



Braintree District Council

**Braintree District
Settlement Fringe Landscape Capacity Analysis
For Braintree and Environs**

November 2007

CHRIS BLANDFORD ASSOCIATES

Environment Landscape Planning

Braintree District
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Date: 22 November 2007

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CONTENTS

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

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

- 3.0 LANDSCAPE SENSITIVITY AND VALUE**

- 4.0 LANDSCAPE CAPACITY EVALUATION**

- 5.0 CONCLUSIONS**

FIGURES

- Figure 1 – Settlement Locations**
- Figure 2 – Landform and Drainage**
- Figure 3 - Settlement Evolution of Braintree and its Environs**
- Figure B0 - Braintree Settlement Fringe Analysis Plan Overview**
- Figure B1 - Braintree Settlement Fringe Analysis (Plan 1)**
- Figure B2 - Braintree Settlement Fringe Analysis (Plan 2)**
- Figure B3 - Braintree Settlement Fringe Analysis (Plan 3)**
- Figure B4 - Braintree Settlement Fringe Analysis (Plan 4)**
- Figure B5 - Braintree Settlement Fringe Analysis (Plan 5)**
- Figure B6 - Braintree Settlement Fringe Analysis (Plan 6)**
- Figure B7 - Braintree Landscape Capacity Evaluation Plan**

APPENDICES

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

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

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

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

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

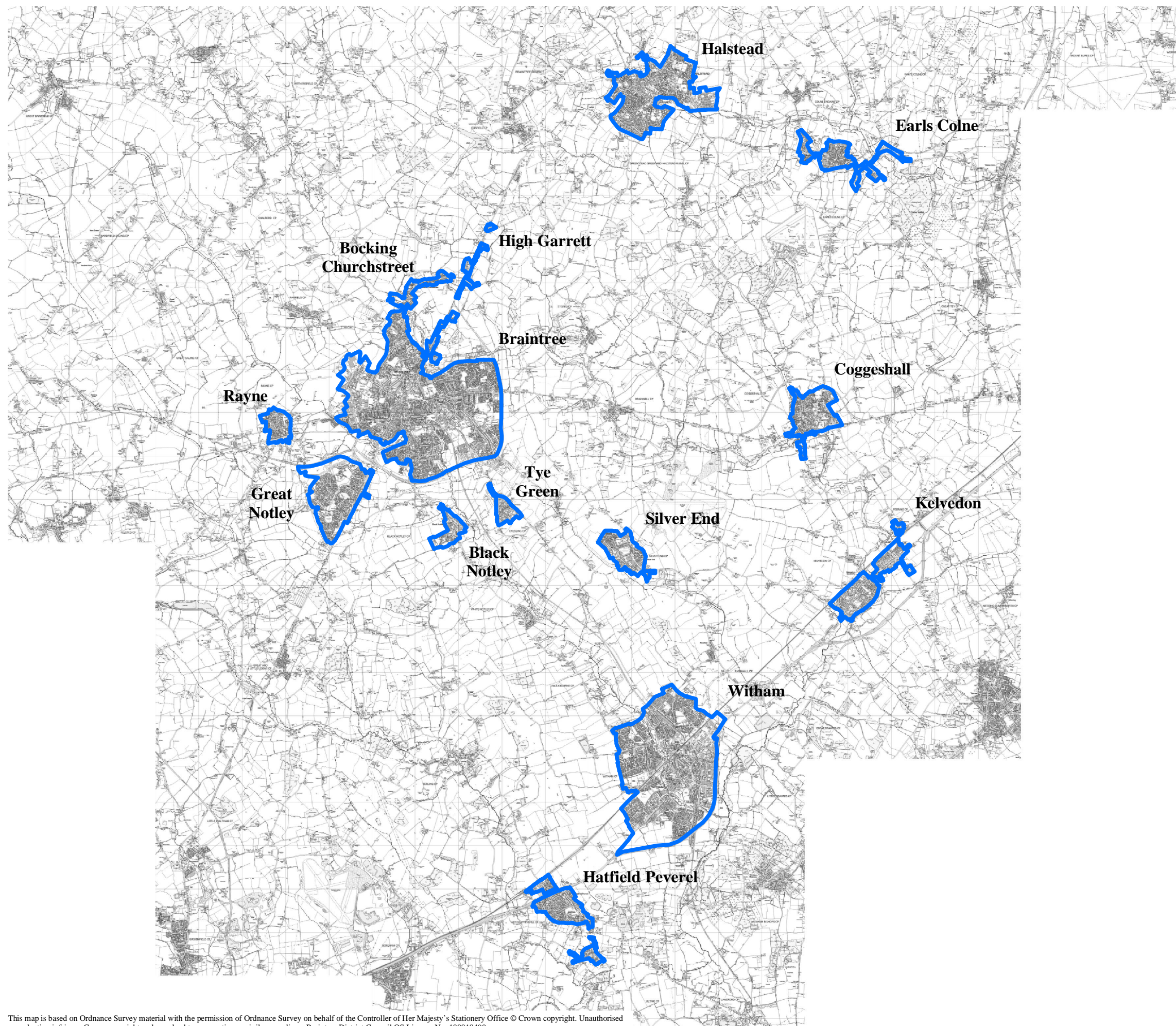
- Braintree and environs (including Bocking Churchstreet, Rayne, Great Notley, Black Notley and Cressing)
- Witham
- Halstead
- Silver End
- Hatfield Peverel
- Earls Colne
- Coggeshall
- Kelvedon

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

1.2 Study Purpose and Objectives

1.2.1 The key objectives of the Study are to:

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



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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 Braintree and its environs.

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 visual prominence and indivisibility, at a scale of 1:10,000. Each area has been analysed in terms of its visual, ecological and cultural sensitivity, taking into account the following three key factors (Refer to Appendix B for the Field Survey Sheet used for this study):

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

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

1.3.5 The assessment has comprised the following tasks:

(i) Desk Based Analysis

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

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

(ii) Field Survey Analysis

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

(iii) Analysis/Reporting

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

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

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

2.0 STUDY CONTEXT

2.1 Planning Policy Context

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

Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development

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

Planning Policy Statement 7: Sustainable Development in Rural Areas

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

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

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

Regional Planning Context

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

Local Planning Context

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

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

2.2 Landform and Drainage (See Figure 2)

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

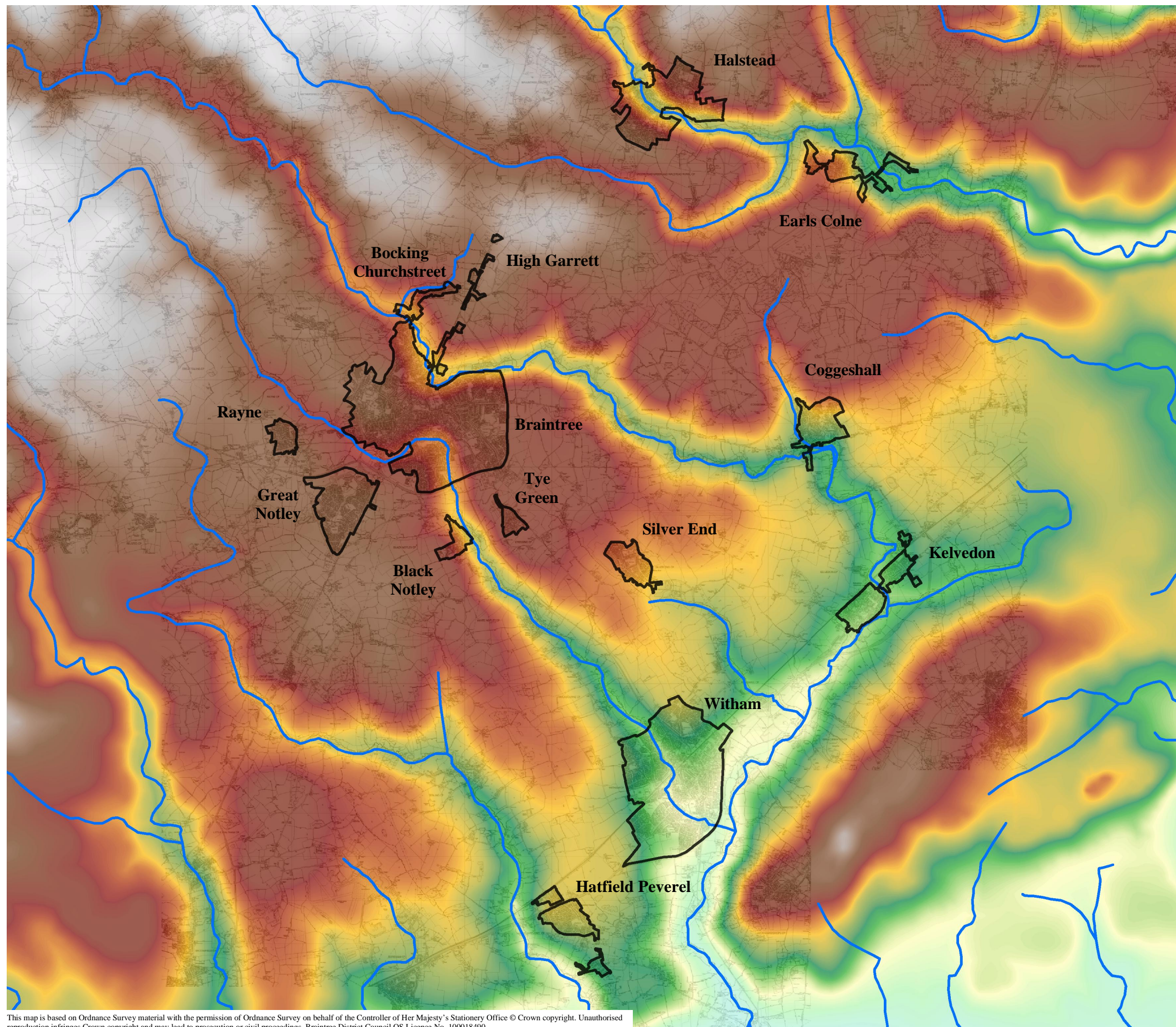
2.2.2 The meandering River Colne runs in a southeasterly direction through Halstead, towards Colchester. It is characterized by a shallow river valley with relatively steep valley sides, which varies in width throughout its length. There is a dense network of roads dissecting the river valley and bridging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

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

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

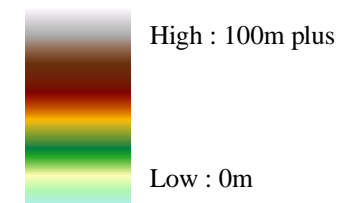
2.3 Landscape Character

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



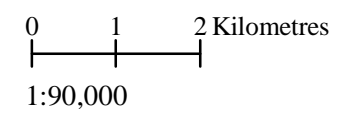
KEY

Elevation (Indicative)



— Rivers

□ Settlements Within Study



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Figure 2
 Landform and Drainage

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

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

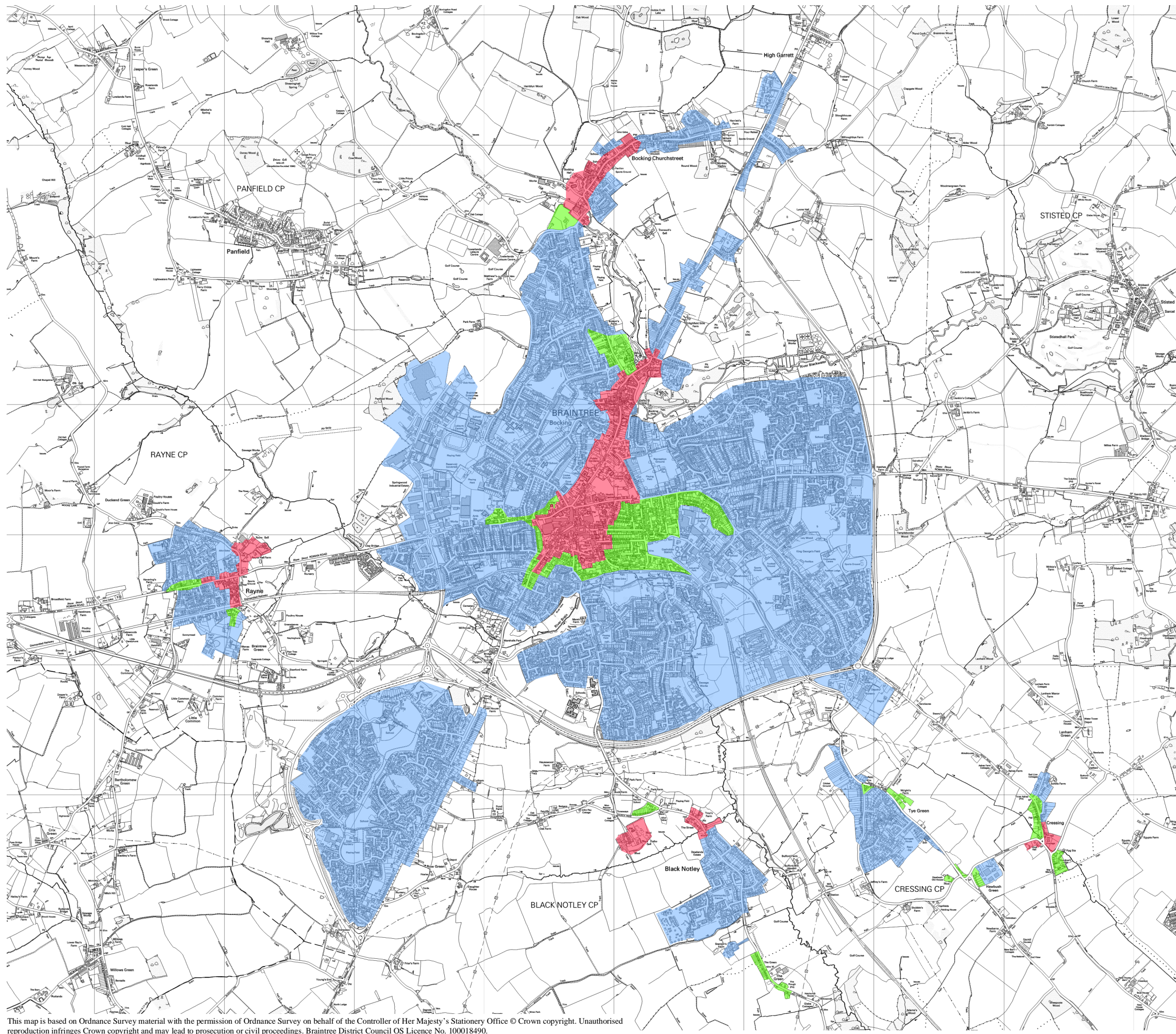
- The medieval towns are mainly small market towns, but within that group there are variations on this theme. A number of medieval towns failed to develop in the later medieval and early post-medieval, and are now no more than villages, whilst others prospered and grew.

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

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

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

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



KEY

- Historic Core
- Victorian Expansion c1880
- Modern Expansion

0 0.5 1 Kilometres
1:30,000

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Figure 3
Settlement Evolution
(Braintree and Environs)

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. Wet meadows and wet woodland adjacent to riverbanks are a key characteristic of the Pant River Valley Landscape, northeast of Braintree.

- 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.
- 2.3.11 Although Braintree and Bocking now form part of a continuous area, this was not the case until the early 20th century. Settlement began in Braintree just over 2000 years ago just before the Roman invasion. A small but flourishing Roman town developed on the gravel ridge above the river, and there is a little evidence for a Saxon village in the area of St Michael's Church. In the later Saxon period, Braintree passed into the hands of the Bishops of London, whose manor house was at Chapel Hill.

3.0 LANDSCAPE SENSITIVITY AND VALUE

Introduction

This section sets out an assessment of the sensitivities and value of various landscape setting areas immediately surrounding the edges of Braintree and its environs (including Bocking Churchstreet, Rayne, Great Notley and Cressing) to accommodate housing and employment development. A total of six 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 B0: Settlement Fringe Analysis Overview Plan.

3.1 LANDSCAPE SETTING AREA B1 (refer to Landscape Assessment Figure B6)

3.1.1 Location

This landscape setting area is located on the southern edge of Braintree, and extends eastwards from the northern edge of Black Notley to meet to northern edge of Tye Green.

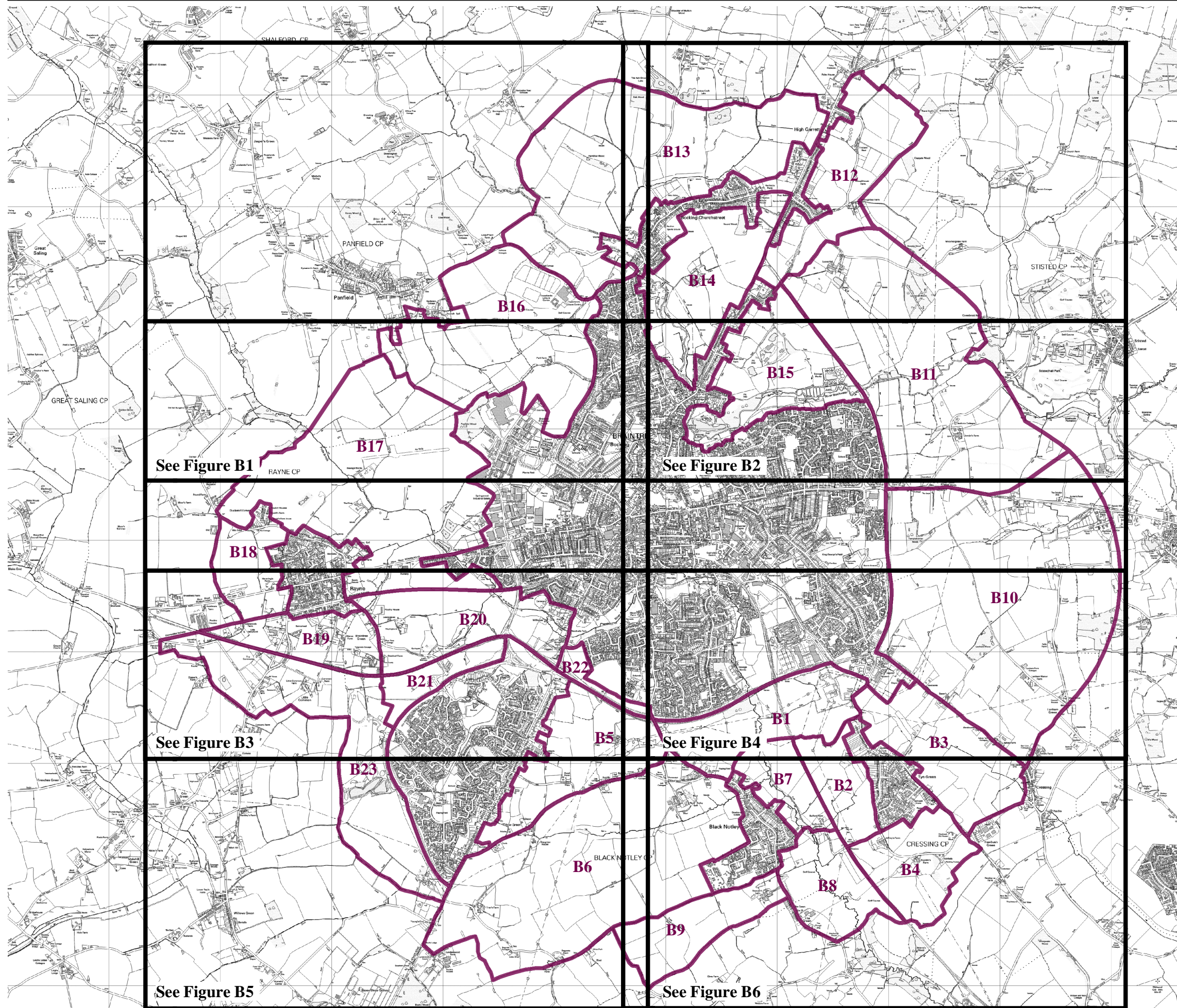
Landscape and Visual Baseline

3.1.2 Landform and Drainage


- Area occupies a relatively shallow valley with moderate sloping sides descending towards the River Brain, which passes through the area in a southerly direction;
- Small streams traverse eastern and western parts of area, feeding into the River Brain.

