

# **A12 Chelmsford to A120 widening scheme**

**TR010060**

## **6.3 ENVIRONMENT STATEMENT**

### **APPENDIX 8.1 PUBLISHED SOURCES OF LANDSCAPE CHARACTER**

APFP Regulation 5(2)(a)

Planning Act 2008

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Infrastructure Planning

Planning Act 2008

**A12 Chelmsford to A120 widening scheme**  
**Development Consent Order 202[ ]**

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# 1 Introduction

- 1.1.1 This appendix presents the published landscape character areas (LCAs) that fall within the landscape and visual study area at national (Table 1.1), regional (Table 1.2) and local (Tables 1.3 and 1.4) level. The key characteristics and published sensitivity to change are recorded, along with information relating to landscape planning and land management guidelines for the local LCAs.

**Table 1.1 Published National Character Areas**

<b>National character area</b>	<b>Key characteristics</b>
NCA 86 South Suffolk and North Essex Clayland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An undulating chalky boulder clay plateau is dissected by numerous river valleys, giving a topography of gentle slopes in the lower, wider valleys and steeper slopes in the narrower upper parts.</li> <li>• Fragments of chalk give many of the soils a calcareous character, which also influences the character of the semi-natural vegetation cover.</li> <li>• South-east-flowing streams and rivers drain the clay plateau. Watercourses wind slowly across flood plains, supporting wet, fen-type habitats; grazing marsh; and blocks of cricket-bat willows, poplars and old willow pollards. Navigation locks are present on some rivers.</li> <li>• Lowland wood pasture and ancient woodlands support the dormouse and a rich diversity of flowering plants on the clay plateau. Large, often ancient hedgerows link woods and copses, forming wooded skylines.</li> <li>• The agricultural landscape is predominantly arable with a wooded appearance. There is some pasture on the valley floors. Field patterns are irregular despite rationalisation, with much ancient countryside surviving. Field margins support corn bunting, cornflower and brown hare.</li> <li>• Roman sites, medieval monasteries and castles and ancient woodlands contribute to a rich archaeology. Impressive churches, large barns, substantial country house estates and Second World War airfields dot the landscape, forming historical resources.</li> <li>• There is a dispersed settlement pattern of scattered farmsteads, parishes and small settlements around ‘tyes’ (commons) or strip greens and isolated hamlets. The NCA features a concentration of isolated moated farmsteads and numerous well-preserved medieval towns and large villages.</li> <li>• Larger 20th-century development has taken place to the south and east around Chelmsford, Ipswich and the new towns of Harlow and Stevenage.</li> <li>• Traditional timber-frame, often elaborate buildings with exposed timbers, colour-washed render, pargeting and steeply pitched roofs with pegtiles or long straw thatch. Sometimes they have been re-fronted with Georgian red brick or Victorian cream-coloured bricks (‘Suffolk whites’). Clay lump is often used in cottages and farm buildings.</li> </ul>

National character area	Key characteristics
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Winding, narrow and sometimes sunken lanes are bounded by deep ditches, wide verges and strong hedgerows. Transport infrastructure includes the A14, A12, M11 and Stansted Airport.</li> <li>A strong network of public rights of way provides access to the area's archetypal lowland English countryside.</li> </ul>
NCA 111 Northern Thames Basin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The landform is varied with a wide plateau divided by river valleys. The prominent hills and ridges of the 'Bagshot Hills' are notable to the northwest and extensive tracts of flat land are found in the south.</li> <li>Characteristic of the area is a layer of thick clay producing heavy, acidic soils, resulting in retention of considerable areas of ancient woodland.</li> <li>Areas capped by glacial sands and gravels have resulted in nutrient-poor, free-draining soils which support remnant lowland heathlands, although these are now small. Areas that have alluvial deposits present are well drained and fertile.</li> <li>The water bearing underlying Chalk beds are a main source of recharge for the principal London Basin Chalk aquifer.</li> <li>A diverse landscape with a series of broad valleys containing the major rivers Ver, Colne and Lea, and slightly steeper valleys of the rivers Stour, Colne and Roman. Numerous springs rise at the base of the Bagshot Beds and several reservoirs are dotted throughout the area.</li> <li>The pattern of woodlands is varied across the area and includes considerable ancient semi-natural woodland. Hertfordshire is heavily wooded in some areas as are parts of Essex, while other areas within Essex are more open in character. Significant areas of wood pasture and pollarded veteran trees are also present.</li> <li>The field pattern is very varied across the basin reflecting historical activity. Informal patterns of 18th-century or earlier enclosure reflect medieval colonisation of the heaths. Regular planned enclosures dating from the Romano-British period are a subtle but nationally important feature on the flat land to the south-east of the area. In the Essex heathlands, 18th and 19th-century enclosure of heathlands and commons followed by extensive 20th-century field enlargement is dominant.</li> </ul>

