover change	Widespread	Localised	Insignificant
C2/ Age structure of tree cover *	Over mature	Mature or young	Mixed
C3/ Extent of semi-natural habitat survival *	Relic	Scattered	Widespread/linked
C4/ Management of semi-natural habitats	Poor	Not obvious	Good
C5/ Survival of cultural pattern (fields and hedges)	Declining/relic	Interrupted	Intact
C6/ Impact of development	High	Moderate	Low
Totals * Prime condition if a tie		Moderate	

Strength of character/condition:	Improve and Conserve
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Capacity analysis

Criteria	Importance	A=5	B=4	C=3	D=2	E=1	Total
1/ Landscape features							
Slope analysis	Primary (x1.5)	✓					7.5
Vegetation enclosure	Primary (x1.5)		✓				6
Complexity / scale	Secondary (x1)				✓		2
Condition	Secondary (x1)			✓			3
Sub total							18.5
2/ Visual features							
Openness to public view	Secondary (x1)				✓		2
Openness to private view	Secondary (x1)		✓				4
Relationship with existing urban conurbation	Primary (x1.5)				✓		3
Prevention of coalescence	Primary (x1.5)				✓		3
Scope to mitigate the development	Primary (x1.5)				✓		3
Sub total							15
3/ Landscape value							
Strength of character and condition	Secondary (x1)			✓			3
Sub total							3
Overall capacity profile (1/ + 2/+ 3/) = 36.5							

Overall Capacity:

Medium-Low

Landscape Capacity Analysis form

Parcel No.: 3e

Settlement: Witham

Landscape Setting Area: W3

Surveyor: IJ/LH

Date surveyed: 18/02/2015

Parcel Description

This parcel is adjacent to the north-east edge of Witham, immediately north of Forest Road. Rectory Lane, a narrow minor road between Rickstones Road and the east end of Forest Road, divides the Parcel into two portions: arable fields crossed by farm tracks and public footpaths to its north, and the private grounds of the Old Rectory and lodges to its south.

Hedgerows and recently planted woodland copses form much of the Parcel's boundaries. The northern portion of the north-east boundary is formed by Rickstones Farm and the rear or properties located on Rickstones Road. To the north and east these recently planted copses divide the parcel from a golf course. The parcel will become increasingly contained and blocked from views from the north as this vegetation matures. The hedgerows on Rickstones Road and Forest Road are tall and of good quality, allowing only occasional glimpses to the Parcel. There are additional internal hedgerows along the edge of The Old Rectory property which enclose it and protect it from views from the northern portion of the Parcel.

Only glimpses are available between the existing development on Forest Road and the parcel due good quality hedgerows. Recent planting on golf course boundaries form boundaries to the east. These will strengthen and screen views further with time.

Strength of character/condition			
Strength of character	Weak	Moderate	Strong
S1/ Impact of landform	Insignificant	Apparent	Dominant/Prominent
S2 Impact of landcover *	Insignificant	Apparent	Dominant/Prominent
S3/ Historic pattern *	Insignificant	Apparent	Dominant/Prominent
S4/ Tranquillity	Discordant	Moderate	Tranquil
S5/ Distinctiveness /rarity	Frequent	Unusual	Unique/rare
S6/ Visual unity	Incoherent	Coherent	Unified
Totals * Prime character if a tie			Strong
Condition	Poor	Moderate	Good
C1/ Landcover change	Widespread	Localised	Insignificant
C2/ Age structure of tree cover *	Over mature	Mature or young	Mixed
C3/ Extent of semi-natural habitat survival *	Relic	Scattered	Widespread/linked
C4/ Management of semi-natural habitats	Poor	Not obvious	Good
C5/ Survival of cultural pattern (fields and hedges)	Declining/relic	Interrupted	Intact
C6/ Impact of development	High	Moderate	Low
Totals * Prime condition if a tie			Good

Strength of character/condition:	Conserve and Strengthen
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Capacity analysis

Criteria	Importance	A=5	B=4	C=3	D=2	E=1	Total
1/ Landscape features							
Slope analysis	Primary (x1.5)	✓					7.5
Vegetation enclosure	Primary (x1.5)		✓				6
Complexity / scale	Secondary (x1)				✓		2
Condition	Secondary (x1)				✓		2
Sub total							17.5
2/ Visual features							
Openness to public view	Secondary (x1)			✓			3
Openness to private view	Secondary (x1)				✓		2
Relationship with existing urban conurbation	Primary (x1.5)			✓			4.5
Prevention of coalescence	Primary (x1.5)			✓			4.5
Scope to mitigate the development	Primary (x1.5)			✓			4.5
Sub total							18.5
3/ Landscape value							
Strength of character and condition	Secondary (x1)				✓		2
Sub total							2
Overall capacity profile (1/ + 2/+ 3/) = 39							

Overall Capacity:

Medium-Low

Landscape Capacity Analysis form

Parcel No.: 3f

Settlement: Witham

Landscape Setting Area: W3

Surveyor: IJ/LH

Date surveyed: 17/02/2015

Parcel Description

- A golf course. Access is via western boundary, entrance is from Forest Road, across 3e parcel.
- Topography is gently sloping down southwards, with local undulations created through mounding and depression earthworks.
- Tree and shrub planting, including some recently planted tree belts along boundaries and blocks within the parcel.
- Glimpses from road and train. New development along Rickstones Road has some views of the parcel from its south-west corner plots.

Strength of character/condition			
Strength of character	Weak	Moderate	Strong
S1/ Impact of landform	Insignificant	Apparent	Dominant/Prominent
S2/ Impact of landcover *	Insignificant	Apparent	Dominant/Prominent
S3/ Historic pattern *	Insignificant	Apparent	Dominant/Prominent
S4/ Tranquillity	Discordant	Moderate	Tranquil
S5/ Distinctiveness /rarity	Frequent	Unusual	Unique/rare
S6/ Visual unity	Incoherent	Coherent	Unified
Totals * Prime character if a tie		Moderate	
Condition	Poor	Moderate	Good
C1/ Landcover change	Widespread	Localised	Insignificant
C2/ Age structure of tree cover *	Over mature	Mature or young	Mixed
C3/ Extent of semi-natural habitat survival *	Relic	Scattered	Widespread/linked
C4/ Management of semi-natural habitats	Poor	Not obvious	Good
C5/ Survival of cultural pattern (fields and hedges)	Declining/relic	Interrupted	Intact
C6/ Impact of development	High	Moderate	Low
Totals * Prime condition if a tie		Moderate	

Strength of character/condition:	Improve and Conserve
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Capacity analysis