3.1.3 Land Use

- Predominantly arable farmland interspersed with some rough grassland, woodland blocks and belts of trees;
- Electrical substation in north-eastern part and overhead power lines crossing area;
- Braintree to Witham railway traverses the area in a north-south direction.



KEY

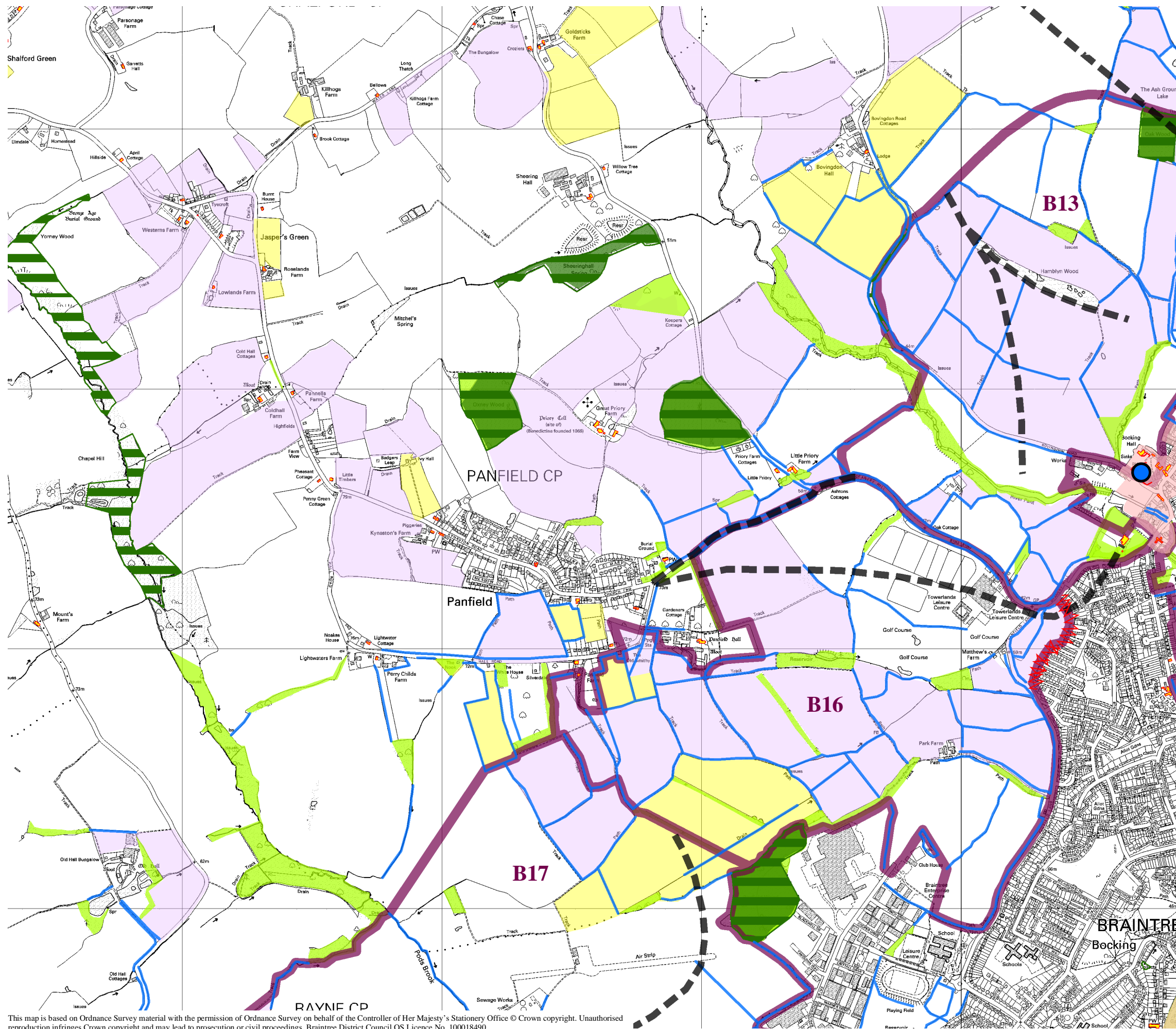
 Landscape Setting Areas (see Settlement Fringe Analysis Plans B1-B6)

0 0.5 1 Kilometres


1:35,000

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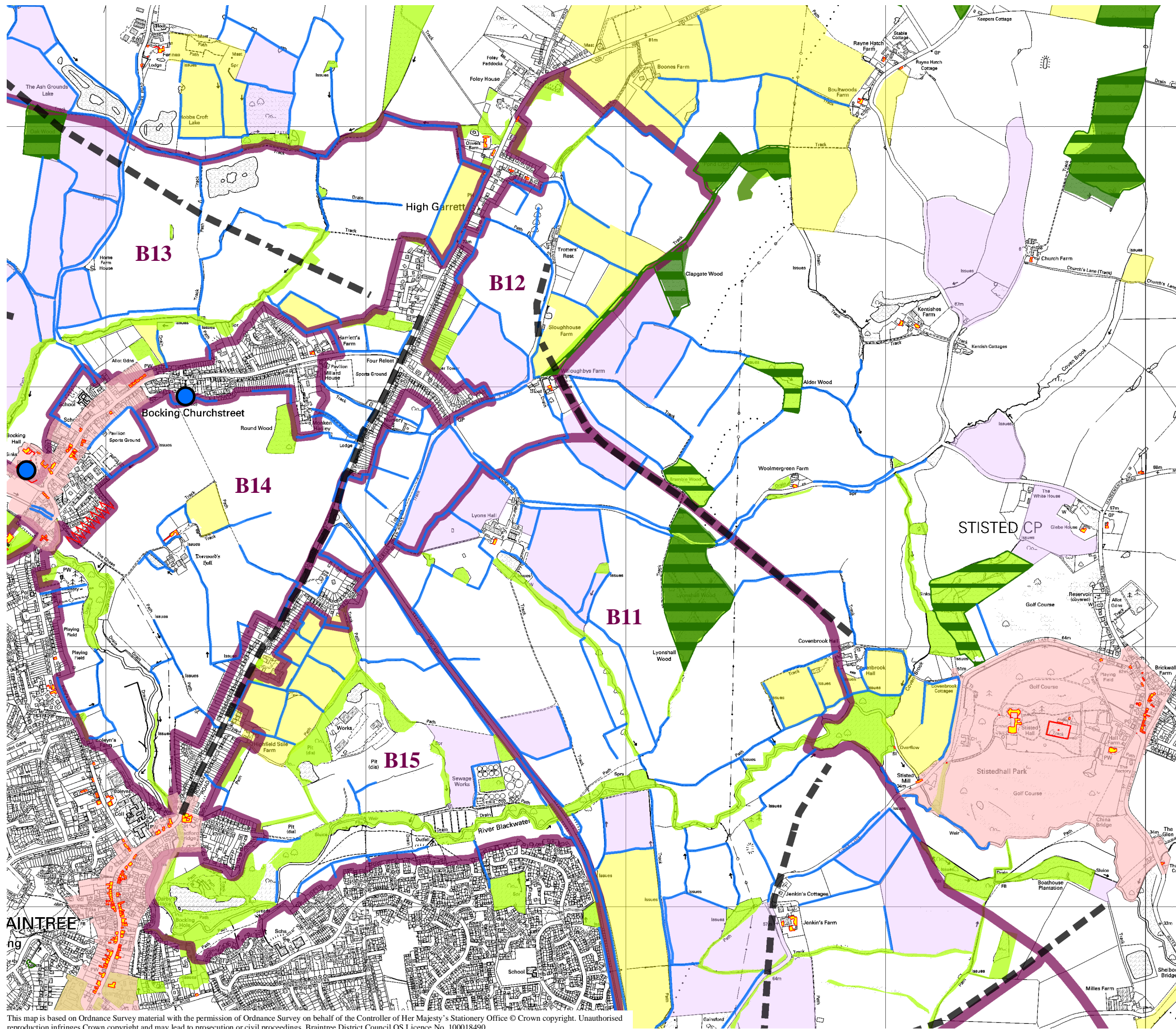
-  Landmarks
-  Harsh Abrupt Urban Edges
-  Key Ridgelines
-  Landscape Setting Areas
-  Approximate Extent of Robust Hedgerows and Lines of Trees
-  Approximate Extent of Key Woodland Blocks and Tree Belts
-  Ancient Woodland
-  Pre-18th century enclosure
-  18th-19th century enclosure
-  Sites of Special Scientific Interest
-  County Wildlife Sites
-  Listed Buildings
-  Ancient Monuments
-  Conservation Areas

0 250 500 Metres
1:15,000

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Figure B1
Braintree Settlement
Fringe Analysis Plan 1

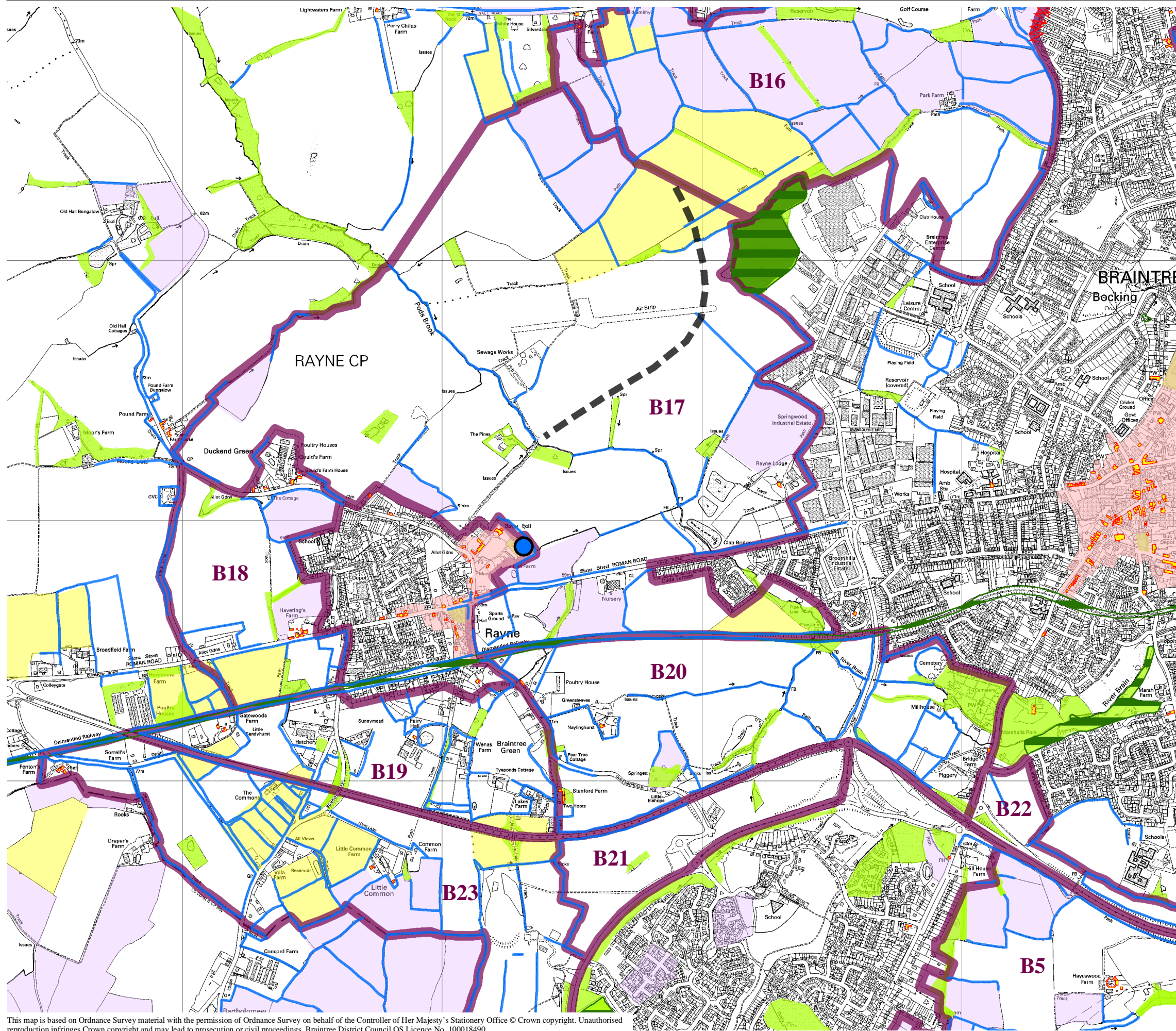


- KEY**
- Landmarks
 - Harsh Abrupt Urban Edges
 - Key Ridgelines
 - Landscape Setting Areas
 - Approximate Extent of Robust Hedgerows and Lines of Trees
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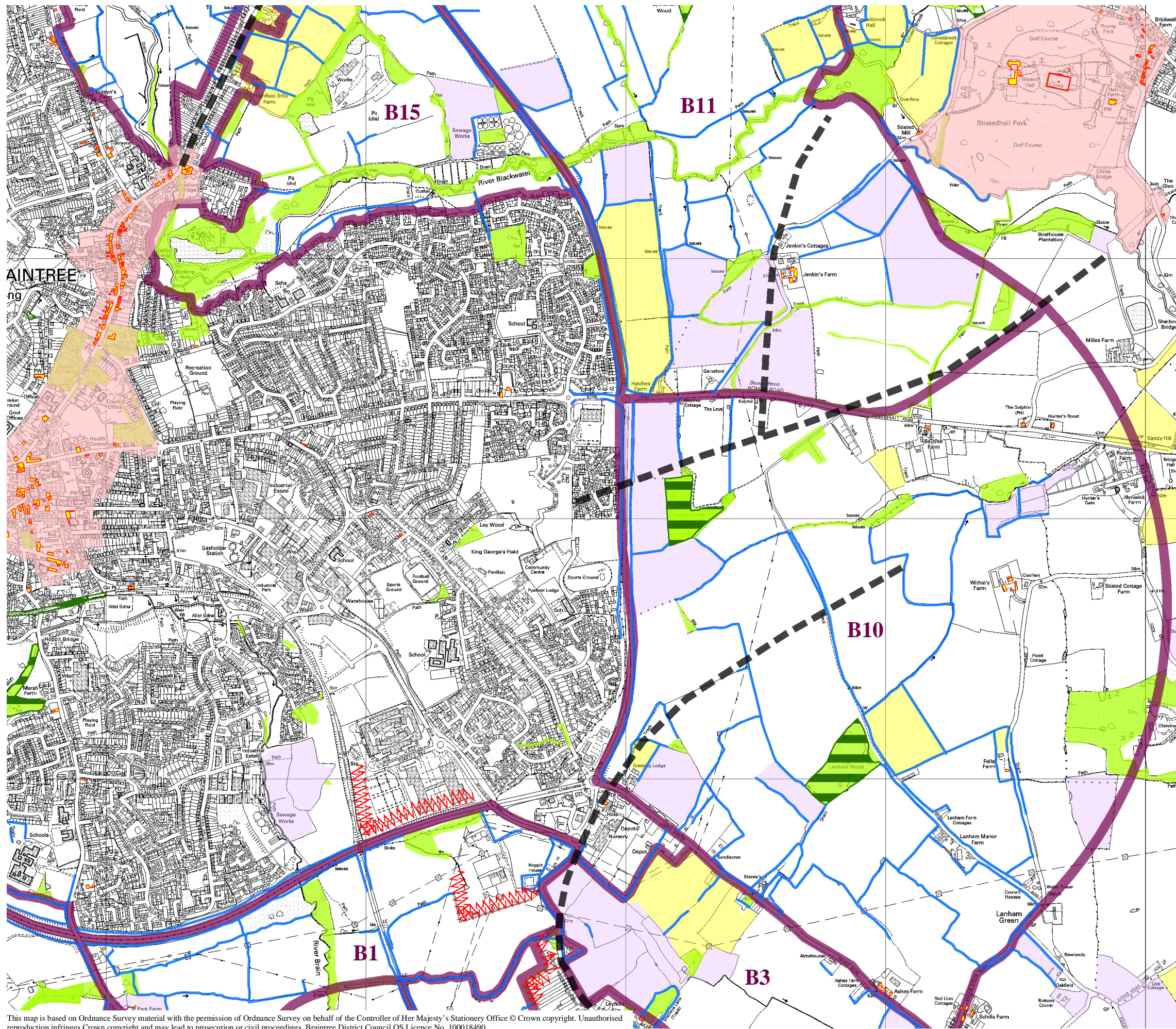
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Figure B3
Braintree Settlement
Fringe Analysis Plan 3