<b>National character area</b>	<b>Key characteristics</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mixed farming, with arable land predominating in the Hertfordshire plateaux, parts of the London Clay lowlands and Essex heathlands. Grasslands are characteristic of the river valleys throughout. Horticulture and market gardening are found on the light, sandy soils of former heaths in Essex, particularly around Colchester, along with orchards, meadow pasture and leys following numerous narrow rivers and streams.</li> <li>• The diverse range of semi-natural habitats include ancient woodland, lowland heath and floodplain grazing marsh and provide important habitats for a wide range of species including great crested newt, water vole, dormouse and otter.</li> <li>• Rich archaeology including sites related to Roman occupation, with the Roman capital at Colchester and City of St Albans (Verulamium) and links to London. Landscape parklands surrounding 16th and 17th-century rural estates and country houses built for London merchants are a particular feature in Hertfordshire.</li> <li>• The medieval pattern of small villages and dispersed farming settlement remains central to the character of parts of Hertfordshire and Essex. Market towns have expanded over time as have the London suburbs and commuter settlements, with the creation of new settlements such as the pioneering garden city at Welwyn and the planned town at Basildon.</li> <li>• Brick-built dwellings are characteristic from the late 17th-century onwards. Prior to this dwellings and farm building tended to be timber built with weatherboarding, now mainly painted white but traditionally black or tarred, and whitewashed plaster walls.</li> </ul>

**Table 1.2 Published Regional Landscape Character Areas**

Landscape character area	Key characteristics	Published sensitivity to major transportation developments / improvements
<b>Essex Landscape Character Assessment (Chris Blandford Associates, 2003)</b>		
B1 Central Essex Farmland (potentially directly affected)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Irregular field pattern of mainly medium size arable fields, marked by sinuous hedgerows and ditches.</li> <li>• Many small woods and copses provide structure and edges in the landscape.</li> <li>• Scattered settlement pattern, with frequent small hamlets, typically with greens and ponds.</li> <li>• A concentration of isolated moated farmsteads.</li> <li>• Network of narrow, winding lanes.</li> <li>• Mostly tranquil character away from major roads and Stansted Airport.</li> </ul>	Moderate
B4 Gosfield Wooded Farmland (potentially directly affected)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flat to gently undulating landform.</li> <li>• Strong pattern of large and small woods, including distinctive ancient limewoods.</li> <li>• Irregular medium size arable fields, bounded by thick hedgerows with mature hedgerow trees.</li> <li>• Enclosed character.</li> <li>• Many small farmsteads, occasional hamlets and villages.</li> </ul>	Moderate