Criteria	Importance	A=5	B=4	C=3	D=2	E=1	Total
1/ Landscape features							
Slope analysis	Primary (x1.5)	✓					7.5
Vegetation enclosure	Primary (x1.5)		✓				6
Complexity / scale	Secondary (x1)				✓		2
Condition	Secondary (x1)			✓			3
Sub total							18.5
2/ Visual features							
Openness to public view	Secondary (x1)			✓			3
Openness to private view	Secondary (x1)		✓				4
Relationship with existing urban conurbation	Primary (x1.5)				✓		3
Prevention of coalescence	Primary (x1.5)					✓	1.5
Scope to mitigate the development	Primary (x1.5)			✓			4.5
Sub total							16
3/ Landscape value							
Strength of character and condition	Secondary (x1)			✓			3
Sub total							3
Overall capacity profile (1/ + 2/+ 3/) = 37.5							

Overall Capacity:

Medium-Low

Landscape Capacity Analysis form

Parcel No.: 3g

Settlement: Witham

Landscape Setting Area: W3

Surveyor: IJ/LH

Date surveyed: 12/02/2015

Parcel Description

The Parcel abuts industrial development to the north-eastern edge of Witham and is contained to the north-west by the London to Colchester railway line to the south-east by the A12 (London Road). A line of agricultural buildings and storage containers and a residential property occupy the north-eastern boundary, separated from the adjacent Parcel 3h to the north-east by an intermittent band of vegetation enclose the north-eastern boundary.

The southern boundary is marked by the linear corridor of the busy A12 corridor, a dual carriageway following the line of the Roman road to Colchester. Views between the Parcel and road corridor are direct; the absence of any vegetation on the south-eastern boundary allowing for clear views into the three medium sized fields within the Parcel. This lack of visual containment, and the presence of signage and lighting along the trunk road corridor, results in a discordant feel, the Parcel having as great a connection with the industrial units on the south-western boundary as it does with the farmland in the adjacent Parcel 3h to the north-east.

Strength of character/condition			
Strength of character	Weak	Moderate	Strong
S1/ Impact of landform	Insignificant	Apparent	Dominant/Prominent
S2 Impact of landcover *	Insignificant	Apparent	Dominant/Prominent
S3/ Historic pattern *	Insignificant	Apparent	Dominant/Prominent
S4/ Tranquillity	Discordant	Moderate	Tranquil
S5/ Distinctiveness /rarity	Frequent	Unusual	Unique/rare
S6/ Visual unity	Incoherent	Coherent	Unified
Totals * Prime character if a tie	Weak		
Condition	Poor	Moderate	Good
C1/ Landcover change	Widespread	Localised	Insignificant
C2/ Age structure of tree cover *	Over mature	Mature or young	Mixed
C3/ Extent of semi-natural habitat survival *	Relic	Scattered	Widespread/linked
C4/ Management of semi-natural habitats	Poor	Not obvious	Good
C5/ Survival of cultural pattern (fields and hedges)	Declining/relic	Interrupted	Intact
C6/ Impact of development	High	Moderate	Low
Totals * Prime condition if a tie		Moderate	

Strength of character/condition:	Improve and Reinforce
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Capacity analysis							
Criteria	Importance	A=5	B=4	C=3	D=2	E=1	Total
1/ Landscape features							
Slope analysis	Primary (x1.5)		✓				6
Vegetation enclosure	Primary (x1.5)		✓				6
Complexity / scale	Secondary (x1)				✓		2
Condition	Secondary (x1)		✓				4
Sub total							18
2/ Visual features							
Openness to public view	Secondary (x1)		✓				4
Openness to private view	Secondary (x1)	✓					5
Relationship with existing urban conurbation	Primary (x1.5)		✓				6
Prevention of coalescence	Primary (x1.5)				✓		3
Scope to mitigate the development	Primary (x1.5)		✓				6
Sub total							24
3/ Landscape value							
Strength of character and condition	Secondary (x1)		✓				4
Sub total							4
Overall capacity profile (1/ + 2/+ 3/) = 46							

Overall Capacity:	Medium
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Guidelines for development and mitigation measures

- Access route to take into account practicalities of creating an access onto the A12 road corridor, the creation of a route via the industrial estate to the south-west being a more likely option.
- Plant a landscape buffer (substantial belt of trees and hedgerow planting) on the south-eastern boundary to reduce road noise within the Parcel and limit the visibility of any development proposals.
- A green corridor of vegetation and informal green space along the rail line would safeguard a pedestrian link between Witham and Rivenhall End in the future.

Landscape Capacity Analysis form

Parcel No.: 3h

Settlement: Witham

Landscape Setting Area: W3

Surveyor: IJ/LH

Date surveyed: 18/02/2015

Parcel Description

Linear parcel of land extending south-west from the small settlement of Rivenhall End. The south-eastern boundary of the Parcel is formed by the A12 (London Road). The north-western boundary is formed by the London to Colchester railway line. To the north-east the Parcel abuts hedges and fencing to the rear gardens of properties on Oak Road. The south-western boundary is formed by a line of vegetation and drainage channel running alongside a residential property and some agricultural barns.

The Parcel is set on a slightly undulating landform that provides enclosure to the agricultural barns to the south-west. Whitelands, an isolated residential property within the Parcel is also enclosed by landform and vegetation on plot boundaries. Aside from Whitelands, the Parcel comprises a single large scale arable field.

The Parcel has moderate enclosure by vegetation with fragmented tree belts along both corridors and variable hedges and intermittent trees to the boundaries with residential properties. There are open views into the Parcel from vehicles on the A12 and from passengers on the railway. There are no public rights of way through the Parcel or through adjoining fields. The residential properties facing the Parcel from the north-eastern boundary have partial views of the Parcel. Large scale buildings in an industrial estate in Witham can be seen in views towards the settlement to the south-west.

The Parcel has some minor connections with the residential properties to the north-east accessible via Oak Road and is connected to Witham via transport corridors. The farmland currently provides separation between development Witham and Rivenhall End enabling them to remain distinct settlements.