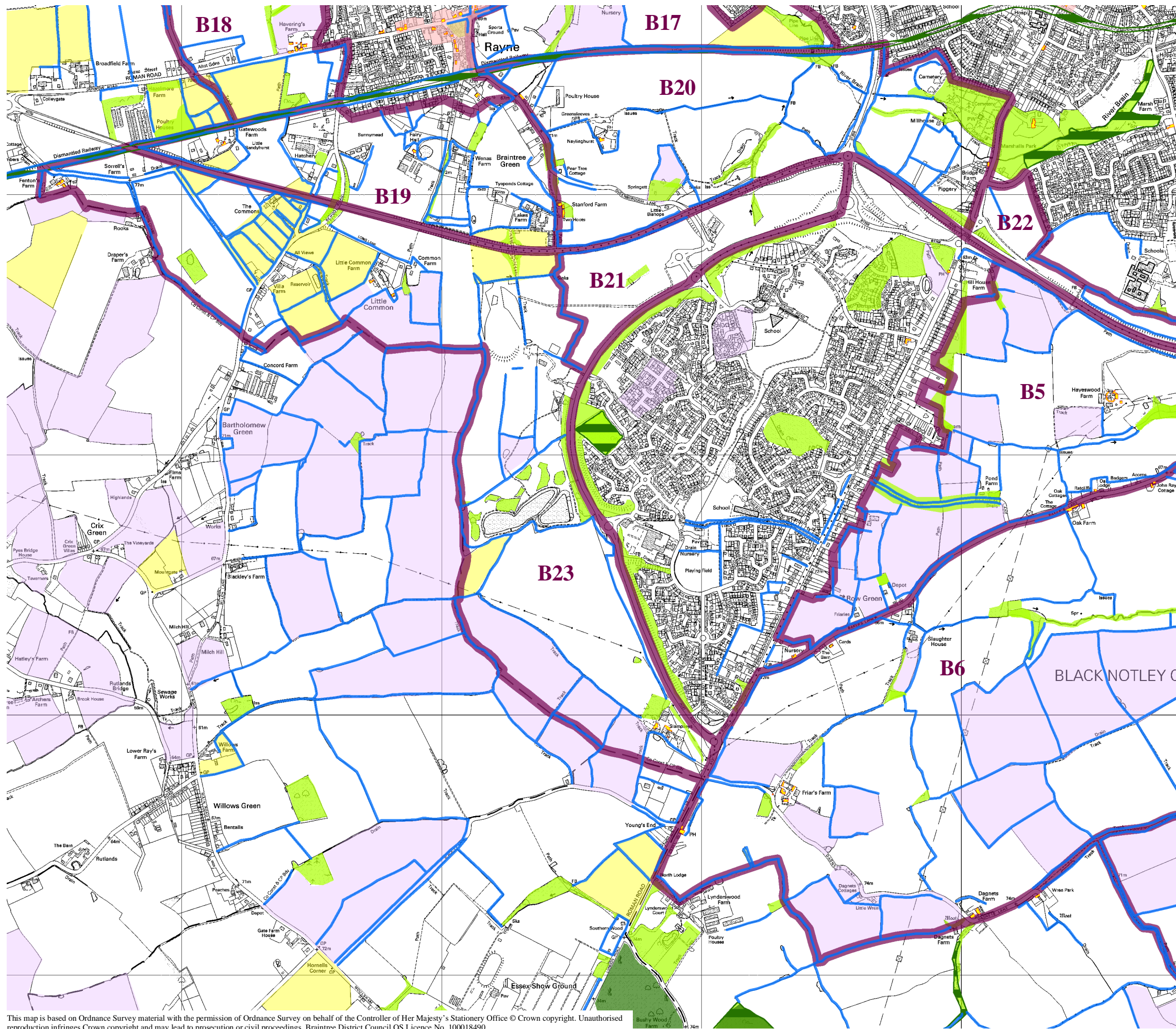
KEY

- Landmarks
- Harsh Abrupt Urban Edges
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- Landscape Setting Areas
- Approximate Extent of Robust Hedgerows and Lines of Trees
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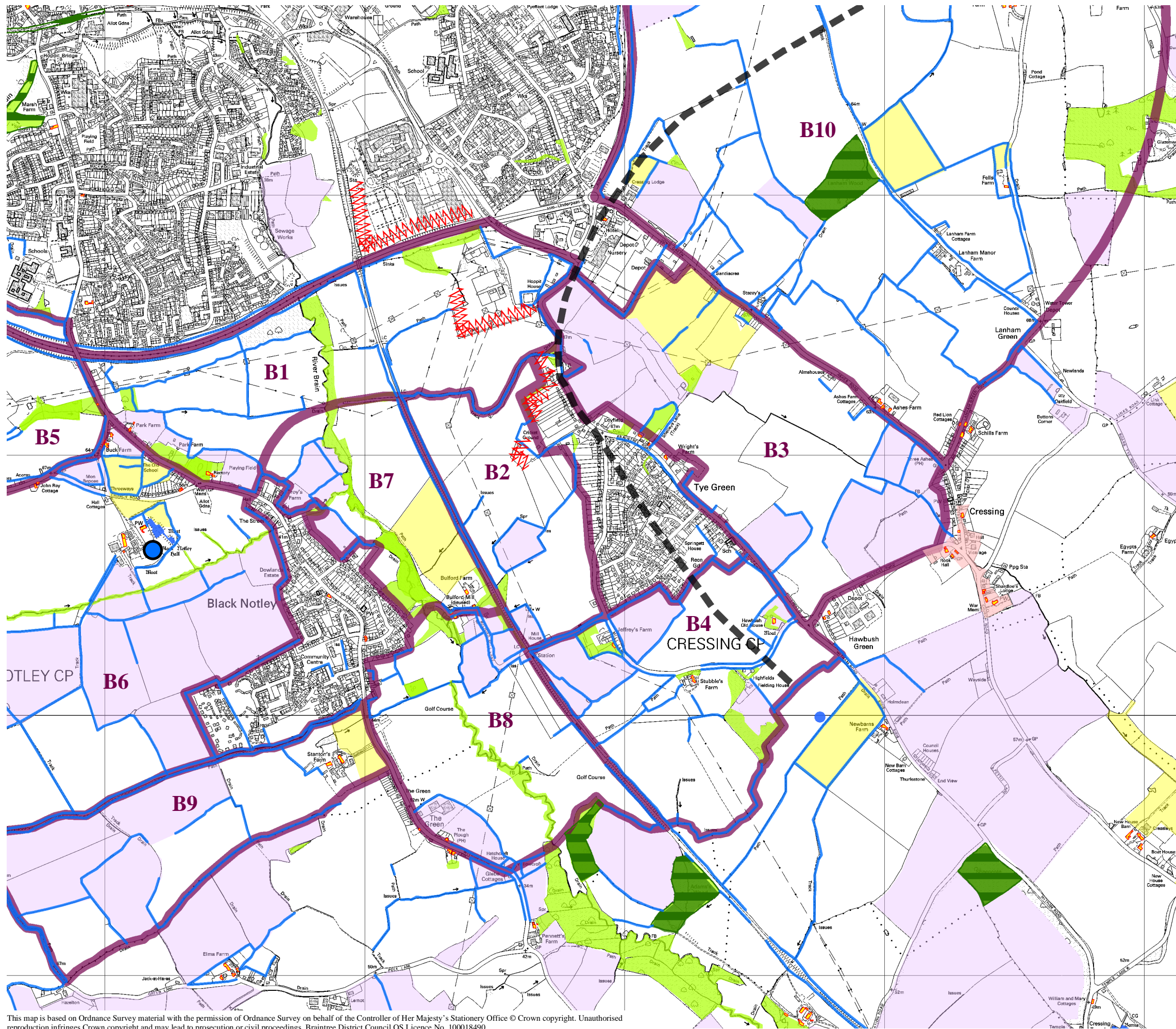
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Figure B5
Braintree Settlement
Fringe Analysis Plan 5



KEY

- Landmarks
- Harsh Abrupt Urban Edges
- Key Ridgelines
- Landscape Setting Areas
- Approximate Extent of Robust Hedgerows and Lines of Trees
- 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 B6
Braintree Settlement
Fringe Analysis Plan 6

3.1.4 **Vegetation**

- Generally good structure of vegetation including robust hedgerows, mature hedgerow trees and some woodland belts, which define field patterns and provide enclosure to roads, railway corridor and urban edges in peripheral parts;
- River Brain corridor is fairly well-enclosed by streambank vegetation and woodland copses;
- Weak landscape structure alongside electrical substation but small woodland block to west.

3.1.5 **Access**

- Well-accessed by a number of fairly well used public footpaths, which connect Witham Road with riverside route along the River Brain corridor;
- Fewer opportunities for public access within areas west of the river.

3.1.6 **Settlement Edge**

- The northern edge of Tye Green is well integrated into the local landscape: housing of varied architectural style and age, peripheral hedgerows and mature garden trees and shrubs;
- Southern fringes of Braintree are contained and abruptly defined by the A120, with a varied structure of planting;
- Some abrupt and visually harsh urban edges, including large-scale buildings at the Freeport Retail Development.
- The edge is indented by a wedge of open space that runs alongside the river towards the centre of town.

3.1.7 **Visual Appraisal**

- Intervisibility between east and west parts of the area is limited, due to the undulating topography, hedgerows and mature trees, which are mainly in associated with the river valley and railway;
- Views to Tye Green fringe are substantially enclosed from area due to robust belt of woodland lining a field boundary and track along south-eastern part of area;
- A120 provides an abrupt yet relatively well-integrated edge to the northern boundary of area due to vegetated embankments and cuttings either side of the road;
- Gaps in planting structure alongside the southern fringes of Braintree allow open views to large-scale buildings within Freeport Retail Development;

- Area is generally not visible from long distances due to intervening vegetation and topographic variations; with the exception of skyline views to the transmission towers and some glimpses from northern parts of Black Notley and landscape setting area B6;
- Limited visibility of area from existing housing;
- Open views from number of well-used public footpaths in western part of the area;
- Substation has an abrupt and highly visible edge, comprising chainmesh wire fencing with some shrub planting, allowing filtered views to the substation and related infrastructure;
- Electrical substation, with connecting transmission towers and power lines, dominate the skyline in views from the centre of the area.

Evaluation

3.1.8 **Landscape Character Sensitivity**

- A high sensitivity landscape as any built development in this area would substantially change the open rural landscape that physically and visually separates Braintree and Black Notley as well as Braintree and Tye Green;
- Area forms part of a rural setting to Tye Green, Black Notley and Braintree, and is a historically open area between these settlements;
- Area provides only a moderate contribution to wider landscape outside this setting area on account of enclosure provided by landform and vegetation;
- Sensitivity increased by the largely intact hedgerow structure, interspersed with mature hedgerow trees and strengthened in parts by mature woodland belts;
- Sensitivity increased by sense of historic integrity, resulting from pre-18th century field enclosure pattern and old buildings in south-western part of the area;
- Sensitivity reduced by fragmentation of some hedgerows in western parts, and by overhead power lines, transmission towers and the electrical substation.

3.1.9 **Visual Sensitivity**

- A landscape of overall medium to high visual sensitivity due to the visual prominence of its upper slopes, its visibility in filtered views from road and rail corridors and in open views from network of public footpaths, particularly along the riverside walkway that leads into Braintree;

- Increased sensitivity in eastern part, due to its relatively high elevation;
- Overall sensitivity reduced slightly by open views to visually harsh urban edges, powerlines and the electrical substation.

3.1.10 Landscape Value

Although the setting area includes no nationally designated landscapes or features, other important components of the landscape include:

- Listed buildings to the north of Black Notley;
- Well-used network of public footpaths in western parts;
- Special Landscape Area designation.

3.1.11 Summary of B1 Landscape Sensitivities and Value

Landscape Character Sensitivity	Visual Sensitivity	Landscape Value
High sensitivity due to contribution to physical and visual separation between Braintree and settlements of Black Notley and Tye Green; a historically open area between these settlements and a largely intact hedgerow structure with some historic field enclosures.	Medium to high sensitivity overall due to the visual prominence of its upper slopes, its visibility in filtered views from road and rail corridors and in open views from network of public footpaths, particularly along the riverside walkway that leads into Braintree. Limited visibility of area from existing housing.	Medium to high value overall, due to Special Landscape Area, listed buildings within Black Notley urban fringe; well-used network of public footpaths in western parts.
High	Medium to high	Medium to high

3.2 LANDSCAPE SETTING AREA B2 (refer to Landscape Assessment Figure B6)

3.2.1 Location

This landscape setting area is located on western edge of Tye Green.

Landscape and Visual Baseline

3.2.2 Landform and Drainage

- Area occupies part of upper slopes of river valley;
- Gently rolling landform that descends in a westerly direction towards the railway and down towards River Brain;
- Some drainage channels lining fields.

3.2.3 Land Use

- Mostly arable farmland, but areas of rough grassland near Tye Green;

3.2.4 Vegetation

- Remnants of hedgerows of varied condition in central part;
- Substantial loss of hedgerows within northern and southern parts;
- Small mature woodland block in southern part, adjacent to railway corridor;
- Strong structure of trees and shrubs lining roads and railway corridor;
- Varied but generally strong structure of planting alongside fringe of Tye Green, including peripheral hedgerows and rear garden trees.

3.2.5 Access

- Well-accessed by a number of public footpaths, which connect Mill Lane, Braintree Road and routes alongside the River Brain corridor.

3.2.6 Settlement Edge

- Western fringe of Tye Green is dominated by modern, low-density houses. The edge is generally abrupt yet well integrated in its northern parts by a strong structure of robust hedgerows and trees alongside the settlement;
- The settlement edge in southern parts also contains modern, detached houses with rear garden boundaries defined by garden hedges and isolated trees;
- South-western fringe of Tye Green is well-defined by Mill Lane and its strong structure of roadside planting;

- Industrial site located south west of the Tye Green Cricket Ground forms an unattractive, visually prominent edge, and contributes to a poor quality settlement fringe setting.

3.2.7 **Visual Appraisal**

- Open character in northern and southern parts due to significant loss or fragmentation of hedgerow structure, allowing open views across the farmland to Black Notley and beyond;
- Open views in northern parts to industrial site located on western fringe of Tye Green;
- Views in lower eastern parts in close proximity to railway are more enclosed by vegetation;
- Transmission towers and power lines dominate the skyline;
- Mill Lane, Bullford Mill Lane and the railway corridor provide abrupt yet relatively well-integrated edges to the setting, due to vegetation and topographic variation;
- Open views across the farmland for those using public footpaths;
- Views northwards are substantially constrained by tree belt along northern boundary of area;
- Good intervisibility between this area and Landscape Setting Area B2 to the south and also with the edge of Black Notley.

Evaluation

3.2.8 **Landscape Character Sensitivity**

- Area provides a rural setting to Tye Green and a buffer zone between the settlement and Black Notley;
- Area provides a medium to high contribution to wider landscape on account of its intervisibility with Black Notley and Landscape Setting Area B2.
- A medium to high sensitivity landscape as any built development in this area would substantially change the open rural landscape that physically and visually separates Tye Green and Black Notley;
- Sensitivity increased by a sense of historic integrity, resulting from pre-18th century field enclosure pattern in central and western parts;
- Sensitivity of area reduced by loss and fragmentation of hedgerow structure, by poorly integrated edge to industrial site, which acts as a landscape detractor in

northern parts; by overhead power lines and transmission towers and by slight noise intrusion and traffic movement from the railway and nearby roads.

3.2.9 Visual Sensitivity

- A landscape of overall medium to high visual sensitivity due to the open nature of the area, the visual prominence of upper slopes of river valley and its visibility in filtered views from road/rail corridors and in open views from public footpaths and housing;
- Transmission towers and power lines that traverse the area and dominate the skyline, reduce the overall visual sensitivity
- Reduced sensitivity in lower parts due to enclosure provided by landform and vegetation lining the railway corridor.

3.2.10 Landscape Value

Although the setting area includes no nationally designated landscapes or features, other important components of the landscape include:

- A number of well-used public footpaths;
- Moderate sense of tranquillity;
- Special Landscape Area designation.

3.2.11 Summary of B2 Landscape Sensitivities and Value

Landscape Character Sensitivity	Visual Sensitivity	Landscape Value
Medium to high sensitivity due to its role in providing visual and historic physical separation between Tye Green and Black Notley and due to its unified character and a sense of historic integrity, resulting from pre-18th century field enclosure.	Medium to high sensitivity due to open nature of the area, the visual prominence of upper slopes of river valley and its visibility from road/rail corridors, public footpaths and housing.	Medium to high value due to Special Landscape Area designation, well-used public footpaths; and moderate sense of tranquillity.
Medium to high	Medium to high	Medium to high

3.3 LANDSCAPE SETTING AREA B3 (refer to Landscape Assessment Figure B6)

3.3.1 Location

This landscape setting area lies on the eastern edge of Tye Green, extending eastwards to Ashes Road and northwards to Fowles Farm.

Landscape and Visual Baseline

3.3.2 Landform and Drainage

- Area comprises generally flat farmland plateau with some gentle undulations and forms parts of a shallow valley that descends to the southeast;
- Drainage channels align some field boundaries.

3.3.3 Land Uses

- Mixture of arable and pastoral farmland, with scattered farmsteads;
- Tye Green settlement fringe comprises small-scale pastoral fields used for 'horsiculture'.

3.3.4 Vegetation

- Good structure of vegetation comprising hedgerows and woodland
- Several robust hedgerows, mature hedgerow trees and some woodland blocks/belts help define field patterns and provide screening to roads, farmsteads and urban edges in peripheral parts;
- Highly fragmented hedgerow structure in northern parts;
- Loss of hedgerow structure in central parts, east of Wight's Farm.

3.3.5 Access

- Well-accessed by a number of public footpaths, which connect to Ashes Road, Polecat Road and Witham Road.

3.3.6 Settlement Edge

- Tye Green fringe includes a mixture of modern, low-density residential and some farmsteads with small-scale pastoral fields, many used for horse grazing;
- Fringe of Tye Green is generally well integrated into local landscape by a robust structure of trees and shrub planting along edge of settlement;

- Some northern parts of Tye Green edge are visually harsh and poor in quality, forming a disused grassland urban fringe with little vegetation.

3.3.7 **Visual Appraisal**

- Views within central parts of the area are generally uninterrupted, due to loss of hedgerow structure within a generally flat landscape, allowing open views across the farmland to Ashes Road, Lanham Wood and beyond;
- Views are more enclosed within northwestern parts of the area, in close proximity to Tye Green, where remnant hedgerows and hedgerow trees define medium sized fields, and blocks of woodland interrupt views;
- Intervisibility between northern and southern parts of the area is limited, due to enclosure provided by remnant hedgerows, woodland blocks and copses of trees;
- Blocks of woodland, remnant hedgerows, mature trees and shrubs generally enclose views to Braintree Road, Long Green and western fringes of Tye Green;
- Transmission towers and power lines dominate the skyline throughout northern parts;
- Braintree Road forms an abrupt, linear edge but is mostly enclosed by a mixture of mature hedgerows and trees;
- Panoramic views obtained from Ashes Road across farmland to eastern edge of Tye Green;
- Ashes Road is highly visible from central parts and introduces some movement into the landscape;
- Nursery depot at Fowler's Farm, south-east of the A120 / Millennium Way junction, has an abrupt, linear edge that is enclosed by a robust belt of trees and shrubs;
- Water tower located within Lanham Green village is a prominent landmark in many western skyline views;
- Intervisibility between the area and Braintree is generally poor due to the well-treed embankments and cuttings either side of the A120 Braintree Bypass.

Evaluation

3.3.8 **Landscape Character Sensitivity**

- Area provides an open, rural setting to western Tye Green and provides opportunities for access to the open countryside;

- A medium to high sensitivity landscape overall as it provides the rural setting to Tye Green, is visible from adjacent landscape setting areas and has a generally open, rural character with recognisable landscape structure;
- Sensitivity of area reduced by recent development of a large-scale industrial shed with associated palette stacks and containers, protruding out beyond the settlement edge and forming a visually prominent and abrupt edge;
- Sense of historic integrity, resulting from small to medium pre-19th century field enclosures and some 18th to 19th century field enclosure patterns in northern and southern parts of the area;
- Increased sensitivity in northern and southern parts where land contributes to physical and visual separation between settlements;
- Sensitivity of area reduced by substantial fragmentation to hedgerow structure with loss of hedgerows within central parts and by overhead power lines and transmission towers which dominate the skyline;
- Character of western parts strongly influenced by urban fringe land uses, including storage containers, some farmsteads with small-scale fields for 'horsiculture', temporary fencing and rough grassland;
- Generally good structure of planting in northern part, including woodland blocks, intact hedgerows, and mature trees which combine to form a well-integrated edge to Tye Green.

3.3.9 Visual Sensitivity

- A landscape of overall medium to high visual sensitivity as area visible in filtered views from Ashes Road and in open views from network of public footpaths;
- Expansive views within central parts due to substantial fragmentation to hedgerow structure, panoramic views to the western fringes of Tye Green, open north-eastern views across the farmland to Ashes Road (including farmhouses along the road) and distant views to arable fields and Lanham Wood within Landscape Setting Area B10;
- Blocks of woodland and remnant hedgerows and hedgerow trees generally interrupt views between northern and southern parts of Tye Green urban fringes, reducing the visual sensitivity to an extent;
- Sensitivity also reduced by skyline views to transmission towers.

3.3.10 Landscape Value

Although the setting area includes no nationally, regionally and locally designated landscapes or features, other important components of the landscape include:

- Good access to the area with a number of public footpaths;
- Moderate sense of tranquillity;
- Some listed buildings on western edge of Tye Green.

3.3.11 Summary of B3 Landscape Sensitivities and Value

Landscape Character Sensitivity	Visual Sensitivity	Landscape Value
Medium to high sensitivity overall due to its generally open, rural landscape character; its historic field enclosures, and its role in providing the eastern near setting to Tye Green with increased sensitivity in northern and southern parts, where historic field enclosures dominate and land contributes to physical and visual separation between settlements.	Medium to high sensitivity due to its general openness; panoramic views to the western fringes of Tye Green, views from Ashes Road and open views from network of public footpaths.	Medium value due to listed buildings along Tye Green fringes; good access with a number of public footpaths; and its moderate sense of tranquillity.
Medium to high	Medium to high	Medium

3.4 LANDSCAPE SETTING AREA B4 (refer to Landscape Assessment Figure B6)

3.4.1 Location

This landscape setting area is located on the south-eastern edge of Tye Green, and extends westwards from Witham Road to the railway.

Landscape and Visual Baseline

3.4.2 Landform and Drainage

- Landform comprises generally flat farmland plateau, with some small undulations, and gently descends south-west and west towards the railway;
- Small number of ponds, in association with scattered farmsteads.

