

BDC/047/19/27



**Braintree District Council**

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

**November 2007**

***CHRIS BLANDFORD ASSOCIATES***

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*Environment Landscape Planning*

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**Signed:** SK

**Position:** Senior Associate

**Date:** 22 November 2007

***CHRIS BLANDFORD ASSOCIATES***

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*Environment Landscape Planning*

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## **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:

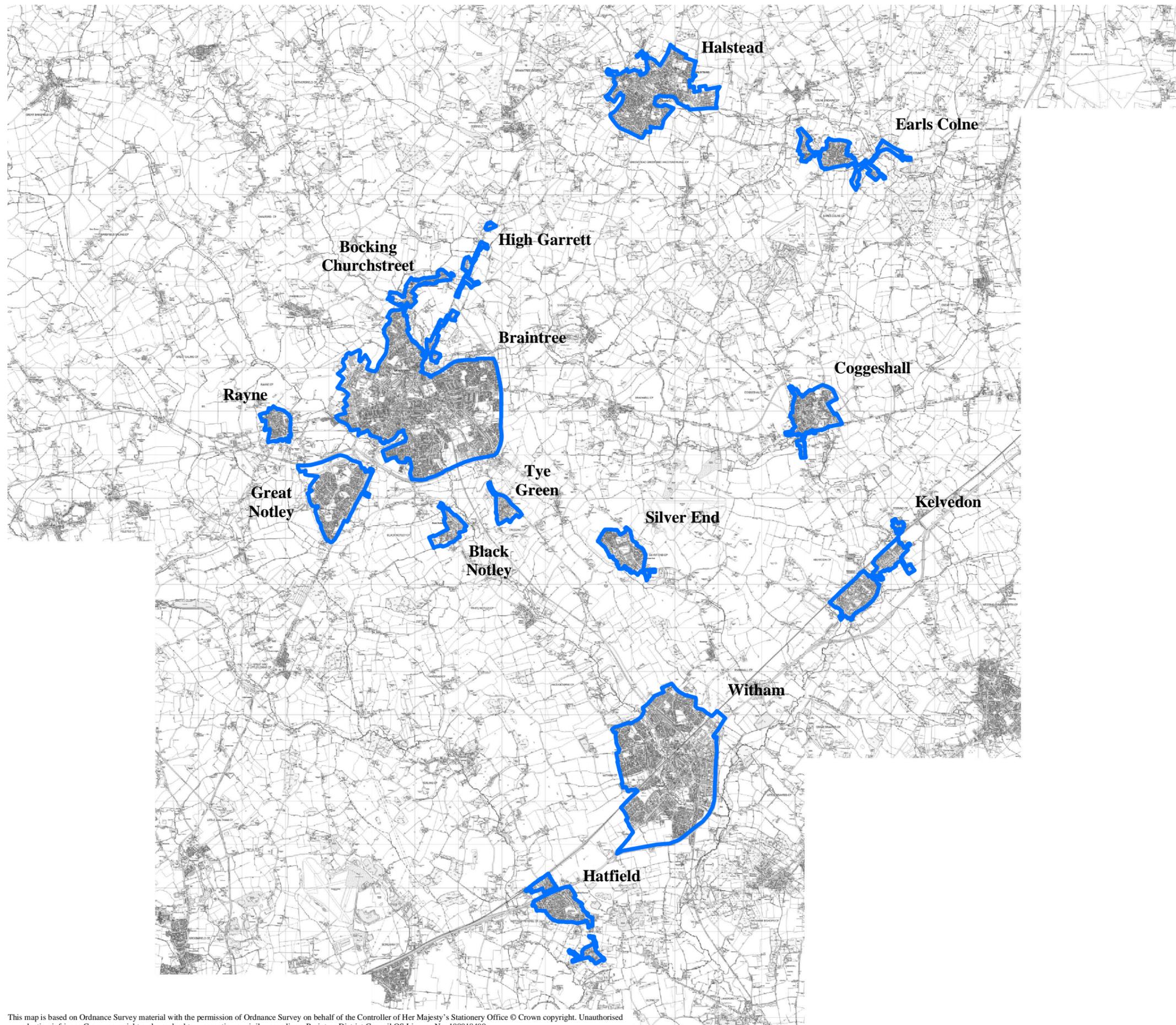
- Braintree and environs (including Bocking Churchstreet, Rayne, Great Notley, Black Notley and Cressing)
- Witham
- Halstead
- Silver End
- Hatfield Peveral
- Earls Colne
- Coggeshall
- Kelvedon

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;



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**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 Kelvedon.

### 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 PPS1<sup>1</sup> and PPS7<sup>2</sup>.

#### *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).

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<sup>1</sup> Planning Policy Statement 1 : Delivering Sustainable Development (ODPM, 2005).

<sup>2</sup> 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 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 25<sup>th</sup> 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.

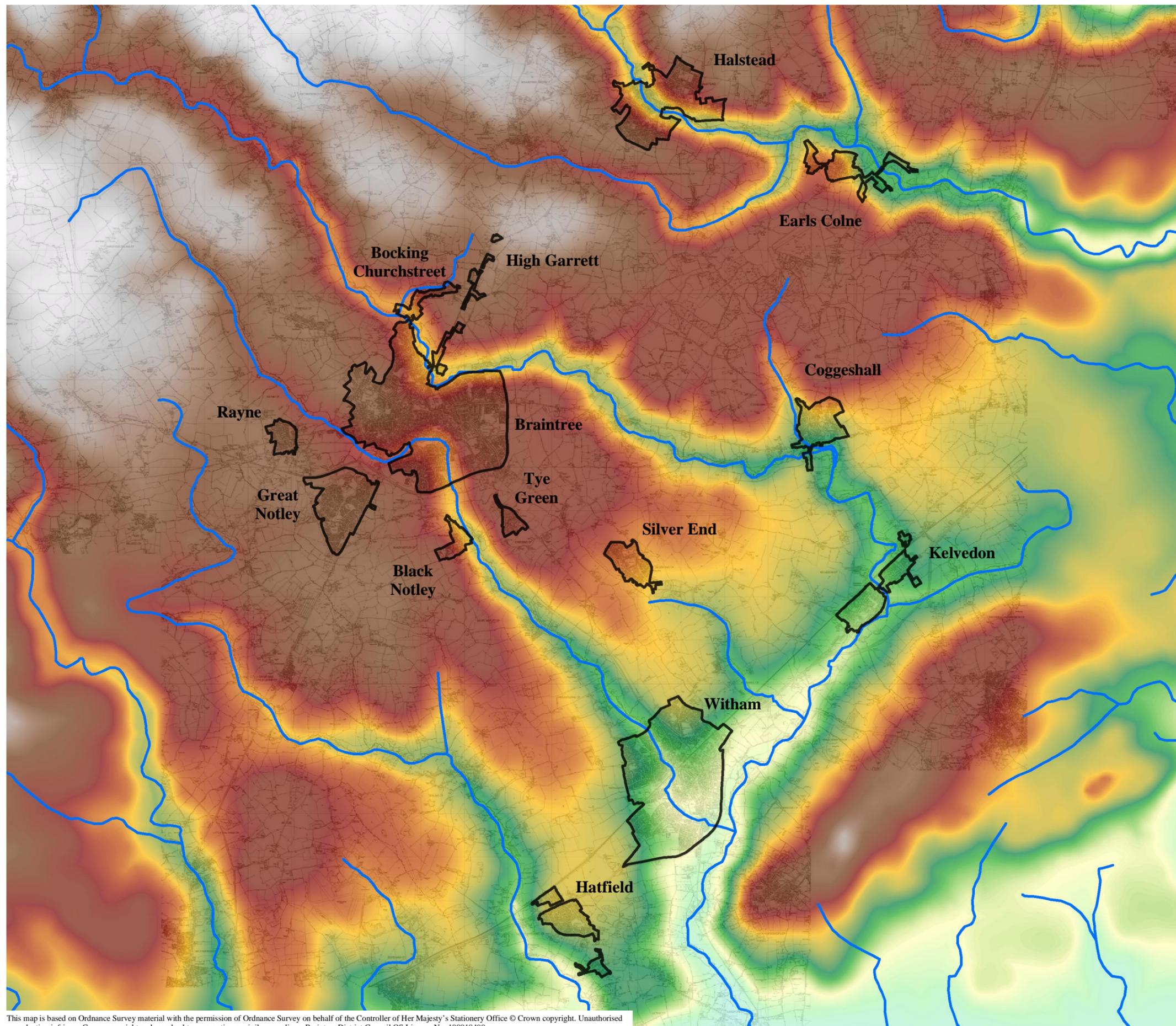
2.2.2 The meandering River Colne runs in a southeasterly direction through Halstead, towards Colchester. It is characterized by a shallow river valley with relatively steep valley sides, which varies in width throughout its length. There is a dense network of roads dissecting the river valley and bridging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

