



Braintree District Council

**Braintree District Settlement Fringes
Landscape Capacity Analysis For Halstead**

November 2007

CHRIS BLANDFORD ASSOCIATES

Environment Landscape Planning

**Braintree District Settlement Fringes
Landscape Capacity Analysis For Halstead**

November 2007

Approved By: Stephen Kirkpatrick

Signed: SK

Position: Senior Associate

Date: 22 November 2007

CHRIS BLANDFORD ASSOCIATES

Environment Landscape Planning

CONTENTS

- 1.0 INTRODUCTION**
- 1.1 Background to the Study**
- 1.2 Study Purpose and Objectives**
- 1.3 Approach and Methodology**

- 2.0 CONTEXT**
- 2.1 Planning Policy Context**
- 2.2 Landform and Drainage**
- 2.3 Landscape Character**

- 3.0 LANDSCAPE SENSITIVITY AND VALUE**

- 4.0 LANDSCAPE CAPACITY EVALUATION**

- 5.0 CONCLUSIONS**

FIGURES

- Figure 1 – Settlement Locations**
- Figure 2 – Landform and Drainage**
- Figure 3 - Settlement Evolution of Halstead**
- Figure H0 - Halstead Settlement Fringe Analysis Plan Overview**
- Figure H1 - Halstead Settlement Fringe Analysis (Plan 1)**
- Figure H2 - Halstead Settlement Fringe Analysis (Plan 2)**
- Figure H3 - Halstead Settlement Fringe Analysis (Plan 3)**
- Figure H4 - Halstead Landscape Capacity Evaluation Plan**

APPENDICES

- Appendix A: Methodology for Judging Landscape Capacity**
- Appendix B: Field Survey Sheet**

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

1.1.1 In July 2007 Braintree District Council commissioned Chris Blandford Associates (CBA) to prepare a detailed landscape capacity analysis (at 1:10,000 scale) of the fringes of eight key settlements to provide an evidence base for informing the preferred options stage of the Core Strategy for the Local Development Framework (LDF). The study has been informed by the following:-

- The Braintree, Brentwood, Chelmsford, Maldon and Uttlesford Landscape Character Assessment (at 1:25,000 scale), which was prepared by CBA in September 2006.
- Historic landscape characterisation data provided by Essex County Council

1.1.2 The eight key settlements that were selected by Braintree District Council as having the potential for expansion are as follows:

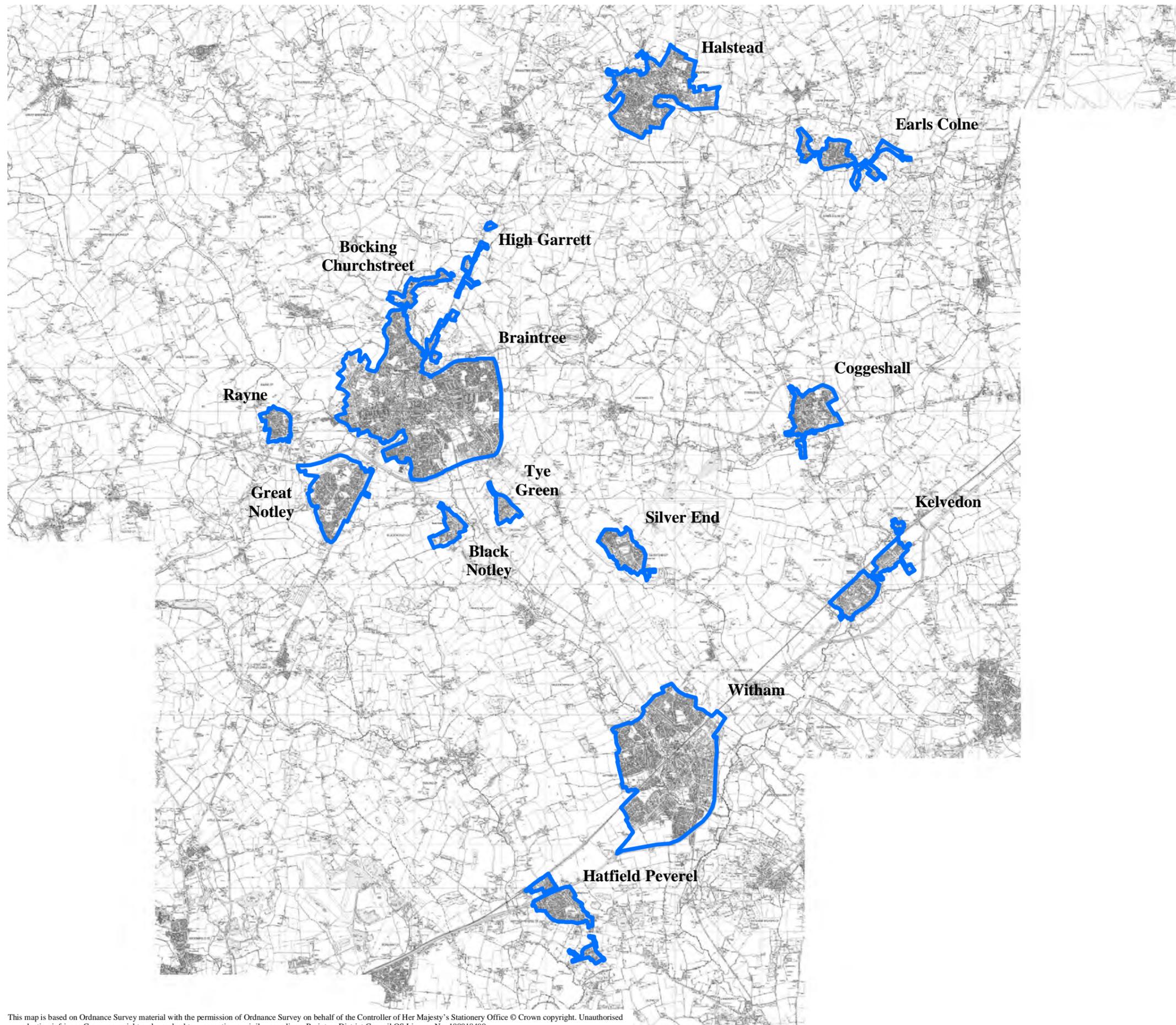
- Braintree and environs (including Bocking Churchstreet, Rayne, Great Notley, Black Notley and Cressing)
- Witham
- Halstead
- Silver End
- Hatfield Peverel
- Earls Colne
- Coggeshall
- Kelvedon

1.1.3 The locations of these settlements are identified at Figure 1.

1.2 Study Purpose and Objectives

1.2.1 The key objectives of the Study are to:

- provide a transparent, consistent and objective assessment of the sensitivity and capacity of the around the selected eight settlements to accommodate new development;



This map is based on Ordnance Survey material with the permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office © Crown copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings. Braintree District Council OS Licence No. 100018490.

KEY

 Settlements Within Study

0 1 2 Kilometres
1:90,000

- identify areas where new development could best be accommodated without unacceptable adverse landscape and visual impacts.

1.2.2 This report sets out the findings of the survey and analysis work for Halstead.

1.3 Approach and Methodology

1.3.1 The general approach of the Study has been informed by the Countryside Agency's '*Landscape Character Assessment – Guidance for England and Scotland: Topic Paper 6 – Techniques and Criteria for Judging Capacity and Sensitivity*' and by other landscape capacity studies undertaken by CBA. The methodology used to make judgements about landscape capacity and sensitivity is set out in Appendix A to this report.

1.3.2 For the purposes of this study, landscape sensitivity and capacity are defined as follows:

- **Landscape Sensitivity** – '*The extent to which a landscape type or area can accept change of a particular type and scale without unacceptable adverse effects on its character*'. (Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment 2002), based on judgements about landscape character sensitivity and visual sensitivity.
- **Landscape Capacity** – The relative ability of the landscape to accommodate new urban development without unacceptable adverse impacts, taking account of appropriate mitigation measures. It is a reflection of the interaction between (i) the inherent sensitivity or vulnerability of the landscape resource itself and (ii) the value attached to the landscape or specific elements.

1.3.3 The Study has used desk-based and field survey analysis to identify discrete 'Landscape Setting Areas', which have been primarily defined by the approximate extent of visibility for each settlement fringe, at a scale of 1:10,000. Each area has been analysed in terms of its visual, ecological and cultural sensitivity, taking into account the following three key factors (Refer to Appendix B for the Field Survey Sheet used for this study):

- Landscape Character – the range of natural, cultural and aesthetic factors that are unique to the setting area, and its overall landscape quality / condition;
- Visual Characteristics (Visual Prominence and Intervisibility) – the extent to which an area has prominent topography and/or is widely visible from surrounding areas, as well as its contribution to distinctive settlement setting e.g. the extent to which an area has distinctive backdrops, distinctive approaches/gateways, visually important woodland and trees, prominent skyline/ridgeline views, landmarks, urban edge description, green corridor linkages to the countryside, allows critical outward and inward views.
- Landscape Value – highlight existing national and/or local designations relating to each landscape setting area and any other criteria indicating landscape value e.g. tranquillity, remoteness, wildness, scenic beauty, cultural associations, conservation interests.

1.3.4 In order to assess the sensitivity of the landscape to development, assumptions have been made as to the likely form of any new built residential or employment development. It has been assumed that buildings would be either detached, semi-detached or terraced buildings, mostly 2 or 3 storeys in height. A strong structure of tree/shrub planting would be provided of an appropriate scale, extent and design to help ensure that the development sits well in the landscape. Employment buildings are likely to be large in scale, some 10 to 12 metres high, and again it has been assumed that these would be developed with an appropriate structure of tree/shrub planting to help integrate the buildings into the local landscape. It has not been possible at this stage in the LDF preparation process to make assumptions about the quantum of development required within the study area.

1.3.5 The assessment has comprised the following tasks:

(i) Desk Based Analysis

- Preparation of base maps for each settlement;
- Review of the relevant Landscape Character Types and Areas around each settlement from the Braintree District Landscape Character Assessment at the 1:25,000 contextual scale, and review of the intrinsic landscape qualities, sensitivities/vulnerabilities to change and guidelines as defined by the landscape character area study.

- Mapping of landscape features (vegetation, landform, key heritage features, water bodies/courses, etc.) and wildlife sites/heritage conservation designations. This has been based in part by data mapped in the Braintree District Landscape Character Assessment and from other available sources of data, such as the Essex Historic Landscape Characterisation datasets.
- Defining landscape setting areas by mapping the approximate extent of potential visibility of each settlement fringe (i.e. Landscape Setting Areas) derived from analysis of topography and woodland/tree cover mapping.
- Broadly defining and mapping the townscape character of each settlement at 1:10,000 scale to determine how it has developed and to identify the main features and areas that contribute to the built character of the settlement (e.g. greenspace, built form, viewing experience etc.)

(ii) Field Survey Analysis

- Identifying the extent of the landscape setting area for each settlement, based on the approximate extent of visibility of the settlement fringe, involving the validation and refinement of the preliminary 'Landscape Setting Areas' as necessary. A variety of open and partial views of the settlement fringe may be obtained from within each landscape setting area. It is possible that additional views may be obtained from outside the setting area but, in these cases, the settlement fringe would represent a significantly reduced component of these views compared to those obtained within the setting area. For example, glimpsed views may be obtained through or above trees/shrubs on the edge of the setting area or distant views may be obtained from elevated land located some distance beyond a setting area).
- Identifying and recording key views into and out of each settlement;
- Identifying and recording positive and negative qualities/features that contribute to the Landscape Setting Areas around each settlement – such as skylines/ridgelines, landmarks, visually important trees and woodland, distinctive approaches, tranquil areas, urban edges, green corridors/ 'bridges' to the countryside, urban and urban fringe land uses/activities, etc.
- Identifying and recording strategic opportunities for creating a strong landscape framework to mitigate development impact on landscape character and visual amenity through developing green networks, tree and woodland planting and other landscape enhancements.

(iii) Analysis/Reporting

Assessing the sensitivity/vulnerability of positive landscape qualities that contribute to the Landscape Setting Areas around each settlement to loss or alteration by development.

- Based on the assessment criteria set out in Appendix A, the capacity of each Landscape Setting Area to accommodate new housing and employment development has been identified. Opportunities have also been identified where housing and employment development would be least constrained in landscape and visual terms.
- Preparing a concise report setting out the purpose, methodology, main findings and recommendations as to the capacity of the fringes of each settlement to inform consideration of the general directions of growth to be included in the preferred options for the Core Strategy.

1.3.6 The extent of the study areas around each settlement broadly reflects the extent of visibility of each settlement fringe.

2.0 STUDY CONTEXT

2.1 Planning Policy Context

- 2.1.1 National planning policy relating to landscape sensitivity and capacity is contained in PPS1¹ and PPS7².

Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development

- 2.1.2 PPS1 sets out the Government's overarching planning policies on the delivery of sustainable development through the planning system. It states that one of the Government's objectives for the planning system is that planning should facilitate and promote sustainable urban and rural development by protecting and enhancing the natural and historic environment and the quality and character of the countryside (para 5). In its key principles, PPS1 states that '*a spatial planning approach should be at the heart of planning for sustainable development*' (para 13.iii) and '*design which fails to take the opportunities for improving the character and quality of an area should not be accepted*' (para 13.iv). When preparing development plans '*planning authorities should seek to enhance as well as protect biodiversity, natural habitats, the historic environment and landscape and townscape character*' (para 27). PPS1 also requires new design to be integrated into the existing urban form and natural and built environments (para 35).

Planning Policy Statement 7: Sustainable Development in Rural Areas

- 2.1.3 The policies in this statement apply to the rural areas, including country towns and villages and the wider, largely undeveloped countryside up to the fringes of larger urban areas. Two of the key objectives in PPS7 include the delivery of sustainable patterns of development and sustainable communities in rural areas. In its key principles, PPS7 states that '*All development in rural areas should be well designed and inclusive, in keeping and scale with its location, and sensitive to the character of the countryside and local distinctiveness*' (para 1.vi). PPS7 advises that Planning authorities should continue to ensure that the quality and character of the wider countryside is protected and, where possible, enhanced (para 15).