<b>Landscape character area</b>	<b>Key characteristics</b>	<b>Published sensitivity to major transportation developments / improvements</b>
C6 Blackwater/Brain and Lower Chelmer Valleys (potentially directly affected)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shallow valleys.</li> <li>• Predominantly arable farmland with well hedged medium to large fields.</li> <li>• The Brain and the Upper Blackwater Valleys are narrow with undulating valleysides.</li> <li>• The Lower Chelmer, and the Blackwater near Maldon, have wide flat valley floors, and gentle valley sides.</li> <li>• Extensive linear poplar and willow plantations are a distinctive feature.</li> </ul>	Moderate
D4 Tiptree Ridge (potentially directly affected)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Elevated, broad ridge.</li> <li>• Strongly wooded western ridgeside.</li> <li>• Small - medium scale field pattern.</li> <li>• Enclosed character provided by many tall, thick hedgerows and woodland.</li> <li>• Framed views over the Blackwater Valley and the Blackwater coastal farmlands.</li> </ul>	High
E2 South Colchester Farmlands (potentially directly affected)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mix of small regular pasture and large arable fields.</li> <li>• Dense woodland in the Roman River valley.</li> <li>• Enclosed, intimate character in the north, more open in the south.</li> <li>• Complex settlement pattern of nucleated and linear villages/hamlets, and farmsteads along dispersed lanes.</li> <li>• Distinctive elongated large waterbody of Abberton Reservoir within a shallow valley.</li> </ul>	Moderate

<b>Landscape character area</b>	<b>Key characteristics</b>	<b>Published sensitivity to major transportation developments / improvements</b>
G2 Chelmsford and Environs (potentially directly affected)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Historic town with extensive residential estate development spreading over a gently sloping valleyside landform.</li> <li>• Wide riverside corridors of green space except in the town centre.</li> <li>• Fringe of mixed farmland with variable size hedgerowed fields, with few woods or copses.</li> <li>• Large villages of Writtle and Galleywood physically separated from the town, but with much development of an urban character.</li> </ul>	Moderate
G4 Colchester and Environs (potentially indirectly affected)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Historic town core with a strong grid pattern on a low hill above the River Colne.</li> <li>• Residential and commercial development wraps over valleysides or slightly elevated flatter land.</li> <li>• Uninterrupted valley floor of the Colne forms a ribbon of green space running through the centre of the urban area.</li> <li>• Large blocks of woodlands and open spaces on some valleysides.</li> <li>• Variable size regular hedgerowed fields in the fringing farmland.</li> </ul>	Moderate

**Table 1.3 Published local landscape character including landscape Planning and Land Management Guidelines (Chelmsford, Braintree, Maldon)**

Landscape character area	Key characteristics	Landscape planning guidelines	Land management guidelines
<b>Braintree, Brentwood, Chelmsford, Maldon and Uttlesford Landscape Character Assessments (Chris Blandford Associates, 2006)</b>			
A7 Lower Chelmer River Valley (directly affected)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shallow valley.</li> <li>• Predominantly arable farmland on the valley slopes.</li> <li>• The Lower Chelmer where it meets the River Blackwater has gentle valley sides.</li> <li>• Overall strong sense of place and tranquillity away from Maldon and the A12 and the railway line.</li> </ul> <p><b>Published sensitivity to change: high</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manage the traffic flows along the minor roads especially those not suitable for heavy goods vehicles (HGVs) and lorries due to narrow bridges.</li> <li>• Ensure that new built development is in keeping with landscape character.</li> <li>• Conserve and enhance the landscape setting of settlements.</li> <li>• Enhance the screening of the A12 and the railway line.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conserve and enhance the existing hedgerow pattern, and strengthen through planting where appropriate to local landscape character.</li> <li>• Conserve and manage the ecological structure of hedges and ditches within the character area.</li> <li>• Conserve and promote the use of building materials, which area in keeping with local vernacular/landscape character.</li> </ul>