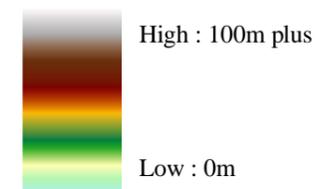
## **2.3 Landscape Character**

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



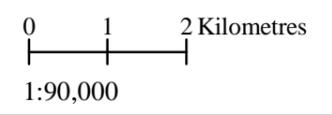
**KEY**

**Elevation (Indicative)**



— Rivers

□ Settlements Within Study



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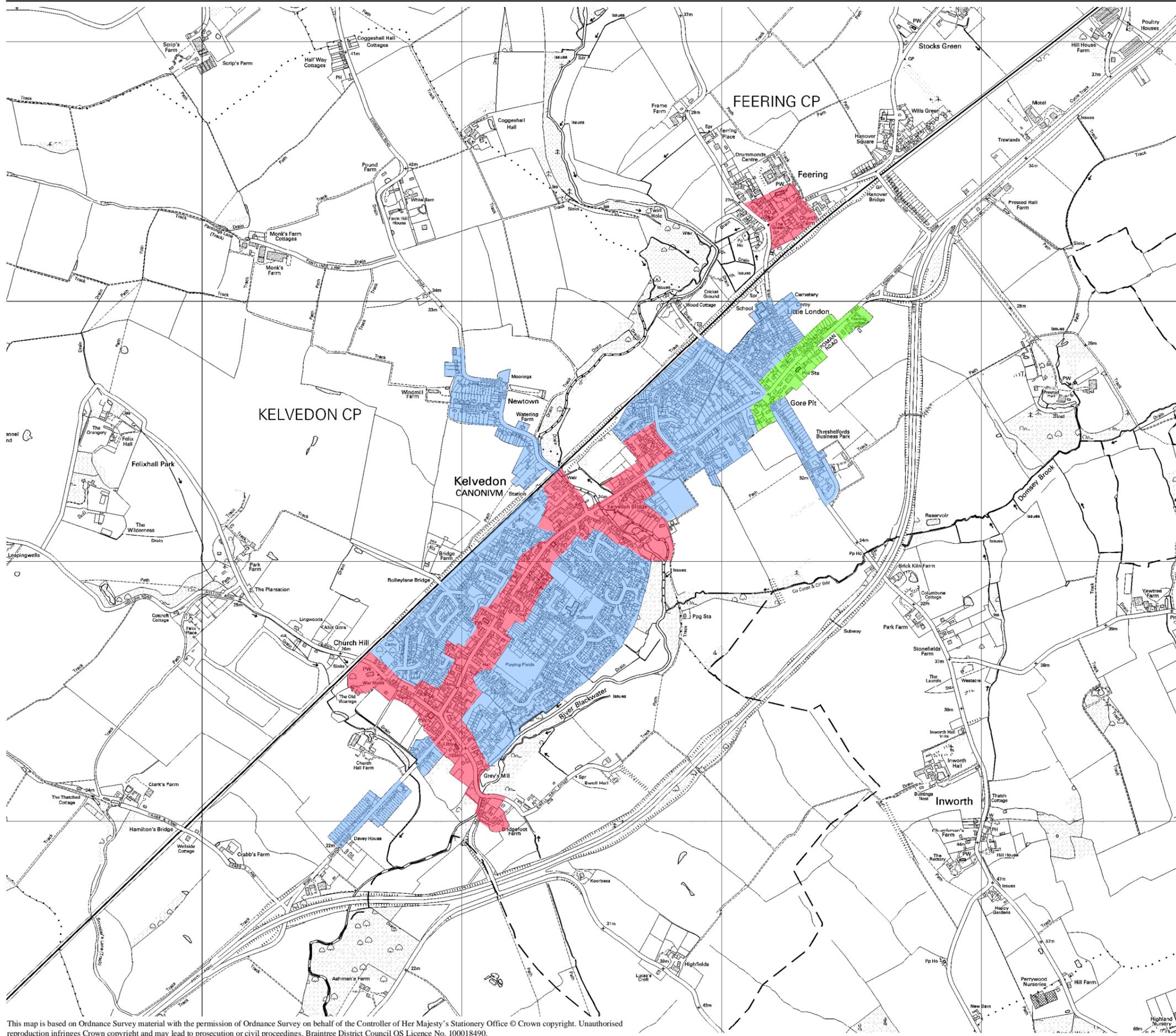
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**Figure 2**  
 Landform and Drainage

- 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 10<sup>th</sup> 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

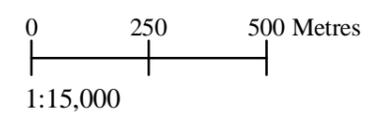
the later medieval and early post-medieval, and are now no more than villages, whilst others prospered and grew.

- 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 Kelvedon are illustrated on Figure 3. The original focus of the medieval settlement of Kelvedon is thought to be around the church, with a second smaller focus at the river crossing-point at Easterford over a kilometre to the north-east. The town consisted of two distinct nuclei of settlement, based on the cross-roads at either end of the High Street. The earliest focus of the medieval town was located at the southwestern end of the High Street where the church was sited and at the Maldon Road / London-Colchester Road junction. In the modern period, Kelvedon and the neighbouring village of Feering have almost merged, being separated only by a corridor of open space lining the River Blackwater, including groves of tree and shrubs, water-meadow, and a small pasture field.
- 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



**KEY**

- Modern Expansion
- Victorian Expansion c1880's
- Historic Core



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**Figure 3**  
Kelvedon Settlement Evolution

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 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 Kelvedon. A total of two 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 K0: Settlement Fringe Analysis Overview Plan.