Strength of character/condition			
Strength of character	Weak	Moderate	Strong
S1/ Impact of landform	Insignificant	Apparent	Dominant/Prominent
S2/ Impact of landcover *	Insignificant	Apparent	Dominant/Prominent
S3/ Historic pattern *	Insignificant	Apparent	Dominant/Prominent
S4/ Tranquillity	Discordant	Moderate	Tranquil
S5/ Distinctiveness /rarity	Frequent	Unusual	Unique/rare
S6/ Visual unity	Incoherent	Coherent	Unified
Totals * Prime character if a tie		Moderate	
Condition	Poor	Moderate	Good
C1/ Landcover change	Widespread	Localised	Insignificant
C2/ Age structure of tree cover *	Over mature	Mature or young	Mixed
C3/ Extent of semi-natural habitat survival *	Relic	Scattered	Widespread/linked
C4/ Management of semi-natural habitats	Poor	Not obvious	Good
C5/ Survival of cultural pattern (fields and hedges)	Declining/relic	Interrupted	Intact
C6/ Impact of development	High	Moderate	Low
Totals * Prime condition if a tie	Poor		

Strength of character/condition:	Improve and Restore
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Capacity analysis

Criteria	Importance	A=5	B=4	C=3	D=2	E=1	Total
1/ Landscape features							
Slope analysis	Primary (x1.5)		✓				6
Vegetation enclosure	Primary (x1.5)			✓			4.5
Complexity / scale	Secondary (x1)		✓				4
Condition	Secondary (x1)		✓				4
Sub total							18.5
2/ Visual features							
Openness to public view	Secondary (x1)				✓		2
Openness to private view	Secondary (x1)			✓			3
Relationship with existing urban conurbation	Primary (x1.5)			✓			4.5
Prevention of coalescence	Primary (x1.5)					✓	1.5
Scope to mitigate the development	Primary (x1.5)				✓		3
Sub total							14
3/ Landscape value							
Strength of character and condition	Secondary (x1)			✓			3
Sub total							3
Overall capacity profile (1/ + 2/+ 3/) = 35.5							

Overall Capacity:

Medium-Low

Landscape Capacity Analysis form

Parcel No.: 4a

Settlement: Witham

Landscape Setting Area: W4

Surveyor: IJ/LH

Date surveyed: 12/02/2015

Parcel Description

The Parcel is located to the north-east edge of Witham, adjacent to the A12 (London Road) which forms its western boundary. The northern and eastern boundaries are those of Landscape Setting Area W4. The southern boundary follows the vegetated field boundaries and woodland associated with Parcel 4b and the River Blackwater corridor.

The Parcel encompasses the low lying land associated with the floodplains and valley floor of the River Blackwater. The Parcel comprises small-scale linear arable fields divided by shelterbelts, grass pastures, and Colemans Reservoir. The field patterns include some areas of pre-18th and 18th-19th century enclosure. Drainage ditches run alongside some of the internal field boundaries. The Parcel boundaries are semi-enclosed by vegetation with dense medium height hedgerows forming the majority of external boundaries and tall tree belts and hedgerows to internal boundaries. The boundary with the A12 is less contained, with areas open to the road except for scattered trees and fragmented hedgerows.

The Parcel is partially contained from public views with vegetation alongside minor roads to the north and south including Braxted Road and Little Braxted Lane. Views are available from the A12 and a public bridleway that crosses the Parcel from Coleman's Farm to the southern side of Colemans Reservoir. Dense internal field boundaries contain areas of the Parcel in these views. The Parcel is well contained from private views with only a small amount of surrounding residential properties within Rivenhall End to the north and along Little Braxted Lane to the south. However, these properties are well contained by mature vegetation.

The Parcel has moderate associations with the built edge of Witham despite the A12 corridor forming a strong intervening feature between the farmland and the industrial development to the west. The Parcel has a strong rural character with limited intrusive development internally and strong associations with the River Blackwater corridor. The rural landscape provides separation between Witham and Rivenhall End.

Strength of character/condition			
Strength of character	Weak	Moderate	Strong
S1/ Impact of landform	Insignificant	Apparent	Dominant/Prominent
S2/ Impact of landcover *	Insignificant	Apparent	Dominant/ Prominent
S3/ Historic pattern *	Insignificant	Apparent	Dominant/Prominent
S4/ Tranquillity	Discordant	Moderate	Tranquil
S5/ Distinctiveness /rarity	Frequent	Unusual	Unique/rare
S6/ Visual unity	Incoherent	Coherent	Unified
Totals * Prime character if a tie		Moderate	
Condition	Poor	Moderate	Good
C1/ Landcover change	Widespread	Localised	Insignificant
C2/ Age structure of tree cover *	Over mature	Mature or young	Mixed
C3/ Extent of semi-natural habitat survival *	Relic	Scattered	Widespread/linked
C4/ Management of semi-natural habitats	Poor	Not obvious	Good
C5/ Survival of cultural pattern (fields and hedges)	Declining/relic	Interrupted	Intact
C6/ Impact of development	High	Moderate	Low
Totals * Prime condition if a tie			Good

Strength of character/condition:	Conserve and Strengthen
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Capacity analysis

Criteria	Importance	A=5	B=4	C=3	D=2	E=1	Total
1/ Landscape features							
Slope analysis	Primary (x1.5)				✓		3
Vegetation enclosure	Primary (x1.5)		✓				6
Complexity / scale	Secondary (x1)				✓		2
Condition	Secondary (x1)				✓		2
Sub total							13
2/ Visual features							
Openness to public view	Secondary (x1)			✓			3
Openness to private view	Secondary (x1)	✓					5
Relationship with existing urban conurbation	Primary (x1.5)			✓			4.5
Prevention of coalescence	Primary (x1.5)					✓	1.5
Scope to mitigate the development	Primary (x1.5)				✓		3
Sub total							17
3/ Landscape value							
Strength of character and condition	Secondary (x1)			✓			3
Sub total							3
Overall capacity profile (1/ + 2/+ 3/) = 33							

Overall Capacity:

Low

Landscape Capacity Analysis form

Parcel No.: 4b

Settlement: Witham

Landscape Setting Area: W4

Surveyor: IJ/LH

Date surveyed: 18/02/2015

Parcel Description

The Parcel is characterised by the presence of the River Blackwater and associated wildlife corridor. The Parcel follows the line of the river and associated riparian vegetation and woodland blocks from the north of Little Braxted down to the boundary with Blue Mills Hill and Parcel 4f where the character of the landscape changes slightly relating to adjoining land use. The edge of Witham is located on the gently east facing valley sides. The River Brain also dissects the town and connects with the River Blackwater towards the south of the Parcel. The west facing valley slopes are steeper and elevated above the river corridor.

Along the river corridor are blocks and belts of mature woodland, small scale pastures, reservoirs and streams associated with the river and occasional farms and residential properties. This includes the small parish of Little Braxted set on the eastern side of the River Blackwater.

Views of the river corridor are generally well contained by mature vegetation. There are occasional glimpsed views from minor roads and public footpaths in close proximity to the Parcel. Private properties are also well contained by mature vegetation.