Landscape character area	Key characteristics	Landscape planning guidelines	Land management guidelines
A9 Blackwater River Valley (directly affected)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shallow valley.</li> <li>• The valley sides slope gently up from the valley floor.</li> <li>• Predominantly arable farmland on the valley slopes.</li> <li>• The Lower Blackwater near the confluence with the River Chelmer has gentle valley slopes.</li> <li>• Overall strong sense of place and tranquillity away from the settlements of Braintree, Witham and Maldon and the A120, A12 and the railway line.</li> </ul> <p><b>Sensitivity to change not published</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manage the traffic flows along the minor roads especially those not suitable for HGVs and lorries due to narrow bridges.</li> <li>• Ensure that new built development is in keeping with landscape character.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conserve and enhance the existing hedgerow pattern, and strengthen through planting where appropriate to local landscape character.</li> <li>• Conserve and manage the ecological structure of hedges and ditches within the character area.</li> </ul>
Landscape sub-area A9A (directly affected)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mixture of arable and pastoral land use on the valley floor.</li> <li>• The River Blackwater Valley floor north of the A120 is narrow.</li> <li>• The River Blackwater near the confluence with the River Chelmer has a wide flat valley floor.</li> <li>• Extensive linear poplar and willow plantations are a distinctive feature especially along the river banks.</li> </ul> <p><b>Sensitivity to change not published</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conserve and enhance the landscape setting of settlements.</li> <li>• Enhance the screening of the A12 and the railway line.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conserve and promote the use of building materials, which area in keeping with local vernacular/landscape character.</li> <li>• Manage the roadside fly tipping and rubbish thrown from cars that lands in the road verges.</li> </ul>

Landscape character area	Key characteristics	Landscape planning guidelines	Land management guidelines
B17 Terling Farmland Plateau (indirectly affected)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rolling arable farmland.</li> <li>• Irregular pattern of medium to large-scale fields.</li> <li>• Scattered settlement pattern, with frequent small hamlets, typically with greens and ponds.</li> <li>• Network of narrow winding lanes.</li> <li>• Mostly tranquil away from the A12 and A131.</li> </ul> <p><b>Published sensitivity to change: moderate</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that new build is in keeping with landscape character.</li> <li>• Conserve and enhance the landscape setting of settlements.</li> <li>• Ensure any new development within the farmland is small-scale, responding to historic settlement pattern, landscape setting and locally distinctive building styles.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conserve and enhance the existing hedgerow pattern, and strengthen through planting where appropriate to local landscape character.</li> <li>• Conserve and manage areas of semi-natural woodland as important historical, landscape and nature conservation features.</li> <li>• Conserve and manage the ecological structure of woodland, copses and hedges within the character area.</li> <li>• Conserve and promote the use of building materials, which are in keeping with local vernacular/landscape character.</li> </ul>

Landscape character area	Key characteristics	Landscape planning guidelines	Land management guidelines
B18 Silver End Farmland Plateau (indirectly affected)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gently undulating farmland.</li> <li>• Irregular predominantly large arable fields marked by sinuous hedgerows.</li> <li>• Many small woods and copses provide structure and edges in the landscape.</li> <li>• Scattered settlement pattern, with frequent small villages.</li> <li>• Network of narrow winding lanes.</li> <li>• Mostly tranquil character away from the major roads.</li> </ul> <p><b>Published sensitivity to change: moderate to high</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that new build is in keeping with landscape character.</li> <li>• Conserve and enhance the landscape setting of settlements.</li> <li>• Maintain characteristic open views across the farmland.</li> <li>• Ensure any new development within the farmland is small-scale, responding to historic settlement pattern, landscape setting and locally distinctive building styles.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conserve and enhance the existing hedgerow pattern, and strengthen through planting where appropriate to local landscape character.</li> <li>• Conserve and manage areas of semi-natural woodland as important historic, landscape and nature conservation features.</li> <li>• Conserve and manage the ecological structure of hedges within the character area.</li> <li>• Conserve and promote the use of building materials, which are in keeping with local vernacular/landscape character.</li> </ul>

Landscape character area	Key characteristics	Landscape planning guidelines	Land management guidelines
B19 Langley Green Farmland Plateau (directly affected)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flat to gently sloping landform.</li> <li>• Dominated by large arable fields.</li> <li>• Generally gappy and fragmented field boundaries especially adjacent to roads.</li> <li>• Settlement pattern consists of small villages with scattered farmsteads amongst predominantly arable land.</li> <li>• The houses are predominantly modern constructed from brick.</li> <li>• Overall strong sense of place and tranquillity away from the A120, A12 and the railway line.</li> </ul> <p><b>Published sensitivity to change: low to moderate</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that new built development is in keeping with landscape character.</li> <li>• Conserve and enhance the landscape setting of settlements.</li> <li>• Conserve the mostly rural character of the area.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider the introduction of new structure planting to shield/mitigate the visual effects on the A120, A12 and the railway line corridor.</li> <li>• Conserve and enhance the existing hedgerow pattern, and strengthen through planting where appropriate to local landscape character.</li> <li>• Conserve and manage the ecological structure of hedges and ditches within the character area.</li> <li>• Conserve and promote the use of building materials, which are in keeping with local vernacular/landscape character.</li> </ul>