### **3.1 LANDSCAPE SETTING AREA K1 (refer to Landscape Assessment Figure K1)**

#### **3.1.1 Location**

The setting area abuts northwestern edge of Kelvedon, extending northwestwards from the London-Colchester railway line.

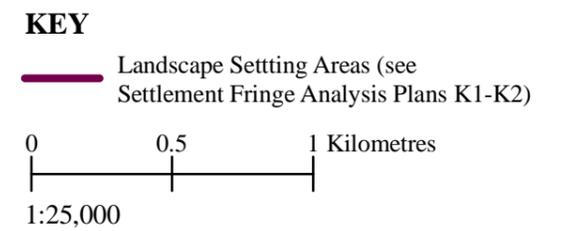
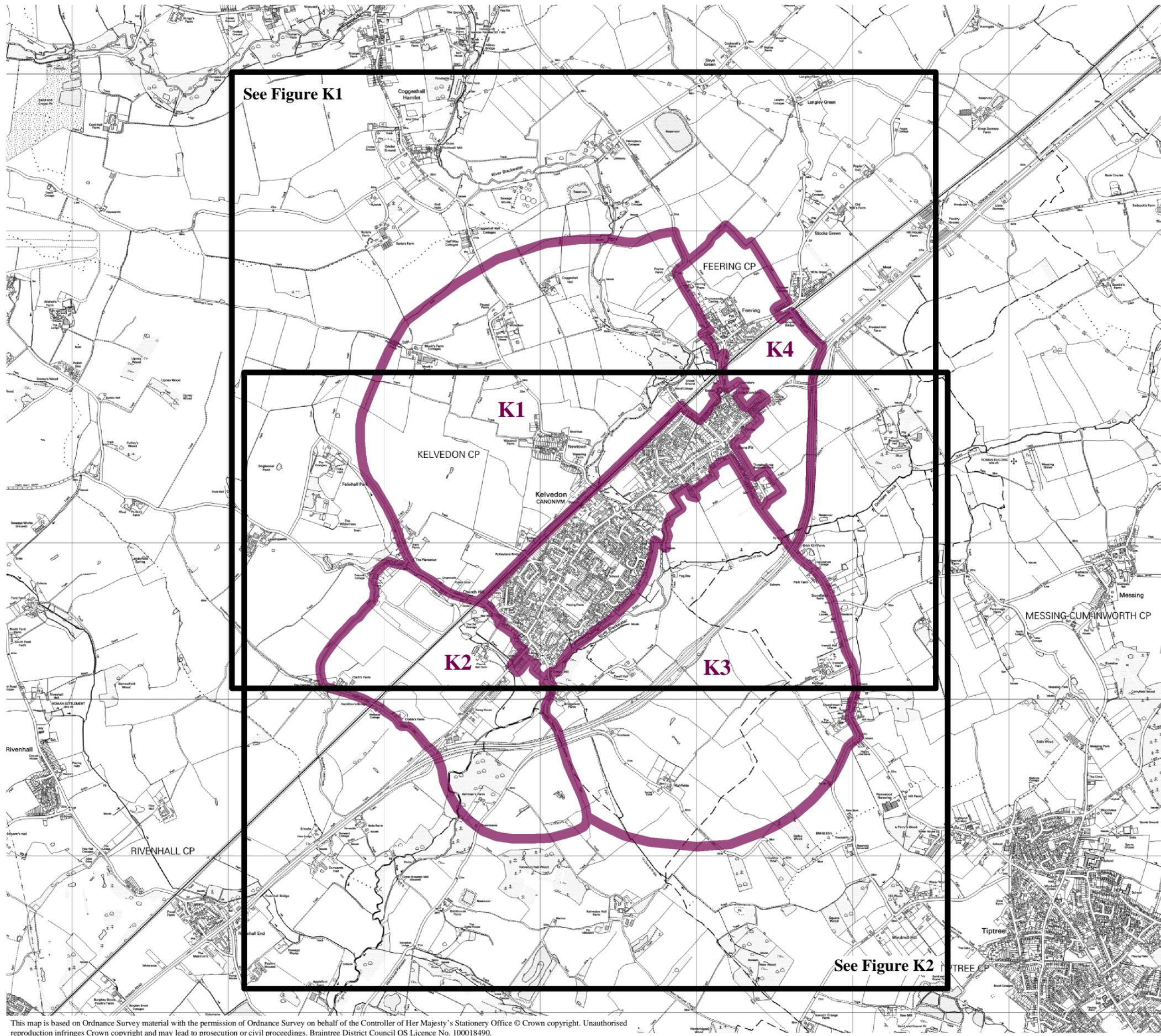
#### *Landscape and Visual Baseline*

#### **3.1.2 Landform and Drainage**

- Landform comprises the gentle east and southeast facing slopes of the Blackwater Valley. These slopes descend towards the River Blackwater, which meanders in a southerly direction through the eastern part of the area before heading to the southwest and southeast and on through the centre of the settlement;
- Several minor hill spurs descend towards the river, forming gentle undulations on the valley side;
- Occasional ponds within farmland.