¹ Planning Policy Statement 1 : Delivering Sustainable Development (ODPM, 2005).

² Planning Policy Statement 7 : Sustainable Development in Rural Areas (ODPM, 2004).

Regional Planning Context

- 2.1.4 The East of England Regional Assembly (EERA) is currently producing the 'East of England Plan'. Once finalised this will guide planning and transportation policy up to 2021 and provide the statutory framework for local authorities such as Braintree District Council to produce more detailed local development plans for their areas. Also known as the 'Regional Spatial Strategy' (RSS), the Plan has a key role in contributing to the development of the region.
- 2.1.5 The RSS is important to Braintree District in that it will determine where development will take place. More specifically, it will consider the amount of housing and employment land needed for each District up to 2021. It will formulate the Regional Transport Strategy which has implications for the local road and rail network, and other forms of transport. It will include policies on the environment, energy and waste, sport and tourism.
- 2.1.6 Policy H1 of the RSS includes guidance for annual average provision for net additional dwellings within the East of England. The strategy requires Essex to achieve an annual average rate of 5330 net additional dwellings between 2006 to March 2021.

Local Planning Context

- 2.1.7 Braintree District Local Plan Review, was adopted by the Council on 25th July 2005 and provides a framework for the development of the Braintree District. The Plan will shape the development of the District in the period up to 2011, or until it is replaced in whole, or part, by the Local Development Framework documents as they are produced.
- 2.1.8 One of the key elements of the Plan recognises Braintree, Witham and to a lesser extent, Halstead, as the primary settlements to concentrate new development. In respect to the RSS and the Essex & Southend-on-Sea Replacement Structure Plan, the Plan aims to achieve completion of 10,300 net dwelling in the District between 1996 and 2011; of which, 60% is targeted for completion on undeveloped land. In addition, the Local Plan Review stresses the importance of protecting the character of rural areas, which include areas that are sensitive to change.
- 2.1.9 This study looks at capacity for new development within the urban fringes of the eight selected settlements and will contribute to the evidence base that will inform

the Core Strategy, which is a Development Plan Document forming part of the Local Development Framework. The Core Strategy sets out the spatial vision, spatial objectives and strategy for the development of the District.

2.2 Landform and Drainage (See Figure 2)

2.2.1 Landform within the Braintree District is predominantly elevated gently rolling Boulder Clay/Chalky Til plateau landscape, incised by v-shaped or u-shaped shallow river valleys, which cut through flat or gently undulating valley floor. The Colne, Blackwater, Pant and Stour river valleys are major landscape features, comprising locally significant scenic qualities.

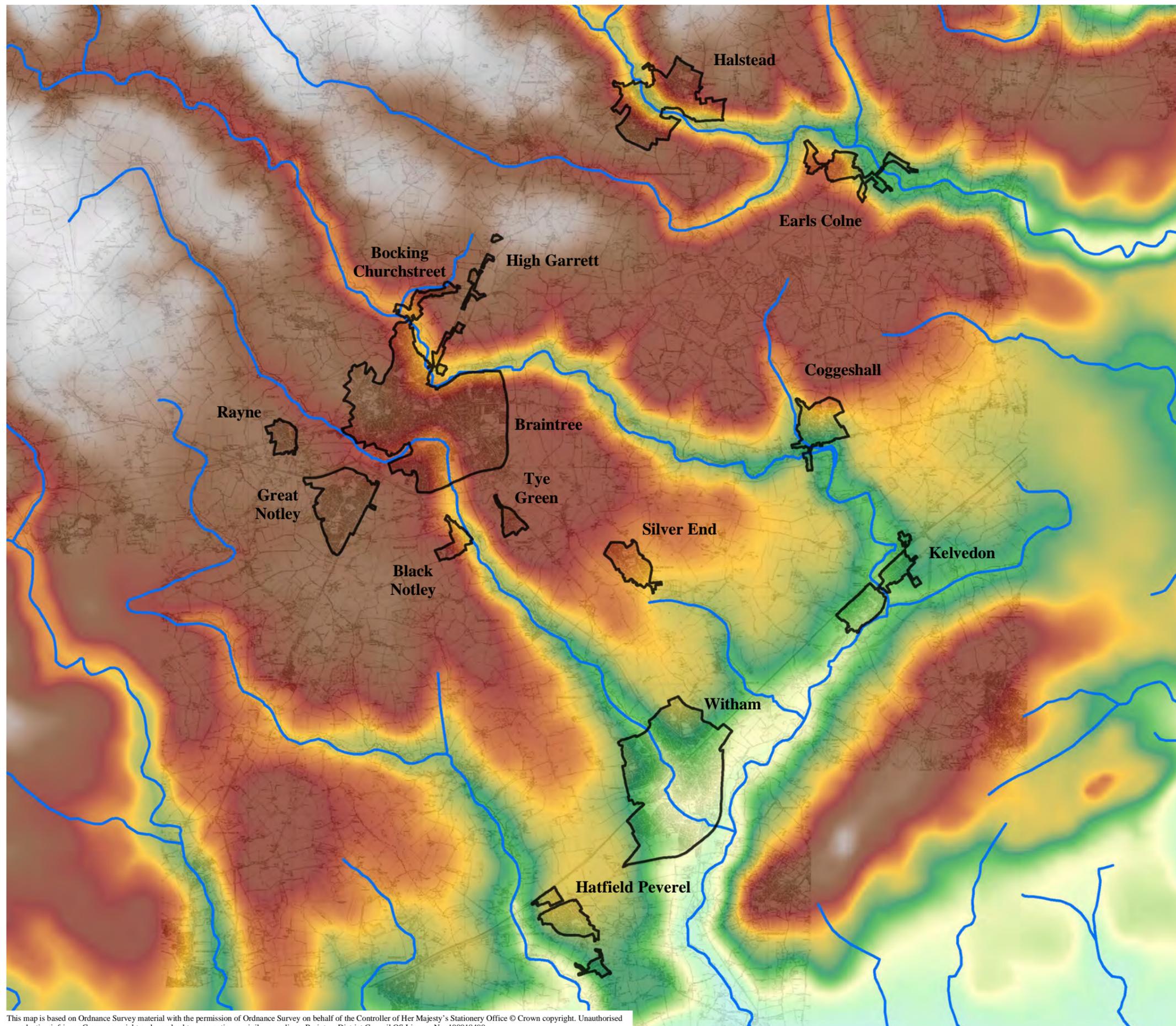
2.2.2 The meandering River Colne runs in a southeasterly direction through Halstead, towards Colchester. It is characterized by a shallow river valley with relatively steep valley sides, which varies in width throughout its length. There is a dense network of roads dissecting the river valley and bridging the river itself, providing access and creating interesting views along the river corridor.

2.2.3 The River Blackwater meanders from Braintree through Stisted, Bradwell, Coggeshall, Coggeshall Hamlet, Feering, Kelvedon, near Witham, Wickham Bishops, Langford to Beeleigh where it meets the Chelmer. As the river meanders down the valley, the valley floor becomes more wooded especially south of Coggeshall. The valley floor has large settlements such as Braintree and Witham along industries centered on the river such as watermills. Many of these mills have been converted to tourist attractions but maintain original features.

2.2.4 The River Stour is one of the County's earliest navigable rivers forms most of the County boundary between Essex and Suffolk. Running in a southerly direction through a wide pastoral and wooded valley in the north of the District, the river is an important recreational asset and forms a key focal point throughout the valley and surrounding slopes.

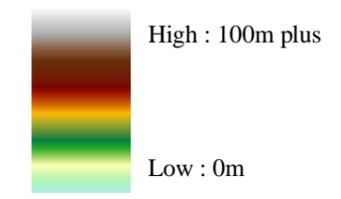
2.3 Landscape Character

2.3.1 A large proportion of the rural area in Braintree District consists of distinctive and attractive landscapes, which derive their intrinsic quality from a combination of



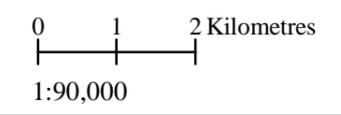
KEY

Elevation (Indicative)



— Rivers

□ Settlements Within Study



This map is based on Ordnance Survey material with the permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office © Crown copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings. Braintree District Council OS Licence No. 100018490.

E:\Projects\50014601_Braintree_Settlement_Fringe_LCA\GIS\Projects\firstdraft\01_topo_revB.mxd

Figure 2
Landform and Drainage

natural and cultural features including topography, vegetation cover, river systems and historic features.

- 2.3.2 The Braintree, Brentwood, Chelmsford, Maldon and Uttlesford Landscape Character Assessment was undertaken to inform land use planning and land management decisions. The Study involved the combination of desk study research and field survey analysis that identified and mapped generic Landscape Types and geographically unique Landscape Character Areas at 1:25,000 scale.
- 2.3.3 Three different Landscape Character Types were identified in Braintree District: River Valley Landscapes, Farmland Plateau and Wooded Farmland Landscapes; all of which contribute to a varied landscape setting to settlements within the district.
- 2.3.4 The character of the landscape with Braintree district is predominantly elevated gently rolling Boulder Clay/Chalky Til plateau landscape, incised by shallow river valleys, which create subtle variety. Although the valleys are not prominent in terms height or steepness, they provide a distinct contrast to the flat or gently undulating landscape generally characteristic of the valley floor. The Valleys also give rise to variations in land use, such as traditional grazing pastures in the floodplain and arable cultivation on the drier slopes. Such variations contribute to the visual interest of the landscape setting to settlements within the District.
- 2.3.5 Many of District's settlements are multi-period in date and some have been occupied more or less continuously since the Late Iron Age or Roman period. However, they can be broken down into the following main period groupings:-
- The Roman towns fall into two groups; those founded on sites previously occupied in the Late Iron Age and those that appear to have been 'greenfield' sites. They are nearly all at important points on the communications network, and often take the form of ribbon development along a routeway with little planned internal layout.
 - The Saxon towns fall into two groups, those that were founded as *burhs* by Edward the Elder at the beginning of the 10th century and those that were monastic foundations. The Domesday Book shows that many of the medieval towns were thriving villages by the end of the Saxon period, although not necessarily urban in character.

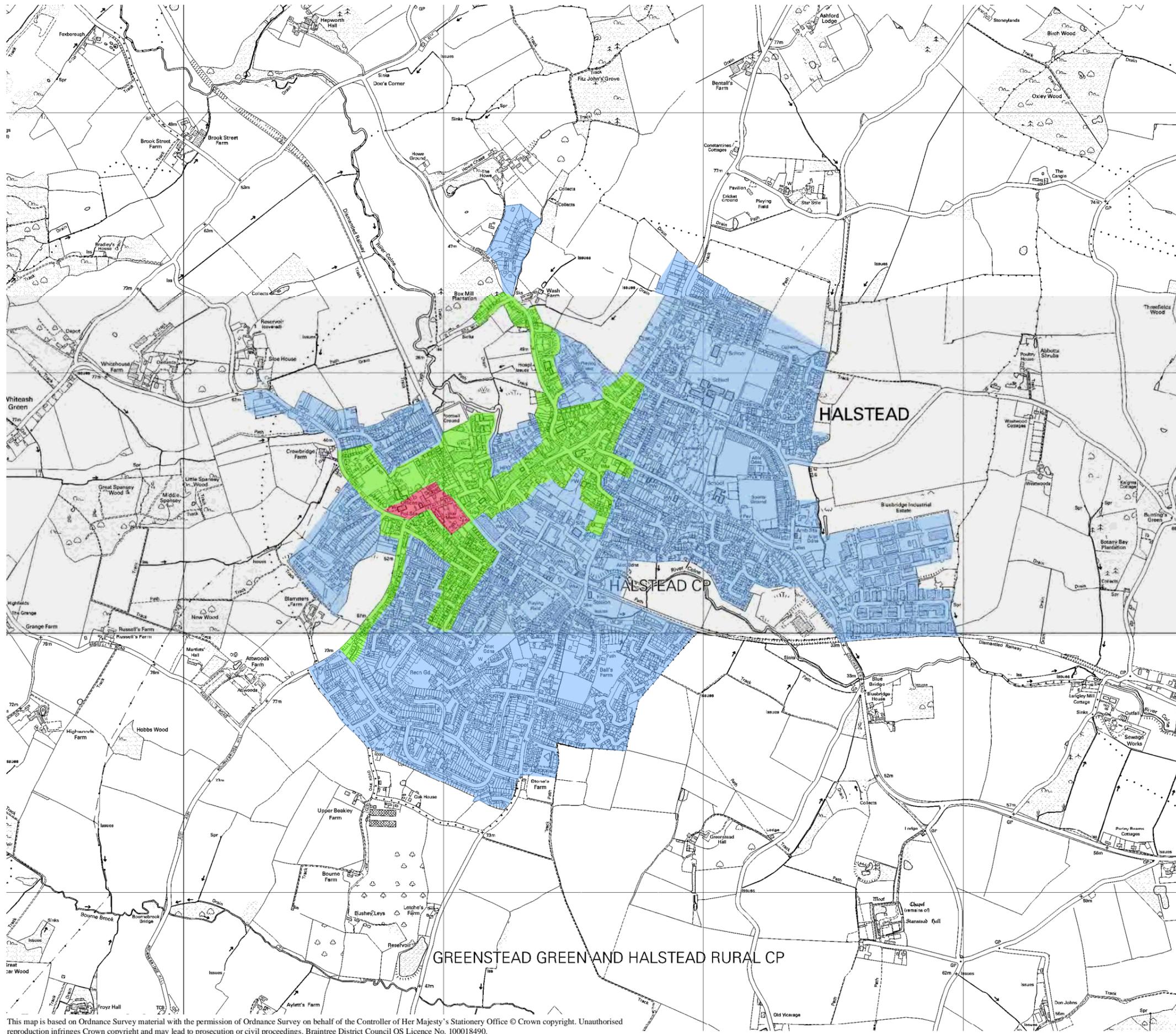
- The medieval towns are mainly small market towns, but within that group there are variations on this theme. A number of medieval towns failed to develop in the later medieval and early post-medieval, and are now no more than villages, whilst others prospered and grew.