Landscape character area	Key characteristics	Landscape planning guidelines	Land management guidelines
B21 Boreham Farmland Plateau (directly affected)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Irregular field pattern of mainly medium size arable and pastoral fields, marked by hedgerows, banks and ditches.</li> <li>• Small woods and copses provide structure and edges in the landscape.</li> <li>• Scattered settlement pattern, with frequent small villages.</li> <li>• A concentration of isolated farmsteads.</li> <li>• Network of narrow winding lanes.</li> </ul> <p><b>Published sensitivity to change: low to moderate</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider the visual impact of new residential development and farm buildings in the surrounding agricultural fields.</li> <li>• Ensure any new development is small-scale, responding to historic settlement pattern, landscape setting and locally distinctive building styles.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conserve and enhance the existing hedgerow pattern, and strengthen through planting where appropriate to local landscape character.</li> <li>• Conserve and manage areas of ancient and semi-natural woodland as important historical, landscape and nature conservation features.</li> <li>• Conserve and manage the ecological structure of woodland, copses and hedges within the character area.</li> <li>• Strengthen the recreational role of the water filled sand and gravel pits.</li> <li>• Conserve and promote the use of building materials, which are in keeping with local vernacular/landscape character.</li> </ul>

Landscape character area	Key characteristics	Landscape planning guidelines	Land management guidelines
F3 Totham Wooded Farmland (directly affected)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wooded ridges and hillsides to the east of the River Blackwater.</li> <li>• Predominantly agricultural fields enclosed by woodland patches or hedgerows with mature trees.</li> <li>• Field boundaries vary; some thickly enclosed, as at Beacon Hill; some more open with gappy hedges.</li> <li>• Interest created by colour washed buildings both in villages and scattered in the landscape.</li> </ul> <p><b>Published sensitivity to change: high</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conserve and protect open views from Mountain Road, Braxted Lane and other rural lanes.</li> <li>• Ensure that any new development responds to historic settlement pattern and scale, and uses materials and colours that are appropriate to the local landscape character; such development should be well integrated into the surrounding landscape.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conserve and restore existing hedgerow network where gappy and depleted especially on property boundaries or on field margins.</li> <li>• Conserve and enhance the ecological structure of woodland, copses and hedges within the character area.</li> <li>• Conserve, manage and enhance areas of semi natural and ancient woodland as important heritage, nature conservation and landscape features.</li> <li>• Conserve historic lanes and unimproved roadside verges.</li> <li>• Introduce arable field margins as a means to ensure that ploughing does not disturb mature trees within hedgerows.</li> <li>• Conserve and promote the use of local building materials which are in keeping with the local vernacular and landscape character.</li> </ul>

**Table 1.4 Published local landscape character including landscape Planning and Land Management Guidelines (Colchester)**

Landscape character area	Key characteristics (sensitivity to change not published)	Landscape planning guidelines	Land management guidelines
<b>Colchester Borough Landscape Character Assessment (Chris Blandford Associates, 2005)</b>			
A2 Wooded Roman River Valley (indirectly affected)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relatively steep and wooded slopes of narrow V-shaped Roman River valley (tributary of the Colne River).</li> <li>• Large areas of deciduous and coniferous (mixed) woodland on the valley slopes (e.g. Donyland Wood, Friday Wood and Chest Wood).</li> <li>• Small patches of ancient woodland on the valley sides.</li> <li>• Large regular fields on northern valley slopes with a concentration of smaller irregular fields at High Park Corner.</li> <li>• Several areas of historic parkland, often associated with halls, overlooking the valley floor.</li> <li>• Views across and within the valley restricted by large woodland areas.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conserve the historic quay at Rowhedge, which makes a positive contribution to local landscape character.</li> <li>• Consider the landscape pattern and structure of large woodland areas, and the role that they have in the composition of views to and from the area.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conserve and manage areas of ancient and semi-natural woodland as important landscape, historical and nature conservation features.</li> <li>• Conserve and manage the ecological structure of woodland, copses and hedges within the character area.</li> <li>• Strengthen the recreational role of the woodland resource.</li> </ul>