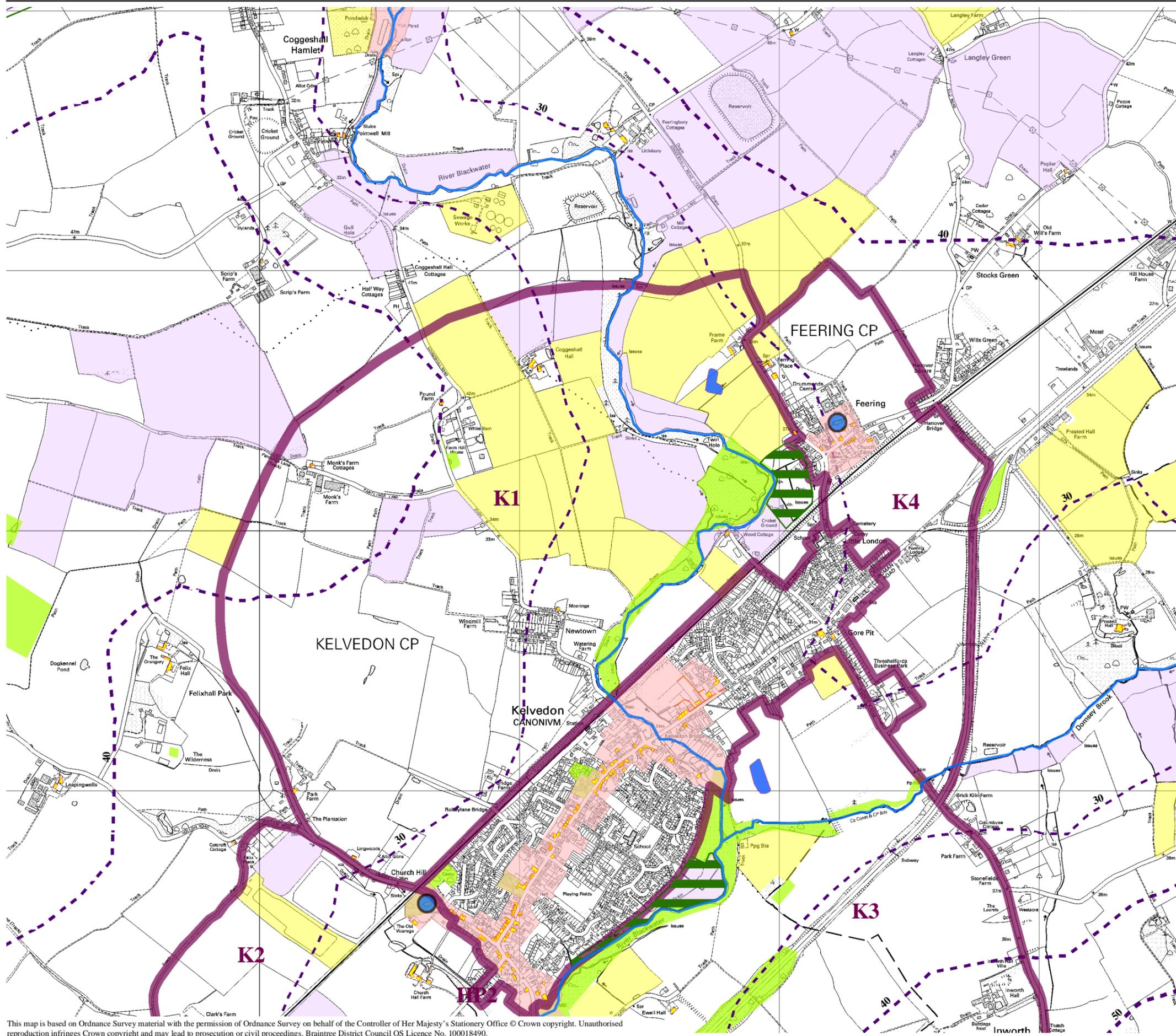
#### **3.1.3 Land Use**

- Predominantly arable farmland with pockets of pasture;
- Areas of rough grassland, small pasture fields and linear plantations (poplar and willow) along river corridor;
- Railway along southern boundary of area;
- Large woodland at bend in river near Feering;
- Scattered farmsteads and historic buildings;
- Allotments gardens in western part, near Church Hill;

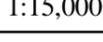


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**KEY**

-  Landmarks
-  20
-  60
-  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

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- Some housing alongside roads that lead north-westwards from settlement edge, including linear housing that connects with small group of houses at Newtown along Coggeshall Road in central part of area.

#### 3.1.4 **Vegetation**

- Predominantly medium-scale arable fields but with small grass paddocks and pasture fields along river corridor;
- Large-scale arable fields in western part with fragmented hedgerow structure;
- River lined by water-meadows and plantations comprising poplar and willow species;
- Substantial woodland plantation in eastern part, particularly at bend in river;
- Belt of trees and shrubs lining parts of railway cutting;
- Fairly intact hedgerow structure in eastern parts, with varying condition and some large trees along field boundaries in central parts;
- Largely fragmented hedgerow structure in western parts;
- Robust structure of trees and shrubs surrounding historic White Barn House and Farm Mill, including woodland, hedgerows and individual mature trees.

#### 3.1.5 **Access**

- Well accessed by a number of public footpaths, which connect Newtown, Coggeshall Road, Feering Road, and Church Road along the northern fringes of Kelvedon, including routes alongside the river corridor.

#### 3.1.6 **Settlement Edge**

- Central parts of settlement fringe mainly comprise historic buildings within the Kelvedon conservation area;
- Eastern and western parts of settlement fringe mainly comprise modern housing with an abrupt linear edge alongside the railway;
- Buildings within Newtown mainly comprise vernacular style houses with large rear gardens adjacent to arable farmland.

#### 3.1.7 **Visual Appraisal**

- Sequences of pasture, water meadow, plantations and groves of trees and shrubs alongside the river in southern part of setting area provide a historic visual setting between the settlements of Feering and Kelvedon;

- Settlement fringe of Kelvedon is generally well-enclosed in views from much of the setting by belts of trees and shrubs alongside railway;
- Visibility within southern part of setting area is fairly open, due to loss of hedgerows and limited tree growth near the settlement fringe;
- Filtered views to rooftops of houses within northern part of Kelvedon from elevated parts of setting area;
- Distant skyline views to church steeple within Kelvedon conservation area;
- Filtered views from eastern parts of setting area to Feering church steeple and buildings within Feering conservation area;
- Where available, filtered views of housing within conservation areas tend to be of vernacular housing of varying age, style and form.

### Evaluation

#### 3.1.8 **Landscape Character Sensitivity**

- Area provides a moderate contribution to the wider landscape on account of its generally open character;
- Area provides part of a historic rural river setting to Kelvedon and Feering;
- Area provides a rural river valley setting to historic Coggeshall Hall 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 western and southern parts;
- Area has a medium to high sensitivity overall, as area provides strong contribution to the setting of the settlement, has a strong rural character and a generally robust structure of semi-natural vegetation lining the river;
- Sensitivity increased within eastern parts by river corridor between Kelvedon and Feering, which forms a continuum of landscape structure and provides a strongly recognisable and historic setting to Kelvedon and Feering;
- Sensitivity increased in eastern parts by contribution to visual and physical separation between Kelvedon and Feering and by concentration of pre-18<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> -19<sup>th</sup> century field enclosures defined by intact hedgerows, which add a sense of time depth to the landscape;
- Sensitivity reduced in western parts by loss of historic field enclosures and weak vegetation structure.

### 3.1.9 Visual Sensitivity

- Medium to high sensitivity overall, due to the open nature of views within the area and the visual prominence of the area within the wider landscape;
- Some intervisibility with the upper north-facing valley slopes of the River Blackwater;
- Elevated northern parts are visually prominent within the setting area and the wider landscape, and mostly seen in context of historic Coggeshall Hall, White Barn Farm and Monk's Farm; increasing the sensitivity of these parts;
- Reduced sensitivity in eastern parts, south of River Blackwater, due to visual enclosure provided by riverside woodland;
- Reduced sensitivity in western parts due to influence of railway with pylons and overhead wires;
- Views of historic buildings along central part of Kelvedon settlement edge and along western edge of Feering.

### 3.1.10 Landscape Value

Valued components of the landscape include:

- One County Wildlife Site (Feering Marsh);
- Eastern part of area designated as a County Wildlife Site;
- Ancient Monument in eastern part of area, west of Feering Place;
- Listed buildings scattered within the countryside, including those at Coggeshall Hall, Monk's Farm Cottages, Moorings, Lingwoods, Rye Mill House, Frame farm, Park Farm and Pound Farm;
- A good structure of public footpaths;
- Moderate sense of tranquillity away from roads and railway.