3.4.3 Land Uses

- Mixture of arable and pastoral farmland;
- Land use and field pattern in close proximity to Tye Green comprises medium to large-scale arable fields divided by mature hedgerows;
- Elsewhere, land use comprises irregular small to medium scale arable and pastoral fields, with farmsteads clustered along Mill Lane;
- Part of 'The Notley's Golf Club' in southern part of area, adjacent to railway.

3.4.4 Vegetation

- Mature hedgerows and hedgerow trees define field patterns in northern and southern parts;
- Highly fragmented hedgerow structure south of Stubble's Farm;
- Mature hedgerows and hedgerow trees along Mill Lane, Bulford Mill Lane and Tye Green urban fringe;
- Mature trees and shrubs within scattered farmsteads: particularly Jeffrey's Farm, Highfields and Hawbush Old House.
- New woodland plantation located south of Stubble's Farm
- Robust belt of trees and shrubs lining railway corridor, which fragments close to Bulford Mill Lane;
- Vegetation within golf course largely restricted to remnant hedgerows.

3.4.5 Access

- Generally good public access, with a number of footpaths that connect to Mill Lane, Witham Road and the Essex Way long-distance path.

3.4.6 Settlement Edge

- Urban fringe of Tye Green includes a mixture of modern, low-density houses and recreational grounds. In most parts, the edge is generally abrupt and linear, yet moderately well integrated into the local landscape by a strong structure of mature trees and shrubs.

3.4.7 Visual Appraisal

- Mature trees and shrubs lining Bull Mill Lane combined with the strong structure of planting along the settlement of Tye Green and within scattered farmsteads, form robust visual barriers between northern and southern parts of the area.
- Views north of Mill Lane, are generally open due to large-scale fields of flat, arable farmland; however belts of mature trees and hedgerows close to the settlement edge enclose views to Tye Green, allowing only filtered views to tiled roofs;
- Highly fragmented hedgerows south of Stubble's Farm and poor vegetation structure within golf course, contributes to a sense of openness in southern parts of the area;
- Roads and farmsteads are mostly enclosed by a mixture of mature hedgerows, trees and shrubs, allowing only filtered views in the area;
- Views are more enclosed within southern parts of the area, south of Mill Lane, due to the cumulative screening effects of hedgerows, hedgerow trees and blocks of woodland;
- Intervisibility between northern and southern parts of the area is limited, due to enclosure provided by intervening robust hedgerows, woodland and trees;
- Overhead power lines traverse fields south-west of Mill Lane
- Hawbush Old House, Jeffrey's Farm and Highfields Fielding House are well enclosed by a strong structure of trees and shrubs.

Evaluation

3.4.8 **Landscape Character Sensitivity**

- Medium sensitivity overall due to generally poor representation of semi-natural habitat, lack of distinctiveness along settlement edge and by fragmented pre-18th century field enclosure patterns in northern and eastern parts of the area;
- Area provides a rural setting to southern Tye Green and opportunities for access to the open countryside in central and southern parts of area, with connection to Essex Way long-distance path;
- Area provides only a moderate contribution to wider landscape on account of its gently undulating topography and the enclosure provided by peripheral vegetation;
- Vegetation structure is generally good, with a strong network of intact hedgerows defining field boundaries and some woodland blocks, belts and plantation throughout the area;
- Southern edge of Tye Green is well integrated into the local landscape through a robust and strong structure of planting along the settlement edge;
- Overall sensitivity of the area is reduced by influence of overhead power lines, by noise intrusion from nearby roads and by significant fragmentation of hedgerow structure south of Stubble's Farm.

3.4.9 **Visual Sensitivity**

- Low to medium visual sensitivity overall on account of enclosure provided by strong structure of vegetation;
- Reduced sensitivity in areas close to Tye Green fringe due to a robust and strong structure of planting along the settlement, providing good enclosure;
- Mature trees and shrubs generally enclose views from Braintree Road, Mill Lane and Bullford Mill Lane, allowing only filtered views to the area;
- Influence of Hawbush Old House is reduced to an extent, on account of good enclosure from much of the area by mature trees and shrubs;
- Expansive views within southern parts due to significant fragmentation of hedgerow structure and little vegetation structure within golf course;
- Some filtered views between central parts of the area and Hawbush Green.

3.4.10 Landscape Value

Although the setting area includes no nationally designated landscapes or features, other important components of the landscape include:

- Hawbush Old House; a particularly sensitive historical monument within the area, located at the junction of Braintree Road and Mill Lane, including an early sixteenth century barn and timber-framed house (listed building);
- Listed buildings within Stubble's and Jeffrey's Farm;
- Ancient Monument west of Newbarns Farm;
- Network of public footpaths;
- Special Landscape Area designation.

3.4.11 Summary of B4 Landscape Sensitivities and Value

Landscape Character Sensitivity	Visual Sensitivity	Landscape Value
Medium sensitivity due to its poor representation of semi-natural habitat, a lack of distinctiveness along settlement edge and fragmented pre-18 th century enclosure pattern.	Low to medium sensitivity due to generally strong structure of vegetation.	Medium to high value due to Special Landscape Area, presence of listed buildings; and Ancient Monument west of Newbarns Farm. No public footpaths north of Mill Lane.
Medium	Low to medium	Medium to high

3.5 LANDSCAPE SETTING AREA B5 (refer to Landscape Assessment Figure B5)

3.5.1 Location

This landscape setting area is located on the eastern edge of Black Notley.

Landscape and Visual Baseline

3.5.2 Landform and Drainage

- Landform comprises generally flat farmland plateau, gently falling to the south-east and with some gentle undulations in northern parts;
- Narrow stream dissects the area in an easterly direction, towards the River Brain;
- Small number of ponds, in association with scattered farmsteads;
- Some drainage channels running adjacent to field boundaries.

3.5.3 Land Uses

- Predominantly arable farmland, comprising a patchwork of irregular medium to large-scale fields with farmsteads clustered along Baker's Lane and Pickpocket Lane;
- Depot located along Baker's Lane at Row Green;
- Nursery located at junction of Pickpocket Lane and London Road;
- Woodland plantation located east of Hayeswood Farm.

3.5.4 Vegetation

- Depot at Row Green well enclosed by mature woodland and tree belts;
- Generally good structure of vegetation, including a robust and strong structure of planting along the edge of Great Notley, particularly in northern parts;
- Mature, species-rich hedgerows and hedgerow trees define field patterns, particularly in western parts, in close proximity to urban fringe;
- New woodland plantation located east of Hayeswood Farm;
- Streambank vegetation along the stream;
- Robust hedgerows and trees line Baker's Lane and Pickpocket Lane;
- Isolated mature trees scattered within fields, particularly within eastern parts near Hayeswood Farm;
- Some newly established belts of shrubs lining the top of the A120 embankments.

3.5.5 Access

- Well-accessed by a number of public footpaths that connect to Baker's Lane, London Road and Braintree;
- Public byway along Pickpocket Lane, linking Baker's Lane to London Road.

3.5.6 Settlement Edge

- A mixture of detached and semi-detached houses line the eastern side of London Road.
- In the northern part of the settlement, north of Ludham Hall Lane, a robust structure of hedgerow and tree planting along the eastern fringes of Great Notley, form a fairly strong visual barrier and enclose long-distance views to the edge;
- South of Ludham Hall Lane, a combination of rear garden fencing, hedges, and mature garden trees/shrubs form a well-integrated edge to Great Notley, allowing only filtered views to the tiled roofs of modern, low-density residential houses.

3.5.7 Visual Appraisal

- Visibility within south-western parts is limited by vegetation; particularly in close proximity to Great Notley fringe, where hedgerows and hedgerow trees define small to medium sized fields, and blocks of woodland interrupt views, allowing only filtered, near distance views to houses along the settlement edge;
- Views to houses along settlement edge north of Ludham Hall Lane are well-enclosed by a robust structure of trees and shrubs;
- Intervisibility between northern and southern parts of urban fringe is limited, due to robust hedgerows, woodland and mature copses of trees within the landscape;
- Views from long sections of the A120 are enclosed by vegetated roadside cuttings;
- Views within central parts of the area, between Great Notley and Hayeswood Farm, are generally uninterrupted, with open views across medium to large-scale fields of flat, arable farmland where hedgerows have been fragmented or lost;
- In long distance views from central parts, scattered small woods and copses and hedgerow trees coalesce to sometimes create the illusion of a wooded horizon;
- Local roads and farmsteads are generally enclosed by a mixture of mature hedgerows and trees, allowing mostly filtered views to and from the area;
- New woodland plantation lines the stream east of Hayeswood Farm;
- Transmission towers and power lines dominate the skyline throughout western parts;

- Hayeswood Farm is well enclosed from southern parts of the area by a strong structure of trees and shrubs lining the stream, yet highly visible from central parts.

Evaluation

3.5.8 **Landscape Character Sensitivity**

- Area provides a rural setting to eastern Great Notley and provides opportunities for access to the open countryside for urban populations;
- Medium to high sensitivity due to historic influence of Black Notley and sense of historic integrity resulting from swathe of pre-18th century field enclosure patterns along the fringes of Great Notley;
- Increased sensitivity in northern parts where area provides physical and visual separation between Great Notley and Braintree;
- Area provides a moderate contribution to wider landscape to the south on account of its openness within central and eastern parts;
- Strong rural character with landscape generally in good condition, including a largely intact hedgerow structure defining small to medium fields in northern and southern parts;
- Fragmented hedgerows and some loss of hedgerow structure within central parts;
- Great Notley fringe is well integrated through a robust and strong structure of planting along the settlement edge;
- Sensitivity of area reduced by visually prominent transmission towers and overhead power lines, as well as noise intrusion from nearby roads, especially the A120;
- Semi-natural vegetation along stream course.

3.5.9 **Visual Sensitivity**

- The western parts of the area closest to Great Notley are of medium visual sensitivity on account of the enclosure provided by hedgerows and associated trees. The eastern parts of the area are generally of higher sensitivity on account of their open nature and their relatively high visual prominence in the wider landscape;
- Sensitivity increased by strong tree and hedgerow structure along eastern edge of settlement, which substantially encloses views of housing;

- Sensitivity of area reduced by skyline views to transmission towers and power lines;
- Although there are open northern views towards Braintree, the intervisibility between this area and Braintree is generally poor due to the enclosure provided by well-treed embankments and cuttings either side of the A120 Braintree Bypass;
- Open views of area available from local network of public footpaths and from nearby lanes.

3.5.10 Landscape Value

Although the setting area includes no nationally, regionally and locally designated landscapes or features, other important components of the landscape include:

- Well-used public footpath network;
- Listed buildings, including within Hayeswood Farm and the nursery;
- Moderate sense of tranquillity.

3.5.10 Summary of B5 Landscape Sensitivities and Value

Landscape Character Sensitivity	Visual Sensitivity	Landscape Value
Medium to high sensitivity overall due to its largely intact swathe of pre-18 th century enclosures along settlement edge and its role in providing a rural setting to Great Notley and Braintree. Increased sensitivity in northern parts, where area provides physical and visual separation between settlements.	Varies across area with medium sensitivity in western parts closest to Great Notley, where there is a relatively high degree of enclosure provided by field hedgerows, but increased sensitivity in eastern parts, which have a relatively high visibility in wider landscape and where relatively open views within the area may be obtained.	Medium to high value due to a well-used public footpath network; moderate sense of tranquillity and listed buildings.
Medium to high	Medium	Medium to high

3.6 LANDSCAPE SETTING AREA B6 (refer to Landscape Assessment Figure B5)

3.6.1 Location

This landscape setting area lies on the western edge of Black Notley.

Landscape and Visual Baseline

3.6.2 Landform and Drainage

- Area comprises a shallow valley, with its side slopes descending gently towards a stream that meanders through the area in an easterly direction towards the River Brain;
- Small number of ponds scattered throughout southern parts of the area.

3.6.3 Land Uses

- Predominantly arable farmland with some small-scale pasture fields and clusters of farmsteads;
- Clusters of houses along Church Road, Baker's Lane and Witham Road;
- A slaughter house at Row Green;
- Historic Black Notley Hall in eastern part.

3.6.4 Vegetation

- Vegetation structure within the area is generally good;
- Patchwork of irregular arable fields of varying size;
- North-western fringes of Black Notley comprise moderately strong structure of planting along the settlement edge, particularly in northern parts;
- Distinctive belt of mature coniferous trees along western edge of Black Notley;
- Central parts are relatively enclosed, particularly along stream and in fields surrounding Notley Hall, with robust species-rich hedgerows and mature hedgerow trees;
- Mature planting lining roads, particularly Baker's Lane and Church Road;
- Semi-natural stream bank vegetation;
- Some small-scale pasture fields divided by mature hedgerows and hedgerow trees in central parts, near Black Notley Hall and either side of the stream;
- Northern edge of recent residential development protruding west from Black Notley is partly screened by a distinctive belt of north-facing mature coniferous planting; which is seen in many long distance views within the area;

- Fairly robust hedgerows and some hedgerow trees, line the western edge of the same development.

3.6.5 Access

- Generally good access via a number of public footpaths, which connect Baker's Lane, Witham Road and Black Notley Hall and provide links to nearby settlements, including Great Notley and Braintree.

3.6.6 Settlement Edge

- Fringes of Black Notley comprise modern low-density residential of varying architecture styles. In most parts, the edge is generally abrupt and linear, yet well-integrated into the local landscape by a strong structure of mature trees and shrubs.

3.6.7 Visual Appraisal

- Glimpsed views to the urban fringes of Braintree, including the Braintree Freeport development, seen above trees in intervening landscape;
- Partial views to the tiled roofs of modern, low-density residential houses, fences, trimmed hedges and mature garden trees along the western fringe of Black Notley;
- Visibility within the setting area is generally good, with open views across medium to large-scale fields towards the western fringes of Black Notley;
- Visibility within central parts is limited by topographic variation and vegetation, where hedgerows and hedgerow trees define small to medium sized fields, and streambank vegetation interrupts views;
- Belt of mature coniferous trees along the western fringe of Black Notley forms a distinctive and linear edge, seen in many long distant views within the area;
- Some open views from elevated parts, to modern and vernacular houses along Church Road;
- Woodland located north of the Witham Road/Church Road junction creates a strong wooded backdrop in many long views;
- Partial views to historic Black Notley Hall and surrounds, provides an interesting feature within an otherwise farmland setting. The church steeple is prominent within many local views;
- Local roads and farmsteads are mostly enclosed by a mixture of mature hedgerows and trees, generally allowing only filtered views to the area;

- Slaughter house is well enclosed by a mature woodland block and tree belts;
- Transmission towers dominate skyline views throughout most parts of the area;
- Views southwards from central and northern parts of area are enclosed by Black Notley and by high-lying land and robust hedgerows to west and south-west of settlement;
- Open, extensive views from area out to surrounding landscape to north and west.

Evaluation

3.6.8 **Landscape Character Sensitivity**

- Western part of area lies in close proximity to historic core of Black Notley;
- Area provides a rural setting to western Black Notley and provides opportunities for access to the open countryside;
- Area provides a rural setting to historic Black Notley Hall and grounds;
- Area forms part of a wider landscape of open space that provides physical and visual separation between the small settlements of Black Notley and Great Notley.
- Rural landscape character with a recognisable landscape structure, including swathe of pre-18th century field enclosure patterns in northern and central parts close to historic core of settlement;
- Overall sensitivity reduced by influence of transmission towers, overhead power lines, and noise intrusion from nearby roads.

3.6.9 **Visual Sensitivity**

- High visual sensitivity overall due to open nature of the area and the availability of long distance views in and out of area from land to the north and west;
- Area forms part of visual setting to historic Black Notley Hall;
- Visual sensitivity is slightly reduced by open, elevated views to large-scale retail buildings on southern rings of Braintree, by skyline views to overhead power lines and by distant views to the electrical substation.

3.6.10 **Landscape Value**

Although the setting area includes no nationally, regionally and locally designated landscapes or features, other important components of the landscape include:

- Black Notley Hall and grounds, noted for its landscape and heritage value;
- Ancient monument and listed buildings;

- Well-used public footpath network;
- Moderate sense of tranquillity away from roads and urban fringes.

3.6.11 Summary of B6 Landscape Sensitivities and Value

Landscape Character Sensitivity	Visual Sensitivity	Landscape Value
High sensitivity due to its contribution to the setting of Black Notley Hall and Black Notley; strong structure of semi-natural vegetation and swathe of pre-18 th century enclosure in close proximity to historic core of settlement.	High sensitivity overall due to its openness, its visual prominence in the local landscape. Area forms part of visual setting to historic Black Notley Hall.	Medium to high value due to ancient monuments, listed buildings within Black Notley Hall; pre-18 th century field enclosure patterns; well-used public footpath network; and moderate sense of tranquillity.
High	Medium to high	Medium to high

3.7 LANDSCAPE SETTING AREA B7 (refer to Landscape Assessment Figure B6)

3.7.1 Location

This landscape setting area is located on the north-eastern edge of Tye Green.

Landscape and Visual Baseline

3.7.2 Landform and Drainage

- Area occupies a shallow valley. Its sides gently descend towards the River Brain, which meanders through central part of the area in a southerly direction;
- A small stream descends from a side valley in an easterly direction and joins the River Brain, near Troy's Farm.

3.7.3 Land Use

- Land use comprises a mixture arable and pastoral farmland;
- Some areas of rough grassland in close proximity to Black Notley;
- Woodland alongside river;
- Braintree to Witham railway along eastern edge of area.

3.7.4 Vegetation

- Good structure of vegetation throughout the area;
- River Brain is well enclosed by a strong structure of trees and shrubs, particularly in southern parts with its semi-natural woodland;
- Robust network of hedgerows and hedgerow trees define small-scale field pattern west of the River Brain;
- East of the river, field boundaries are defined by drainage lines and some isolated hedgerow trees;
- Robust belt of woodland planting encloses the railway.

3.7.5 Access

- Public footpath runs alongside the River Brain, with links to Braintree and Tye Green;

3.7.6 Settlement Edge

- Eastern fringes of Black Notley comprise mixture of detached and semi-detached houses, and are generally abrupt yet well enclosed by a strong structure of planting along the settlement edge, including a robust hedgerow structure in adjacent fields;
- Housing off Brain Valley Avenue has relatively sparse tree growth in gardens, presenting a slightly harsh edge to this part of settlement.

3.7.7 Visual Appraisal

- Most views of housing on edge of Black Notley are softened and enclosed to varying degrees by trees and hedgerows within the eastern part of area;
- Views from eastern parts of the area are generally uninterrupted, with open views across large-scale fields, with highly fragmented hedgerows;
- Visibility within western parts is enclosed by vegetation, including woodlands, tree belts and a mature hedgerow structure that defines small-scale fields;
- Elevated robust belt of trees lining the railway provides a strong sense of visual enclosure and enclose views eastwards to Tye Green;
- Some long distance glimpses to south-eastern urban fringes of Braintree.
- Transmission towers and power lines dominate the skyline in most northern and eastern views.

Evaluation

3.7.8 Landscape Character Sensitivity

- Area forms part of a rural setting to Black Notley;
- Area provides a buffer zone between Black Notley and the railway;
- Area provides only a low to moderate contribution to the wider landscape on account of enclosure provided by landform and vegetation;
- Area contributes to historic separation between Black Notley and Tye Green;
- Strong structure of semi-natural vegetation lining the river and stream;
- Sense of historic integrity reflected in pre-18th century field enclosures in western part defined by intact mature hedgerows and hedgerow trees;
- Increased sensitivity in eastern parts due to its open character with large-scale arable fields, rising landform, and 18th to 19th century field enclosure patterns;
- Sensitivity of area reduced by overhead power lines.

3.7.9 Visual Sensitivity

- The area is of medium visual sensitivity overall on account of the enclosure provided by hedgerows and associated trees. The eastern parts of the area are generally of higher sensitivity on account of their open nature, their elevated location and the availability of expansive views across large-scale arable fields.