The River corridor helps to provide a strong vegetated edge between Witham and the open countryside. The A12 also forms a strong physical boundary to development in Witham and separates the Parcel from nearby the urban fabric. The Parcel has a strong rural character and is an important ecological corridor on the outskirts of the town.

Strength of character/condition			
Strength of character	Weak	Moderate	Strong
S1/ Impact of landform	Insignificant	Apparent	Dominant/ Prominent
S2/ Impact of landcover *	Insignificant	Apparent	Dominant/ Prominent
S3/ Historic pattern *	Insignificant	Apparent	Dominant/Prominent
S4/ Tranquillity	Discordant	Moderate	Tranquil
S5/ Distinctiveness /rarity	Frequent	Unusual	Unique/rare
S6/ Visual unity	Incoherent	Coherent	Unified
Totals * Prime character if a tie			Strong
Condition	Poor	Moderate	Good
C1/ Landcover change	Widespread	Localised	Insignificant
C2/ Age structure of tree cover *	Over mature	Mature or young	Mixed
C3/ Extent of semi-natural habitat survival *	Relic	Scattered	Widespread/linked
C4/ Management of semi-natural habitats	Poor	Not obvious	Good
C5/ Survival of cultural pattern (fields and hedges)	Declining/relic	Interrupted	Intact
C6/ Impact of development	High	Moderate	Low
Totals * Prime condition if a tie			Good

Strength of character/condition:	Safeguard and Manage
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Capacity analysis

Criteria	Importance	A=5	B=4	C=3	D=2	E=1	Total
1/ Landscape features							
Slope analysis	Primary (x1.5)				✓		3
Vegetation enclosure	Primary (x1.5)	✓					7.5
Complexity / scale	Secondary (x1)					✓	1
Condition	Secondary (x1)					✓	1
Sub total							12.5
2/ Visual features							
Openness to public view	Secondary (x1)		✓				4
Openness to private view	Secondary (x1)	✓					5
Relationship with existing urban conurbation	Primary (x1.5)					✓	1.5
Prevention of coalescence	Primary (x1.5)	✓					7.5
Scope to mitigate the development	Primary (x1.5)					✓	1.5
Sub total							19.5
3/ Landscape value							
Strength of character and condition	Secondary (x1)				✓		2
Sub total							2
Overall capacity profile (1/ + 2/+ 3/) = 34							

Overall Capacity:

Medium-Low

Landscape Capacity Analysis form

Parcel No.: 4c

Settlement: Witham

Landscape Setting Area: W4

Surveyor: IJ/LH

Date surveyed: 18/02/2015

Parcel Description

The Parcel is located on elevated slopes on the west facing valley sides of the River Blackwater. The western boundary is formed by the densely vegetated River Blackwater corridor and Parcel 4b. The eastern boundary and part of the northern boundary are formed by the winding path of Little Braxted Lane. A small triangle of farmland with a similar sloping landform is also included to the north of this lane. The southern boundary follows the outer extent of woodland surrounding Sewells Farm.

The Parcel comprises medium to large scale, sloping arable and grazed pastoral farmland. To the east and northern sides are low to medium height hedgerows, fragmented in parts. The northern fields contain pre-18th century field enclosures and lie adjacent to the historic Braxted Hall and grounds beyond the Parcel to the north. There are woodland blocks providing enclosure to the west and south. Internal hedgerows are generally low and clipped with occasional trees. A farm track crosses the Parcel through the centre from north to south. Overhead power lines are an intrusive feature crossing the Parcel in a curving line through the eastern fields.

No public rights of way cross the Parcel. A public footpath runs alongside part of the southern boundary adjacent Barn Grove. This provides views of the southern fields. Public views are also available from gaps in vegetation along Little Braxted Lane. These extend over the river valley to industrial development in Witham to the western side of the A12. Views from the A12 towards the Parcel are screened by dense planting alongside the carriageway.

The presence of the River Blackwater and the A12 isolates the Parcel from the built edge of Witham. The Parcel is accessed via a minor road and adjoining development is generally isolated farms and the small cluster of residential properties within Little Braxted. The Parcel has a largely rural character and despite some views to the edge of Witham, is isolated from the urban fabric.

Strength of character/condition			
Strength of character	Weak	Moderate	Strong
S1/ Impact of landform	Insignificant	Apparent	Dominant/ Prominent
S2/ Impact of landcover *	Insignificant	Apparent	Dominant/ Prominent
S3/ Historic pattern *	Insignificant	Apparent	Dominant/Prominent
S4/ Tranquillity	Discordant	Moderate	Tranquil
S5/ Distinctiveness /rarity	Frequent	Unusual	Unique/rare
S6/ Visual unity	Incoherent	Coherent	Unified
Totals * Prime character if a tie			Strong
Condition	Poor	Moderate	Good
C1/ Landcover change	Widespread	Localised	Insignificant
C2/ Age structure of tree cover *	Over mature	Mature or young	Mixed
C3/ Extent of semi-natural habitat survival *	Relic	Scattered	Widespread/linked
C4/ Management of semi-natural habitats	Poor	Not obvious	Good
C5/ Survival of cultural pattern (fields and hedges)	Declining/relic	Interrupted	Intact
C6/ Impact of development	High	Moderate	Low
Totals * Prime condition if a tie		Moderate	

Strength of character/condition:

Conserve and Restore

Capacity analysis

Criteria	Importance	A=5	B=4	C=3	D=2	E=1	Total
1/ Landscape features							
Slope analysis	Primary (x1.5)			✓			4.5
Vegetation enclosure	Primary (x1.5)		✓				6
Complexity / scale	Secondary (x1)				✓		2
Condition	Secondary (x1)				✓		2
Sub total							14.5
2/ Visual features							
Openness to public view	Secondary (x1)			✓			3
Openness to private view	Secondary (x1)		✓				4
Relationship with existing urban conurbation	Primary (x1.5)					✓	1.5
Prevention of coalescence	Primary (x1.5)	✓					7.5
Scope to mitigate the development	Primary (x1.5)					✓	1.5
Sub total							17.5
3/ Landscape value							
Strength of character and condition	Secondary (x1)				✓		2
Sub total							2
Overall capacity profile (1/ + 2/+ 3/) = 34							

Overall Capacity:

Medium-Low

Landscape Capacity Analysis form

Parcel No.: 4d

Settlement: Witham

Landscape Setting Area: W4

Surveyor: IJ/LH

Date surveyed: 18/02/2015

Parcel Description

The Parcel occupies flat, the low lying floodplain of the River Blackwater east of the A12. The land rises west towards the settlement edge of Witham. The northern and eastern boundaries are formed by the River Blackwater and woodland blocks associated it. To the south the Parcel is bound by Blue Mills Hill and to the south-west by a cycle route which travels under the A120 carriageway.