Landscape character area	Key characteristics (sensitivity to change not published)	Landscape planning guidelines	Land management guidelines
A5 Colne River Valley Slopes (indirectly affected)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relatively steep V-shaped valley slopes facilitate attractive and open views across and along the river corridor.</li> <li>• Principal road network consisting of narrow tree-lined (sometimes sunken) lanes traversing the valley sides to the north and south.</li> <li>• A mosaic of medium to large-sized irregular and regular, predominantly arable fields with medium hedgerows containing semi-mature/mature hedgerow trees.</li> <li>• Some larger semi-enclosed arable fields to the west of Wakes Colne; and concentrations of smaller fields with intact hedge boundaries adjacent to settlements.</li> <li>• Settlement pattern consists of small linear village settlements such as Wakes Colne and Eight Ash Green, adjacent to the north-south roads, which cross the River Valley; and small hamlets and farmsteads.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure any new small-scale development in, or on the edges of Fordham, Wivenhoe, West bergholt and Colchester is of an appropriate scale, form and design and uses materials which respond to historic settlement pattern, landscape setting and locally distinctive building styles and materials. (Development opportunities are limited around Fordham due to the Woodland Trust site).</li> <li>• Ensure any new development on valley sides is small-scale, responds to historic settlement pattern, form and building materials.</li> <li>• Maintain cross-valley views.</li> <li>• Conserve views of the river and floodplain.</li> <li>• Ensure that new woodland planting is designed to enhance existing landscape character and species composition reflects local provenance.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conserve and manage existing hedgerows (especially failing elm hedges).</li> <li>• Restore hedgerows using hawthorn and plant new hedgerow trees, particularly in areas of arable farmland.</li> <li>• Conserve and manage existing valleyside woodlands.</li> <li>• Encourage the planting of native alder and willow riverside trees where appropriate.</li> </ul>

Landscape character area	Key characteristics (sensitivity to change not published)	Landscape planning guidelines	Land management guidelines
B2 Easthorpe Farmland Plateau (directly affected)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Raised farmland plateau, dissected by the wooded Roman River valley in the east.</li> <li>• A mixture of small, medium and large, irregular, predominantly arable fields.</li> <li>• Small patches of deciduous woodland and several ponds/reservoirs.</li> <li>• Area crossed by a network of narrow, sometimes winding lanes.</li> <li>• Airfield, surrounded by large open fields, has a dominant influence on the landscape character in the south of the character area.</li> <li>• Settlement pattern consists of small villages and hamlets with scattered farmsteads amongst predominantly arable agricultural land.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conserve the mostly rural character of the area.</li> <li>• Ensure that any appropriate new development responds to historic settlement pattern and uses materials which are appropriate to landscape character (refer to the Essex Design Guide for Residential and Mixed Use Areas, Essex Planning Officer Association, 1997, for further information). Such development should be well integrated into the surrounding landscape.</li> <li>• Ensure that any development on the edges of Marks Tey and Copford responds to traditional settlement patterns and uses design and materials, which are appropriate to local landscape character.</li> <li>• New farm buildings such as sheds should be sensitively located within the landscape to respect local character and avoid the skyline.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider the introduction of new structure planting to shield/ mitigate the visual effects on the A12 / railway and settlement corridor (B2a).</li> <li>• Strengthen and enhance hedgerows with hawthorn where gappy and depleted.</li> <li>• Conserve and manage areas of ancient and semi-natural woodland (for example to the north east of Messing Lodge) as important landscape, historical and nature conservation features.</li> <li>• Conserve historic lanes and unimproved roadside verges.</li> </ul>