3.7.10 Landscape Value

The setting area includes no nationally designated landscapes or features, but includes a fairly well-used public footpath network. Area lies within Special Landscape Area.

3.7.11 Summary of B7 Landscape Sensitivities and Value

Landscape Character Sensitivity	Visual Sensitivity	Landscape Value
Medium to high sensitivity overall due to its strong rural character, its pre-18 th century fields; its strong structure of semi-natural vegetation lining the river and stream; and by its contribution to historic separation between Black Notley and Tye Green. Sensitivity increases in northern part of area where land abuts the historic core of Black Notley.	The area is of medium visual sensitivity overall on account of the enclosure provided by hedgerows and associated trees. The eastern parts of the area are generally of higher sensitivity on account of their open nature, elevated location and the availability of expansive views across large-scale arable fields.	Medium to high value due to Special Landscape Area and fairly well-used public footpath network.
Medium to high	Medium	Medium to high

3.8 LANDSCAPE SETTING AREA B8 (refer to Landscape Assessment Figure B6)

3.8.1 Location

This landscape setting area is located on the south-eastern edge of Tye Green.

Landscape and Visual Baseline

3.8.2 Landform and Drainage

- Area occupies a shallow valley. Its sides gently descend towards the River Brain, which meanders through central part of the area in a southerly direction;
- Landform in central parts is modified by development of a golf course.

3.8.3 Land Use

- Land use dominated by Notley's Golf Club with its golf course, parking area, clubhouse and associated buildings, including a large-scale shed;
- Some small-scale pasture and arable fields in northern part;
- Small blocks of woodland.

3.8.4 Vegetation

- Good structure of vegetation throughout northern and southern parts;
- Large mature woodland blocks south of golf course, enclosing an arable field;
- Mature woodland block and belt of woodland north of the golf course clubhouse;
- Golf course is generally open in character, with remnants of hedgerows in western parts and tree cover limited to the river corridor;
- Robust network of hedgerows and hedgerow trees define small-scale field pattern in northern parts;
- River Brain corridor is well enclosed by a strong structure of trees and shrubs in southern parts, including new woodland plantations;
- Railway corridor is elevated and fairly open in central parts, yet well enclosed by a strong structure of trees and shrubs in southern parts.

3.8.5 Access

- Public footpath runs east-west across the golf course, over the river corridor and railway.

3.8.6 Settlement Edge

- South-eastern edge of Black Notley comprises mixture of modern detached and semi-detached houses and is generally well-enclosed from long distance views by robust woodland belts and woodland blocks in north-western parts of area, allowing only partial, near distance views to houses.

3.8.7 Visual Appraisal

- Open views within central parts of area, with expansive views across the golf course due to sparse vegetation structure and substantial fragmentation of hedgerow structure;
- Views in southern and northern parts are more channelled and constrained by woodland blocks and belts, streambank vegetation and hedgerows that define small-scale fields;
- Bulford Mill Lane is well-enclosed due to its low-lying topography and strong structure of planting lining the road, allowing only glimpses to buildings at Bulford Mill and Farm, typically viewed against a strong wooded backdrop;
- Elevated belt of woodland (fragmented in places) lining the railway provides a sense of visual enclosure;
- Transmission towers and power lines cross the area in a north-south direction and dominate the skyline in most northern and eastern views;
- Open views from central parts of area to isolated row of houses at The Green, some 350 metres south of Black Notley;
- Some long distant glimpses to the south-eastern urban fringes of Braintree from elevated western parts.

Evaluation

3.8.8 Landscape Character Sensitivity

- Area provides a rural setting to south-eastern parts of Black Notley;
- Area provides a buffer zone between Black Notley and the railway;
- Contribution to the physical and visual separation between Black Notley and Tye Green;
- Character of the area is strongly influenced by the golf course; its openness with weak vegetation structure;
- Significant loss of hedgerow structure in central parts, with some remnants of hedgerows west of the river;

- Sensitivity of the area is reduced by overhead powerlines and by partial views of elevated railway corridor;
- Distinctive pre-18th century arable field enclosures defined by intact mature hedgerow structure, with mature woodland blocks south of the golf course;
- Irregular, small to medium-scale pasture farmland in northern parts, with pre-18th century field pattern, defined by a robust network of mature hedgerows, hedgerow trees and some blocks and belts of woodland;
- Some semi-natural vegetation and woodland lining the river corridor.

3.8.9 **Visual Sensitivity**

Medium to high sensitivity overall on account of open nature of golf course landscape. Reduced visual sensitivity in northern and southern parts due to enclosure provided by woodlands, tree belts and hedgerows.

3.8.10 **Landscape Value**

Although the setting area includes no nationally designated landscapes or features, other important components of the landscape include:

- Public footpath through area;
- Ancient woodland (Adam's Wood) in southern part of the area;
- Special Landscape Area designation.

3.8.11 Summary of B8 Landscape Sensitivities and Value

Landscape Character Sensitivity	Visual Sensitivity	Landscape Value
Medium sensitivity overall due to golf course, loss of hedgerows, weak vegetation structure in southern parts, influence of overhead power lines, pre-18 th century field enclosures and robust mature hedgerows in northern parts; and limited semi-natural vegetation in woodland and along river.	Medium to high sensitivity overall on account of open nature of golf course landscape; medium visual sensitivity in northern and southern parts due to enclosure provided by woodlands, tree belts and hedgerows.	Medium to high value due to Special Landscape Area, ancient woodland on periphery and one public footpath through area.
Medium	Medium to high	Medium to high

3.9 LANDSCAPE SETTING AREA B9 (refer to Landscape Assessment Figure B6)

3.9.1 Location

This landscape setting area abuts the southern edge of Black Notley.

Landscape and Visual Baseline

3.9.2 Landform and Drainage

- Landform within the area is gently undulating, sloping gently down south-east towards the River Brain;
- A minor hill spur located some 400-600 metres to the south of Black Notley protrudes from the sideslopes of the valley;
- Drainage channels line some field boundaries;
- Small number of ponds scattered throughout central and northern parts of the area.

3.9.3 Land Use

- Land use dominated by large-scale arable farmland;
- Clusters of farmsteads along Green Lane, Witham Road and Pole Lane including, Stanton's Farm located in north-eastern corner of area;
- Row of houses at The Green, along Witham Road.

3.9.4 Vegetation

- Black Notley is bounded by a strong belt of trees and shrubs along its southern edge;
- A well treed hedgerow some 200 metres southwest of Stanton's Farm;
- Vegetation structure dominated by hedgerows and hedgerow trees, enclosing large-scale fields;
- A mature group of trees and shrubs lies in northern part of the area, north of Stanton's Farm;
- Mature coniferous hedgerow along western edge of Stanton's Farm;
- Field boundaries in northern parts are enclosed by a mixture of thick, intermittent hedgerows with some large gaps;
- Some field boundaries marked by grassy banks or ditches, where hedgerow structure has been lost, particularly in eastern parts;
- Little vegetation along the western edge of housing at The Green;

- Robust belt of trees and shrubs along public byway.

3.9.5 Access

- Access to area is generally good, served by a well-developed and well-used public footpath network, which provides north-south and east-west links between Black Notley, Pole Lane, The Green and areas beyond;
- A public byway runs along the northern boundary, linking Witham Road to Dagnets Lane to the east;

3.9.6 Settlement Edge

- Southern edge of Black Notley is abrupt, with lines of modern housing, yet well integrated into the landscape through a robust and strong structure of tree planting along the southern edge of the settlement, allowing only filtered views to rooftops;
- Western edge of The Green is harsh and abrupt, with open views to the houses from most parts of the area;
- Edges of farmsteads along Pole Lane and Green Lane are generally abrupt, but defined by hedgerows that provide some enclosure.

3.9.7 Visual Appraisal

- Visibility within the area is generally good, with expansive views across large-scale arable farmland, with increased openness in central and eastern parts due to loss of hedgerow structure south of Stanton's Farm;
- Long distant glimpses through intervening trees to the southern edges of Tye Green;
- Stanton's Farm is well-enclosed due to its low-lying topography and strong structure of planting along its western boundary, including a visually prominent clipped coniferous hedge;
- Trees / shrub belt along southern edge of Black Notley substantially encloses settlement in views from open countryside to south. Stanton's Farm appears as small, isolated farmstead in rural setting. It is well-enclosed due to its low-lying topography and strong structure of planting along its western boundary, including a visually prominent clipped coniferous hedge;
- Transmission power lines dominate the skyline in most views to east;

- Views from the open countryside to the north of this landscape setting area tend to be enclosed by the screening effects of the well treed hedgerow, located southwest of Stanton's Farm, and the hill spur located some 400-600 metres south of Black Notley.

Evaluation

3.9.8 **Landscape Character Sensitivity**

- Area forms part of a wide belt of countryside that extends southwards from the settlement. Its contribution to the wider landscape is limited by the robust tree/shrub belts that extend along the southern edge of the settlement and further westwards along the public byway;
- Area provides an open, rural setting to Black Notley and provides opportunities for access to the open countryside;
- Strong rural character with semi-natural habitat.
- Sensitivity slightly reduced by views of overhead power lines;
- Moderate landscape condition;
- Loss of hedgerow structure south of Stanton's Farm;
- Sense of historic integrity, resulting from pre-18th century field enclosure patterns in western parts of area;
- Aesthetically pleasing with robust tree/shrub planting along the southern edge of settlement substantially enclosing views of modern development;
- Generally tranquil with some traffic noise and movement on nearby roads.

3.9.9 **Visual Sensitivity**

- Open nature of the skyline in most parts of the area, typically viewed against well-treed hedgerows and tree/shrub belts;
- Glimpsed views of overhead powerlines;
- Central parts are more open in character, allowing open views to housing at The Green and glimpsed views towards Tye Green;
- Woodland blocks and tree belts enclose most views to residential areas within Black Notley and to Stanton's Farm.
- Views of any residential development in the northern part of this area, nearest to Black Notley, would be partially enclosed by tree belts alongside Black Notley, by the tree groups associated with Stanton's Farm, by well-treed hedgerows in

the local landscape, particularly to the south-west of the farm and by existing built development at Black Notley, Stanton's Farm and the Green;

- Visibility of area largely limited to views from local network of public footpaths, from local roads and from housing at The Green;
- Expansive views with central and eastern parts of area due to hedgerow loss;
- Visual sensitivity increases to south of well treed hedgerow located some 200 metres southwest of Stanton's Farm and to the west of the hedgerow that extends southwards from the western edge of the settlement.

3.9.10 Landscape Value

Although the setting area includes no nationally, regionally and locally designated landscapes or features, other important components of the landscape include:

- Moderate sense of tranquillity;
- Good access to the area with a well-used footpath network.

3.9.11 Summary of B9 Landscape Sensitivities and Value

Landscape Character Sensitivity	Visual Sensitivity	Landscape Value
Medium sensitivity overall, increasing to medium-to high in west, where pre-18 th century field enclosures dominate. Strong structure of planting along settlement fringes; sensitivity reduced slightly by overhead power lines to east and loss of hedgerows.	Medium sensitivity overall due to limited visibility of any new development and open nature of the skyline in most parts.	Medium value due to moderate sense of tranquillity and well-used network of public footpaths.
Medium	Medium	Medium

3.10 LANDSCAPE SETTING B10 AREA (refer to Landscape Assessment Figure B4)

3.10.1 Location

The landscape setting area is located on the eastern edge of Braintree, south of the A120 (Coggeshall Road).

Landscape and Visual Baseline

3.10.2 Landform and Drainage

- Landform within the area is very gently undulating, falling gradually to the east and northeast;
- Drainage restricted to drainage channels lining field boundaries and narrow stream that runs in a north-east direction towards the River Blackwater;
- Small number of ponds scattered throughout the area.

3.10.2 Land Use

- Land use dominated by large-scale arable fields, enclosed by hedgerows;
- Some small-scale pasture fields in the northeast, west of Runtun Farm;
- Small and large blocks of mature woodland scattered throughout the area;
- Clusters of farmsteads along Ashes Road, Coggeshall Road and Lanham Green Road;
- Row of houses along Lanham Green Road;
- Power transmission lines and water tower.

3.10.4 Vegetation

- Hedgerow structure within the area is generally good, but poorer in central and western parts;
- Two large blocks of ancient woodland - Lanham Wood and Templeborder Wood;
- Small to large-scale fields, generally defined by hedgerows and hedgerow trees;
- Some fields boundaries marked by grassy banks or ditches, where hedgerow structure has been lost;
- A120 on northern boundary of area is well enclosed by a strong belt of trees and shrubs;
- Stream is well enclosed by a strong structure of streambank vegetation, new woodland and trees;

- Farmsteads are well enclosed from roads by a strong structure of trees and shrubs.

3.10.5 Access

- Public access to area is generally good, served by a well-developed and well-used footpath network, which provides north-south and east-west links to Coggeshall Road, Ashes Road, Lanham Green Road and beyond;
- No public footpath link across the A120 to Braintree.

3.10.6 Settlement Edge

- Well-treed embankments and cuttings either side of the A120;
- Abrupt linear edge for built development along eastern edge of Braintree, but well-integrated into local landscape through strong structure of planting along the road;
- Lines of buildings along western edge of A120 separated by large area of open space.

3.10.7 Visual Appraisal

- Open, large-scale character in central and western parts due to large-scale field sizes and loss of hedgerows;
- Visibility within the setting area is generally good, with expansive views across large-scale arable farmland, especially in central parts, and medium-distance views to land east of River Blackwater;
- In some views, woodlands, hedgerows and individual trees coalesce to create illusion of a well-wooded horizon;
- Intervisibility between the area and Braintree is generally limited due to well-treed embankments and cuttings either side of the A120;
- Overhead power lines that cross the area in north-south and northeast-southwest alignment are prominent in local views
- Area includes two large ancient woodlands, which tend to truncate some local views.

Evaluation

3.10.8 Landscape Character Sensitivity

- Area forms an open, rural setting to Braintree, and provides opportunities for access into wider landscape;
- The area provides a moderate contribution to the wider landscape as it is visible in glimpsed medium distance views from elevated land to the east of the River Blackwater and in views from local roads, properties and public footpaths;
- Strong rural character, undeveloped character but loss of hedgerows and little semi-natural vegetation, except in woodland and along a stream;
- Sensitivity slightly reduced by views of overhead powerlines;
- Aesthetically pleasing with open skies and well-treed horizon;
- Hedgerow structure within area is generally good but significant loss of historic hedgerow structure in central parts;
- Some pre-18th century field enclosures in north-western and south-western parts;
- Small-scale fields in northern parts are enclosed by a robust network of hedgerows and hedgerow trees;
- Significant loss of hedgerow structure in central and western parts;
- Two large blocks of ancient woodland;
- Semi-natural vegetation associated with stream and woodland blocks;
- Generally tranquil with some disturbance from traffic noise on nearby roads, including the A120.

3.10.9 Visual Sensitivity

- Open, expansive views nature of in most parts of the area;
- Filtered and glimpsed views available out of area to the rolling rural landscape to the east and northeast;
- Open, large-scale nature of much of area and the availability of medium distance views from elevated land to east of River Blackwater;
- Any new built development in setting area would visually relate to open countryside rather than to urban edge, which is substantially enclosed by tree belt along A210.

3.10.10 Landscape Value

The setting area includes two ancient woodlands (Lanham and Templeborder Wood) whose value is reflected in their County Wildlife Site designations.

Other important components of the landscape include:

- Sense of historic integrity, resulting from pre- 18th and pre-18th to 19th century field enclosures;
- Mature hedgerows and hedgerow trees, which define field patterns and contain biodiversity;
- Stream bank vegetation lining the stream;
- Robust and strong structure of planting lining the A120;
- Mature vegetation lining the Black Notley urban fringe.
- Good access to the area with a number of public footpaths.

3.10.11 Summary of B10 Landscape Sensitivities and Value

Landscape Character Sensitivity	Visual Sensitivity	Landscape Value
Medium sensitivity overall. Strong rural, undeveloped character but loss of hedgerows in central parts and little semi-natural vegetation, except in woodland along a stream. Strong structure of planting along roads. Sensitivity increased in north-western parts due to concentration of 18 th century field enclosures and ancient woodland.	Medium to high sensitivity due to the open, expansive nature of views in most parts of the area.	Medium to high value due to ancient woodlands with County Wildlife Site designations; moderate sense of tranquillity and well-used network of public footpaths.
Medium	Medium to high	Medium to high

3.11 LANDSCAPE SETTING AREA B11 (refer to Landscape Assessment Figures B4 and B2)

3.11.1 Location

Area lies on north-eastern edge of Braintree, north of A120 (Coggeshall Road).

Landscape and Visual Baseline

3.11.2 Landform and Drainage

- Landform within the area is gently rolling and slopes towards the River Blackwater, which has a shallow valley and meanders in an east-west direction through the area, its valley sides sloping gently up from the valley floor;
- A number of streams meander through the area, feeding into the River Blackwater;
- Small number of farm dams and ponds scattered throughout the area.

3.11.3 Land Use

- Patchwork of arable and pasture farmland;
- Small and large blocks of mature woodland throughout the area;
- Clusters of farmsteads along roads;
- Golf course located in eastern part, near Stisted Hall.

3.11.4 Vegetation

- Vegetation structure within the area is generally good;
- Mature trees associated with Stisted Hall Park and golf course;
- One large block of ancient woodland in central part of area (Lyonshall Wood);
- Fields generally defined by hedgerows and hedgerow trees in varying condition;
- Loss of hedgerow structure in central parts with some fields boundaries marked by grassy banks or ditches,
- Robust belt of trees and shrubs along A120;
- Strong structure of trees along stream
- New woodland copses and plantation near Covenbrook Hall;
- Generally medium to large-scale fields but small-scale fields in northern parts, enclosed by a robust network of hedgerows and hedgerow trees.

3.11.5 Access

- Well accessed by a number of public footpaths, which connect to Coggeshall Road, King's Lane and Water Lane;
- The public footpaths form part of a network of routes that serve residents of Braintree and link to nearby settlements, including Stisted to the east;
- One key public footpath passes along the lower slopes of the Blackwater Valley and links to northern part of Braintree.

3.11.6 Settlement Edge

- South of River Blackwater, built development provides an abrupt linear edge to Braintree, but is well-integrated into local landscape by the well treed embankments and cuttings either side of the A120;
- Braintree's eastern urban edge (the A120) is abrupt, but not harsh, as it is integrated to the local landscape through a thick belt of vegetation adjacent to the A120;
- Local roads and farmsteads are mostly screened by a mixture of mature hedgerows and trees, allowing only filtered views to the area;
- Stisted Hall Park Golf Course is well integrated by a strong and mature structure of vegetation;
- Eastern urban fringes of Stisted are generally abrupt, yet defined in places by shrubs, trees and woodland that provide some enclosure to the edge.

3.11.7 Visual Appraisal

- Open character in central and western parts due to large scale field pattern and loss of hedgerow structure;
- Many parts of the area are visible in elevated middle-distance views from the east and north-east;
- Visibility within the area is generally good, with expansive views across large-scale arable farmland, especially in elevated western parts;
- Area visible from southern parts of Setting Area B12;
- Restricted intervisibility between setting areas B10 and B11 due to changes in topography and strong vegetation structure along Coggeshall Road;
- In views within central parts, large woodlands, woodland copses and hedgerow trees coalesce to sometimes create the illusion of a wooded horizon;

- Intervisibility between Braintree and its setting area is generally good in elevated western parts and is generally poor in lower parts, due to enclosure provided by the well-treed embankments and cuttings either side of the road.
- Open views to the eastern urban fringes of Braintree from elevated parts, especially west of Lyonshall Wood;
- Long distant glimpses from central parts to farmsteads nestled within the landscape;
- Lyonshall Wood is elevated and visually prominent in many views within the area and from Braintree;
- Views in lower parts of river valley are more channelled and constrained by riparian trees and by robust hedgerows that enclose small to medium-scale fields;
- Overhead power lines are prominent in long-distance southern skyline views and in near distance views toward Lyonshall Wood.