2.3.6 Essex is fortunate in the quality of its historic towns, particularly in regard to the built environment. Many still retain a definite 'historic' identity and show clearly the stages of their development through the centuries. The key stages in the evolution of Halstead are illustrated on Figure 3.

2.3.7 The historic landscape setting to Halstead and the form and character of surrounding settlements in the District are strongly related, both having developed over many centuries in response to changing patterns of land use. A mixture of settlement sizes characterise the District from farmsteads to large sprawling settlements with modern extensions and industrial units and derelict water mills. Settlements are generally aligned along the river, with some clustering at crossing-places, as at Earls Colne, Halstead, Sible Hedingham and Great Yeldham. On the valley sides, traditional small settlements and isolated farmsteads with limited modern development occur. Church towers, traditional villages, farmsteads, barns and mills form distinctive features. Away from the larger settlements, there is an overall sense of tranquility, with a network of quiet rural lanes and public rights of way winding through the landscape.

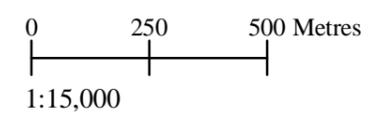
2.3.8 The vernacular architecture of settlements present important features in the landscape, including timber frames, colour wash walls and thatched roofs found along the river valley floor as well as the top of the valley sides. Ancient churches within small settlements or isolated amongst farmlands are a key characteristic of the district. Halls are often associated with villages such as Black Notley, Bocking Churchstreet, Maplestead Hall and Twinstead Hall, contributing to the character and overall strong sense of place within the area. The villages and hall provide landmarks in the views across the farmland. However, in some cases, the integrity of vernacular buildings is diluted by more recent encroaching developments.

2.3.9 The woodlands are a strong and unifying characteristic in the District, with blocks of mature mixed and deciduous woodland (including areas of ancient and semi-natural woodland); copses, hedges and mature single trees. Visibility within the District is commonly influenced by a combination of topography and woodland



KEY

- Historic Core
- Victorian Expansion c1880
- Modern Expansion



This map is based on Ordnance Survey material with the permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office © Crown copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings. Braintree District Council OS Licence No. 100018490.

E:\Projects\50014601_Braintree_Settlement_Fringe_LCA\GIS\Projects\firstdraft\halstead\50014601_setevo.mxd

Figure 3
 Settlement Evolution
 of Halstead

distribution. For example, views west of Halstead tend to be framed by the hedges and woodland, creating a mixture of enclosed and open views, with some distant channelled views to Halstead.

- 2.3.10 Trees, hedgerows and woodland make a significant and positive contribution to the appearance of the landscape in the strategy area. They help to break up extensive tracts of land into a more human scale, thus creating greater visual interest. They also provide valuable screening for new developments, allowing better integration with the existing landscape. This is particularly important in the open and plateau landscape, characteristic of many parts of the District.

3.0 LANDSCAPE SENSITIVITY AND VALUE

Introduction

This section sets out an assessment of the sensitivities and value of the various landscape setting areas immediately surrounding the fringes of Halstead. A total of three Settlement Fringe Analysis Plans have been prepared to help identify the key landscape, visual, heritage and ecological issues that are relevant to each Landscape Setting Area. The extent of each analysis plan is illustrated at Figure H0: Settlement Fringe Analysis Overview Plan.

3.1 LANDSCAPE SETTING AREA H1 (refer to Landscape Assessment Figure H1)

3.1.1 Location

This landscape setting area lies on north-western edge of Halstead, which centres on the Colne River Valley, and extends north-westwards from the settlement to Halstead Road.

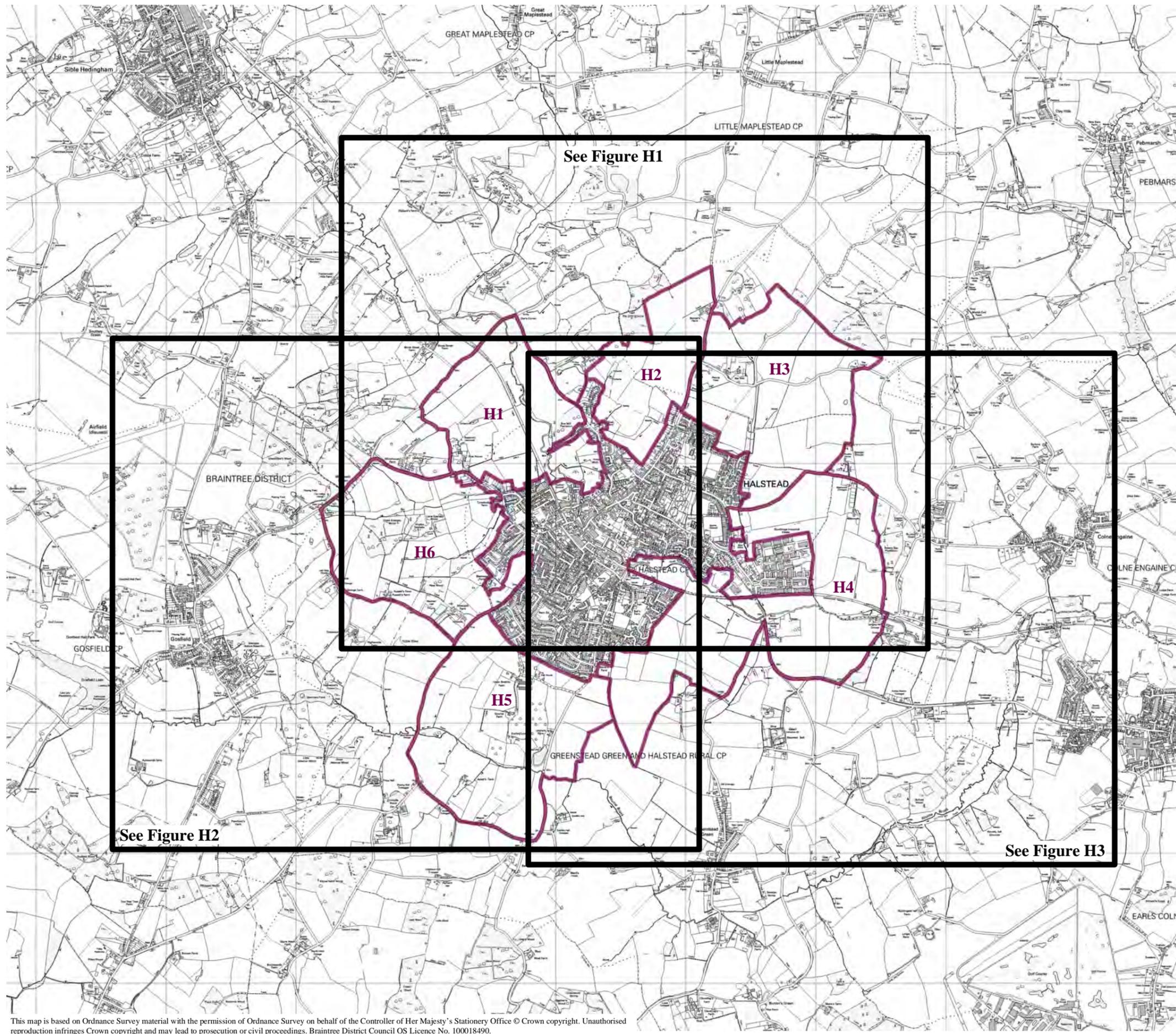
Landscape and Visual Baseline

3.1.2 Landform and Drainage

- Area occupies a relatively shallow valley with its sideslopes descending to the River Colne, which meanders through the area in a south-easterly direction towards Halstead town centre;
- The south-western side of the valley rises up to form a knoll at some 70m AOD.

3.1.3 Land Use

- Predominantly arable farmland with pockets of pasture;
- Large areas of rough grassland, pasture and blocks of woodland, particularly along river corridor;
- Dismantled railway through centre of area;
- Woodland plantation in eastern part;
- Woodland block, north of Sloe House;
- Allotment gardens in south-eastern corner, near settlement edge.



KEY

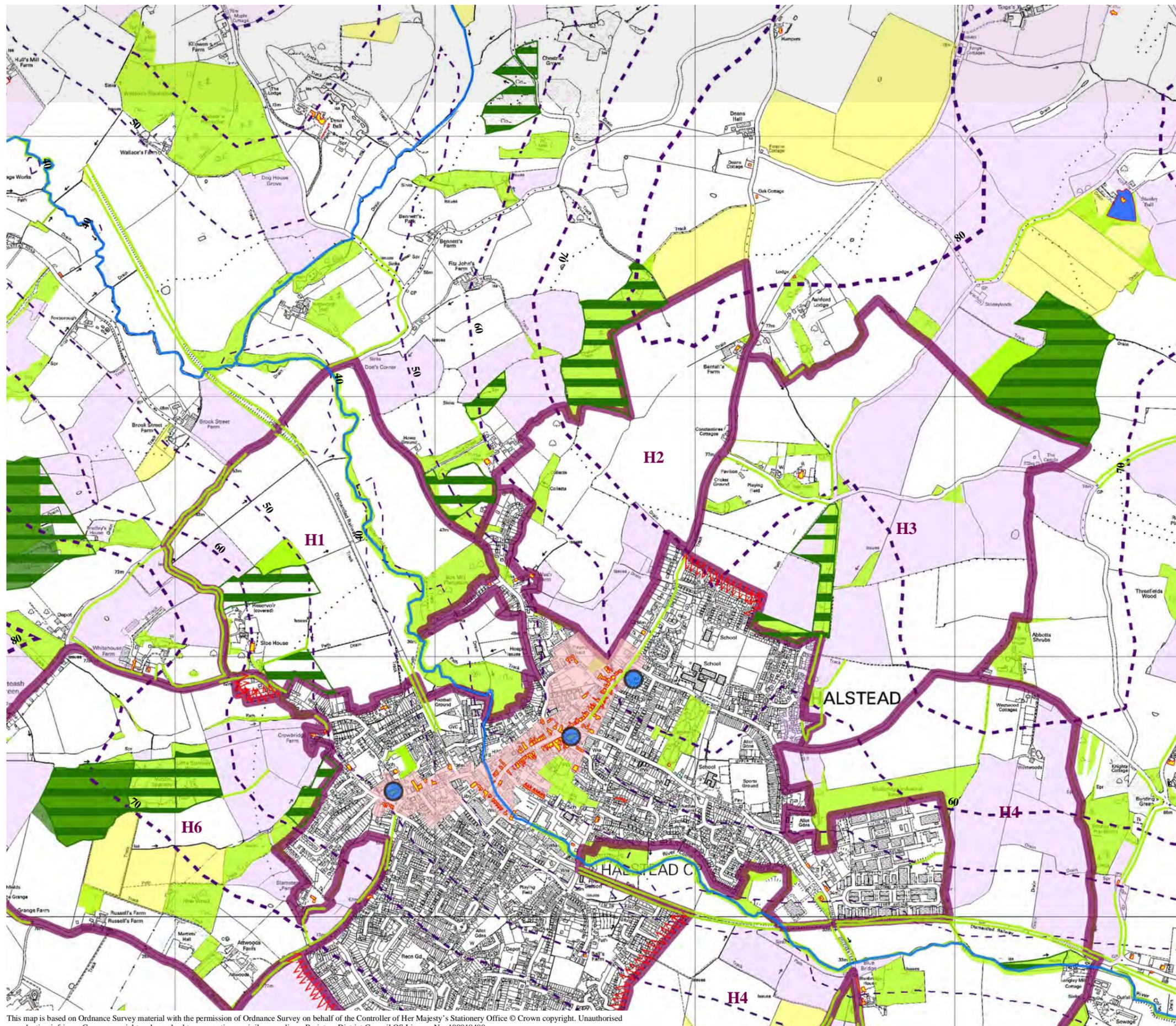
 Landscape Setting Areas (see Settlement Fringe Analysis Plans H1-H3)

0 0.5 1 Kilometres

1:30,000

This map is based on Ordnance Survey material with the permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office © Crown copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings. Braintree District Council OS Licence No. 100018490.