Landscape character area	Key characteristics (sensitivity to change not published)	Landscape planning guidelines	Land management guidelines
Landscape sub-area B2A (directly affected)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Linear settlement corridor extending from the western edge of Colchester urban area, including the western edges of Stanway, Copford village and Marks Tey in the west.</li> <li>• Northern boundary delineated by main A12 and railway corridor which is a dominant visual feature within the character area.</li> <li>• Visually dominant major road junctions/roundabouts within the character area.</li> <li>• Landscape character is disturbed by the visual movement and noise intrusion of cars on the A12 and also by frequent trains on the main railway line.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As per B2 Easthorpe Farmland Plateau</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As per B2 Easthorpe Farmland Plateau</li> </ul>

Landscape character area	Key characteristics (sensitivity to change not published)	Landscape planning guidelines	Land management guidelines
B3 Southern Colchester Farmland Plateau (indirectly affected)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An area of sloping farmland plateau (with a mixture of small, medium and large predominantly arable fields) bordered by Colchester settlement fringes to the north and the wooded Roman River Valley to the south.</li> <li>• Influence of the military (East Donyland military training area and Middlewick Rifle Ranges) – disturbs tranquillity whilst firing practice is taking place.</li> <li>• Several large patches of woodland extend from the northern slopes of the Roman River valley onto the plateau.</li> <li>• Several small lakes and ponds within disused sand and gravel works.</li> <li>• Character area provides physical and visual separation between Colchester urban area and the Roman River Valley.</li> <li>• Fragmented and sometimes chaotic landscape structure with numerous unrelated land uses.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The reuse of redundant agricultural buildings, particularly black timber-framed and boarded barns, should be encouraged.</li> <li>• Ensure any new development responds to historic settlement pattern and uses materials which are appropriate to landscape character.</li> <li>• Screen existing visually intrusive modern housing development along the southern edges of Colchester (adjacent and north of Gosbecks archaeological park) with new structure planting.</li> <li>• Conserve and manage small patches of woodland which play an important role in framing views within and into/ out of the area.</li> <li>• Ensure any extensions to existing housing developments avoid visual intrusion.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protect and manage areas of archaeological importance, including Gosbecks Park and the Iron-Age dyke system.</li> <li>• Strengthen and restore hedgerows where gappy and depleted.</li> <li>• Seek ways to restore sand and gravel pits in ways which are enhance local landscape character (for example, creation of nature parks and diverse wildlife areas).</li> <li>• Avoid the use of visually intrusive tape fences surrounding and dividing horse paddocks.</li> <li>• Review the condition and use of existing public rights of way (PRoW) within the character area, and prioritise action to repair and review footpaths.</li> </ul>

Landscape character area	Key characteristics (sensitivity to change not published)	Landscape planning guidelines	Land management guidelines
B4 Great Tey Farmland Plateau (indirectly affected)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gently sloping farmland plateau consisting of a mixture of medium to large-scale enclosed, predominantly arable fields.</li> <li>• Linear belts and small patches of predominantly deciduous woodland.</li> <li>• Small, nucleated settlements and scattered farmsteads.</li> <li>• Comprehensive network of footpaths and winding lanes.</li> <li>• Peaceful and tranquil atmosphere.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conserve the mostly rural character of the area.</li> <li>• Encourage the screening of visually intrusive modern farm buildings by using tree belts.</li> <li>• Ensure that any appropriate new development responds to historic settlement pattern and uses materials which are appropriate to local landscape character (refer to the Essex Design Guide for Residential and Mixed Use Areas, Essex Planning Officers Association, 1997, for further information).</li> <li>• Conserve open views to landmark churches.</li> <li>• New farm buildings such as sheds should be sensitively located within the landscape to respect local character and avoid the skyline.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conserve and enhance orchards as distinctive landscape features.</li> <li>• Encourage sensitive conversion of vernacular barns which respect traditional materials and built fabric and landscape character.</li> <li>• Conserve and manage the ecological structure of woodland, copses and hedges within the character area.</li> <li>• Conserve and manage areas of ancient and semi-natural woodland as important landscape, historical and nature conservation features.</li> <li>• Strengthen existing hedgerows through planting of hawthorn and management of elm.</li> </ul>