Evaluation

3.11.8 **Landscape Character Sensitivity**

- Area forms part of a wider landscape belt of open countryside that extends eastwards from Braintree and provides visual and physical separation between Stisted and Braintree;
- Area forms an open, rural setting to Braintree and provides opportunities for access to wider landscape;
- Strong rural character, particularly in the Blackwater Valley, which also has a strong sense of place;
- Tranquil areas along the narrow rural lanes, away from key settlements and busy roads;
- Semi-natural vegetation associated with River Blackwater and with block of ancient woodland;
- Landscape in moderate to good condition with strong sense of unity;
- Hedgerow structure within the area is generally good but with loss of hedgerow structure in northern parts;
- Some pre-18th century field enclosures in southern and northern parts; and some 18th to 19th century field enclosures near Stisted Hall;
- One large block of ancient woodland (Lyonshall Wood);
- Open landscape with strong rural character.

3.11.9 Visual Sensitivity

- High sensitivity due to generally expansive and open nature of views in most parts of the area and visual prominence of upper slopes in wider landscape;
- Availability of medium and long distance panoramic views from elevated parts, often with a well-treed backdrop;
- Areas of low visual sensitivity in stream valley;
- Views to the eastern urban fringes of Braintree are open from elevated western parts, yet screened in lower parts by vegetation lining the River Blackwater and A120.

3.11.10 Landscape Value

The setting area includes one ancient woodland (Lyonshall Wood), whose locally important status is reflected in its County Wildlife Site designation.

Other important components of the landscape include:

- Historic Stisted Hall and Stisted Hall Conservation Area near eastern edge of area;
- Good access to the area with a number well-used of public footpaths;
- Generally tranquil in spite of moderate noise disturbance from A120 traffic;
- Special Landscape Area designation.

3.11.11 Summary of B11 Landscape Sensitivities and Value

Landscape Character Sensitivity	Visual Sensitivity	Landscape Value
Medium to high sensitivity overall due to proximity to Stisted Hall Conservation Area; strong sense of rural character; pre-18 th and 18 th to 19 th century field enclosures; semi-natural vegetation along river and in woodland. Hedgerow structure generally in good condition.	High sensitivity due to the generally expansive and open nature of views in most parts of the area, and the visual prominence of upper slopes in the wider landscape.	Medium to high value due to Special Landscape Area, ancient woodland with County Wildlife Site designation; Stisted Hall Conservation Area; and well-used network of public footpaths.
Medium to high	High	Medium to high

3.12 LANDSCAPE SETTING B12 AREA (refer to Landscape Assessment Figure B2)

3.12.1 Location

This landscape setting area lies on the northern edge of Braintree and the eastern edge of High Garrett/Barking Churchstreet.

Landscape and Visual Baseline

3.12.2 Landform and Drainage

- Landform within the area is generally flat but gently descends to the southeast;
- Drainage restricted to drainage channels lining fields;
- Small number of farm ponds are scattered throughout the area.

3.12.3 Land Use

- Land use dominated by a patchwork of arable and pasture farmland, defined by hedgerows of mixed condition;
- Small blocks of mature woodland throughout the area;
- Clusters of farmsteads along roads.

3.12.4 Vegetation

- Vegetation structure within the area is generally good;
- Two small ancient woodland blocks in eastern part of area (Clapgate Wood and Pond Croft Wood);
- Mature woodland belt between Willoughbys Farm, Clapgate Wood and Pond Croft Wood;
- Small to medium-scale fields generally defined by hedgerows in varying condition, with hedgerow trees;
- A120 is well enclosed by a strong belt of trees and shrubs;
- Generally strong structure of planting along eastern fringes of High Garrett;
- Farmsteads are well enclosed from roads by a strong structure of trees and shrubs.

3.12.5 Access

- Well accessed by a number of public footpaths, which connect Lyons Hall, Broad Road, Sunnyfields Road and Halstead Road and beyond;

- Public byway runs in a north-south direction between Willoughbys Farm and Boultwoods Farm;
- Public byway runs in a north-south direction between Thistley Green Road and Lyons Hall Road;
- No public footpath access past the A131 to Braintree;
- Bridleway heads northeast from Sunnyfields Road.

3.12.6 Settlement Edge

- The A131 and Broad Road provide abrupt, linear edges to the west and southwest, and are defined by a strong structure of planting along the road;
- Housing on the eastern edge of High Garrett adapts a linear arrangement of detached and semi-detached houses alongside the High Garrett Road;
- Eastern urban fringes of High Garrett are generally abrupt yet fairly well integrated in places by a strong structure of planting.

3.12.7 Visual Appraisal

- Medium and long distance views across the area generally curtailed by the cumulative screening effect of a robust network of hedgerows and hedgerow trees;
- Woodlands are prominent features seen against the skyline in many views to the east;
- Intervisibility between the area and Braintree is very limited, with only glimpses to the north-eastern fringes from elevated southern parts;
- Poor intervisibility between setting areas B12 and B15 due to changes in topography and well-treed embankments and cuttings either side of the A120;
- Open views across medium-scale arable fields to houses within the northern urban fringes of High Garrett obtained from Sunnyfields Road;
- Some views to Landscape Setting Area B11 from southern elevated parts;
- Low voltage power lines cross the area near to the urban fringes of High Garrett in a north-south direction;
- Filtered views to the overhead lights at the A131/Broad Road junction;
- Views to the fringes of Braintree from other parts of the area are generally interrupted by robust hedgerows, topography and by the well-treed embankments and cuttings either side of the A131;
- Local roads and farmsteads are mostly screened by a mixture of mature hedgerows and trees, allowing only filtered views to the area.

Evaluation

3.12.8 **Landscape Character Sensitivity**

- Area contributes to physical and visual separation between High Garrett and Braintree;
- Area forms an open, rural setting to High Garrett;
- Vegetation structure within the area generally in good condition with arable and pasture fields generally defined by robust hedgerows and hedgerow trees;
- Historic moat at Willoughbys Farm, several pre-18th to 19th century field enclosures in southern parts of area, and two small ancient woodland blocks in eastern parts, all adding a sense of time-depth;
- An attractive landscape with few landscape detractors.

3.12.9 **Visual Sensitivity**

- Medium visual sensitivity overall due to semi-enclosed nature of most parts of area;
- Well treed skyline in most parts of the area;
- Increased sensitivity within southern part as this land provides visual separation between Braintree and High Garrett;
- Glimpses of the A131 and associated overhead lighting at the Broad Road junction.

3.12.10 **Landscape Value**

- Special Landscape Area designation;
- The setting area includes two ancient woodlands (Clapgate and Pond Croft Woods), whose locally important status is evident from their County Wildlife Site designations;
- Moderate sense of tranquillity and remoteness, with little traffic movement visible from nearby roads due to robust screening, although some noise disturbance from A120 traffic.

3.12.11 Summary of B12 Landscape Sensitivities and Value

Landscape Character Sensitivity	Visual Sensitivity	Landscape Value
Medium to high sensitivity as area contributes to physical and visual separation between Braintree and High Garrett, good vegetation structure, ancient woodlands; 18 th to 19 th century field enclosures; pre-18 th century enclosures and historic moat.	Medium sensitivity due to truncated views within this semi-enclosed landscape on the edge of settlement. Increased sensitivity within southern part as this land provides visual separation between Braintree and High Garrett. Limited medium and long distance views available into area.	Medium to high value overall due to Special Landscape Area, two small ancient woodlands with County Wildlife Site designations, and good network of public footpaths/bridleways.
Medium to high	Medium	Medium to high

3.13 LANDSCAPE SETTING AREA B13 (refer to Landscape Assessment Figures B1 and B2)

3.13.1 Location

This landscape setting area is located on the northern and western edges of Bocking Churchstreet and extends southwards to meet the northern edge of Braintree.

Landscape and Visual Baseline

3.13.2 Landform and Drainage

- Landform within the area is rolling and gently slopes towards the River Pant, which meanders through the southern part of area in a south-easterly direction;
- A number of small streams dissect the area, feeding into the River Pant;
- Small number of ponds and lakes in central and northern parts, including man-made fishing ponds.

3.13.3 Land Use

- Land use dominated by arable farmland;
- Some small-scale pasture fields in close proximity to fringes of Bocking Churchstreet and River Pant;
- Small blocks, copses and belts of mature woodland throughout the area;
- Clusters of farmsteads along roads.

3.13.4 Vegetation

- Vegetation structure within the area is generally good;
- Small blocks and belts of mature woodland throughout the area, including Hamblym Wood and Oak Wood (an ancient woodland);
- Numerous mature isolated trees and tree copses scattered throughout fields;
- Medium to large scale arable fields generally defined by hedgerows of varying condition with good representation of hedgerow trees;
- River Pant and feeder streams generally defined and enclosed by mature trees and shrubs;
- Generally strong structure of planting along western and northern fringes of Bocking Churchstreet;
- Farmsteads are well enclosed from roads by a strong structure of trees and shrubs.

3.13.5 Access

- Well accessed by a number of public footpaths, which connect to Bocking Churchstreet, High Garrett and beyond;
- Public footpath follows River Pant corridor, passing through Bocking Churchstreet and on toward northern parts of Braintree.

3.13.6 Settlement Edge

- Housing along the northern and western edges of Bocking Churchstreet is of varying style and age, with older housing concentrated at its western end.
- The fringes of Bocking Churchstreet are fairly well- integrated into the local landscape due to topographical variation and by a strong structure of vegetation in western parts and along the stream corridor to the north and west;
- Bocking Churchstreet Church on south-western edge of settlement with nearby industrial buildings;
- Detached and semi-detached houses along western fringes of High Garrett are well-enclosed by a robust and strong structure of planting along the settlement edge;
- Allotment gardens east of Fennes Road, within the Bocking Churchstreet fringes;
- Modern detached and terraced houses along northern fringes of Braintree, well enclosed by robust tree/shrub belt except for the modern residential extension west of Churchill Road.

3.13.7 Visual Appraisal

- Visibility within the setting area is limited due to the rolling topography and strong vegetation structure that tends to curtail many medium and long distance views;
- A mixture of open and partial views across medium-scale arable fields to clustered farmsteads, woodland and Bocking Churchstreet fringes;
- Visibility between the area and northern edge of Braintree is generally limited due to structure of vegetation along urban edge;
- Woodlands are prominent in many northern and western views and are typically seen against the skyline;
- Views within lower areas tend to be more channelled and constrained by riparian trees and by robust hedgerows;
- Views more open in central and western parts due to large-scale field pattern and some loss of hedgerow structure.

Evaluation

3.13.8 **Landscape Character Sensitivity**

- Area forms an open, rural setting to Bocking Churchstreet and High Garrett;
- Area contributes to the visual and physical separation between Bocking Churchstreet and Braintree;
- Good structure of semi-natural woodland and riparian vegetation within the area;
- Concentration of vernacular houses on fringe of Bocking Churchstreet;
- Small-scale pasture fields defined by hedgerows and hedgerow trees between the urban fringes of Bocking Churchstreet and small stream, provide some enclosure to the urban edge;
- Pre-18th century field enclosures in central and southern parts and one small ancient woodland block add a sense of time-depth to the area;
- Sensitivity of the landscape is slightly reduced by presence of power lines that cross the area near Home Farm House;
- Forms part of historic setting to settlement, which has already bordered farmland.

3.13.9 **Visual Sensitivity**

- Edge of Bocking Churchstreet is softened and substantially enclosed by peripheral trees and hedgerows;
- Views of buildings within Bocking Churchstreet tend to be of vernacular housing of varying age, style and form;
- Open, near distance views to Bocking Churchstreet Church from western parts;
- Some fields on northern edge of Bocking Churchstreet are visually prominent located on elevated land that slopes down into stream valley;
- Well-vegetated skyline in most parts of the area, formed by woodlands, copses of woodland and hedgerow trees;
- Mixture of filtered and open views to landmark church and vernacular housing on fringes of Bocking Churchstreet;
- Visual sensitivity slightly reduced by views of powerlines that cross elevated fields near Home Farm House.

3.13.10 **Landscape Value**

- The setting area includes one ancient woodland (Oak Wood), whose locally important status is evident from their County Wildlife Site designations.

- Special Landscape Area designation;
- Historic moat located between Fennes and Garrett Farm;
- Well-used public footpath/bridleway network;
- Adjacent to Bocking Churchstreet conservation area;
- Moderate sense of tranquillity, with little movement disruption from nearby roads due to enclosure provided by robust vegetation.

3.13.11 Summary of B13 Landscape Sensitivities and Value

Landscape Character Sensitivity	Visual Sensitivity	Landscape Value
High sensitivity due to good structure of semi-natural vegetation (woodlands and riparian vegetation), one ancient woodland; pre-18 th and 18 th to 19 th century field enclosures. Forms part of historic setting to settlement, which has always bordered on farmland.	Medium to high sensitivity due visually prominent sloping land on northern edge of Bocking Churchstreet and views of landmark and historic buildings along settlement edge.	Medium to high value due to Special Landscape Area, proximity to conservation area, ancient woodland with County Wildlife Site designation; historic moat; moderate sense of tranquillity.
High	Medium to high	Medium to high

3.14 LANDSCAPE SETTING AREA B14 (refer to Landscape Assessment Figure B2)

3.14.1 Location

The setting area lies between Bocking Churchstreet and the northern edge of Braintree.

Landscape and Visual Baseline

3.14.2 Landform and Drainage

- Landform comprises a shallow valley. Its sideslopes gently descend towards the River Blackwater, which meanders through the western part of area in southerly direction;
- One small lake located in centre of area at Doreward's Hall.

3.14.3 Land Use

- Land use includes a patchwork of arable and pasture farmland, with some small blocks of woodland and plantation.

3.14.4 Vegetation

- Highly fragmented hedgerow structure with substantial removal of hedgerows within northern parts;
- Fields boundaries often marked by grassy banks or ditches where hedgerows have been lost;
- One large block of ancient woodland in northern part of area (Round Wood);
- Mature trees and coniferous hedges at Doreward's Hall;
- Streambank vegetation and new woodland copses/plantation along river corridor;
- Sparse tree and shrub planting along settlement edge.

3.14.5 Access

- Well accessed by a number of public footpaths, which connect to Broad Road, Church Street and The Chase, providing countryside access for the residents of Bocking Churchstreet and Braintree, with link to historic Doreward's Hall.

3.14.6 **Settlement Edge**

- Mixture of detached and semi-detached houses along southern edge of Bocking Churchstreet, generally well integrated into local landscape by peripheral tree/shrub planting, particularly in rear gardens;
- Urban fringes of Braintree, south of the cemetery, are abrupt yet moderately integrated through vegetation structure associated with the River corridor;
- Urban fringes of Braintree, west of Broad Road, are slightly abrupt, with open views to houses from most parts of the area;
- Broad Road provides an abrupt linear edge to the north-east, with little vegetation structure along the road, particularly at the A131 junction;
- Windmill on southern edge of Bocking Churchstreet forms landmark feature.

3.14.7 **Visual Appraisal**

- Poor intervisibility between landscape setting areas B13 and B15 due to enclosure provided by topography and by ridgeline houses along Church Street;
- Area is prominent in many views from the northern part of Braintree, including views from Landscape Setting Area B16 on the western side of the River Pant;
- Visibility within the setting area is generally good due to significant loss of hedgerows, with expansive views across arable and pasture farmland to surrounding urban fringes;
- Intervisibility between the area and Braintree is generally good except along low-lying river corridor, with open views to Braintree from elevated northern parts;
- Round Wood is elevated and visually prominent in many views within and outside the area;
- Prominent southern views to the high-rise, educational tower block located within the northern urban fringes of Braintree;
- Prominent northern views to windmill on the southern urban edge of Bocking Churchstreet;
- Doreward's Hall is well-enclosed by mature trees and coniferous hedges;
- Glimpses to Bocking Churchstreet church tower, from most parts of the area.

Evaluation

3.14.8 **Landscape Character Sensitivity**

- Area provides physical and visual separation between Bocking Churchstreet and Braintree;
- Area provides an open, rural setting to Doreward's Hall, Bocking Churchstreet and Braintree;
- Area provides an open, rural setting to the northern part of Braintree, the Bocking Churchstreet conservation area and historic Doreward's Hall;
- A historically open area, in close proximity to historic core of Braintree;
- Vegetation structure within the area is generally poor, with substantial loss of hedgerow structure and open views to several visually abrupt urban edges;
- One 18th to 19th century field enclosure north-east of Doreward's Hall, with substantial loss of hedgerow structure;
- One block of woodland in the north (Round Wood);
- A positive character with strong tree/shrub structure alongside river, a good sense of place and few detracting features other than sections of abrupt urban edge.

3.14.9 **Visual Sensitivity**

- High visual sensitivity overall due to visual prominence of most of area, which rises up from river and the availability of views from relatively large number of houses, including those within Bocking Churchstreet conservation area;
- Skyline views to Bocking Churchstreet church tower;
- Prominent northern views to the windmill on the southern urban fringes of Bocking Churchstreet;
- Views to the northern urban fringes of Braintree are restricted in lower parts by vegetation lining the River Blackwater.

3.14.10 **Landscape Value**

Although the setting area includes no nationally designated landscapes or features, other important components of the landscape include:

- Listed building at Doreward's Hall;
- Provides a landscape setting to Bocking Churchstreet conservation area;
- Ancient woodland at Round Wood;
- Special Landscape Area designation;

- Moderate sense of tranquillity away from noise disturbance and traffic movement along Broad Road;
- Stream bank vegetation lining the stream;
- Good access to the area with a number of well-used public footpaths.

3.14.11 Summary of Landscape B14 Sensitivities and Value

Landscape Character Sensitivity	Visual Sensitivity	Landscape Value
High sensitivity overall due to proximity to Bocking Churchstreet conservation area, presence of historic Doreward's Hall, 18 th to 19 th century field enclosure, a landscape in good condition with semi-natural vegetation alongside river and at Round Wood. A historically open area, in close proximity to historic core of Braintree.	High sensitivity due to the open nature of views in most parts of the area, which rises up from river and visual prominence of area from land to the west of River Pant. The availability of views from relatively large numbers of houses, including those within Bocking Churchstreet conservation area. Skyline views to Bocking Churchstreet church tower and windmill.	Medium to high value overall due to Special Landscape Area, listed Doreward's Hall, Bocking Churchstreet conservation area; ancient woodland, a moderate sense of tranquillity and well-used network of public footpaths.
High	High	Medium to high

3.15 LANDSCAPE SETTING AREA B15 (refer to Landscape Assessment Figure B2)

3.15.1 Location

This landscape setting area lies on northern edge of Braintree, to the east of B1053.

Landscape and Visual Baseline

3.15.2 Landform and Drainage

- Landform comprises a shallow valley. Its sideslopes gently descends towards the River Blackwater, which meanders through the area in an easterly direction;
- One large lake in south-western corner (Bocking Hole) associated with River Blackwater;
- Two artificial lakes associated with industrial site in centre of area.

3.15.3 Land Use

- Industrial site in centre of area;
- Large areas of rough grassland, as well as pasture and blocks of woodland, particularly along river corridor;
- Sewage works in eastern corner;
- Bocking Hole and the lake south of industrial site are used for recreational purposes, including fishing and picnicking.

3.15.4 Vegetation

- Highly fragmented hedgerow structure with substantial removal of hedgerows within western parts;
- Mature woodland surrounding the north, east and western edges of industrial site;
- Belt of trees extending between industrial site and Thistley Green Road;
- Sewage works are well-enclosed by a strong structure of planting;
- Good structure of vegetation, including woodland, surrounding Bocking Hole;
- River corridor is well-enclosed by streambank vegetation, woodland copses and plantations;
- Little vegetation structure along southern settlement fringes;
- Two artificial lakes are well-enclosed by mature trees and shrubs.