E:\Projects\50014601_Braintree_Settlement_Fringe_LCA\GIS\Projects\firstdraft\halstead\50014601_h0_revD.mxd



KEY

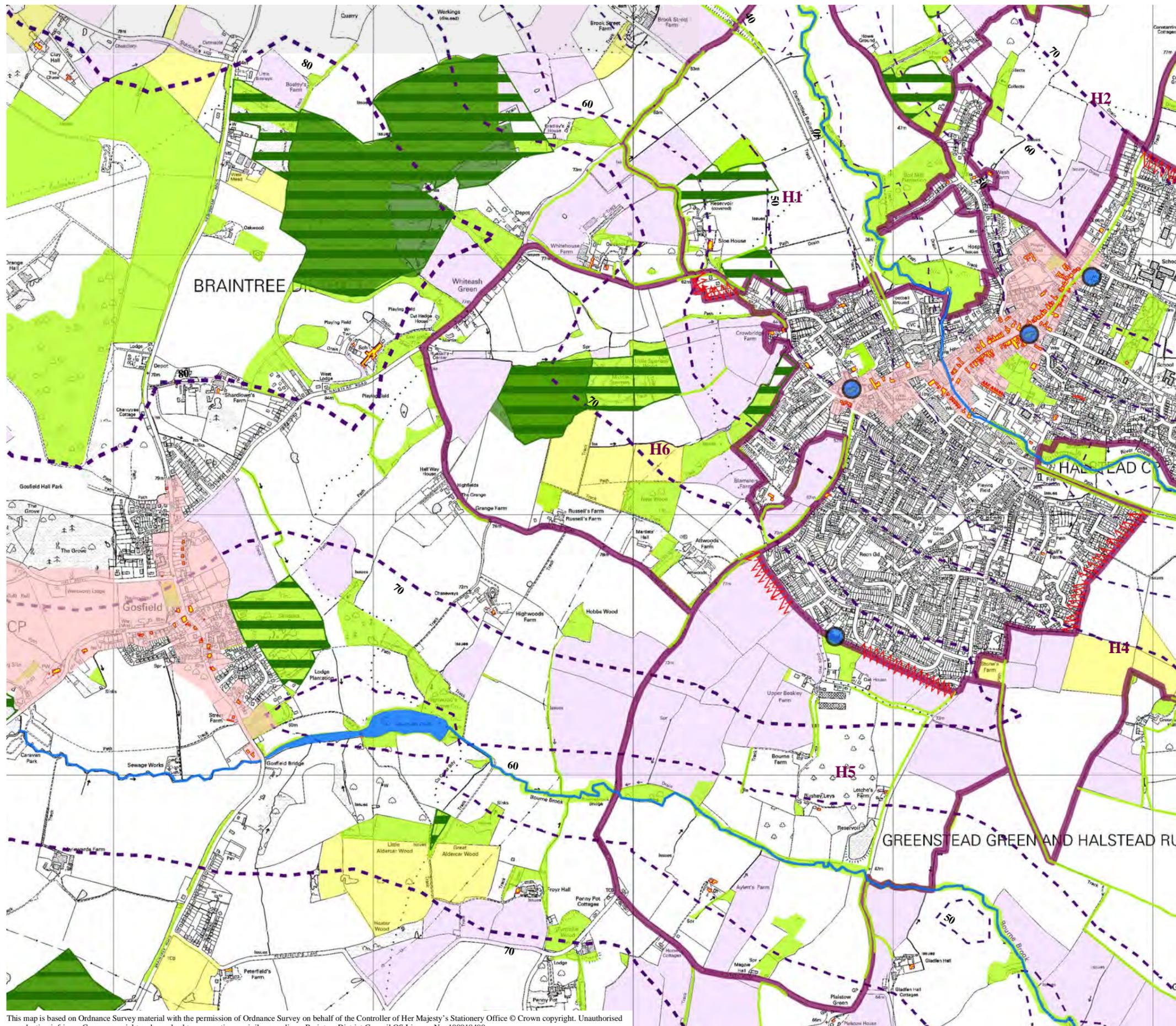
-  Landmarks
-  Harsh Abrupt Urban Edges
-  50
-  80
-  Landscape Setting Areas
-  Water Courses and Water Bodies
-  Approximate Extent of Key Woodland Blocks and Tree Belts
-  Ancient Woodland
-  Pre-18th century enclosure
-  18th-19th century enclosure
-  Sites of Special Scientific Interest
-  County Wildlife Sites
-  Listed Buildings
-  Ancient Monuments
-  Conservation Areas

0 250 500 Metres
1:15,000

This map is based on Ordnance Survey material with the permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office © Crown copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings. Braintree District Council OS Licence No. 100018490.

E:\Projects\50014601_Braintree_Settlement_Fringe_LCA\GIS\Projects\firstdraft\halstead\50014601_h1_revC.mxd

Figure H1
Halstead Settlement
Fringe Analysis (Plan 1)



KEY

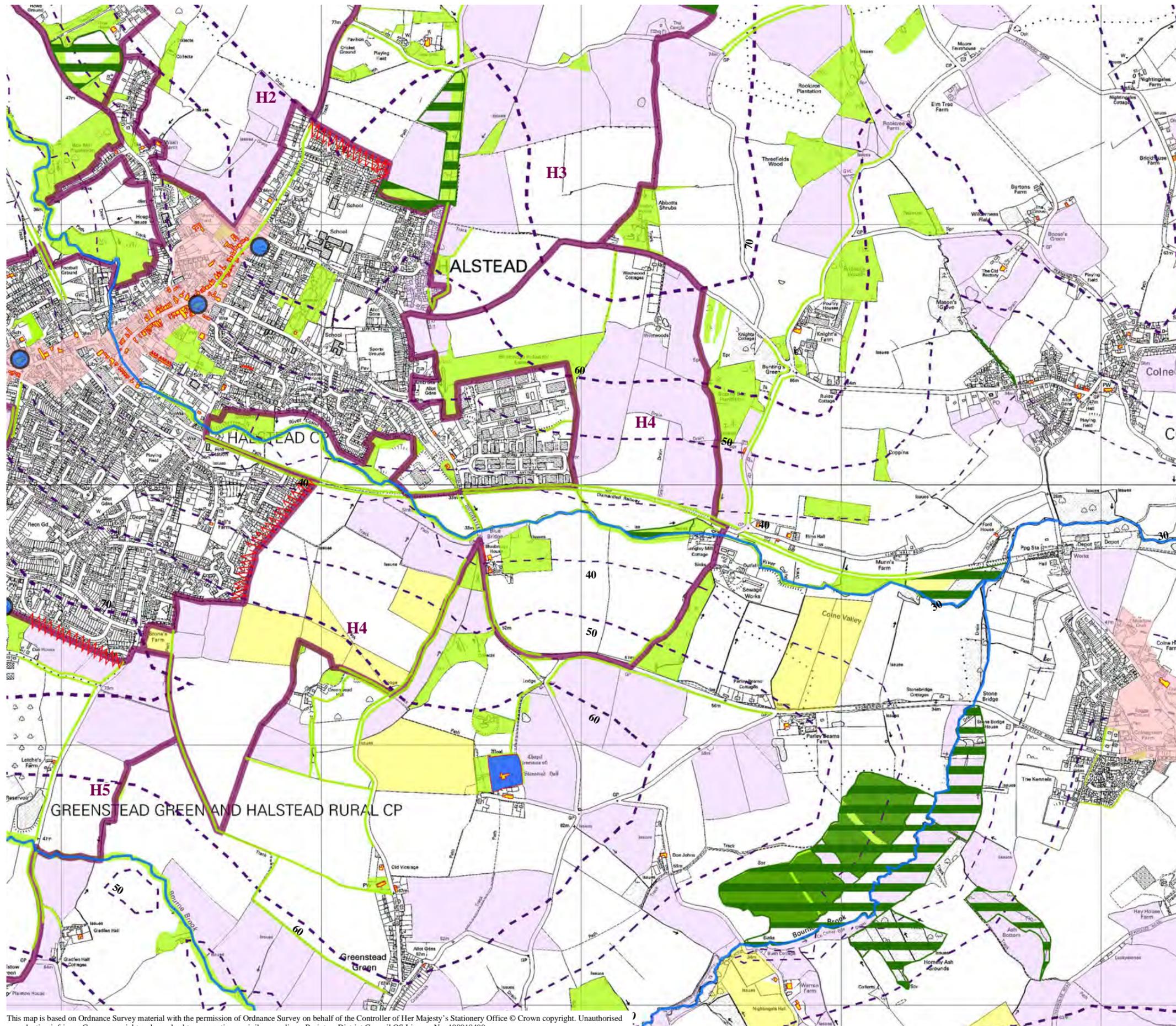
- Landmarks
- Harsh Abrupt Urban Edges
- 50 Contours (mAOD)
- 80 Contours (mAOD)
- Landscape Setting Areas
- Water Courses and Water Bodies
- Approximate Extent of Key Woodland Blocks and Tree Belts
- Ancient Woodland
- Pre-18th century enclosure
- 18th-19th century enclosure
- Sites of Special Scientific Interest
- County Wildlife Sites
- Listed Buildings
- Ancient Monuments
- Conservation Areas

0 250 500 Metres
1:15,000

This map is based on Ordnance Survey material with the permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office © Crown copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings. Braintree District Council OS Licence No. 100018490.

E:\Projects\50014601_Braintree_Settlement_Fringe_LCA\GIS\Projects\firstdraft\halstead\50014601_h2_revC.mxd

Figure H2
Halstead Settlement
Fringe Analysis (Plan 2)



KEY

- Landmarks
- Harsh Abrupt Urban Edges
- 50 Contours (mAOD)
- 80 Contours (mAOD)
- Landscape Setting Areas
- Water Courses and Water Bodies
- Approximate Extent of Key Woodland Blocks and Tree Belts
- Ancient Woodland
- Pre-18th century enclosure
- 18th-19th century enclosure
- Sites of Special Scientific Interest
- County Wildlife Sites
- Listed Buildings
- Ancient Monuments
- Conservation Areas

0 250 500 Metres
1:15,000

This map is based on Ordnance Survey material with the permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office © Crown copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings. Braintree District Council OS Licence No. 100018490.

E:\Projects\50014601_Braintree_Settlement_Fringe_LCA\GIS\Projects\firstdraft\halstead\50014601_h3_revC.mxd

3.1.4 **Vegetation**

- Medium to large-scale arable fields with small grass paddocks and pasture used for grazing horses in western parts;
- River corridor is well-enclosed by streambank vegetation, woodland copses and plantations;
- Substantial mature woodland plantation in eastern part, including coniferous species;
- Species-rich grassland north and south of Sloe House;
- Belts of trees and shrubs lining dismantled railway and perimeter roads, including Hedingham Road, Sloe Hill, Halstead Road
- Generally intact hedgerow structure, with varying condition and some large trees along field boundaries in western parts;
- Some fragmented and removed hedgerows within central parts;
- Mature woodland surrounding the western and southern edges of the allotments;
- Good structure of vegetation surrounding Sloe House including woodland, trimmed hedgerows, isolated mature trees and grassland;
- Good variety and structure of vegetation within allotments.

3.1.5 **Access**

- Provides a bridge to the countryside as it is well accessed by a number of public footpaths, which connect Hedingham Road, Sloe Hill, Halstead Road and northern urban fringes of Halstead, including routes alongside the dismantled railway.

3.1.6 **Settlement Edge**

- Northern settlement fringe of Halstead, west of the dismantled railway, includes mainly modern terraced and semi-detached housing, is softened in parts by field hedgerows and tree/shrub planting within rear gardens;
- East of the dismantled railway, settlement fringes include a mixture of modern and Victorian buildings, which are contained by trees and shrubs along the river corridor, within allotments and within sporting fields;
- Allotments and sporting fields lie in central section of settlement fringe forming indentations of open space;

- Some ribbon development occurs along Hedingham Road, mainly comprising a variety of vernacular style houses with small scale pasture and arable fields; well-contained to the north by a large woodland plantation;

3.1.7 **Visual Appraisal**

- Visibility within setting area is varied, reflecting variation in vegetation structure and topography;
- Some open views to modern detached and semi-detached houses west of dismantled railway, which form a poorly integrated and highly visible edge within the local landscape due to sparse vegetation structure / loss of hedgerows;
- Settlement edges east of dismantled railway are well-enclosed from much of the area by relatively high land on the valley side, by Box Mill Plantation and a strong structure of trees and shrubs within the allotments and lining the river;
- Open views from central parts to historic Sloe House, located amongst a strong structure of vegetation including mature trees and shrubs, and often viewed against a wooded skyline;
- Visibility within parts west of dismantled railway, near the settlement fringe is fairly open, due to loss of hedgerows and limited mature vegetation;
- Tree belts along roads combined with scattered woodland blocks and copses within the local landscape, including the Box Mill Plantation, contribute to a wooded skyline;
- Channelled northern views within central parts towards the upper river valley, often framed by woodland;
- Expansive views within central parts due to some loss of hedgerows, open and partial views to the northern fringes of Halstead and channelled northerly views across farmland river valley;
- Distant skyline views to church steeple within Halstead town centre;
- Filtered views to rooftops within residential areas of southern Halstead's from elevated eastern parts.

Evaluation

3.1.8 **Landscape Character Sensitivity**

- Area provides a medium to high sensitivity overall due to its patterns of semi-natural vegetation lining the river, a largely intact field enclosure pattern with some hedgerows in good condition, substantial blocks of mature woodland,

generally contained and well-integrated edges, its strength of character and unity, all combining to form a generally unified, rural river valley setting to north Halstead;

- Areas of open grassland combined with tree/shrub belts, along river valley and dismantled railway, contribute to a generally unified corridor of open space that leads to the north-western part of Halstead;
- Belts of trees and shrubs lining Hedingham Road, contribute to a well-wooded and distinctive approach to the settlement;
- Area generally provides a strong contribution to the setting of the town;
- Eastern part of area dominated by distinctive Victorian buildings;
- Area is well contained, providing a low to moderate contribution to the wider landscape on account of enclosure provided by landform and vegetation;
- Sensitivity increased within central part, between the dismantled railway and river corridor, as it forms a continuous belt of river corridor landscape with a strongly recognisable structure;
- Area provides a rural river valley setting to historic Sloe House and its grounds;
- Vegetation structure within the area is generally robust and in good condition, with the exception of some fragmentation to hedgerow structure in central parts;
- Sensitivity increased by extent of species-rich grasslands, north and south of Sloe House;
- Sensitivity slightly increased in north-western part by one pre-18th century field enclosure, defined by intact hedgerows;
- Distinctive and well-wooded northern approach road to Halstead along Hedingham Road;
- Sensitivity reduced by open views to some poorly integrated settlement edges west of dismantled railway.