The Parcel is medium scale but with variations in pattern and scale to the east of the Parcel where it abuts the river. The Parcel comprises arable fields, smaller areas of rough grass, and the grounds of Benton Hall, a Grade II listed building. Benton Hall is well contained by tall tree belts and small woodland blocks. There is also a woodland block to the north-east corner of the Parcel, dense riparian vegetation along the River Blackwater and tall but unmanaged hedgerows to both sides of the cycle route to the west. Internal hedgerows are defined by fragmented hedgerows and trees. Remaining boundaries to the south and the west along Blue Mills Hill and the A12 are lacking in vegetation and largely open to the roads.

Views across the Parcel can be obtained from the surrounding roads and a public footpath which crosses the grounds of Benton Hall and travels north towards the River Brain. The A12 carriageway is slightly raised from the Parcel providing relatively open views across the farmland to the south-east. The noise from the busy road is noticeable throughout the Parcel but the Parcel has a moderately tranquil and rural character. Houses on the south-eastern edge of Witham are visually contained by the presence of the A12 and dense vegetation to the western side of the carriageway. There are filtered views to parts of the Parcel from housing on Maldon Road to the west.

The Parcel forms part of the river valley landscape and farmland framing the eastern edge of Witham. The rural landscape is physically detached from the town by the A12 which is elevated from the Parcel and visually contained by strong bands of vegetation in neighbouring land.

Strength of character/condition			
Strength of character	Weak	Moderate	Strong
S1/ Impact of landform	Insignificant	Apparent	Dominant/Prominent
S2/ Impact of landcover *	Insignificant	Apparent	Dominant/Prominent
S3/ Historic pattern *	Insignificant	Apparent	Dominant/Prominent
S4/ Tranquillity	Discordant	Moderate	Tranquil
S5/ Distinctiveness /rarity	Frequent	Unusual	Unique/rare
S6/ Visual unity	Incoherent	Coherent	Unified
Totals * Prime character if a tie		Moderate	
Condition	Poor	Moderate	Good
C1/ Landcover change	Widespread	Localised	Insignificant
C2/ Age structure of tree cover *	Over mature	Mature or young	Mixed
C3/ Extent of semi-natural habitat survival *	Relic	Scattered	Widespread/linked
C4/ Management of semi-natural habitats	Poor	Not obvious	Good
C5/ Survival of cultural pattern (fields and hedges)	Declining /relic	Interrupted	Intact
C6/ Impact of development	High	Moderate	Low
Totals * Prime condition if a tie		Moderate	

Strength of character/condition:	Improve and Conserve
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Capacity analysis

Criteria	Importance	A=5	B=4	C=3	D=2	E=1	Total
1/ Landscape features							
Slope analysis	Primary (x1.5)				✓		3
Vegetation enclosure	Primary (x1.5)		✓				6
Complexity / scale	Secondary (x1)				✓		2
Condition	Secondary (x1)			✓			3
Sub total							13
2/ Visual features							
Openness to public view	Secondary (x1)					✓	1
Openness to private view	Secondary (x1)			✓			3
Relationship with existing urban conurbation	Primary (x1.5)			✓			4.5
Prevention of coalescence	Primary (x1.5)	✓					7.5
Scope to mitigate the development	Primary (x1.5)			✓			4.5
Sub total							20.5
3/ Landscape value							
Strength of character and condition	Secondary (x1)			✓			3
Sub total							3
Overall capacity profile (1/ + 2/+ 3/) = 37.5							

Overall Capacity:

Medium-Low

Landscape Capacity Analysis form

Parcel No.: 4e

Settlement: Witham

Landscape Setting Area: W4

Surveyor: IJ/LH

Date surveyed: 18/02/2015

Parcel Description

The Parcel is located east of the River Blackwater and set on sloping land dissected by small tributary streams. Blue Mills Hill forms the southern boundary and the Parcel extends to the eastern edge of the Landscape Setting Area. Woodland blocks define the northern boundary separating the Parcel from the west facing farmland slopes within Parcel 4c. The land falls beyond the District Boundary which follows the path of the River Blackwater.

The Parcel comprises small to medium scale grass fields dispersed with large scale properties set within well vegetated grounds. A number of these properties including Mathyns, Blue Mills, the Barn at Isham Chase and Sewells Farmhouse are listed buildings. Ishams Chase leading north from Blue Mills Hill provides access to houses to the west of the Parcel. The Parcel peripheries are generally well contained by dense tree belts and woodland blocks including Barn Grove to the north. The Parcel abuts the edge of Chantry Wood to the east which provides dense visual containment to the Parcel in the wider landscape.

A public footpath follows the route of Ishams Chase to the west of the Parcel and extends north to join with Little Braxted Road. This route provides partial views of the Parcel that are filtered through the strong tree and hedgerow structure. Large parts of the Parcel are not publically accessible. There are also limited views of the Parcel from surrounding houses which are well contained within the wooded landscape. A number of the large residential properties within the Parcel are prominent in views from Blue Mills Hill, although generally the undulating landform and strong presence of vegetation helps to integrate the built form into the landscape.

The Parcel is part of the well treed landscape that frames the eastern edge of Witham and contributes to its tranquil, rural setting. Despite the presence of built development, the Parcel is generally isolated from the urban fabric of Witham. The agricultural land and woodland blocks also play an important role in ensuring separation between Witham and Wickham Bishops which is enclosed by Chantry Wood to the south-east.