3.15.5 Access

- Well accessed by a number of public footpaths, which connect Thistley Green, Highfield Stile Road and northern urban fringes of Braintree, including routes alongside River Blackwater.

3.15.6 Settlement Edge

- Braintree urban fringe, east of Broad Road (B1053), is well-integrated into local landscape by a robust structure of planting along settlement edge;
- Urban fringe, south of the River Blackwater, is generally abrupt, yet moderately integrated into local landscape by planting structure associated with river corridor.

3.15.7 Visual Appraisal

- Open character in central and western parts due to significant loss of hedgerows;
- Visibility within setting area is generally limited by vegetation and topographical variation;
- Intervisibility between the area and Braintree is good, with open views to housing areas within northern parts of Braintree from elevated northern parts;
- Filtered views to houses within northern urban fringes from lower southern parts, near the river;
- Telecommunications tower, adjacent to the sewage works, is visually prominent;
- Views to west of high-rise, educational tower block; located within the northern urban fringes of Braintree;
- Distant skyline views to church steeple within Braintree town centre;
- Filtered views of visually prominent chainmesh wire fencing and associated shrub vegetation along the southern edge of the industrial site;
- Distant views eastward to arable fields within Landscape Setting Area B11 from elevated western parts;
- Prominent southern views to the woodland blocks within the eastern fringes of Braintree.
- Sewage works are well enclosed by vegetation and landform;
- Mature woodland belt encloses the A131;
- A131 provides an abrupt, linear edge yet well-enclosed by a robust belt of planting;
- Broad Road/A131 junction, to north of area, has little vegetation structure along the road, allowing open views to overhead lighting associated with the junction;

- Industrial site located in centre of area is well-enclosed by mature woodland, with only filtered views of site from southern parts of area.

Evaluation

3.15.8 **Landscape Character Sensitivity**

- Area provides a rural setting to northern Braintree;
- Medium to high sensitivity overall as area lies in close proximity to historic core of Braintree and has been historically open with little built development;
- Strong structure of semi-natural vegetation lining the river corridor, which provides some enclosure to the fringes of Braintree;
- Small to medium scale 18th to 19th century field enclosures in north-western parts;
- Character of the area is strongly influenced by open views of housing areas within northern parts of Braintree;
- Sensitivity of area reduced by industrial works, power lines and notable presence of litter;
- Rough grassland has a high concentration of ragwort and contributes to an unmanaged/neglected landscape character;
- Vegetation structure within the area is generally good;
- Moderate noise disturbance associated with nearby roads and industrial works;
- Substantial loss of hedgerow structure in central and western parts;

3.15.9 **Visual Sensitivity**

- Medium visual sensitivity overall due to open views within area and enclosure provided by housing to west and south, by ridgeline to north-east and by robust structure of woodlands and hedgerows;
- Expansive views within central and western parts due to significant loss of hedgerow structure, panoramic views to the northern fringes of Braintree and distance glimpses to arable fields within Landscape Setting Area B11;
- Reduced visual sensitivity in lower parts due to enclosure provided by landform and by vegetation lining the River Blackwater;
- Sensitivity also reduced by filtered views to the industrial site;
- Views to woodland block within the eastern urban fringes of Braintree.

3.15.10 Landscape Value

Although the setting area includes no nationally designated landscapes or features, other important components of the landscape include:

- Good access to the area with a number of well-used public footpaths and bike routes;
- Moderate sense of tranquillity;
- Special Landscape Area designation.

3.15.11 Summary of B15 Landscape Sensitivities and Value

Landscape Character Sensitivity	Visual Sensitivity	Landscape Value
Medium to high sensitivity as area lies in close proximity to historic core of Braintree and has been historically open with little built development. Important contribution to the setting of northern Braintree. Some 18 th to 19 th century field enclosures defined by intact hedgerows, highly fragmented hedgerow structure and strong structure of semi-natural vegetation associated with woodland and river corridor.	Medium sensitivity overall due to open nature of area, good intervisibility between the area and northern Braintree, the enclosure of views by housing to west and south, by ridgeline to north-east and by robust structure of woodlands and hedgerows. Numerous footpaths.	Medium to high value overall due to Special Landscape Area, moderate tranquillity and well-used public footpath network. Litter, powerlines, industrial works and sewage works act as landscape detractors.
Medium to high	Medium	Medium to high

3.16 LANDSCAPE SETTING AREA B16 (refer to Landscape Assessment Figure B1)

3.16.1 Location

This landscape setting area is located on the north-western edge of Braintree, north of Braintree Enterprise Centre.

Landscape and Visual Baseline

3.16.2 Landform and Drainage

- Landform within the area falls generally to the northeast and is gently rolling, with wide flat tops and narrow stream valleys;
- A number of small streams meander through the area in an easterly direction; the valley sides slope gently up from the valley floor;
- A number of small lakes and ponds scattered throughout the area.

3.16.3 Land Use

- Predominantly medium to large-scale arable fields interspersed with small grass paddocks and pasture used for grazing horses;
- Leisure centre, equestrian centre and golf course in north-eastern part of area;
- Mature woodland blocks and belts scattered throughout the area;
- Historic Panfield Hall and grounds in western part, east of Hall Road.

3.16.4 Vegetation

- Mature block of ancient woodland, west of Braintree Enterprise Centre (Panfield Wood), with mature woodland belts extending north-eastwards from Panfield Wood;
- Tree copses and plantation alongside streams;
- Intact hedgerow structure, particularly in central and western parts;
- Some mature woodland belts lining field boundaries in western parts;
- Some new woodland belts and copses within golf course;
- Mature trees and shrubs lining the B1053 (Deanery Hill) and Panfield Lane.

3.16.5 Access

- Well accessed by a number of public footpaths, which connect Panfield Lane, Braintree Enterprise Centre and Hall Road (south of Panfield); including a route alongside the stream corridor

- No public footpath connection to the B1053 (Deanery Hill).

3.16.6 Settlement Edge

- Eastern fringe of Braintree predominantly comprises terraced and semi-detached houses set out in linear form along Panfield Lane. These houses are generally well-integrated into the local landscape by a robust structure of planting along the settlement edge;
- However, the modern residential extension west of Churchill Road is poorly integrated into the local landscape with little peripheral planting, providing open views of housing from surrounding countryside;
- Braintree Enterprise Centre forms part of a recent urban extension containing some abrupt and poorly integrated urban edges with little associated vegetation. It comprises large-scale, modern brick and steel buildings with overhead street lighting and telecommunications towers in close proximity.

3.16.7 Visual Appraisal

- Visibility within the setting area is generally limited by land rising up on the sides of the central stream valley and by hedgerows and woodland within area;
- Away from the stream valleys, there are open views over large flat arable fields with boundaries generally delineated by hedgerows interspersed with hedgerow trees and some woodland belts
- Fairly truncated views in central and western parts, due to a robust hedgerow structure, strengthened in places by mature woodland belts, which all coalesce to create illusion of a wooded horizon;
- Intervisibility between the area and Braintree is restricted by robust planting adjacent Panfield Lane;
- Typically a well-vegetated skyline within the area;
- Some filtered views to rooftops within northern Braintree from elevated central parts;
- Open, but limited, views to houses and open space within the modern residential extension west of Churchill Road;
- Golf Course is generally well enclosed by a robust structure of trees and shrubs, especially alongside the stream, allowing only filtered views of golf course from elevated central parts, north of Mathew's Farm;
- Leisure and equestrian centres are generally enclosed by robust belts of woodland and trees;

- Partial views to large-scale modern brick and steel buildings, overhead street lighting and telecommunications tower within Braintree Enterprise Centre from eastern parts;
- Long distance glimpses to the windmill within Bocking Churchstreet;
- Ancient woodland forms a backdrop to many views within local area, including those from Rayne, Panfield and Braintree;
- Mature woodland belt extending north of Panfield Wood encloses much of the Braintree Enterprise Centre in views from western parts of the area.

Evaluation

3.16.8 **Landscape Character Sensitivity**

- Moderate to high sensitivity overall due to strong rural character, and with wide belt of medium to large-scale, pre-18th century field enclosures, defined by intact hedgerows and hedgerow trees;
- Area provides a rural setting to north-western Braintree;
- Area forms part of a wider belt of land that physically and visually separates Panfield and Braintree;
- Western part of area forms a rural setting to Panfield Hall;
- Sensitivity of southern parts of area reduced by loss of field enclosures, lack of vegetation structure and open views to large-scale buildings, overhead street lighting and telecommunications tower within the Enterprise Centre;
- Sensitivity of area also reduced by the modern residential extension to west of Churchill Road by golf course, leisure and equestrian centre;
- Some parts with unmanaged/neglected landscape character;
- Strong structure of semi-natural vegetation in woodlands and lining the stream corridor.

3.16.9 **Visual Sensitivity**

- Medium visual sensitivity overall due to truncated views in this partially enclosed area;
- Reduced visual sensitivity in southern parts due to open views to buildings, overhead street lighting and telecommunications tower within Braintree Enterprise Centre;
- Sensitivity slightly reduced in areas where open views of housing along Panfield Lane may be obtained;

- Upper slopes of stream valley have high visual sensitivity on account of their wider visibility.

3.16.10 Landscape Value

Although the setting area includes no nationally designated landscapes or features, other important components of the landscape include:

- Special Landscape Area designation;
- Panfield Hall and surrounds (moated site);
- Ancient woodland (Panfield Wood);
- Good access to the area with a number of well-used public footpaths;
- Overall sense of remoteness and tranquillity.

3.16.11 Summary of B16 Landscape Sensitivities and Value

Landscape Character Sensitivity	Visual Sensitivity	Landscape Value
Medium to high sensitivity overall due to its pre-18 th century field enclosures with intact hedgerow structure; its strong rural character and strong structure of semi-natural vegetation with mature woodland. Much reduced sensitivity in southern area due to Braintree Enterprise Centre.	Medium sensitivity due to the partially enclosed nature of most views within area, reduced visual sensitivity in south-eastern parts with some open views to Braintree Enterprise Centre.	Medium to high value due to Special Landscape Area designation, presence of historic Panfield Hall and surrounds; large ancient woodland; and good public access.
Medium to high	Medium	Medium to high

3.17 LANDSCAPE SETTING AREA B17 (refer to Landscape Assessment Figures B1 and B3)

3.17.1 Location

This landscape setting area lies on the western edge of Braintree and extends out towards the northeast.

Landscape and Visual Baseline

3.17.2 Landform and Drainage

- Landform within the area is rolling with wide flat tops and gently descends towards Pods Brook, which has a narrow, shallow valley and meanders in a south-west direction through the area;
- A number of farm dams, artificial lakes and ponds are scattered throughout the area.

3.17.3 Land Use

- Land use dominated by large-scale arable farmland fields, interspersed with small to medium-scale grass paddocks and pasture used for grazing horses;
- Small airstrip located within elevated, central part of area;
- Sewage works located south-west of the airstrip;
- Small and large blocks of mature woodland scattered throughout the area;
- Three recreational lakes used for fishing at Rayne Lodge Farm
- Dismantled railway along southern boundary of area serves as a national trail;
- Playing fields on the eastern fringe of Rayne;
- Historic Rayne Hall and clusters of houses and caravan park south of Rayne Road;
- Nursery located along Rayne Road.

3.17.4 Vegetation

- Vegetation structure largely limited to blocks of woodland and woodland plantations in western parts (including some coniferous), stream bank vegetation along the Pod Brook valley and occasional remnant hedgerows;
- Strong and robust belt of woodland lining the dismantled train line;

- Northern edge of Rayne generally has soft edge with mature woodland around Rayne Hall but with relatively little rear garden, trees and shrubs at northern end of settlement;
- Substantial loss of hedgerow structure, particularly within central parts near to airstrip;
- Strong and mature vegetation associated with Rayne Hall Park and The Pines;
- One large ancient woodland block in northern part of area (Panfield Wood);
- Some fields boundaries marked by grassy banks or ditches, where hedgerow structure has been lost;
- Strong belt of trees and shrubs along the eastern and western edges of the sewage works.

3.17.5 Access

- Well accessed by a number of public footpaths, which connect Rayne, Springwood Industrial Estate and Panfield;
- Fritch Way recreational path along dismantled railway.

3.17.6 Settlement Edge

- Fritch Way recreational path provides an abrupt linear edge to the south, but is well-integrated through strong structure of planting along the path;
- Large-scale industrial buildings within Springwood Industrial Estate on western fringes of Braintree, north of Rayne Road, are softened and well-enclosed from most parts of the area by landform and by woodland;
- Harsh and abrupt urban edge to Braintree, south of Rayne Road;
- Variety and interest is provided by the presence of church tower and other local vernacular buildings with timber frames, colour wash and tiled roofs along the northern and north-western fringes of Rayne.

3.17.7 Visual Appraisal

- Panfield Wood is elevated and visually prominent in many views within the area and from Braintree;
- Panfield Wood encloses views to Braintree Enterprise Centre;
- Filtered views to Springwood Industrial Estate from southern and western parts;
- Open views to the northern urban fringes of Rayne from western parts of the area, especially to the houses north of Shalford Road;

- Skyline views eastwards to telecommunications tower and overhead lighting within Springwood Industrial Estate and to flood-lighting columns within playing fields, east of industrial estate;
- Open, expansive views in central and western parts due to large scale field pattern and loss of hedgerow structure;
- Open views to the elevated airstrip with its large grey hanger and several light aircraft adjacent to the grass runway;
- Visibility within the setting area is generally good, with expansive views across large-scale arable farmland, especially in elevated western parts;
- Poor intervisibility between the area and Braintree, due to changes in topography and vegetation structure; especially from areas west of the airstrip;
- Open views to large-scale industrial buildings within Gould's Farm;
- Visually prominent row of poplar trees west of Panfield Wood, often views against the skyline;
- Mature trees and shrubs along Flich Way provide a robust visual barrier between Landscape Setting Areas B17 and B20;
- Long distance, panoramic views from elevated plateau across large-scale arable fields in central parts;
- Long distance views to the woodland belts in Landscape Setting Area B16 from central and northern elevated plateau.

Evaluation

3.17.8 **Landscape Character Sensitivity**

- Area forms part of a wider belt of open countryside that extends north-westwards along Pods Brook valley;
- Area provides visual and physical separation between Rayne and Braintree;
- Area forms an open, rural setting to Braintree and Rayne;
- Provides an open, rural setting to Rayne Conservation Area, including Rayne Hall;
- Area provides high contribution to wider landscape but much reduced contribution in vicinity of Rayne Lodge / Springwood Industrial Estate, where parcels of land are contained by hedgerows and mature trees;
- Pods Brook river valley cuts through a farmland plateau landscape, with occasional woodland blocks and plantations;

- Hedgerows with hedgerow trees delineate the field boundaries along the length of the river valley, however hedgerow structure is highly fragmented in plateau areas;
- Some pre-18th century field enclosures in close proximity to Rayne and north of Rayne Lodge;
- 18th to 19th century field enclosure south of caravan park along Rayne Road;
- One large ancient woodland block (Panfield Wood);
- Sensitivity of the area is reduced by filtered views of Springwood Industrial Estate, open views to sewage works and skyline views to telecommunications tower and overhead lighting within the estate;
- Harsh and abrupt edge to south-western Braintree, south of Rayne Road.

3.17.9 **Visual Sensitivity**

- Medium to high visual sensitivity overall due to visually prominent hill slopes and open nature of views in most parts of the area, often viewed against woodlands and woodland belts (yet disturbed by eastern skyline views to industrial estate, telecommunication tower and lighting columns);
- Views between the area and Braintree are generally enclosed by intervening trees/shrubs and by changes in topography; especially views from area west of the airstrip;
- Visual sensitivity reduced in low-lying areas along northern edge of Rayne and near Rayne Lodge, where land is enclosed to a greater degree by trees and hedgerows;
- Panfield Wood is prominent in many long distance views within the area and from Braintree;
- Low sensitivity visual receptors in industrial estate and high sensitivity receptors using footpath network and in houses.

3.17.10 **Landscape Value**

The setting area includes one ancient woodland (Panfield Wood) whose locally important status is ruptured within the area, and strengthens through planting where appropriate to the local landscape evident in its County Wildlife Site designation.

Other important components of the landscape include:

- Special Landscape Area designation;
- Rayne Conservation Area, including historic Rayne Hall;

- Good access to the area with a number of public footpaths;
- An overall sense of tranquillity and remoteness away from key settlements and busy roads;
- Strong sense of remoteness and tranquillity away from roads and settlements.

3.17.11 Summary of B17 Landscape Sensitivities and Value

Landscape Character Sensitivity	Visual Sensitivity	Landscape Value
Medium to high sensitivity overall due to its strong rural character, pre-18 th century and 18 th to 19 th century field enclosures, ancient woodland. Increased sensitivity in southern part due to proximity of Rayne Conservation Area and contribution to historic separation between Rayne and Braintree.	Medium to high sensitivity overall due to visually prominent hill slopes and open nature of views in most parts of the area. Reduced sensitivity in eastern part where views may be obtained of industrial estate, telecommunication tower and lighting columns.	Medium to high value due to Special Landscape Area, one block of ancient woodland with County Wildlife Site designation; Rayne Conservation Area; and overall sense of tranquillity away from settlements and road.
Medium to high	Medium to high	Medium to high

3.18 LANDSCAPE SETTING AREA B18 (refer to Landscape Assessment Figure B3)

13.18.1 Location

This landscape setting area lies to west of Rayne, extending south from Shalford Road to Flitch Way.

Landscape and Visual Baseline

13.18.2 Landform and Drainage

- Gently rolling and elevated land with a distinct knoll between the settlement edge of Rayne and Pods Lane;
- Land gently falls away from the knoll, providing enclosure to the urban edge from western parts of the area;
- A number of small ponds and drainage channels along some field boundaries.

13.18.3 Land Uses

- Land use dominated by large-scale arable farmland;
- Some small-scale pasture fields in southern parts, near Dunmow Road;
- Large scale storage units and car hire business off Dunmow Road;
- Scattered farmsteads alongside roads;
- Small depot in south-western corner, west of Station Road;
- Allotment gardens in northern part near Duckend Green;
- Flitch Way Recreational Path (disused railway track) along southern boundary.

13.18.4 Vegetation

- Substantial fragmentation of hedgerow structure in western parts;
- Generally good structure of vegetation in southern parts between Flitch Way and Dunmow Road, with robust hedgerows, mature woodland and scattered mature trees;
- Strong belt of trees and shrubs lining Flitch Way;
- Small number of woodland blocks and belts throughout the area.

13.18.5 Access

- Flitch Way recreational path connects Rayne to Braintree;

- One public footpaths links Flitch Way to Shalford Road in a north-south direction and another provides a link to the Rayne County Primary School and Shalford Road;
- General lack of public footpaths in western parts.

3.18.6 **Settlement Edge**

- Rayne's western edge comprise a mixture of modern, low-density houses, a school, a depot and some farmsteads;
- Abrupt and harsh urban edge to Rayne, with clipped garden hedges of mixed heights and qualities, varied fence types; and open views to houses and gardens sheds;
- Abrupt and harsh edges to Havering's Farm and Broadfield Farms.