3.1.9 **Visual Sensitivity**

- Medium sensitivity overall, due to its restricted visibility in the wider landscape and many areas of restricted views within area as a result enclosure provided by landform and vegetation;
- Elevated western parts are visually prominent within the setting area and mostly seen in context of historic Sloe House with a well-wooded backdrop, resulting in increased sensitivity of these parts. However, these parts are also prominent in views from Landscape Setting Area H2 and from the A131 the approach road into the north of Halstead;

- Sensitivity increased within low-lying central parts by the sense of visual continuity along the river corridor including areas of open grassland with occasional mature trees, clearly defined by the river and the dismantled railway
- Although north-eastern parts of the area are fairly enclosed from much of the area by woodland plantation and trees/shrubs lining the river, they are visible from the north-western edge of the town and its approach road;
- Church steeple and other buildings in northern Halstead are seen in open views from elevated parts of area, particularly to east of dismantled railway;

3.1.10 Landscape Value

Area includes two County Wildlife Sites:- Sloe Cottage Meadow and Sloe Hill Meadows, which are protected grasslands north and south of Sloe House respectively. Other important components of the landscape include:

- Special Landscape Area designation;
- Sloe House (listed building);
- Good network of public footpaths;
- Allotment gardens;
- Medium to high sense of tranquillity.

3.1.11 Summary of H1 Landscape Sensitivities and Value

Landscape Character Sensitivity	Visual Sensitivity	Landscape Value
Medium to high sensitivity due to semi-natural vegetation lining the river; hedgerows generally in good condition; its strength of character and unity, distinctive Victorian buildings adjacent to eastern parts of area, woodland blocks, all providing strong contribution to setting of town.	Medium sensitivity overall due to its limited visibility within the wider landscape. Increased sensitivity in western parts, which are visually prominent in views from the northwest. A well treed skyline and views of church steeple and houses in northern Halstead. Strong sense of visual continuity along river corridor.	Medium to high value due to Special Landscape Area, two protected grasslands (County Wildlife Sites); allotment gardens; public footpaths, including recreational routes alongside disused railway corridor; historic Sloe House (listed building); and medium to high sense of tranquillity.
Medium to high	Medium	Medium to high

3.2 LANDSCAPE SETTING AREA H2 (refer to Landscape Assessment Figure H1)

3.2.1 Location

This landscape setting area lies to the north of Halstead, between Hedingham Road and Sudbury Road, and extends northwards from northern fringe towards Fitz John's Grove.

Landscape and Visual Baseline

3.2.2 Landform and Drainage

- Landform within the area is gently rolling, descending in a south-westerly direction towards the settlement fringe from a plateau of high land located to north of Fitz John's Grove;
- Several drainage ditches within farmland, some following field boundaries.

3.2.3 Land Use

- Predominantly arable farmland with some peripheral fields of pasture;
- Mature blocks and copses of woodland and belts, mainly in western parts;
- Area abuts large woodland along its northern edge (Fitz John's Grove).

3.2.4 Vegetation

- Medium to large-scale arable fields, interspersed with small grass paddocks and pasture close to the settlement fringe;
- Large mature woodland (Fitz John's Grove abuts the northern boundary);
- Mature woodland belt extending northwards towards Fitz John's Grove;
- Some woodland copses south of Fitz John's Grove;
- Strong structure of mature trees and shrubs lining settlement fringe in southern part;
- Highly fragmented structure overall with substantial loss of hedgerows in northern and southern parts;
- Some large mature trees along field boundaries throughout the area;
- Some intact hedgerows in southern parts, defining small to medium-scale fields;
- Distinctive line of mature coniferous trees along Sudbury Road.

3.2.5 Access

- Provides a bridge to the countryside as it has a number of public footpaths, which connect to Hedingham Road, Sudbury Road, Fitz John's Grove and the settlement fringes of northern Halstead, including routes through arable and pasture farmland.

3.2.6 Settlement Edge

- Settlement fringes comprise mainly modern detached and semi-detached houses with some vernacular style detached houses and farmsteads, forming a fairly well-defined edge;
- Victorian housing along south-eastern edge;
- Church and water tower within northern part of Halstead act as landmark features;
- Some ribbon development along roads east of Hedingham Road;
- Sporting field and school within central part of settlement fringe.

3.2.7 Visual Appraisal

- Limited visibility from the wider landscape due to enclosure provided by elevated land to east and robust mature woodland to west;
- Good visibility within elevated central and northern parts due to rising landform and highly fragmented hedgerow structure, allowing expansive views;
- Views from area generally contained to the west by woodland but include open views over northern and western Halstead, with middle distance views of land within landscape setting areas H1 and H6;
- Distant views from central parts to church steeple within Halstead town centre;
- Some intervisibility with Landscape Setting Area H3, with channelled views across farmland through and above fragmented hedgerows;
- Woodland within western parts provides high levels of visual enclosure;
- Limited visibility within southern parts due to enclosure provided by low-lying land, tree belts, some robust hedgerows and trees/shrubs along sections of the settlement edge;
- Partial views to mixture of modern detached houses, Victorian detached houses and farmsteads along northern settlement fringe, including some distinctive buildings;

- Partial views to mostly vernacular style detached houses along Sudbury Road, which form a well-integrated edge to the setting area due to mature trees, shrubs and trimmed hedges associated with established rear gardens;

Evaluation

3.2.8 **Landscape Character Sensitivity**

- Area provides a only moderate sensitivity overall due to its recognisable but weak landscape structure, contributing to a highly fragmented landscape character;
- Area abuts a conservation area on northern edge of Halstead;
- Area provides an important rural setting to northern Halstead, with its large scale arable fields and ancient woodland;
- Area is fairly well contained to west, providing a moderate contribution to the wider landscape on account of enclosure provided by landform and woodland.
- Area provides a rural setting for listed buildings within the northern settlement fringes of Halstead, including Wash Farm, The Howe, Ashford Lodge and buildings along Sudbury Road and Mill Chase;
- Small and medium-scale pasture fields defined by hedgerows and hedgerow trees in southern parts;
- Belt of pre-18th century field enclosures in southern parts, defined by intact hedgerows, add a sense of time-depth to the area;
- Distinctive, elevated approach road to northern Halstead along Sudbury Road;
- Sensitivity of area reduced by loss of hedgerows within northern parts and fragmented hedgerow structure within central parts.

3.2.9 **Visual Sensitivity**

- Although the setting area is fairly enclosed from the wider landscape, it has a moderate to high visual sensitivity overall, as eastern parts occupy a highly prominent hill spur, which descends into north Halstead;
- Eastern parts are visually prominent from north and west Halstead, and from Landscape Setting Area H1;
- Elevated eastern and northern parts contribute to a distinctive approach to northern Halstead, with open elevated views, across farmland, of woodland and buildings in northern part of Halstead;

- Although southern parts are generally not visually prominent within the wider landscape, they are prominent in views from the northern settlement fringes of Halstead;
- Increased sensitivity in vicinity of listed buildings at Wash Farm and Bentall's Farm.

3.2.10 Landscape Value

Although the setting includes no nationally or locally designated landscapes, valued components of the landscape include:

- Special Landscape Area designation;
- Woodland on north-western boundary designated as a Country Wildlife Site;
- Several public footpaths cross area;
- Listed buildings at Bentall's Farm, Wash Farm, The Howe, Ashford Lodge and buildings along Sudbury Road and Mill Chase;
- Abuts Halstead Conservation Area;
- Moderate to high sense of tranquillity away from roads and settlement edges.

3.2.11 Summary of H2 Landscape Sensitivities and Value

Landscape Character Sensitivity	Visual Sensitivity	Landscape Value
Medium to high sensitivity overall due to its strong rural character, its contribution to the setting of northern Halstead, its belt of pre-18 th century field enclosures, and its location abutting the conservation area. It contains several listed buildings and provides the setting for many others.	Medium to high sensitivity overall due to its visual prominence within the local landscape.	Medium to high value due to Special Landscape Area, Country Wildlife Site on western boundary; public footpath network; listed buildings and moderate to high sense of tranquillity. Abuts Halstead conservation area.
Medium to high	Medium to high	Medium to high

3.3 LANDSCAPE SETTING AREA H3 (refer to Landscape Assessment Figure H1)

3.3.1 Location

This landscape setting area lies on the north-eastern edge of Halstead and extends out to the northeast as far as Oxley Wood.

Landscape and Visual Baseline

3.3.2 Landform and Drainage

- Landform within the area is generally rolling with wide flat tops but incised in its central parts by a wide stream valley,
- Stream meanders in a southerly direction through centre of area and on past eastern boundary of settlement;
- A number of farm dams and ponds are scattered throughout the area.

3.3.3 Land Use

- Mixture of arable and pasture with clusters of farmsteads along roads;
- Cricket ground in western part near Star Stile House;
- Small blocks of woodland in central parts.

3.3.4 Vegetation

- Medium to large-scale arable and pasture fields
- Small woodland blocks in central parts;
- Good structure of trees and shrubs lining stream, including groves of poplars;
- Strong structure of mature trees and shrubs within cricket grounds and in grounds of Star Stile House;
- Mature trees and shrubs lining settlement fringe west of the stream;
- Varied quality of hedgerows, but with mature trees along field boundaries throughout the area;
- Fragmented hedgerow structure in central and southern parts;
- Some newly planted hedgerows in western parts;
- Large mature woodland (Oxley Wood) forms part of the north-eastern boundary;
- Robust belts of trees and hedgerows lining some roads.

3.3.5 Access

- Provides a bridge to the countryside as it is well accessed by a number of public footpaths, which connect Star Stile, Sudbury Road and Brook Street with north-eastern Halstead, including routes alongside the stream.

3.3.6 Settlement Edge

- North-eastern fringes of Halstead dominated by modern detached and semi-detached houses, forming a fairly abrupt edge, but softened in some parts by tree/shrub planting and woodland;
- Eastern settlement fringes partly contained by tributary stream and softened in some parts by trees and shrubs lining the stream.

3.3.7 Visual Appraisal

- Limited visibility with wider landscape due to enclosure provided by rising landform and a robust structure of vegetation, including large mature woodlands, woodland blocks, and tree belts;
- Mature woodland, including Oakley Wood and woodland surrounding Ashford Lodge, enclose views to north;
- Some intervisibility between Landscape Setting Area H4 and southern parts of area, with elevated views over Colne River valley to modern detached and semi-detached brick houses within settlement fringes of southern Halstead;
- Views in southern parts are well-enclosed by low-lying topography and strong structure of mature trees and shrubs lining the stream; allowing only partial views to rooftops from elevated southern and eastern parts;
- Eastern elevated parts of area are highly prominent in views from settlement fringes of north-east Halstead;
- Generally good intervisibility between western parts of area;
- Streamside trees and shrubs, woodland blocks in central parts and rolling landform provide some visual separation between eastern and western parts of the area;
- Star Stile House is well-enclosed by tree belts, robust hedgerows and a strong structure of trees and shrubs within the grounds; allowing only glimpsed views of the house;
- Panoramic views to row of semi-detached houses along Colne Road from eastern parts;

- Open views to modern detached and semi-detached brick houses within settlement fringe in western part, forming an abrupt and visually prominent edge due to sparse peripheral vegetation;
- Views of cricket ground are well-enclosed due to robust hedgerows, and a strong structure of trees and shrubs within the grounds and along perimeter roads;
- Mature trees within town cemetery are a prominent feature in southern views towards the settlement, and disrupt views to Halstead Conservation Area;
- Some views of traffic movement through gaps in structural planting along perimeter roads.

Evaluation

3.3.8 **Landscape Character Sensitivity**

- Medium to high sensitivity overall due to its strong, generally unified, rural character and recognisable landscape structure with fields defined by hedgerows in many areas, and generally contained by framework of woodland and mature tree belts;
- Increased sensitivity within central parts due to patterns of semi-natural vegetation lining the tributary stream with groves of poplars, contributing to an intimate, tranquil and quite remote character within a strong rural setting;
- Provides an important rural setting to northern Halstead and to historic Star Stile House and grounds;
- Well-integrated and partly enclosed settlement fringe in southern parts, due to adjacent hill slopes and strong structure of trees/shrubs;
- Reduced sensitivity in south-western parts due to poorly integrated settlement fringe;
- Belt of pre-18th century field enclosures in central and north-western parts, defined by mostly intact hedgerow structure with some large mature trees along field boundaries.

3.3.9 **Visual Sensitivity**

- Varied, but with medium to high visual sensitivity overall due to visibility of settlement edges and the visual prominence of setting area as a whole in the wider landscape, especially in eastern parts where the land is open and rising - these parts are visually prominent in views from Halstead and from Landscape Setting Area H4;

- Western parts, to south of Star Stile House, provide a visual setting to northern settlement fringe but are seen in the context of existing built development along this fringe. These parts are generally not prominent in views from the wider landscape due to the enclosure provided by woodland, tree belts and tree/hedgerows in the fields on this elevated land.
- Increased visual sensitivity within the setting of Star Stile House (listed building);

3.3.10 Landscape Value

Vegetation lining the stream is protected for its biodiversity value (County Wildlife Site), an ancient woodland (Oxley Wood) and County Wildlife Site (grounds of Ashford Lodge) abuts the northern boundary to the area, Special Landscape Area designation, Star Stile House (listed building) and a number of public footpaths.

3.3.11 Summary of H3 Landscape Sensitivities and Value

Landscape Character Sensitivity	Visual Sensitivity	Landscape Value
Medium to high sensitivity overall due to its unified and strong rural character and recognisable landscape structure; belt of pre-18 th century field enclosures; its contribution to the setting of northern Halstead; an intimate, tranquil and quite remote character.	Varies across the area but medium to high sensitivity overall. Medium sensitivity in western parts where there is a relatively high degree of enclosure provided by field hedgerows and tree belts, but increased sensitivity in eastern parts, where open, rural rising slopes are visually prominent in views from northern Halstead and from the wider landscape.	Medium to high value overall due to Special Landscape Area, vegetation lining the stream, protected for its biodiversity value (County Wildlife Site), Star Stile house (listed building); and generally good access via public footpaths. Oxley Wood (ancient woodland) and grounds of Ashford Lodge (County Wildlife Site) abut northern boundary of area
Medium to high	Medium to high	Medium to high

3.4 LANDSCAPE SETTING AREA H4 (refer to Landscape Assessment Figure H3)

3.4.1 Location

The setting area lies on eastern edge of Halstead, extending southwards from the Halstead to Colne Engaine road, past the southern edge of Halstead.