## 3.1.11 Summary of K1 Landscape Sensitivities and Value

Landscape Character Sensitivity	Visual Sensitivity	Landscape Value
<p>Medium to high sensitivity overall as area provides strong contribution to setting of settlement, has a strong rural character and a robust structure of semi-natural vegetation lining the river. Strength of rural character significantly reduced in western parts by loss of historic field enclosures and weak vegetation structure. Sensitivity increased in eastern parts by concentration of historic field enclosures.</p>	<p>Medium to high sensitivity overall due to the open nature of views within most of area and its visibility in the wider landscape. Reduced sensitivity in western parts due to influence of railway and also south of River Blackwater due to enclosure provided by woodland.</p>	<p>Medium to high sensitivity due to County Wildlife Site; ancient monument; numerous listed buildings; good structure of public footpaths and moderate sense of tranquillity.</p>
Medium to high	Medium to high	Medium to high

## 3.2 LANDSCAPE SETTING AREA K2 (refer to Landscape Assessment Figure K2)

### 3.2.1 Location

The setting area lies on western edge of Kelvedon and extends westwards from the settlement fringe to Crane's Lane.

#### Landscape and Visual Baseline

### 3.2.2 Landform and Drainage

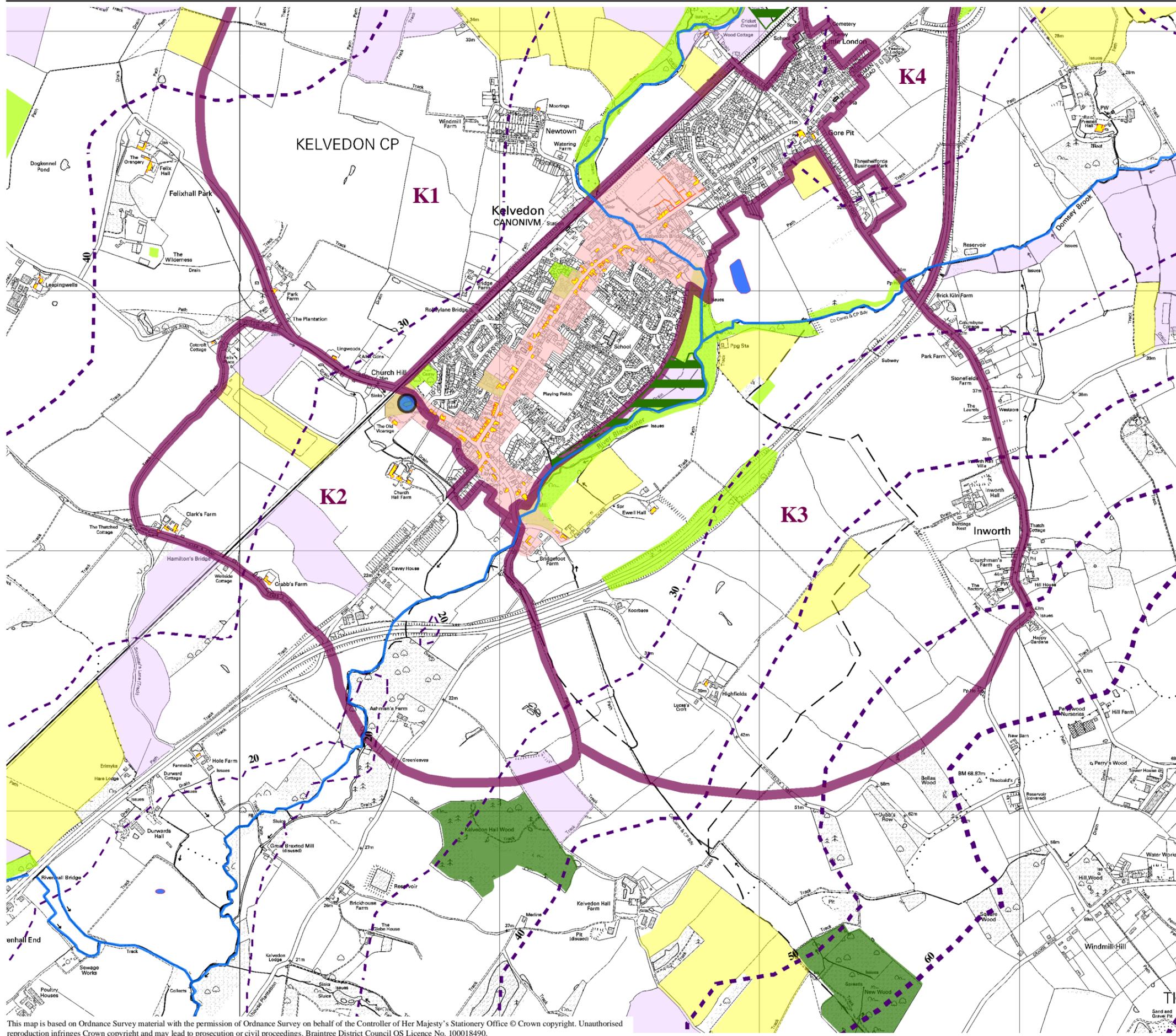
- Area occupies the northwestern and southeastern sides of a shallow valley. Its sideslopes descend towards the River Blackwater, which meanders through the area in a south-westerly direction from the southern fringes of the settlement;
- Minor field stream with sequences of ponds in eastern parts of the area, draining into the River Blackwater;
- Scattered ponds in southern parts of the area.

### 3.2.3 Land Use

- Predominantly arable farmland with some pockets of pasture in eastern parts, near the settlement edge;
- Small areas of rough grassland, pasture and blocks of woodland, particularly along river and field stream corridors;
- A12 highway with associated slip roads passes through southern part of area;
- London – Colchester railway traverses northern part of area;
- Large plantation woodland located at a bend in the River Blackwater, south of the A12;
- Village church with cemetery and Old Vicarage in far eastern part of area, south of railway;
- Isolated farmsteads along roads;
- Commercial/industrial development at junction of London Road and the A12;
- Rows of houses either side of London Road, forming ribbon development.

### 3.2.4 Vegetation

- Medium-scale arable fields with small grass paddocks and pasture in eastern parts along settlement edge;
- River and field stream corridors support strong structure of streambank vegetation, woodland copses and plantations;



**KEY**

- Landmarks
- 20
- 60
- 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

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**Figure K2**  
Kelvedon Settlement  
Fringe Analysis Plan 2

- Mature woodland located in grounds of village church;
- Belts of trees and shrubs lining long sections of the railway cutting;
- Strong structure of trees and shrubs lining northern edges of the A12, particularly at the London Road junction;
- Woodland plantation in southern part, located at bend in river;
- Recognisable but fragmented hedgerow structure, with some loss of hedgerows in southern parts.

### 3.2.5 Access

- Footpath along eastern boundary provides a bridge to the countryside, extending southwards along Maldon Road to Kelvedon Hall Farm and beyond;
- One bridleway along northern edge of area connects Hollow Road with Crabb's Lane.
- Although central parts of the area provide a historical open rural setting to the medieval settlement, there is very limited public access from the town conservation area.