Landscape character area	Key characteristics (sensitivity to change not published)	Landscape planning guidelines	Land management guidelines
F1 Messing Wooded Farmland (directly affected)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sparse settlement pattern consisting of the small village of Messing, and a number of small, isolated farmsteads.</li> <li>• Elevated plateau landform which is situated on a broad ridge and dissected by small streams, providing undulations in topography.</li> <li>• Large areas of mixed woodland (for example Layer Wood and Pods Wood).</li> <li>• Number of small ponds and lakes.</li> <li>• Single mature trees at field boundaries or standing within fields.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conserve the mostly rural character of the area.</li> <li>• Ensure that any appropriate new development responds to historic settlement pattern and uses materials which are appropriate to local landscape character (refer to the Essex Design Guide for Residential and Mixed Use Areas, Essex Planning Officers Association, 1997, for further information). Such development should be well integrated with the surrounding landscape.</li> <li>• Encouraging restoration of redundant rural buildings.</li> <li>• Encourage screening, through tree planting, of visually intrusive modern farm buildings.</li> <li>• Maintain panoramic views across farmland plateau to the north.</li> <li>• Ensure that new farm buildings are sensitively designed and located within the landscape to accord with existing landscape character.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conserve and restore the existing hedgerow network where gappy and depleted.</li> <li>• Conserve, manage and enhance large areas of woodland such as Pods Wood and Layer Wood (consider the use of traditional methods, such as coppicing and pollarding in keeping with existing landscape character).</li> <li>• Conserve and enhance areas of semi-natural and ancient woodland as important heritage, nature conservation and landscape features.</li> <li>• Conserve, manage and enhance smaller patches of woodland, taking into consideration the role that they play in the creation of a distinctive landscape pattern to the north west of Tiptree.</li> <li>• Conserve historic lanes and unimproved roadside verges.</li> <li>• Introduce arable field margins as a means of ensuring that mature trees within hedgerows are not disturbed by ploughing.</li> <li>• Plant half-standard trees within field hedgerow boundaries to succeed over mature trees.</li> </ul>

Landscape character area	Key characteristics (sensitivity to change not published)	Landscape planning guidelines	Land management guidelines
F2 Tiptree Wooded Farmland (indirectly affected)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Located at the eastern end of a broad, ridge that extends west into Braintree District.</li> <li>• Many small patches of woodland.</li> <li>• Character area influenced by nucleated Tiptree settlement within the centre of the area.</li> <li>• Mosaic of small to medium-sized, predominantly arable fields, with a predominantly small-scale field pattern.</li> <li>• Tiptree Heath as an important landscape feature of nature conservation importance.</li> <li>• Linear settlement pattern, consisting of Tiptree Heath and the northern extent of Tolleshunt Knights, which extends outside the character area to the southeast.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conserve and enhance the landscape setting of Tiptree and Tiptree Heath settlements.</li> <li>• Ensure that any appropriate new development responds to historic settlement pattern and uses materials which are appropriate to local landscape character (refer to the Essex Design Guide for Residential and Mixed Use Areas, Essex Planning Officers Association, 1997, for further information). Such development should be well integrated with the surrounding landscape.</li> <li>• Encourage the planting and of tree groups around visually intrusive modern farm buildings.</li> <li>• Small scale development should be carefully sited in relation to exiting farm buildings.</li> <li>• Introduce measures to ensure restoration of gravel workings maximises benefits to wildlife and provides areas for recreation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conserve and restore the existing hedgerow network.</li> <li>• Conserve, manage and enhance smaller patches of woodland.</li> <li>• Conserve historic lanes and unimproved roadside verges.</li> <li>• Safeguard Tiptree Heath Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) from encroachment of development.</li> </ul>

## References

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