Landscape and Visual Baseline

3.4.2 Landform and Drainage

- Area occupies a shallow valley. Its sideslopes gently descend towards the River Colne, which meanders through the centre of the area in a easterly direction from Halstead town centre;
- Far southern part of area occupies part of a ridge of high land;
- A number of small streams, ponds and drainage channels along some field boundaries.

3.4.3 Land Uses

- Predominantly arable farmland with pockets of pasture;
- Large areas of rough grassland, and blocks of woodland, particularly along river corridor;
- Dismantled railway through centre of area;
- Allotment gardens in western part of area, north of River Colne;
- Historic Bluebridge House and surrounds in centre of area, north of River Colne;
- Occasional cottages.

3.4.4 Vegetation

- Large arable fields, interspersed with some small to medium pasture fields;
- Trees and shrubs lining River Colne and small feeder streams, together with an area of marsh in eastern part, near Langley Mill Cottage;
- Robust belt of trees and shrubs lining dismantled railway;
- Recently established linear woodland plantation north of Bluebridge Industrial estate;
- Generally intact hedgerow structure, in varying condition, and some large mature trees along field boundaries throughout the area;
- Some loss of hedgerows within southern and central parts;

- Strong structure of mature trees and shrubs lining approach roads to Halstead, and within grounds of Bluebridge House

3.4.5 Access

- Provides a bridge to the countryside as good access is provided by a number of public footpaths, which connect Church Road, Colchester Road and Brook Street with east Halstead, including routes alongside the dismantled railway.

3.4.6 Settlement Edge

- Eastern settlement fringes of Halstead mainly comprise modern detached and semi-detached brick houses with a fairly abrupt edge but softened in some parts by tree/shrub planting along settlement edges, the dismantled railway, and river corridor and within the allotments.
- A large industrial estate protrudes out from the eastern settlement fringe, north of River Colne, and is well defined and contained by tree/shrub planting along the dismantled railway, field boundaries and a recently planted woodland plantation.
- Allotments lie in central part of settlement fringe and a wedge of open space, centred on the River Colne and the dismantled railway, protrudes into the built up area.

3.4.7 Visual Appraisal

- Visibility with wider landscape restricted by enclosure provided by rising landform and robust vegetation structure, including mature woodland blocks and belts, robust hedgerows and mature trees and shrubs within farmsteads and grounds of numerous historic halls. Area is, however, visually prominent in views from parts of valley further to west;
- Central parts of area under a strong urban influence from both industrial and residential buildings;
- Industrial estate is generally well-enclosed a strong structure of mature trees and shrubs along its edges; allowing only partial views to large-scale buildings from elevated southern and eastern parts;
- Open views to modern detached and semi-detached brick houses within settlement fringes, north of industrial estate, that form an abrupt and visually prominent edge in absence of peripheral vegetation;

- Partial views to modern detached and semi-detached brick houses within settlement fringes, south of dismantled railway, which form visually harsh and prominent edges;
- Good intervisibility between northern and southern parts due to their elevated location, the size of the fields and some loss of hedgerows;
- Visibility within central parts constrained by low-lying topography, tree belts, blocks of woodland, robust hedgerows and strong structure of vegetation along the river corridor and dismantled railway;
- Some intervisibility between Landscape Setting Area H3 and elevated northern, eastern and southern parts;
- Belts of trees and shrubs, lining roads leading to Halstead, contribute to a well-wooded and distinctive approach to the settlement, particularly along Church Road and Colchester Road;
- Bluebridge House is well-enclosed by robust hedgerows and a good structure of mature trees and shrubs within the grounds;
- Distant skyline views to church tower within Halstead town centre from western parts.

Evaluation

3.4.8 **Landscape Character Sensitivity**

- Area provides only a moderate contribution to wider rural landscape on account of the enclosure provided by the sideslopes of the valley and its ridgeline woodlands and tree belts;
- Area provides a rural setting to historic Greenstead Hall, Stanstead Hall, and Bluebridge House;
- Vegetation structure within the area is generally robust and of good condition, with the exception of small fields adjacent to settlement fringes north and south of the industrial estate;
- Vegetation structure along River Colne valley, dismantled railway and within allotment gardens, contribute to a well-vegetated and well-used corridor of open space that extends into central part of settlement fringe;
- Sensitivity increased by patterns of semi-natural habitat lining the river corridor, including areas of marsh and groups of trees/shrubs;
- Numerous pre-18th century field enclosures in eastern parts and some along the river corridor;

- Sensitivity reduced by some fragmentation and loss of hedgerow structure in southern and central parts and by partial views to large-scale buildings within Industrial Estate from elevated western parts;
- Distinctive character along well-wooded southern approach roads to Halstead along Church Road and Colchester Road;
- Strength of rural character significantly reduced by open and partial views of employment and residential development in eastern parts of Halstead. Medium sensitivity overall.

3.4.9 **Visual Sensitivity**

- Medium visual sensitivity overall, as the area is generally not prominent in views from the wider landscape due to the enclosure provided by ridgelines that surround the valley to the north and south, and by tree/hedgerows in the fields on this elevated land;
- Although elevated northern and southern parts are visually prominent within the setting area, they are seen in the context of open and partial views of existing built development on elevated slopes further to the west;
- Increased visual sensitivity in upper parts of slopes and within the setting of listed buildings, including Stanstead Hall and Bluebridge House.

3.4.10 **Landscape Value**

Area includes Langley Mill Marsh, a County Wildlife Site, located west of Langley Mill along the River Colne. Other valued components of the landscape include:

- Special Landscape Area designation;
- Listed buildings associated with Bluebridge House and surrounds;
- Good access to the area with a number of public footpaths;
- Allotment gardens;
- Moderate sense of tranquillity away from roads and settlement edges.

3.4.11 **Summary H4 of Landscape Sensitivities and Value**

Landscape Character Sensitivity	Visual Sensitivity	Landscape Value
<p>Sensitivities include its semi-natural habitat along the river; generally good condition of hedgerows and its contribution to the setting of eastern Halstead. However, strength of rural character significantly reduced by open and partial views of employment and residential development in eastern parts of Halstead. Medium sensitivity overall.</p>	<p>Medium sensitivity overall as it is generally a well-contained river valley landscape but with open and partial views of existing settlement from many parts of area.</p>	<p>Medium to high value due to Special Landscape Area, Langley Mill Marsh (County Wildlife Site); allotment gardens and public footpath network; its listed buildings and moderate sense of tranquillity.</p>
Medium	Medium	Medium to high

3.5 LANDSCAPE SETTING H5 (refer to Landscape Assessment Figure H2)

3.5.1 Location

The setting area lies to the south of Halstead, west of Bournbridge Road.

Landscape and Visual Baseline

3.5.2 Landform and Drainage

- The far northern part of area occupies a broad, elevated saddle of land. The remaining parts of area occupy the north and south facing slopes of a valley containing Bourne Brook, which drains to the east;
- Some drainage ditches and channels lining field boundaries;
- Reservoir along eastern edge of area.

3.5.3 Land Use

- Predominantly arable farmland, with clusters of farmsteads along roads;
- Grass paddocks and pasture close to the settlement fringe.

3.5.4 Vegetation

- Predominantly medium to large arable fields, with some small to medium pasture fields in northern parts;
- Mature blocks and copses of woodland trees/shrubs and woodland lining river;
- Tree belts lining roads, including Oak Road, some 150 metres to south of built edge;
- Robust hedgerows and intermittent groups of trees and shrubs lining some parts of settlement fringe, but vegetation structure reinforced by trees and hedgerows in adjacent fields;
- Generally intact hedgerows with many mature trees along field boundaries throughout the area;
- Loss of hedgerows in central parts.

3.5.5 Access

- Provides a bridge to the countryside as it has a number of public footpaths, which connect to Oak Road, Tidings Hill and Bourne Brook.

3.5.6 Settlement Edge

- Southern settlement fringes of Halstead are located on an elevated saddle of land and mainly comprise modern detached and semi-detached brick houses with a fairly abrupt edge, softened in parts by tree/shrub planting and mature hedgerows in adjacent pasture fields;
- Water tower (local landmark) and reservoir located in central part of settlement fringe.

3.5.7 Visual Appraisal

- Views within area generally comprise near to medium distance views of a well contained river valley landscape;
- Houses within the southern fringes of Halstead are well-enclosed from much of the area by landform and strong vegetation structure in northern parts of area, including robust hedgerows and trees along Oak Road and tree/shrub groups along the settlement edge; allowing only partial views to modern detached and semi-detached brick houses from most of setting area;
- North-eastern parts are fairly prominent in views from the wider landscape, with open views obtained from the rural land surrounding Greenstead Green village, which is located on a ridgeline south-east of the setting area;
- Intervisibility between eastern and western parts of the setting area is generally restricted by robust hedgerows, tree belt and strong structure of trees and shrubs within Connies Farm;
- Long distance views of land to the south-east of area are generally enclosed by substantial woodlands, including Stable Wood, New Wood, Cleveland Wood;
- Glimpses to Greenstead Green church steeple from elevated eastern parts;
- Sheds and water tower at Upper Beakley Farm are prominent in views from southern parts of area.

Evaluation

3.5.8 Landscape Character Sensitivity

- Area has a high sensitivity overall due to its patterns of semi-natural vegetation associated with woodlands and the river, its hedgerows generally in good condition, its contribution to a rural stream valley landscape and its generally

unified and strong rural character, and its contribution to the setting to southern Halstead;

- Area provides a moderate to high contribution overall to wider rural landscape as it forms part of a larger corridor of river valley landscape and is visible from adjacent areas;
- High sensitivity in central parts along the river valley, where mature blocks/copses of woodland and trees/shrubs lining the river contribute to an intimate, tranquil character within a strong rural setting;
- High sensitivity in upper southern and central parts due to well-treed skyline and high contribution to the wider landscape;
- Vegetation structure within the area is generally robust and of good condition;
- Distinctive and well-wooded approach road to northern Halstead along Hedingham Road;
- Strong structure of pre-18th century field enclosures in western parts, and along the settlement fringes of Halstead.

3.5.9 **Visual Sensitivity**

- Medium to high visual sensitivity overall as valley sideslopes are visually prominent in the wider landscape;
- Reduced sensitivity to north of Oak Road/north-east of Upper Beakley Farm due to enclosure provided by tree belts/robust hedgerows.

3.5.10 **Landscape Value**

Although the setting includes no nationally designated landscapes, valued components of the landscape include:

- Special Landscape Area designation;
- Good access to the area with a number of public footpaths;
- Listed buildings at Aylett's Farm, Bushey Leys and Letche's Farm, in eastern half of area;
- Sense of remoteness and tranquillity.

3.5.11 Summary of H5 Landscape Sensitivities and Value

Landscape Character Sensitivity	Visual Sensitivity	Landscape Value
High sensitivity overall due to its patterns of semi-natural vegetation, hedgerow structure in good condition, its strong structure of pre-18 th century field enclosures, its strong and generally unified rural character, which provides the setting to southern Halstead.	Medium to high visual sensitivity overall as the valley sideslopes are visually prominent in the wider landscape.	Medium to high value due to Special Landscape Area, good access to the area by public footpaths; listed buildings within scattered farms; and sense of remoteness and tranquillity.
High	Medium to high	Medium to high

3.6 LANDSCAPE SETTING H6 (refer to Landscape Assessment Figure H2)

3.6.1 Location

This landscape setting area lies on the western edge of Halstead, west of the A131 (Halstead Road) and between Russell's Road and Sloe Hill.

Landscape and Visual Baseline

3.6.2 Landform and Drainage

- Landform is rolling and heavily dissected by a number of small narrow stream valleys;
- A prominent ridgeline passes through the centre of area to meet the western fringes of Halstead.

3.6.3 Land Use

- Predominantly arable farmland with pockets of pasture in southern parts;
- Blocks and belts of woodland throughout the area, including a substantial woodland located along central ridgeline;
- Large areas of rough grassland alongside stream valleys;
- Farmsteads near settlement fringe and alongside roads;
- Detached houses with large rear gardens along Gosfield to Halstead road, in north-western part.

3.6.4 Vegetation

- Substantial woodlands in central and southern parts, including one ancient woodland on central ridgeline (Great Spansey Wood);
- Mosaic of medium to large-scale arable fields surrounding Great Spansey Wood;
- Tree/shrubs groups and tall grasses lining small field streams;
- Generally intact hedgerow structure with varying condition and some large mature trees along field boundaries throughout the area;
- Some loss of hedgerows within western and southern parts;
- Strong structure of mature trees and shrubs lining western approach roads to Halstead, and within grounds of Attwoods.

3.6.5 Access

- Provides a bridge to the countryside as good access is provided by a number of public footpaths, which connect Halstead Road, Russell's Road and New Wood with west Halstead.

3.6.6 Settlement Edge

- Western fringes of Halstead mainly comprise modern detached and semi-detached brick houses with a fairly abrupt edge and softened in some parts by woodland and tree/shrub planting along settlement edges and field streams;
- Group of more varied Victorian buildings to east of Crowbridge Farm;
- Some ribbon development along Sloe Hill, including mostly modern and some vernacular style detached houses with long, linear rear gardens;
- Church in eastern Halstead as a landmark feature and some farmsteads near settlement edge.