### 3.2.6 Settlement Edge

- Settlement edge visually softened and enclosed by groups of mature trees associated with churchyard, tree belt alongside stream and by rear garden trees and shrubs.
- Settlement edge contains a variety of historic vernacular buildings fronting farmland, which form part of one of the medieval settlement foci for Kelvedon and include the historic parish church and the Old Vicarage;
- Some ribbon development along London Road, in central part of settlement fringe, comprising mainly modern semi-detached houses;

### 3.2.7 Visual Appraisal

- Small-scale pasture fields defined by hedgerows and strong structure of trees/shrubs lining tributary stream provide substantial enclosure to the settlement fringe;
- Views within area generally comprise near to medium distance, open views of pasture fields and hedgerows;
- Views to south, from central parts of area, are largely enclosed by vegetated A12 embankments;

- Typically some open views to railway, partial views to recently developed housing along London Road, and partial views to large-scale industrial development at A12 London Road junction;
- Intervisibility between northern and southern parts of the setting area largely restricted by woodland, A12 embankments and hedgerows that restrict views within a largely flat landscape;
- Skyline views to village church steeple;
- Limited visibility from the wider landscape due to enclosure provided by landform, well-treed embankments of A12 and robust woodland to south.

### Evaluation

#### 3.2.8 **Landscape Character Sensitivity**

- Area provides a high sensitivity overall due to good structure of semi-natural vegetation and its historic relationship with, and setting to, Kelvedon, which has always bordered farmland and the Old Vicarage with its grounds;
- Area forms an open, rural setting to historic Church Hall Farm and The Old Vicarage;
- Concentration of historic vernacular houses along settlement fringe;
- Recognisable landscape structure including semi-natural vegetation lining field stream and small-scale pasture fields defined by intact hedgerows along settlement fringe;
- Strength of landscape structure reduced slightly within central and southern parts due to loss of historic fields enclosures;
- Strength of rural character reduced in close proximity to railway and A12, which introduce noise and some vehicular movement into the landscape;
- Low to moderate contribution to the wider landscape on account of visual enclosure provided landform and vegetation, particularly tress and shrubs associated with major transport corridors that traverse the area.

#### 3.2.9 **Visual Sensitivity**

- Medium sensitivity overall, due to open nature of many views but with limited visibility from the wider landscape;
- A well-treed skyline in most parts of area;
- Filtered and partial views of historic buildings along settlement edge;

- Sensitivity reduced in some parts by visual prominence of railway corridor, large-scale buildings within commercial/industrial development at A12/London Road junction and modern residential buildings alongside London Road.

### 3.2.10 Landscape Value

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

- Southern part of area, north of A12 and south of London Road, designated as a Special Landscape Area;
- Proximity to Kelvedon conservation area, including historic parish church (listed building) and Old Vicarage (listed building);
- Listed buildings within Church Hall Farm, Crabb's Farm and Clark's Farm;
- Public footpath in southern part and bridleway along northern boundary;
- Moderate sense of tranquillity away from A12 and railway.

### 3.2.11 Summary of K2 Landscape Sensitivities and Value

Landscape Character Sensitivity	Visual Sensitivity	Landscape Value
High sensitivity overall due to good structure of semi-natural vegetation and its historic contribution to the setting of Kelvedon, which has always bordered farmland. Strength of rural character and landscape structure reduced slightly within central and southern parts due to loss of historic field enclosures and influence of A12 and railway.	Medium sensitivity overall, due to open nature of many views but with limited visibility from the wider landscape.	Medium to high value due to proximity to Kelvedon conservation area; numerous listed buildings; and public footpath and bridleway.
High	Medium	Medium to high

### **3.3 LANDSCAPE SETTING AREA K3** (refer to Landscape Assessment Figure K2)

#### **3.3.1 Location**

The setting area lies on southern edge of Kelvedon, and extends from the settlement fringe towards a ridge of higher land to the south.

#### *Landscape and Visual Baseline*

#### **3.3.2 Landform and Drainage**

- Area occupies the broad, north-facing slope of the River Blackwater valley, which descends to the River Blackwater;
- Several minor hillspurs descend from a broad, elevated saddle of land south of the area, forming gentle undulations within the setting area;
- North-eastern parts occupy the north and south facing slopes of a side-valley containing Domsey Brook, which drains in a westerly direction to the River Blackwater;
- A12 has a locally modified landform and traverses at a higher grade through central parts of the area on embankments.

#### **3.3.3 Land Use**

- Predominantly arable farmland;
- Grass paddocks and pasture close to the settlement fringe, near the River Blackwater;
- A12 traverses northern part of the area in an east-west direction;
- Historic Anglo-Saxon cemetery in northern part of area, close to settlement edge;
- Scattered historic halls and clusters of farmsteads along roads.

#### **3.3.4 Vegetation**

- Predominantly medium to large scale arable fields, with some small to medium scale pasture fields in northern parts;
- Species-rich grassland, with woodland plantation and groves of trees/shrubs lining the River Blackwater valley;
- Domsey Brook is well-enclosed by woodland plantation and groves of trees/shrubs;
- Tree belts lining roads, including Highfields Lane and Inworth Road, particularly in southern parts;
- Well-treed embankments lining the A12, particularly in central parts.

### 3.3.5 Access

- Good structure of public footpaths, which pass over/under the A12 at two points and connect to Maldon Road and Inworth Road, including routes alongside the river corridor and to Ewell Hall Chase.

### 3.3.6 Settlement Edge

- Southern settlement fringes of Kelvedon are softened and enclosed by tree/shrubs and woodland lining the River Blackwater and mainly comprise modern detached and semi-detached houses;
- Small protrusion of historic housing associated with conservation areas at either end of the high street.

### 3.3.7 Visual Appraisal

- Views within area generally comprise near to medium distance views of a well contained river valley landscape, with expansive views over the village to south-facing river valley slopes from elevated southern parts;
- Houses within the southern fringes of Kelvedon are well-enclosed from much of the area by landform and strong vegetation structure along the river corridor; but with a mixture of partial and glimpsed views of housing within central settlement fringes, obtained from elevated parts of setting area;
- Southern parts of area are fairly prominent in views from the wider landscape, with open views obtained from the rural land north of Kelvedon and Feering;
- Views within northern parts of the setting area are generally well-enclosed by large, well-treed embankments to the A12, and strong structure of trees and shrubs lining the river corridor;
- Long distance views of land to the south of area is generally enclosed by several small to medium-sized woodland blocks, including Jubb's Row and Kelvedon Hall Wood.

### Evaluation

### 3.3.8 Landscape Character Sensitivity

- Settlement fringes are well-contained by the Blackwater River valley, which has a strong sense of character and place, with sequences of open grassland amidst groves of willows and poplars, sometimes bordered by 18<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> century field enclosures;

- Area provides a rural river valley setting to historic buildings at Bridgefoot Farm, Ewell Hall, Highfields, Inworth Hall and Churchman's Farmhouse;
- Distinctive and well-treed southern approach to Kelvedon along Maldon Road and Ewell Hall Chase, with a direct relationship between medieval settlement foci and adjacent rural river valley;
- Reduced sensitivity near relatively modern settlement edges;
- Overall strength of character disrupted and severed by the A12, which generates some loss of tranquillity through noise and views of traffic;
- Area provides a medium to high sensitivity overall due to its strong rural character and sense of place with patterns of semi-natural vegetation lining the rivers, gentle sloping valley sides and woodland blocks; which combine to provide a important and historic rural river valley setting to the town;

### 3.3.9 **Visual Sensitivity**

- Medium to high visual sensitivity overall as area is visually prominent in the wider landscape and due to views of medieval settlement foci at either ends of the High Street.