Strength of character/condition			
Strength of character	Weak	Moderate	Strong
S1/ Impact of landform	Insignificant	Apparent	Dominant/ Prominent
S2/ Impact of landcover *	Insignificant	Apparent	Dominant/Prominent
S3/ Historic pattern *	Insignificant	Apparent	Dominant/Prominent
S4/ Tranquillity	Discordant	Moderate	Tranquil
S5/ Distinctiveness /rarity	Frequent	Unusual	Unique/rare
S6/ Visual unity	Incoherent	Coherent	Unified
Totals * Prime character if a tie		Moderate	
Condition	Poor	Moderate	Good
C1/ Landcover change	Widespread	Localised	Insignificant
C2/ Age structure of tree cover *	Over mature	Mature or young	Mixed
C3/ Extent of semi-natural habitat survival *	Relic	Scattered	Widespread/linked
C4/ Management of semi-natural habitats	Poor	Not obvious	Good
C5/ Survival of cultural pattern (fields and hedges)	Declining/relic	Interrupted	Intact
C6/ Impact of development	High	Moderate	Low
Totals * Prime condition if a tie			Good

Strength of character/condition:	Conserve and Strengthen
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Capacity analysis

Criteria	Importance	A=5	B=4	C=3	D=2	E=1	Total
1/ Landscape features							
Slope analysis	Primary (x1.5)			✓			4.5
Vegetation enclosure	Primary (x1.5)	✓					7.5
Complexity / scale	Secondary (x1)				✓		2
Condition	Secondary (x1)				✓		2
Sub total							16
2/ Visual features							
Openness to public view	Secondary (x1)			✓			3
Openness to private view	Secondary (x1)		✓				4
Relationship with existing urban conurbation	Primary (x1.5)					✓	1.5
Prevention of coalescence	Primary (x1.5)				✓		3
Scope to mitigate the development	Primary (x1.5)		✓				6
Sub total							17.5
3/ Landscape value							
Strength of character and condition	Secondary (x1)			✓			3
Sub total							3
Overall capacity profile (1/ + 2/+ 3/) = 36.5							

Overall Capacity:

Medium-Low

Landscape Capacity Analysis form

Parcel No.: 4f

Settlement: Witham

Landscape Setting Area: W4

Surveyor: IJ/LH

Date surveyed: 18/02/2015

Parcel Description

The Parcel is located to the southern extent of the Landscape Setting Area and bound to the west by a cycle route and to the north by Blue Mills Hill. Mope Lane is located along part of the eastern boundary which provides access to part of Wickham Bishops. The landform is low-lying to the west with the River Blackwater flowing through the centre and the west facing valley sides of the river to the east.

The Parcel is predominantly occupied by Benton Hall Golf and Country Club and the landscape associated with the course. This includes small scale pockets of land with gently undulating greens and ponds including a larger scale lake near the club house. There is dense vegetation along the River Blackwater, scattered tree belts and copses. There are large woodlands abutting the Parcel boundaries with Grove Wood and Mope Wood to the east and Sparkey Wood to the south. A belt of fields to the north-east have pre-18th century field enclosures.

Views into the Parcel are relatively open from Blue Mills Hill, but long distance views are stopped by dense vegetation to the south. Two public footpath routes cross the Parcel. One footpath runs parallel to the River Blackwater providing views filtered by vegetation of the area. There are limited private properties with views to the golf course and limited visual connections with the surrounding urban fabric. Despite the close proximity to Witham, views to the settlement are largely restricted by dense vegetation on the A120 corridor. Wickham Bishops to the south-east is also visually contained by dense blocks of woodland.

The Parcel forms part of a strong band of treed farmland and recreation that provides the setting to the south-eastern fringe of Witham. This landscape also has an important role in preserving separation between Witham and Wickham Bishops. The landscape has a tranquil character and has good public right of way connections that form green links between Witham and the surrounding landscape.

Strength of character/condition			
Strength of character	Weak	Moderate	Strong
S1/ Impact of landform	Insignificant	Apparent	Dominant/ Prominent
S2/ Impact of landcover *	Insignificant	Apparent	Dominant/Prominent
S3/ Historic pattern *	Insignificant	Apparent	Dominant/Prominent
S4/ Tranquillity	Discordant	Moderate	Tranquil
S5/ Distinctiveness /rarity	Frequent	Unusual	Unique/rare
S6/ Visual unity	Incoherent	Coherent	Unified
Totals * Prime character if a tie		Moderate	
Condition	Poor	Moderate	Good
C1/ Landcover change	Widespread	Localised	Insignificant
C2/ Age structure of tree cover *	Over mature	Mature or young	Mixed
C3/ Extent of semi-natural habitat survival *	Relic	Scattered	Widespread/linked
C4/ Management of semi-natural habitats	Poor	Not obvious	Good
C5/ Survival of cultural pattern (fields and hedges)	Declining /relic	Interrupted	Intact
C6/ Impact of development	High	Moderate	Low
Totals * Prime condition if a tie			Good

Strength of character/condition:	Conserve and Strengthen
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Capacity analysis

Criteria	Importance	A=5	B=4	C=3	D=2	E=1	Total
1/ Landscape features							
Slope analysis	Primary (x1.5)			✓			4.5
Vegetation enclosure	Primary (x1.5)		✓				6
Complexity / scale	Secondary (x1)					✓	1
Condition	Secondary (x1)				✓		2
Sub total							13.5
2/ Visual features							
Openness to public view	Secondary (x1)			✓			3
Openness to private view	Secondary (x1)		✓				4
Relationship with existing urban conurbation	Primary (x1.5)				✓		3
Prevention of coalescence	Primary (x1.5)				✓		3
Scope to mitigate the development	Primary (x1.5)			✓			4.5
Sub total							17.5
3/ Landscape value							
Strength of character and condition	Secondary (x1)			✓			3
Sub total							3
Overall capacity profile (1/ + 2/+ 3/) = 34							

Overall Capacity:

Medium-Low

Landscape Capacity Analysis form

Parcel No.: 5a

Settlement: Witham

Landscape Setting Area: W5

Surveyor: IJ/LH

Date surveyed: 17/02/2015

Parcel Description

Strength of character/condition			
Strength of character	Weak	Moderate	Strong
S1/ Impact of landform	Insignificant	Apparent	Dominant/Prominent
S2 Impact of landcover *	Insignificant	Apparent	Dominant/Prominent
S3/ Historic pattern *	Insignificant	Apparent	Dominant/Prominent
S4/ Tranquillity	Discordant	Moderate	Tranquil
S5/ Distinctiveness /rarity	Frequent	Unusual	Unique/rare
S6/ Visual unity	Incoherent	Coherent	Unified
Totals * Prime character if a tie	Weak		
Condition	Poor	Moderate	Good
C1/ Landcover change	Widespread	Localised	Insignificant
C2/ Age structure of tree cover *	Over mature	Mature or young	Mixed
C3/ Extent of semi-natural habitat survival *	Relic	Scattered	Widespread/linked
C4/ Management of semi-natural habitats	Poor	Not obvious	Good
C5/ Survival of cultural pattern (fields and hedges)	Declining/relic	Interrupted	Intact
C6/ Impact of development	High	Moderate	Low
Totals * Prime condition if a tie		Moderate	

Strength of character/condition:	Improve and Reinforce
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Capacity analysis