Evaluation

3.6.7 Landscape Character Sensitivity

- Area has a high sensitivity overall due to its substantial blocks of mature woodland (including ancient); patterns of semi-natural vegetation lining field streams, hedgerows mostly good condition, well-wooded skylines, its distinctive character and the strong sense of unity to the landscape, which provides a strong rural setting and backdrop to western Halstead;
- Area provides only a moderate contribution to wider rural landscape on account of the enclosure provided well-wooded ridgelines and tree belts;
- Sense of time depth provided by historic Crowbridge Farm and Blamsters Farm;
- Sensitivity increased by patterns of semi-natural habitat lining field streams, including species-rich grassland along western fringes of Halstead;
- Belt of pre-18th century field enclosures in eastern parts (associated with Crowbridge Farm and Blamsters Farm) and along western fringes of Halstead;
- Group of small-scale 18-19th century field enclosures to north of Russell's Farm;
- Distinctive, strong and generally unspoilt character.

3.6.8 **Visual Sensitivity**

- Eastern part of area visible in open views from Landscape Setting Areas H1 and H2, but views from north, south and west of area substantially more enclosed by landform and vegetation;
- Visibility within area varies greatly but many views truncated by woodland;
- Fringes of western Halstead are generally well-enclosed in views from outside the setting area by central well-wooded ridgeline, trees/hedgerows in the fields, and by streambank vegetation;
- Sensitivity of central parts increased by views along channelled stream valley to central part of Halstead, views framed in part by woodland and mature hedgerows;
- Increased sensitivity within the setting of listed buildings including Crowbridge Farm and Blamsters Farm.

3.6.9 **Landscape Value**

Area includes two County Wildlife Sites: (i) Chapel Hill Meadow (a protected grassland site adjacent to western fringe of Halstead) and (ii) Great Spansey Wood (ancient woodland), Lower Wood and Little Spansey Wood, which combine to form a substantial block of protected woodland. Other valued components of the landscape include:

- Listed buildings at Crowbridge Farm and Blamsters Farm;
- Good access to the area with a number of public footpaths;
- Moderate to high sense of tranquillity and remoteness away from roads and settlement edges.

3.6.10 Summary of H6 Landscape Sensitivities and Value

Landscape Character Sensitivity	Visual Sensitivity	Landscape Value
Area has a high sensitivity overall due to its substantial blocks of mature woodland (including ancient); patterns of semi-natural vegetation lining field streams, hedgerows mostly good condition, well-wooded skylines, its distinctive character and the strong sense of unity to the landscape, which provides a strong rural setting and backdrop to western Halstead.	Medium sensitivity overall. Eastern part of area visible in open views from Landscape Setting Areas H1 and H2, but views from north, south and west of area substantially more enclosed by landform and vegetation.	Medium to high value due to County Wildlife Site, public footpath network, listed buildings and moderate sense of tranquillity and remoteness.
High	Medium	Medium to high

4.0 LANDSCAPE CAPACITY EVALUATION

- 4.1 Landscape capacity refers to the degree to which a particular landscape is able to accommodate change without significant effects on its character. Reaching conclusions about capacity means making a judgement about whether the amount of change proposed can be accommodated without having unacceptable adverse effects on the character of the landscape (related to *landscape character sensitivity*), or the way that it is perceived (related to *visual sensitivity*), and without compromising the values attached to it (related to *landscape value*). Landscape capacity is the function of landscape character sensitivity, plus visual sensitivity, plus landscape value.
- 4.2 This section of the report considers the capacity of each Landscape Setting Area to accommodate a settlement extension.
- 4.3 The levels of landscape character sensitivity, visual sensitivity and landscape value for each Landscape Setting Area, as identified in Section 3.0, are set out in Table 4.1 below. The level of landscape capacity for each of these Landscape Setting Areas is also identified in this table using the matrices provided in Appendix A: Methodology for Judging Landscape Capacity.

Table 4.1: Schedule of Landscape Sensitivities, Landscape Value and Landscape Capacity.

Landscape Setting Area	Landscape Character Sensitivity	Visual Sensitivity	Landscape Value	Landscape Capacity
H1	Medium to High	Medium	Medium to High	Low to Medium
H2	Medium to High	Medium to High	Medium to High	Low to Medium
H3	Medium to High	Medium to High	Medium to High	Low to Medium
H4	Medium	Medium	Medium to High	Low to Medium
H5	High	Medium to High	Medium to High	Low
H6	High	Medium to High	Medium to High	Low

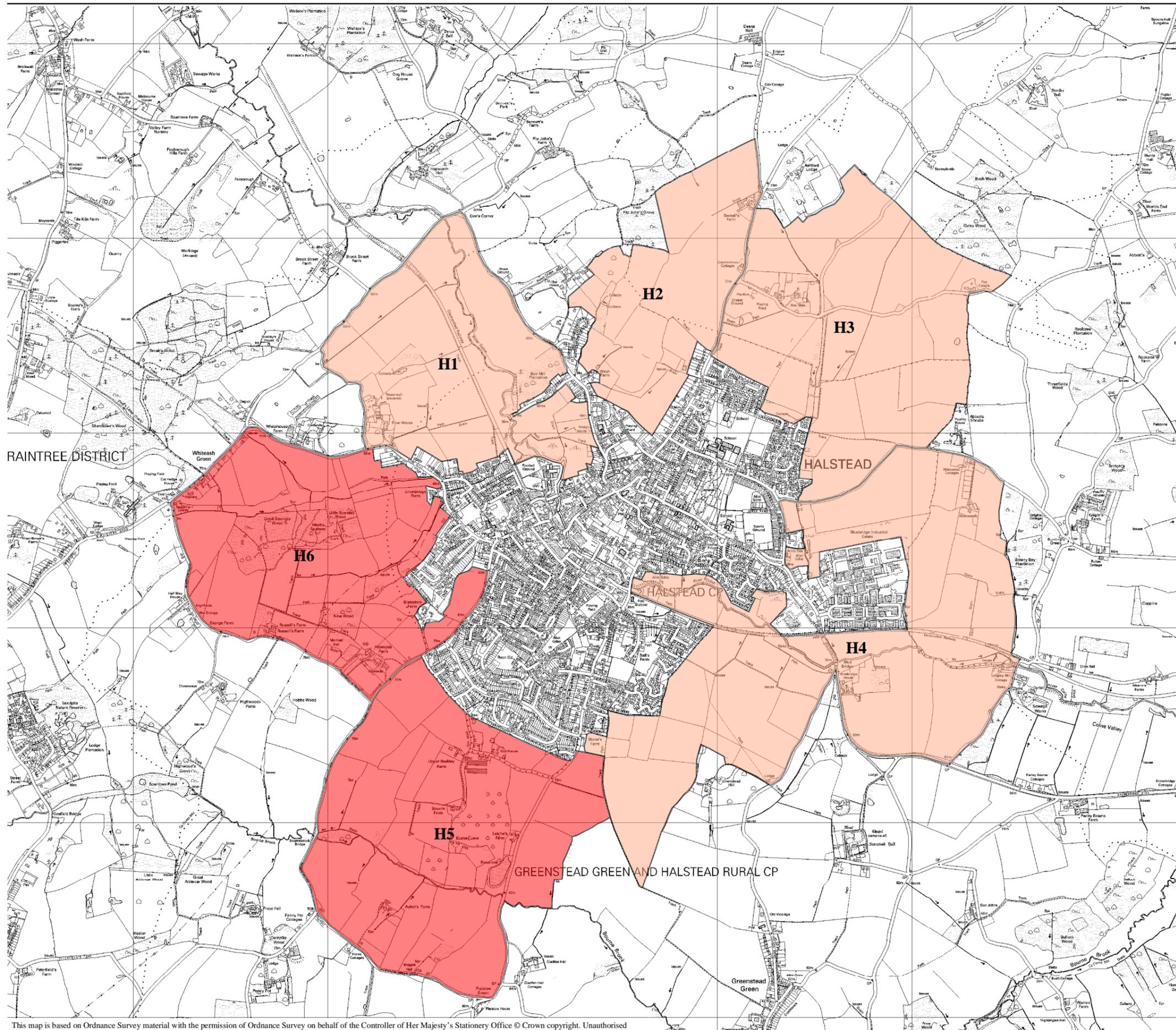
4.4 The capacity levels for the various Landscape Setting Areas around Halstead are illustrated on Figure H4: Landscape Capacity Evaluation Plan. These levels are indicators of the likely amount of change, in terms of built development, which a particular landscape setting area can accommodate without having unacceptable adverse effects on the character of a landscape, or the way that is perceived, and without compromising the values attached to it.

4.5 Landscape capacity is a complex issue and it may be possible that a certain amount of appropriately located and well-designed built development may be quite acceptable even in a moderately sensitive and highly valued landscape. The Landscape Capacity Evaluation Plan identifies that there are two different levels of landscape capacity for the Landscape Setting Areas around this settlement: 'Low to Medium' and 'Low'. The various Landscape Setting Areas associated with each of these capacity levels are identified below, together with broad locations where there might be opportunities for any necessary residential or employment development to be accommodated within each area.

Low to Medium Capacity Areas

4.6 Landscape Setting Areas H1 to H4 have been identified as having low to medium capacity to accommodate new residential development. Potential opportunities for incorporating new built development within these setting areas are limited, but include the following:-

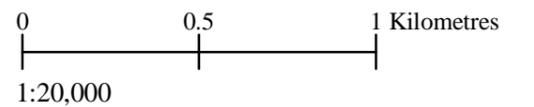
- far southern part of Landscape Setting Area H1, on low-lying land to the west of the disused railway;
- northwest of the farmstead at Wash Farm, in the far southern part of Landscape Setting Area H2, providing that the pre-18th enclosure fields and the setting of listed buildings near Wash Farm are protected;
- far western part of Landscape Setting Area H3, between Star Stile House and the northern fringe of the settlement, providing that the setting of Star Stile House is protected;
- far western part of Landscape Setting Area H4, south of the disused railway and adjacent to the existing residential area off Stanstead Road;
- along the eastern edge of the Bluebridge Industrial Estate, in Landscape Setting Area H4, providing that the development does not extend as far upslope as the northern edge of the industrial estate.



KEY

Landscape Capacity

- Low Capacity
- Low-Medium Capacity
- Medium Capacity
- Medium-High Capacity



This map is based on Ordnance Survey material with the permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office © Crown copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings. Braintree District Council OS Licence No. 100018490.

E:\Projects\50014601_Braintree_Settlement_Fringe_LCA\GIS\Projects\firstdraft\halstead\50014601_landcapa_revB.mxd

- 4.7 These potential opportunities would need to be verified through a more detailed assessment of the setting areas and new tree/shrub belts should be provided in association with any new built development along the settlement fringes. New tree/shrub belts should be particularly robust if land is to accommodate new employment development. Any development in these setting areas would need to be consistent with the form and scale of the existing settlement fringe.
- 4.8 Opportunities for helping accommodate built development within the landscape setting areas H1 to H4 also include enhancing local hedgerow structures and providing additional tree/shrub planting to help soften the appearance of some fringes of the settlement. Opportunities should also be taken to develop a landscape recreational corridor alongside the River Colne, which passes through the Landscape Setting Areas H1 and H4.

Low Capacity Areas

- 4.9 Landscape Setting Areas H5 and H6 have been identified as having low capacity to accommodate new built development. This low capacity reflects the relatively high landscape sensitivities associated with these areas.
- 4.10 There are very limited opportunities for accommodating new built development within Landscape Setting Area H5. If development is necessary within this setting area, then land to the north of Upper Beakley Farm and outside the pre-18th century enclosure fields near the farmstead, should be examined in more detail. It is desirable that the landscape and visual sensitivities identified in Section 3.5 above should be safe-guarded as part of any development proposal.
- 4.11 There are also very limited opportunities for accommodating new built development within Landscape Setting Area H6. If development is necessary within this setting area, then land to the northwest of Blamster's Farm should be examined in more detail. It is desirable that the landscape and visual sensitivities identified in Section 3.6 above should be safe-guarded as part of any development proposal.
- 4.12 The potential opportunities for these landscape setting areas would need to be verified through a more detailed landscape and visual assessment of the setting areas. New tree/shrub belts should be provided, in association with any new built development along any of the settlement fringes, to help integrate development into the landscape. New tree/shrub belts should be particularly robust if land is to

accommodate new employment development. Any development in these setting areas would need to be consistent with the form and scale of the existing settlement fringe.

5.0 CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1 In accordance with the purpose and objectives of the study set out in the introduction to this report, the principal application of this landscape capacity study is to assist Braintree District Council in identifying a broad strategy for housing and employment development in the District and in directing this development to areas of higher landscape capacity.
- 5.2 The landscape capacity appraisal, which has been based on the findings of the landscape sensitivity and landscape value analysis, has identified a range of Landscape Setting Areas that could accommodate varying degrees of change in the form of new built development. Areas with low to medium landscape capacity or above could, in landscape and visual terms, accommodate some level of new development without significant adverse effects on the character of the landscape, providing that appropriate design and mitigation measures are put in place. Any such new development would need to be in scale with the existing settlement. This new development would need to respect the character and sensitivities of adjacent landscapes as well as the character, setting and form of the existing settlement fringe.
- 5.3 It should be noted that levels of landscape capacity may not be uniform across any one landscape setting area. Where capacity for development within any one landscape setting areas varies, proposals would need to respond to site-specific constraints. In such cases, development proposals should respond to the inherent landscape sensitivity of the setting area and take account of both its setting and potential impacts on the surrounding landscape.
- 5.4 Setting areas with low or low to medium landscape capacity have been identified as locations that are suitable in landscape and visual terms, for limited development (e.g. minor settlement extensions). The landscapes are typically small in scale and have, at least, a moderate amount of visual enclosure.
- 5.5 It is recommended that development briefs should be prepared for all sites that are identified in the Core Strategy as having capacity for development. These briefs should take account of the setting area appraisals, identifying:-

- Landscape features or characteristics that give an area its special identity and local distinctiveness;
- Measures to protect and enhance the character of adjacent landscape setting areas, particularly high sensitivity landscapes;
- Measures to protect or enhance these landscape features and characteristics.