### 3.3.10 **Landscape Value**

Area designated as a Special Landscape Area and includes one County Wildlife Site and Local Nature Reserve:- Brockwell Meadows, which is a protected grassland site located along the River Blackwater, immediately south of Kelvedon. Other valued components of the landscape include:

- Anglo-Saxon cemetery (Ancient Monument) in northern part, east of Easterford Mill;
- Close proximity to parts of conservation area at either ends of the High Street;
- Listed buildings at Bridgefoot Farm, Ewell Hall, Churchman's Farmhouse and Highfields;
- Good network of public footpaths, including recreational routes alongside river corridor;
- Medium to high sense of tranquillity, away from A12.

### 3.3.11 Summary of K3 Landscape Sensitivities and Value

Landscape Character Sensitivity	Visual Sensitivity	Landscape Value
Medium to high sensitivity due to its strong rural character and sense of place with patterns of semi-natural vegetation lining the rivers, gentle sloping valley sides and woodland blocks; which combine to provide an important and historic rural river valley setting to the town.	Medium to high sensitivity overall due to its visual prominence within the wider landscape. Increased sensitivity in northern parts, which are visually prominent in views from the conservation area and where views open up to historic buildings on settlement edge.	Medium to high value due to Brockwell Meadows (County Wildlife Site and Local Nature Reserve); close proximity to Kelvedon conservation area; good network of public footpaths, including recreational routes alongside river corridor; numerous listed buildings; an ancient monument site and medium to high sense of tranquillity.
Medium to high	Medium to high	Medium to high

### 3.4 LANDSCAPE SETTING AREA K4 (refer to Landscape Assessment Figure K1)

#### 3.4.1 Location

The setting area lies on eastern edge of Feering, and extends eastwards to New Lane, Hanover Square and the A12.

#### Landscape and Visual Baseline

#### 3.4.2 Landform and Drainage

- Area occupies the south-facing slopes of a valley that contains Domsey Brook and the upper part of a hillspur that lies on the northern edge of this valley.

#### 3.4.3 Land Use

- Predominantly arable farmland;
- Domsey Brook passes under the A12 and Inworth Road, in the far southern part of area,
- Cemetery in northern part, along settlement edge;
- London –Colchester railway forms the northern boundary;
- A12 forms the eastern and southeastern boundary, including an interchange at the London Road junction;
- Business Park in southern part, along settlement edge;
- Rows of detached and semi-detached houses form the eastern boundary.

#### 3.4.4 Vegetation

- Medium and large-scale arable fields;
- Trees and shrubs lining Domsey Brook in southern part;
- Robust belt of trees and shrubs lining the railway;
- Woodland and robust belts of tree/shrubs lining A12 embankments and London Road interchange;
- Recognisable but fragmented field hedgerow structure, with some loss of hedgerows in southern and northern parts;
- Little mature vegetation within grounds of Business Park, with loss of hedgerows in adjacent fields.

#### 3.4.5 Access

- Public footpath within southern part provides a bridge to the countryside for eastern parts of the settlement, heading eastwards over the A12 to the surrounding countryside, towards Prested Hall.

#### 3.4.6 Settlement Edge

- Eastern settlement fringes of Feering 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 edge, within rear gardens and cemetery;
- A small Business Park protrudes out from the southern settlement edge along Inworth Road, and is poorly integrated within it's farmland setting, containing little tree/shrub planting within grounds;
- Northern parts of area abut the railway, adjacent to Feering conservation area, which comprise numerous buildings of historic and architectural value.

#### 3.4.7 Visual Appraisal

- Intervisibility with wider landscape restricted by enclosure provided by the well-vegetated A12 embankments, and by mature trees and shrubs within grounds of Prested Hall, east of the setting area;
- Filtered views to houses in Feering conservation area and northern parts of area, obtained over the railway from southern parts;
- Most of the area is under a strong visual influence from both commercial and residential buildings; as well as the railway and A12;
- Abrupt, linear settlement edges of east Feering are generally softened by mature tree/shrub planting within rear gardens and hedgerows within adjacent fields; allowing only partial views to modern detached and semi-detached houses;
- Glimpses to Feering church tower, from northern parts of the area.

#### Evaluation

#### 3.4.8 Landscape Character Sensitivity

- Northern parts of area provides a rural setting to Feering Village and its historic core north of the railway. However, this historic relationship has been partially disrupted by the railway corridor;

- Vegetation structure within the area is fairly robust, with some hedgerows in good condition, but intermittent gaps in vegetation lining central parts of A12, introducing moderate amounts of noise and movement within the area;
- Area provides only a moderate contribution to wider rural landscape on account of the enclosure provided by the well-treed embankments of the A12 and by woodlands, tree belts and hedgerows within the local landscape;
- Sensitivity reduced slightly in southern parts by poorly integrated edges to Business Park along Inworth Road, and by groups of modern vernacular-style houses that are poorly integrated into rural river valley landscape;
- Strength of rural character reduced by noise generated by the A12 and London – Colchester railway; and general loss of historic field enclosures;
- Medium to high sensitivity overall due to strength of rural character and contribution to the setting of the historic core of Feering. Sensitivity reduced in southern parts by presence of A12, business park and adjacent group of modern houses, which are poorly integrated into the local landscape.

#### 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 the A12 and by tree/hedgerows in the fields on this generally flat land;
- Although southern parts are visually prominent within the setting area, they are seen in the context of open and partial views of existing built development within eastern parts of Feering;
- Increased visual sensitivity in northern parts, where views may be obtained of historic, vernacular buildings on edge of Feering.

#### 3.4.10 **Landscape Value**

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

- Far southern part of area designated as a Special Landscape Area;
- Proximity to Feering Conservation Area;
- Public footpath across southern parts of area.

### 3.4.11 Summary of K4 Landscape Sensitivities and Value

Landscape Character Sensitivity	Visual Sensitivity	Landscape Value
Medium to high sensitivity overall due to strength of rural character and contribution to the setting of the historic core of Feering. Sensitivity reduced in southern parts by presence of A12, business park and adjacent group of modern houses, which are poorly integrated into the local landscape.	Medium visual sensitivity overall, as the area is generally not prominent in views from the wider landscape due to the enclosure provided the A12 and by tree/hedgerows in the fields on this generally flat land	Medium value overall but increased value in close proximity to Feering conservation area.
Medium to high	Medium	Medium