Criteria	Importance	A=5	B=4	C=3	D=2	E=1	Total
1/ Landscape features							
Slope analysis	Primary (x1.5)	✓					7.5
Vegetation enclosure	Primary (x1.5)			✓			4.5
Complexity / scale	Secondary (x1)		✓				4
Condition	Secondary (x1)		✓				4
Sub total							20
2/ Visual features							
Openness to public view	Secondary (x1)					✓	1
Openness to private view	Secondary (x1)		✓				4
Relationship with existing urban conurbation	Primary (x1.5)				✓		3
Prevention of coalescence	Primary (x1.5)			✓			4.5
Scope to mitigate the development	Primary (x1.5)			✓			4.5
Sub total							17
3/ Landscape value							
Strength of character and condition	Secondary (x1)			✓			3
Sub total							3
Overall capacity profile (1/ + 2/+ 3/) = 40							

Overall Capacity:

Medium-Low

Landscape Capacity Analysis form

Parcel No.: 5b

Settlement: Witham

Landscape Setting Area: W5

Surveyor: IJ/LH

Date surveyed: 17/02/2015

Parcel Description

The parcel is located south of Witham adjacent to the southern edge of the A12 and to the west and south of housing that extends along Maldon Road from the A12 road bridge. The parcel is dominated by the noise of A12 and movement of vehicle is noticeable.

The parcel consists of fields relatively smaller in scale than those adjacent. The eastern portion is subdivided into paddocks. Oliver's Farm is located within the parcel's southern portion and is well screened by vegetation from from inside and outside the Parcel. Development at the south of the parcel on Maldon Road where there is an association with other similar uses such as nurseries across the road. As well as Maldon Road and the A12, there are public viewpoint receptors where a public footpath crosses the parcel between Oliver's Farm and the A12 and a track identified as 'other route with public access' demarcates the western boundary. The footpath crosses the A12 to link housing within Witham to the public rights of way network south of the Parcel.

The parcel is fairly flat being located close to the flood plain floor of the River Brain. However the main portion of the parcel to the west of Maldon Road is slightly elevated in comparison with the road and land to the road's east.

Built development in Witham is generally well screened by vegetation except for new development visible at the north-west corner of the parcel. Development along Maldon Road south of the A12 road bridge have views across some of the parcel.

Strength of character/condition			
Strength of character	Weak	Moderate	Strong
S1/ Impact of landform	Insignificant	Apparent	Dominant/Prominent
S2 Impact of landcover *	Insignificant	Apparent	Dominant/Prominent
S3/ Historic pattern *	Insignificant	Apparent	Dominant/Prominent
S4/ Tranquillity	Discordant	Moderate	Tranquil
S5/ Distinctiveness /rarity	Frequent	Unusual	Unique/rare
S6/ Visual unity	Incoherent	Coherent	Unified
Totals * Prime character if a tie	Weak		
Condition	Poor	Moderate	Good
C1/ Landcover change	Widespread	Localised	Insignificant
C2/ Age structure of tree cover *	Over mature	Mature or young	Mixed
C3/ Extent of semi-natural habitat survival *	Relic	Scattered	Widespread/linked
C4/ Management of semi-natural habitats	Poor	Not obvious	Good
C5/ Survival of cultural pattern (fields and hedges)	Declining/relic	Interrupted	Intact
C6/ Impact of development	High	Moderate	Low
Totals * Prime condition if a tie		Moderate	

Strength of character/condition:	Improve and Reinforce
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Capacity analysis							
Criteria	Importance	A=5	B=4	C=3	D=2	E=1	Total
1/ Landscape features							
Slope analysis	Primary (x1.5)				✓		3
Vegetation enclosure	Primary (x1.5)			✓			4.5
Complexity / scale	Secondary (x1)				✓		2
Condition	Secondary (x1)		✓				4
Sub total							13.5
2/ Visual features							
Openness to public view	Secondary (x1)				✓		2
Openness to private view	Secondary (x1)		✓				4
Relationship with existing urban conurbation	Primary (x1.5)		✓				6
Prevention of coalescence	Primary (x1.5)	✓					7.5
Scope to mitigate the development	Primary (x1.5)		✓				6
Sub total							25.5
3/ Landscape value							
Strength of character and condition	Secondary (x1)			✓			3
Sub total							3
Overall capacity profile (1/ + 2/+ 3/) = 42							

Overall Capacity:	Medium
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Guidelines for development and mitigation measures

- Manage and reinforce existing vegetation along Howbridge Hall Road track – the western boundary – to reinforce vegetation cover and provide a physical and visual buffer to the more rural landscape to the west.
- Development should be concentrated on the eastern fringes of the Parcel where they could form a natural extension to the cluster of properties arranged along the B1018 Maldon Road and in the vicinity of the junction with the minor road to Wickham Bishops.
- Framework of new hedgerow and tree planting to reduce the visual impact on the rear gardens of existing properties, and absorb such development into the adjacent countryside.
- New green links within the Parcel would increase the opportunity for circular walks on the southern fringe of the settlement.

Landscape Capacity Analysis form

Parcel No.: 5c

Settlement: Witham

Landscape Setting Area: W5

Surveyor: IJ/LH

Date surveyed: 12/02/2015

Parcel Description

The Parcel is located to the south of Witham on the southern side of the A12. The southern boundary follows the south-western edge of Landscape Setting Area W5. The northern and eastern boundaries mark a change in field scale and enclosure pattern. The landform slopes gently to the east towards the River Blackwater. There are a series of drainage ditches alongside field boundaries throughout the Parcel. Beyond the Parcel boundaries to the south and west are a number of ponds and reservoirs contained within open space associated with gravel and sand extraction in this area.

The Parcel comprises small to medium scale arable fields accessed via farm tracks and separated from surrounding minor roads. There is a relatively dense tree belt along the north-western boundary and a small block of woodland to the north-east corner. Small blocks of woodland and woodland belts are also present surrounding Sandford's Farm, Knowle's Farm and the reservoirs to the south. The southernmost field contains some pre-18th century field enclosure.

Views into the Parcel from nearby roads are limited by boundary vegetation. The vegetated A12 corridor provides a strong visual boundary to development within Witham. A public footpath runs alongside the north-western boundary, which is the only point of public access. There are views to parts of the Parcel from this route, although certain parts are contained by field boundary vegetation and blocks of woodland.

The Parcel is isolated from the development edge of Witham and is located within intervening farmland between Hatfield Peverel and Witham. The Parcel is relatively tranquil with limited access points and a rural character.