5.6 These landscape sensitivities and landscape values identified in the above assessments should inform the land use distribution and masterplanning process, so as to reinforce local landscape distinctiveness, minimise landscape impacts and build, in a consistent form, on the existing settlement pattern. In particular, they should inform the evolution of the development proposals and preparation of strategic landscape strategies so that they provide:

- A landscape strategy which is consistent with local landscape character, taking into account identified landscape sensitivities.
- A land use strategy and built form, which is characteristic of, and compatible with the existing settlement pattern, where appropriate.
- Proposals which avoid landscape and visual impacts on surrounding landscape setting areas or the setting to the District's landscape and heritage assets, and
- Development proposals which have regard for the setting of, and separation between, existing settlements.

5.7 Finally, reference should be made to the land management guidelines identified in the Braintree, Brentwood, Chelmsford, Maldon and Uttlesford Landscape Character Assessment. These management guidelines are prescriptive in nature and respond to local landscape character. They provide a robust basis for detailed landscape proposals, which should be prepared to accompany any new development proposals.

APPENDIX A
METHODOLOGY FOR JUDGING LANDSCAPE CAPACITY

METHODOLOGY FOR JUDGING LANDSCAPE CAPACITY

A1.0 Methodology for Judging Landscape Capacity

Landscape capacity to accommodate the proposed change is a function of landscape character sensitivity, plus visual sensitivity, plus landscape value. Reaching conclusions about capacity means making a judgement about whether the amount of change proposed can be accommodated without having unacceptable adverse effects on the character of the landscape (related to *landscape character sensitivity*), or the way that it is perceived (related to *visual sensitivity*), and without compromising the values attached to it (related to *landscape value*).

A1.1 Landscape Character Sensitivity

Landscape sensitivity is defined as '*the extent to which a landscape type or area can accept change of a particular type and scale without unacceptable adverse effects on its character*'. (Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment 2002). It is based on judgements about the sensitivity of aspects most likely to be affected:

Natural factors – extent and pattern of semi-natural habitat

Cultural factors – land use, enclosure pattern

Landscape condition – representation of typical character

Aesthetic factors – e.g. scale, enclosure, pattern form/line, movement

The sensitivities of the landscapes have been assessed using the following five-point scale and corresponding definitions: -

Table A1: Landscape Character Sensitivity Definitions

Landscape Character Sensitivity	Definition
Low	A landscape or landscape features of low sensitivity potentially tolerant of substantial change. This landscape is likely to have moderate to low levels of semi-natural vegetation and/or historic integrity, and few intrinsic landscape/townscape qualities. The loss or alteration of these qualities/features is likely to have only limited effects on the distinctiveness of the settlement's landscape setting. There is significant scope for enhancement of these landscape

Landscape Character Sensitivity	Definition
	qualities/features through good design and layout of development schemes. (e.g. developed or derelict landscape setting where new development could be accommodated without adversely affecting character).
Low to medium	Between low and medium
Medium	A landscape or landscape features of moderate sensitivity reasonably tolerant of change. This landscape is likely to have moderate levels of semi-natural vegetation and/or mixed historic integrity, and some intrinsic landscape/townscape qualities. The loss or alteration of these qualities/features is likely to partially erode the distinctiveness of the settlement's landscape setting. These landscape qualities/features are considered desirable to safeguard from development through sensitive location, design and layout.
Medium to high	Between medium and high
High	A landscape or landscape feature of particularly distinctive character susceptible to relatively small change. This landscape is likely to have high levels of semi-natural vegetation and/or strong historic integrity and thus low re-creatability, and many intrinsic landscape qualities. The loss or alteration of these qualities/features is likely to significantly erode the distinctiveness of the settlement's landscape setting. Those landscape qualities/features that are considered desirable to safeguard from development. (e.g. rural landscape with few uncharacteristic or detracting man-made features where new development could not be accommodated without adversely affecting character).

A1.2 Landscape Value

Landscape value is concerned with the relative value that is attached to different landscapes. In a policy context the usual basis for recognising certain highly valued landscapes is through the application of a local or national designation. Yet a landscape may be valued by different communities of interest for many different reasons without formal designation, recognising, for example, perceptual aspects such as scenic beauty, tranquillity or wildness; special cultural associations; the influence and presence of other conservation interests; or the existence of a consensus about importance, either nationally or locally. In the context of this study a professional judgement has been made on the value of the landscape within the setting of a zone, giving consideration to, for example, sites or areas designated for their landscape value.

Designations which are most relevant to this study are those which are related to protection of landscape or buildings partially or wholly for their contribution to the landscape. There are no national or regional designations in the study area. However, locally designated landscape or features include Sites of Special Scientific Interest, Conservation Areas, and Listed Buildings. Other designations, which are important components of the landscape and contribute towards landscape value, but are not protected for their contribution to the landscape, include nature conservations sites (e.g. ancient woodland) and ancient monuments.

As part of the judgement of landscape value lies in the views of communities of interest, and obtaining these views is not part of this study, in all cases landscape value is evaluated as medium unless there is an obvious reason to give a higher or lower value (e.g. elevate because of a landscape designation, or lower because of a high degree of disturbance and degradation). An indicator of higher landscape value is the extent of public rights of way within any particular landscape. The value of the landscapes has been assessed using the following five-point scale and corresponding definitions: -

Table A2: Landscape Value Definitions

Landscape Value	Definition
Low	No relevant designations. Degraded or possibly derelict landscape.
Low to medium	Between low and medium
Medium	All landscapes unless there is an obvious reason to give a higher or lower value. The zone lies within, or within the setting of, a relevant local designation but it is not considered that development would adversely affect it.
Medium to high	Between medium and high.
High	The zone lies within, or within the setting of, a relevant local designation and it is considered that development would adversely affect it.

A1.3 Visual Sensitivity

Visual sensitivity is based on the nature of change proposed and its interaction with visual aspects of the landscape. It is based on:

Nature of potential change – considering factors such as height, massing, colour, movement and how it would blend in with or contrast with other elements in its

setting. In the case of this study professional experience is used to judge what the nature of an urban extension might be.

General visibility of potential development within the zone – considering influences of enclosing or screening elements such as landform, hedgerows, trees, woodlands, and built development.

Population – numbers and types of views. The sensitivity of visual receptors (or viewers) is dependent on the location and context of the viewpoint and viewing opportunities, the occupation/pastime of the receptor and the importance of the view.

Sensitivity of view:

- Low – Viewers with a passing interest in their surroundings, e.g. motorists.
- Medium – Viewers with a moderate interest in their surroundings, e.g. users of recreation facilities.
- High – Viewers with proprietary interest and prolonged viewing opportunities, e.g. a residential property of users of public footpaths.

Visual sensitivity has been assessed using the following five-point scale and corresponding definitions: -

Table A3: Visual Sensitivity Definitions

Visual Sensitivity	Definition
Low	Nature of potential change – unobtrusive in the context of its setting General visibility of the potential development – enclosed, screened. Only visible from short distances. Population – Seen by few viewers, or predominantly by viewers with a passing interest in their surroundings, e.g. motorists
Low to medium	Between low and medium
Medium	Nature of potential change – moderately obtrusive in the context of its setting General visibility of the potential development – visible but partially enclosed or screened. Not visible from long distances. Population – seen by a moderate number of viewers. Seen by viewers of medium or lower sensitivity.
Medium to high	Between medium and high
High	Nature of potential change – highly obtrusive in the context

Visual Sensitivity	Definition
	of its setting General visibility of the potential development – highly visible due to the open, exposed nature of the surroundings. Might be visible from long distances. Population – seen by a large number of viewers. Seen predominantly by viewers of high or lower sensitivity.

A1.4 Defining Landscape Capacity

Information produced from the field survey is used to make transparent judgements about the sensitivity and indicative capacity of each Landscape Setting Area to accommodate new built development.

Reaching conclusions about capacity means making a judgement about whether the amount of change proposed can be accommodated without having unacceptable adverse effects on the character of the landscape (related to landscape character sensitivity), or the way that it is perceived (related to visual sensitivity), and without compromising the values attached to it (related to landscape value).

In order to identify the indicative capacity of each Landscape Setting Area to accommodate new built development, the overall sensitivity of each Landscape Setting Area has initially been determined by integrating landscape character sensitivity and visual sensitivity in accordance with the matrix set out in Table A4 overleaf.

The overall capacity of a Landscape Setting Area to accommodate new built development has been determined by integrating overall landscape sensitivity and landscape value in accordance with using the matrix set out in Table A5 overleaf.

Table A4: Combining Landscape Character Sensitivity and Visual Sensitivity to give Overall Landscape Sensitivity

Landscape Character Sensitivity	High	High	High	High	High	High
	Medium to High	High				
	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium to High	High
	Low to Medium	Low to Medium	Low to Medium	Medium	Medium to High	High
	Low	Low	Low to Medium	Medium	Medium to High	High
		Low	Low to Medium	Medium	Medium to High	High
Visual Sensitivity						

Table A5: Combining Overall Landscape Sensitivity and Landscape Value to give Landscape Capacity

Overall Landscape Sensitivity	High	Medium	Low to Medium	Low	Low	Low
	Medium to High	Medium	Low to Medium	Low to Medium	Low to Medium	Low
	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium	Low to Medium	Low
	Low to Medium	Medium to High	Medium to High	Medium	Low to Medium	Low to Medium
	Low	High	Medium to High	Medium	Medium	Medium
		Low	Low to Medium	Medium	Medium to High	High
Landscape Value						

APPENDIX B
FIELD SURVEY SHEET

Local Landscape Setting name	
Date/ Time/ Weather	
Photograph Numbers	
Direction of View	

A. LOCAL LANDSCAPE SETTING

<i>LANDSCAPE SENSITIVITY</i>	<i>CHARACTER</i>
<p>Natural Factors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vegetation: Hedgerows, tree cover and type, woodland (visually important) • Water bodies / courses: River (s/m/l) Speed (f/m/s), river meanders, lake, ponds, bog/wetland, drainage channels, drainage ditches, locks/weirs • Water bodies / courses: River (s/m/l) Speed (f/m/s), river meanders, <p>Cultural Factors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land Use: Farmland (A/P), Forestry/woodland, historic parkland, mineral working, natural, military, other. • Enclosure and pattern: Scale and shape of fields (refer to HLC data) <p>Landscape Quality / Condition</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Landscape Character: key features that contribute to the character of this area and make it differ from surrounding areas – land form, hydrology, land cover, field patterns and boundaries, communications, buildings etc. • Landscape Qualities / Features: Condition/ survival or intactness/ state of repair of individual features or elements, such as field boundaries, trees and woodland, historic features etc. • Urban Edge Description: Type and quality and character – how is the edge perceived? Well integrated / harsh / ad-hoc urban fringe 	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Settlement Perception: views to – open, filtered or well screened. Aesthetic Factors • Built/ architectural character: Timber-frame, weatherboard, flint, brick (traditional/ modern), stone, slate, thatch, tile. • Scale: intimate, small, medium, large • Enclosure: expansive, open, enclosed, constrained • Stimulus: Monotonous, bland, interesting, inspiring • Movement: Remote, vacant, peaceful, active • Unity: unified, interrupted, fragmented, chaotic 	
OVERALL SENSITIVITY RATING	LOW / LOW TO MEDIUM / MEDIUM / MEDIUM TO HIGH / HIGH
<p>VISUAL SENSITIVITY</p> <p>General Visibility</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Topography / Landform Influences: Flat, shelving, rolling, undulating, steep slopes, gentle slopes, floodplain, hills, plateau, broad valley, narrow valley, shallow valley • Skylines / ridgelines: Views – panoramic/ framed/ open/ channelled, key views to landmarks / landscape features • Tree / Woodland cover: Robust, filtered, open views; • General Intervisibility: The degree to which an area is widely visible from, and positively influences the character of, surrounding areas. • Broad description of potential views: Who will see the setting – nearby residents? Users of nearby motorways / roads? Users of public footpaths? • Distinctive Approaches / Gateways / Nodes: • Pedestrian Movement: Good access to or restricted? Green 	

corridors / bridges, links / connections to countryside.	
OVERALL SENSITIVITY RATING	LOW / LOW TO MEDIUM / MEDIUM / MEDIUM TO HIGH / HIGH
<p><u>LANDSCAPE VALUE</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historic Integrity: Visually noted features of historic interest that contribute to the landscape setting – taking into account the intactness and integrity of historic landscape patterns and the presence of valued historic features within the area. • Ecological Integrity: Visually noted features of ecological interest that contribute to the character of the area e.g. Ecological/ nature conservation designations; Woodland (native? Deciduous?); rivers / streams / lakes / pond • Tranquillity: Noise disturbance; Very strong, strong, moderate, low; e.g. minor or major noise disturbance? Scenic beauty and value? Contribution to settlement i.e. amenity value – allotments, sports pitches, parks and gardens, public access and permeability? 	
OVERALL VALUE RATING	LOW / LOW TO MEDIUM / MEDIUM / MEDIUM TO HIGH / HIGH
OVERALL SETTING SUMMARY	

B. POTENTIAL MITIGATION OF LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL IMPACTS

<p>Overall opportunities:</p> <p>e.g. development of green links (public right of way provision)</p> <p>e.g. Screening of visual detractors through, for example, woodland linkages</p> <p>e.g. General enhancement of hedgerows</p>	
--	--

/ woodlands

*e.g. Conserve and enhance the
landscape setting of settlements*

e.g. Conserve or enhance views



www.cba.uk.net

London Office

*Swan Court 9 Tanner Street London SE1 3LE
Tel: 0207 089 6480 Fax: 0207 089 9260 Email: mail@cba.uk.net*

South East Office

*The Old Crown High Street Blackboys Uckfield East Sussex TN22 5JR
Tel: 01825 891071 Fax: 01825 891075 Email: mail@cba.uk.net*