## 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.

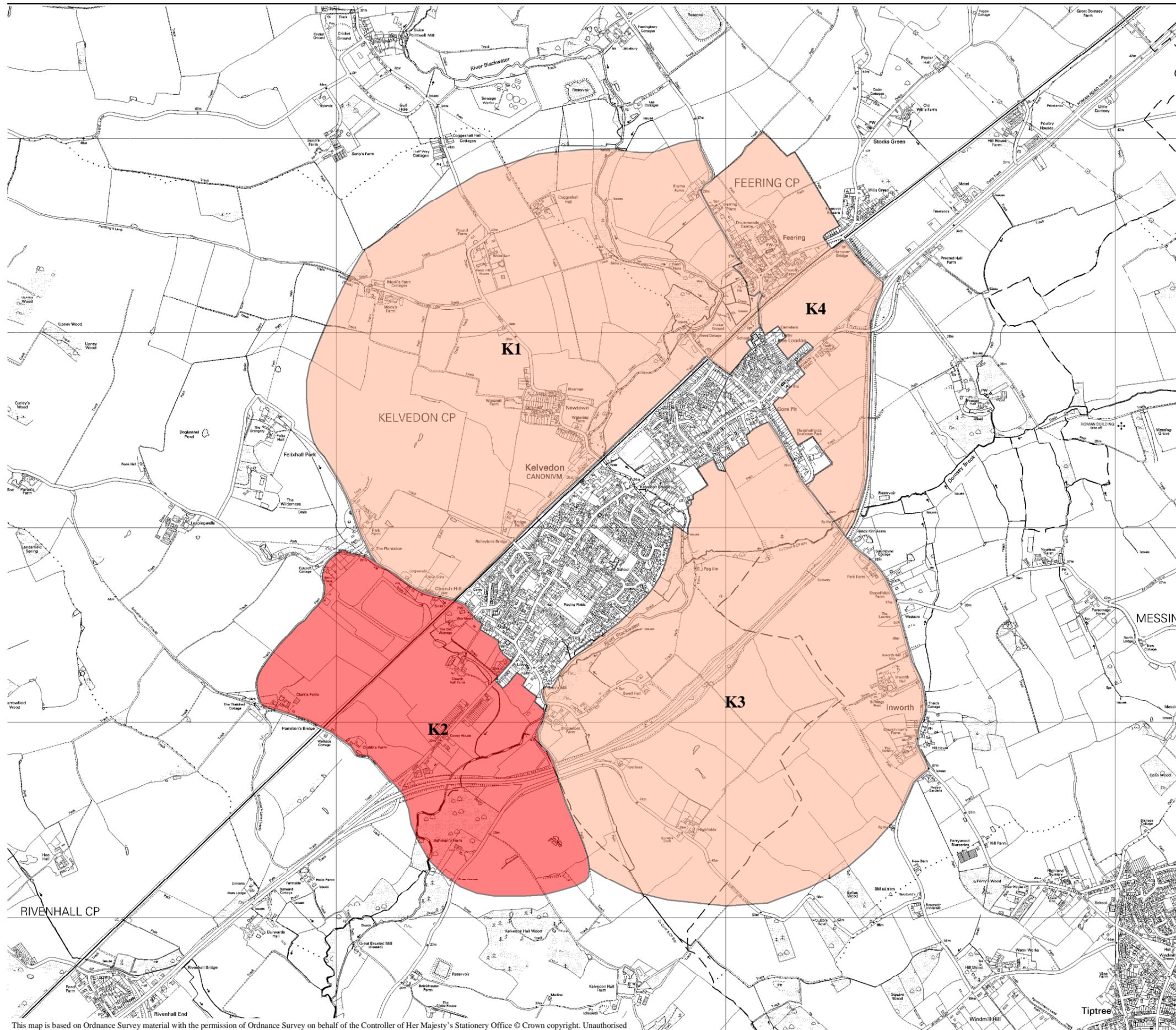
**Table 4.1: Schedule of Landscape Sensitivities, Landscape Value and Landscape Capacity.**

<b>Landscape Setting Area</b>	<b>Landscape Character Sensitivity</b>	<b>Visual Sensitivity</b>	<b>Landscape Value</b>	<b>Landscape Capacity</b>
<b>K1</b>	Medium to high	Medium to high	Medium to high	Low to medium
<b>K2</b>	High	Medium	Medium to high	Low
<b>K3</b>	Medium to high	Medium to high	Medium to high	Low to medium
<b>K4</b>	Medium to high	Medium	Medium	Low to medium

- 4.4 Three of the Landscape Setting Areas around Kelvedon have a ‘Low to Medium’ landscape capacity, and one has a ‘Low’ capacity as set out in Table 4.1 and

illustrated on Figure K3: Landscape Capacity Evaluation Plan. These capacity 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. Potential opportunities for incorporating new built development around Kelvedon are limited. However, there might be opportunities for any necessary residential or employment development to be accommodated subject to more detailed survey and analysis, (e.g. along the northern edge of the settlement, to the west of Newtown) providing that robust belts of trees and shrubs are provided to help integrate any expanded settlement into the local landscape. There may also be opportunities for locating new development on the southern and eastern edges of this settlement, in areas of relatively low sensitivity north of the A12 and on either side of the Inworth Road.
- 4.6 These potential opportunities would need to be verified through a more detailed assessment of the setting areas. 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.
- 4.7 Opportunities for helping accommodate built development within landscape setting areas also include enhancing local hedgerow structures, providing additional tree/shrub planting to help soften the appearance of some fringes of the settlement and building in local vernacular style. Opportunities should also be taken to develop landscape recreational corridors alongside the River Blackwater, which passes through Landscape Setting Areas K1 and K3.



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**KEY**  
**Landscape Capacity**  
 Low Capacity  
 Low-Medium Capacity  
 Medium Capacity  
 Medium-High Capacity

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 1:20,000

**Figure K3**  
 Kelvedon Settlement  
 Landscape Capacity Evaluation Plan

## 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 to medium, or even low, landscape capacity may contain 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**

<b>Landscape Character Sensitivity</b>	<b>Definition</b>
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

<b>Landscape Character Sensitivity</b>	<b>Definition</b>
	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**

<b>Landscape Value</b>	<b>Definition</b>
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**

<b>Visual Sensitivity</b>	<b>Definition</b>
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

<b>Visual Sensitivity</b>	<b>Definition</b>
	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**

<b>Landscape Character Sensitivity</b>	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
<b>Visual Sensitivity</b>						

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

<b>Overall Landscape Sensitivity</b>	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
<b>Landscape Value</b>						

**APPENDIX B**  
**FIELD SURVEY SHEET**

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

#### A. LOCAL LANDSCAPE SETTING

<i>LANDSCAPE SENSITIVITY</i>	<i>CHARACTER</i>
<p>Natural Factors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Vegetation: Hedgerows, tree cover and type, woodland (visually important)</i></li> <li>• <i>Water bodies / courses: River (s/m/l) Speed (f/m/s), river meanders, lake, ponds, bog/wetland, drainage channels, drainage ditches, locks/weirs</i></li> <li>• <i>Water bodies / courses: River (s/m/l) Speed (f/m/s), river meanders,</i></li> </ul> <p>Cultural Factors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Land Use: Farmland (A/P), Forestry/woodland, historic parkland, mineral working, natural, military, other.</i></li> <li>• <i>Enclosure and pattern: Scale and shape of fields (refer to HLC data)</i></li> </ul> <p>Landscape Quality / Condition</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>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.</i></li> <li>• <i>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.</i></li> <li>• <i>Urban Edge Description: Type and quality and character – how is the edge perceived? Well integrated / harsh / ad-hoc urban fringe</i></li> </ul>	

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

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"> <li>• <b>Historic Integrity:</b> 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.</li> <li>• <b>Ecological Integrity:</b> 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</li> <li>• <b>Tranquillity:</b> 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?</li> </ul>	
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>	
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*/ woodlands*

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

*e.g. Conserve or enhance views*



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