Strength of character/condition			
Strength of character	Weak	Moderate	Strong
S1/ Impact of landform	Insignificant	Apparent	Dominant/Prominent
S2/ Impact of landcover *	Insignificant	Apparent	Dominant/Prominent
S3/ Historic pattern *	Insignificant	Apparent	Dominant/Prominent
S4/ Tranquillity	Discordant	Moderate	Tranquil
S5/ Distinctiveness /rarity	Frequent	Unusual	Unique/rare
S6/ Visual unity	Incoherent	Coherent	Unified
Totals * Prime character if a tie		Moderate	
Condition	Poor	Moderate	Good
C1/ Landcover change	Widespread	Localised	Insignificant
C2/ Age structure of tree cover *	Over mature	Mature or young	Mixed
C3/ Extent of semi-natural habitat survival *	Relic	Scattered	Widespread/linked
C4/ Management of semi-natural habitats	Poor	Not obvious	Good
C5/ Survival of cultural pattern (fields and hedges)	Declining/relic	Interrupted	Intact
C6/ Impact of development	High	Moderate	Low
Totals * Prime condition if a tie		Moderate	

Strength of character/condition:	Improve and Conserve
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Capacity analysis

Criteria	Importance	A=5	B=4	C=3	D=2	E=1	Total
1/ Landscape features							
Slope analysis	Primary (x1.5)			✓			4.5
Vegetation enclosure	Primary (x1.5)		✓				6
Complexity / scale	Secondary (x1)				✓		2
Condition	Secondary (x1)			✓			3
Sub total							15.5
2/ Visual features							
Openness to public view	Secondary (x1)			✓			3
Openness to private view	Secondary (x1)		✓				4
Relationship with existing urban conurbation	Primary (x1.5)					✓	1.5
Prevention of coalescence	Primary (x1.5)				✓		3
Scope to mitigate the development	Primary (x1.5)				✓		3
Sub total							14.5
3/ Landscape value							
Strength of character and condition	Secondary (x1)			✓			3
Sub total							3
Overall capacity profile (1/ + 2/+ 3/) = 33							

Overall Capacity:

Low

Landscape Capacity Analysis form

Parcel No.: 5d

Settlement: Witham

Landscape Setting Area: W5

Surveyor: IJ/LH

Date surveyed: 17/02/2015

Parcel Description

Strength of character/condition			
Strength of character	Weak	Moderate	Strong
S1/ Impact of landform	Insignificant	Apparent	Dominant/Prominent
S2 Impact of landcover *	Insignificant	Apparent	Dominant/Prominent
S3/ Historic pattern *	Insignificant	Apparent	Dominant/Prominent
S4/ Tranquillity	Discordant	Moderate	Tranquil
S5/ Distinctiveness /rarity	Frequent	Unusual	Unique/rare
S6/ Visual unity	Incoherent	Coherent	Unified
Totals * Prime character if a tie			Strong
Condition	Poor	Moderate	Good
C1/ Landcover change	Widespread	Localised	Insignificant
C2/ Age structure of tree cover *	Over mature	Mature or young	Mixed
C3/ Extent of semi-natural habitat survival *	Relic	Scattered	Widespread/linked
C4/ Management of semi-natural habitats	Poor	Not obvious	Good
C5/ Survival of cultural pattern (fields and hedges)	Declining/relic	Interrupted	Intact
C6/ Impact of development	High	Moderate	Low
Totals * Prime condition if a tie		Moderate	
Strength of character/condition:	Conserve and Restore		

Capacity analysis

Criteria	Importance	A=5	B=4	C=3	D=2	E=1	Total
1/ Landscape features							
Slope analysis	Primary (x1.5)			✓			4.5
Vegetation enclosure	Primary (x1.5)		✓				6
Complexity / scale	Secondary (x1)				✓		2
Condition	Secondary (x1)				✓		2
Sub total							14.5
2/ Visual features							
Openness to public view	Secondary (x1)			✓			3
Openness to private view	Secondary (x1)		✓				4
Relationship with existing urban conurbation	Primary (x1.5)					✓	1.5
Prevention of coalescence	Primary (x1.5)			✓			4.5
Scope to mitigate the development	Primary (x1.5)			✓			4.5
Sub total							17.5
3/ Landscape value							
Strength of character and condition	Secondary (x1)			✓			3
Sub total							3
Overall capacity profile (1/ + 2/+ 3/) = 35							

Overall Capacity:

Medium-Low

Landscape Capacity Analysis form

Parcel No.: 5e

Settlement: Witham

Landscape Setting Area: W5

Surveyor: IJ/LH

Date surveyed: 17/02/2015

Parcel Description

Strength of character/condition			
Strength of character	Weak	Moderate	Strong
S1/ Impact of landform	Insignificant	Apparent	Dominant/Prominent
S2 Impact of landcover *	Insignificant	Apparent	Dominant/Prominent
S3/ Historic pattern *	Insignificant	Apparent	Dominant/Prominent
S4/ Tranquillity	Discordant	Moderate	Tranquil
S5/ Distinctiveness /rarity	Frequent	Unusual	Unique/rare
S6/ Visual unity	Incoherent	Coherent	Unified
Totals * Prime character if a tie	Weak		
Condition	Poor	Moderate	Good
C1/ Landcover change	Widespread	Localised	Insignificant
C2/ Age structure of tree cover *	Over mature	Mature or young	Mixed
C3/ Extent of semi-natural habitat survival *	Relic	Scattered	Widespread/linked
C4/ Management of semi-natural habitats	Poor	Not obvious	Good
C5/ Survival of cultural pattern (fields and hedges)	Declining/relic	Interrupted	Intact
C6/ Impact of development	High	Moderate	Low
Totals * Prime condition if a tie		Moderate	
Strength of character/condition:	Improve and Restore		

Capacity analysis

Criteria	Importance	A=5	B=4	C=3	D=2	E=1	Total
1/ Landscape features							
Slope analysis	Primary (x1.5)				✓		3
Vegetation enclosure	Primary (x1.5)			✓			4.5
Complexity / scale	Secondary (x1)			✓			3
Condition	Secondary (x1)		✓				4
Sub total							14.5
2/ Visual features							
Openness to public view	Secondary (x1)				✓		2
Openness to private view	Secondary (x1)		✓				4
Relationship with existing urban conurbation	Primary (x1.5)			✓			4.5
Prevention of coalescence	Primary (x1.5)	✓					7.5
Scope to mitigate the development	Primary (x1.5)			✓			4.5
Sub total							22.5
3/ Landscape value							
Strength of character and condition	Secondary (x1)			✓			3
Sub total							3
Overall capacity profile (1/ + 2/+ 3/) = 40							

Overall Capacity:

Medium-Low