3.18.7 **Visual Appraisal**

- Limited intervisibility with Landscape Setting Area B17, due to buildings within Gould's Farm and intervening hedgerows;
- Medium-sized arable field adjacent to Havering's Farm defined by a woodland belt and hedgerow trees, encloses views to the urban edge from western parts of the area;
- Filtered northern views to buildings within Gould's Farm from central parts;
- Views within central parts and western parts are generally expansive, due to elevated land and large-scale arable fields with loss of hedgerow structure;
- Intervisibility between east and west parts of area is limited, due to a prominent knoll, east of Pods Lane;
- Open northern views across the arable farmland to woodland enclosing the allotment gardens;
- Views are more enclosed within southern parts of the area, where hedgerows and hedgerow trees define small-scale fields, and together with blocks of woodland, interrupt views;
- Power lines dominate the skyline throughout;
- Belt of trees and shrubs lining Flitch Way provides visual enclosure to the area and is visually prominent in many views within the local area;
- Shalford Road is generally enclosed from the area by a robust and strong structure of trees and shrubs, allowing only filtered northern views through line of trees and shrubs.

Evaluation

3.18.8 **Landscape Character Sensitivity**

- Area forms an open, rural setting to Rayne and provides opportunities for access to the open countryside for residents of Rayne and Braintree via Flich Way;
- Area to east of knoll provides low contribution to the wider landscape, whilst area to west of knoll provides moderate contribution;
- Urban fringe character to east of knoll, with lack of distinctiveness along settlement edge;
- Landscape elements that are sensitive to change include the hedgerow structure, mature hedgerow trees, woodland blocks and belts throughout the area; particularly in southern parts where small-scale field enclosures are defined by an intact hedgerow structure;
- Historic integrity, resulting from 18th to 19th century and pre-18th century field enclosure patterns in southern, eastern and western parts of the area;
- Overall sensitivity somewhat disturbed by overhead power lines which dominate the skyline, as well as noise intrusion from nearby roads;
- Recent developments of large-scale industrial buildings with varied vegetation structure in southern parts contribute to an a discordant urban fringe character;
- Substantial fragmentation to hedgerow structure in central and western parts;
- A landscape in moderate condition overall.

3.18.9 **Visual Sensitivity**

- Medium visual sensitivity for area east of knoll due to enclosure provided by landform and peripheral vegetation.
- Sensitivity west of knoll increases due to expansive views across large-scale fields with poor vegetation structure;
- Expansive views within central and western parts across large-scale arable fields with a poor vegetation structure (some fragmented hedgerows and small woodland blocks and copses);
- Limited intervisibility between eastern and western parts, due to a prominent knoll, east of Pods Lane;
- Power lines dominate the skyline throughout and reduce the overall sensitivity of the landscape.

3.18.10 Landscape Value

The setting area includes no nationally, regionally or locally designated landscapes or features, but includes a well-used national trail along southern boundary. Moderate sense of tranquillity east of Pods Lane, high sense of tranquillity to west of lane.

3.18.11 Summary of B18 Landscape Sensitivities and Value

Landscape Character Sensitivity	Visual Sensitivity	Landscape Value
Medium sensitivity east of knoll due to presence of historic field enclosures, urban fringe character and lack of distinctiveness along settlement edge.	Medium sensitivity east of knoll due to enclosure provided by trees, hedgerows and landform. Some abrupt and enclosed views to harsh urban fringes. Sensitivity west of knoll increases due to expansive views across large-scale fields with poor vegetation structure. No public rights of way west of Pods Lane.	Medium value overall but moderate sense of tranquillity east of Pods Lane but high sense of tranquillity to west of lane.
Medium	Medium	Medium

3.19 LANDSCAPE SETTING AREA B19 (refer to Landscape Assessment Figure B3)

3.19.1 Location

This landscape setting area is located on the southern edge of Rayne.

Landscape and Visual Baseline

3.19.2 Landform and Drainage

- Generally flat to gently rolling farmland plateau landscape that stretches in a southerly direction from Rayne towards the A120;
- A small number of ponds associated with scattered farmsteads.

3.19.3 Land Uses

- Patchwork of small-scale arable and pasture farmland, interspersed with a variety of other land uses, mainly of rural nature;
- Farmsteads clustered along roads;
- Riding Centre/School and Wenas Farm, along Fairy Hall Lane;
- Poultry hatchery and electrical substation along School Road;
- Some disused/abandoned industrial sheds and farm buildings;
- ‘Little Paddocks’ housing development east of School Road.

3.19.4 Vegetation

- Vegetation structure within the area is generally strong and in good condition, contributing to a strong sense of enclosure within the area;
- Patchwork of arable and pasture farmland with irregular small to medium-scale 20th century field enclosures, defined by hedgerows of varying condition;
- Flitch Way recreational path is lined by a mature and robust belt of trees and shrubs;
- Mature hedgerows lining the A120 contribute to a strong sense of enclosure within southern parts of the area;
- Densely planted shrubs along the A120 overpass embankments;
- Strong vegetation structure associated with Gatewoods Farm and the hatchery;
- General loss of hedgerows within the area, particularly within central parts;
- Braintree Common is a large arable field in a belt of generally small to medium-scale fields.

3.19.5 Access

- Public access is generally good, served by a number of public footpaths that connect to Flitch Way recreation path;
- Pedestrian overpass, south of Lakes Farm, provides access over the A120 to Great Notley County Park.

3.19.6 Settlement Edge

- The edge of Rayne is poorly defined, with ribbon development occurring along roads between the settlement edge and the A120;
- Varying styles of architecture along the settlement edge.

3.19.7 Visual Appraisal

- Views are more enclosed within central and northern parts of the area, in close proximity to Fairy Hall Lane, where hedgerows and hedgerow trees define small-scale fields, and copses of mature trees interrupt views to the urban fringe;
- Red-tiled rooftops of 'Little Paddocks' housing development, east of School Road, are a visually prominent feature within central areas;
- Settlement edge north of 'Little Paddocks' is harsh and abrupt, defined by clipped hedges and a mixture of fence types;
- Mature belt of trees and shrubs lining Flitch Way provides a strong visual barrier between the setting area and Rayne conservation area;
- Braintree Common forms a large open, rural setting to the houses along New Road and Fairy Hall Lane, in the form of an irregular arable field;
- Intervisibility between eastern and western parts of the area is limited, due to robust hedgerows, copses of mature trees, heavily vegetated embankments along the School Road overpass and isolated mature trees within the landscape;
- Open views to poor quality industrial sheds and farm buildings within Fairy Hall;
- Local roads are mostly screened by a mixture of mature hedgerows and trees, allowing only filtered views to the area;
- In central parts, scattered copses of mature trees, hedgerows and isolated trees coalesce to enclose a well-treed skyline.

Evaluation

3.19.8 Landscape Character Sensitivity

- Forms part of the rural setting to Rayne and provides opportunities for access to the countryside, and beyond to Great Notley County Park;
- Hedgerow structure in moderate condition only as significant loss of hedgerow structure in central, southern and western parts;
- Fields alongside the northern sections of Fairy Hall Lane are relatively small in scale and have an intimate, semi-enclosed character;
- Overall sensitivity of the area is diminished by poorly integrated settlement edges, fragmented hedgerow structure and presence of disused/abandoned industrial sheds and farm buildings within central parts;
- Little sense of time-depth in landscape.

3.19.9 Visual Sensitivity

- Views within the area are typically seen against a well-treed skyline, but an area of overall low to medium visual sensitivity on account of the semi-enclosed nature of many of the fields and visually harsh areas of settlement edge.

3.19.10 Landscape Value

Fritch Way recreational path is lined by a mature belt of trees and shrubs, whose value is reflected in its County Wildlife Site designation.

Other important components of the landscape include:

- Network of public footpaths, especially the pedestrian overpass that connects to Great Notley County Park;
- Grade II listed buildings within Gatewoods Farm, Fairy Hall and within the south-eastern urban fringe of Rayne.

3.19.11 **Summary of Landscape B19 Sensitivities and Value**

Landscape Character Sensitivity	Visual Sensitivity	Landscape Value
Medium sensitivity due to its contribution to the rural setting for Rayne but with poorly integrated settlement edge and a significant loss of hedgerow structure in parts	Low to medium sensitivity due to restricted intervisibility with Rayne, presence of visual detractors, poorly defined urban edge and enclosure of views by robust hedgerows and tree belts.	Medium to high value due to Flich Way recreational path with County Wildlife Site designation; Braintree Common; and various Grade II listed buildings. Abuts Rayne conservation area.
Medium	Low to medium	Medium to high

3.20 LANDSCAPE SETTING AREA B20 (refer to Landscape Assessment Figure B3)

3.20.1 Location

The landscape setting area is located on south-western edge of Braintree, north of A120 and south of Flich Way.

Landscape and Visual Baseline

3.20.2 Landform and Drainage

- Undulating landform, gently sloping down north-eastwards towards River Brain and edge of Braintree;
- River Brain flows through eastern part of area, in a south-easterly direction
- A small number of streams and drainage channels traverse the area, feeding into the River Brain.
- A small number of ponds, in association with scattered farmsteads.

3.20.3 Land Uses

- Patchwork of arable and pasture farmland with variety of irregular shaped field sizes;
- Pods Brook Road (B1256) traverses the area, passing over the River Brain in a north-south direction;
- Farmsteads clustered along roads;
- Poultry house along New Road;
- Cemetery in north-eastern part, north of the River Brain;
- Piggery in south-west corner;
- Millhouse south of River Brain.

3.20.4 Vegetation

- Flich Way recreational path is lined by a mature and generally robust belt of trees and shrubs;
- Mature trees and hedgerows line the A120 and B1256;
- Mature trees and shrubs lining the River Brain and tributaries;
- Farmsteads are generally well-enclosed by mature trees and shrubs.

3.20.5 Access

- Public access is generally good, served by a number of public footpaths that connect to Flitch Way recreation path;
- General lack of public access in eastern part, including one poorly used public footpath that connects to B1256 and London Road.

3.20.6 Settlement Edge

- South-eastern urban edge of Rayne is fairly well-defined but some ribbon development occurs along roads towards A120, including a variety of land uses and architecture;
- South-western edge of Braintree is well defined and contained by the cemetery, with some rural land uses along London Road.

3.20.7 Visual Appraisal

- Tree and hedgerow structure is poor, with general loss of hedgerows within the western parts of the area;
- Strong sense of openness within western parts of the area;
- Open views across medium to large-scale arable and pasture fields, defined by hedgerows of mixed quality in western parts;
- Views are more enclosed within eastern parts of the area, in close proximity to the Brain River corridor, where hedgerows and hedgerow trees define small-scale fields, and mature trees along the river and within the cemetery interrupt views to the urban fringe;
- Mature trees and shrubs following a drainage ditch in north-western corner, combined with robust vegetation lining Flitch Way, enclose views to Rayne and its conservation area;
- Strong sense of enclosure within eastern parts of the area;
- Mature belt of trees and shrubs lining Flitch Way provides a robust visual backdrop to the setting area; however minor fragmentation in central parts allows channelled views to Broomhills Industrial Estate and rooftops of residential areas beyond;
- Partial views of A120 Braintree Bypass, its road junctions and overhead lighting, particularly at the A120 / A120 roundabouts;
- In eastern parts, scattered copses of mature trees, hedgerows and isolated trees coalesce to create a well-treed skyline.

Evaluation

3.20.8 **Landscape Character Sensitivity**

- Provides physical and visual separation between Rayne, Braintree and Great Notley;
- Area forms part of a wider belt of countryside that extends northwards from the A120, up past Rayne and Braintree and out towards the north-west;
- Provides a largely open rural landscape setting to Rayne and Braintree, providing opportunities for access to the countryside;
- Provides a limited contribution to the wider landscape on the account of the visual enclosure provided along Flich Way and the A120;
- Any built development in this area would substantially change this tract of open rural landscape that physically and visually separates Braintree and Great Notley as well as Braintree and Rayne;
- Semi-natural habitat along River Brain corridor;
- A medium quality landscape overall: positive character, moderate condition, aesthetically satisfactory but with some detracting features;
- One remnant pre-18th century field enclosure;
- Lack of vegetation structure within central parts, contributing to a open skyline and views to some harsh and poorly integrated urban edges;
- Hedgerow structure within eastern parts of area, south of the River Brain is good, but significant loss of hedgerow structure in central and western parts;
- Sensitivity somewhat disturbed by some noise intrusion from the A120, poorly integrated urban edges and fragmented hedgerow structure allowing channelled views to road junctions, overhead lighting and large-scale buildings within central parts.

3.20.9 **Visual Sensitivity**

Overall, a landscape of medium to high visual sensitivity on account of:

- Mature belt of trees and shrubs lining Flich Way providing a robust visual barrier between the area and Rayne;
- Invisibility between area and Great Notley and views from recreational routes;
- Mature trees and hedgerows alongside the A120;
- Enclosure provided by mature trees and hedgerows in eastern part of area;
- Broomhill Industrial Estate and the A120 are visual detractors.

3.20.10 Landscape Value

Fritch Way recreational path is lined by a mature belt of trees and shrubs, whose value is reflected in its County Wildlife Site designation.

Other important components of the landscape include:

- Network of public footpaths;
- Grade II listed buildings at Stanford Farm, Naylinghurst, Bridge Farm and within the south-eastern fringe of Rayne.

3.20.11 Summary of B20 Landscape Sensitivities and Value

Landscape Character Sensitivity	Visual Sensitivity	Landscape Value
Medium to high sensitivity as area contributes to the historic separation between Braintree, Rayne and Black Notley.	Medium to high sensitivity due to partial enclosure provided by hedgerows and tree belts, intervisibility between area and Great Notley, views from recreational routes and some visual detractors such as Broomhill Industrial Estate and A120.	Medium to high value due to Fritch Way recreational path with County Wildlife Site designation; Braintree Common; various Grade II listed buildings.
Medium to high	Medium to high	Medium to high

3.21 LANDSCAPE SETTING AREA B21 (refer to Landscape Assessment Figure B3)

3.21.1 Location

This landscape setting area abuts the northern and north-eastern edges of Black Notley and lies between the A120 and A131.

Landscape and Visual Baseline

3.21.2 Landform and Drainage

- Landform slopes gently to the west and has been significantly altered by the construction of the embankments and cuttings either side of the A120 Braintree Bypass;
- South of the A131, the land rises steeply to the residential areas of Great Notley;
- A small number of drainage lines traverse the area in a northerly direction and alongside major road corridors.

3.21.3 Land Uses

- Land use dominated by recent commercial development ('Skyline 120') comprising large and medium scale office and warehouse buildings, with grassed amenity areas.

3.21.4 Vegetation

- Some newly established amenity and streetscape planting associated with commercial development;
- Extensive grassland surrounding new development sites;
- Vegetated embankments and roadside shrubs and trees;
- Small, mature woodland blocks.

3.21.5 Access

- Generally restricted public access, with one public footpath across far eastern part of area and another public footpath near western boundary that connects Great Notley Country Park with Rayne over a pedestrian overpass.

3.21.6 Settlement Edge

- Northern fringe of Great Notley is mainly modern terraced housing and is well-defined and contained by vegetated embankments of the A131.

3.21.7 **Visual Appraisal**

- Views within area are dominated by new large-scale office and warehouse buildings, with associated roads, car parks and new planting structure;
- Views on periphery of area are dominated by major road corridors and associated planting structures along embankments, cuttings and junctions;
- Mature trees and shrubs along southern edge of the A131 largely enclose views to Great Notley; allowing only filtered views to tiled roofs;
- Views northwards into Landscape Setting Area B20 substantially enclosed by vegetated embankments along A120;
- Partial views of area from surrounding roads or filtered views through roadside vegetation;
- Filtered western views to Black Notley Country Park.

Evaluation

3.21.8 **Landscape Character Sensitivity**

- Provides low contribution to the wider landscape on account of the enclosure provided by vegetated embankments of A120 and A131;
- Area has undergone major change with new urban development and includes little remaining landscape components or elements that are sensitive to change;
- Area dominated by large-scale industrial and office buildings and strong visual influence of adjacent roads;
- Overall sensitivity of the area is further reduced by noise intrusion and movement from traffic on the A120 and A131.

3.21.9 **Visual Sensitivity**

- Mature belt of shrubs lining the A131 provides a fairly robust visual barrier between the area and Great Notley;
- Substantial removal of hedgerow structure and general lack of mature vegetation contributes to an open landscape with views to surrounding roads, road junctions and overhead lighting.
- Any built development would be physically and visually relate to the A120 and A131 junction, which is substantially open to these roads and enclosed from Great Notley.
- In western parts, a remnant hedgerow provides some visual separation between the area and Black Notley Country Park;

- Low visual sensitivity overall, as area dominated by views of employment buildings and A120/A131 infrastructure, and views obtained mostly by road views who have low sensitivity on account of their transient nature.

3.21.10 Landscape Value

The setting area includes no nationally, regionally or locally designated landscapes or features, but includes public footpaths linking Rayne and Black Notley Country Park as well as Braintree to Black Notley.

3.21.11 Summary of B21 Landscape Sensitivities and Value

Landscape Character Sensitivity	Visual Sensitivity	Landscape Value
Low to medium sensitivity as area dominated by large-scale industrial and office buildings and strong influence of adjacent roads.	Low sensitivity as area dominated by views of employment buildings, and A120/A131 infrastructure and harsh urban edges. Area viewed predominantly by passing motorists.	Medium value overall - no local or national designations and very limited public footpath provision.
Low to medium	Low	Medium

3.22 LANDSCAPE SETTING AREA B22 (refer to Landscape Assessment Figures B3 and B4)

3.22.1 Location

This landscape setting area is located on the southern edge of Braintree, between London Road and Notley Road.

Landscape and Visual Baseline

3.22.2 Landform and Drainage

- Landform very gently slopes to north-west and has been significantly altered by the construction of the embankments and cuttings either side of the A120 Braintree Bypass;
- Close to the A120, land slopes steeply down along an embankment towards the highway;
- Some minor undulations in western parts;
- Drainage swales alongside A120 road corridor.

3.22.3 Land Uses

- Land use dominated disused grassland with belts of trees and shrubs alongside the A120 and adjacent school.

3.22.4 Vegetation

- Some newly established belts of trees and shrubs alongside school grounds;
- Some newly established belts of shrubs lining the top of the A120 embankments;
- Extensive disused grassland with blocks of scrub.

3.22.5 Access

- Generally good public access, with one public footpath in southern part that links to countryside east of Great Notley via a pedestrian overpass over the A120 and another public footpath linking to new residential development on southern fringe of Braintree.

3.22.6 **Settlement Edge**

- Southern urban fringe of Braintree is mainly modern housing, with a fairly abrupt edge and softened in some parts by tree/shrub planting and by sports fields adjacent to school.

3.22.7 **Visual Appraisal**

- Filtered views of A120 and associated slip-lanes, roundabouts and overhead lighting from most parts of area;
- Southern and western parts of area perceived as belt of scrubland in views from road network;
- Open views from central parts of area through chainmesh wire fencing to sports pitches adjacent to school;
- Open views to harsh and abrupt residential edge south of Braintree from western parts;
- Mature trees and shrubs along the southern edge of the sporting fields, largely enclose views to Braintree; allowing only filtered views to tiled roofs;
- Mature belt of shrubs lining the top of the A120 embankment provide a fairly robust visual barrier between the setting area and rural areas south of the A120 as well as a visual barrier between southern Braintree and these rural areas.

Evaluation

3.22.8 **Landscape Character Sensitivity**

- Medium to high sensitivity as area contributes to setting of Braintree but is largely open, poorly used grassland, with strong influence of adjacent roads;
- Area forms part of a belt of open space between Braintree and A120, and contributes to the setting of south Braintree. The area is also perceived by road-users as forming part of the belt of countryside that extends south from A120;
- Eastern linear part of area, south of the school and playing fields, provides a valuable physical and visual buffer between the school and the A120 road corridor;
- Area has undergone major change with the construction of the A120 and associated slip-lanes, roundabouts, embankments and cuttings, and now largely comprises scrub and rough grassland, with few landscape components or elements that are sensitive to change.

- Overall sensitivity of the area is reduced by traffic movement from the A120 and London Road, and lack of mature vegetation to help enclose views to roads, road junctions and overhead lighting.

3.22.9 Visual Sensitivity

- Medium visual sensitivity as general lack of mature trees and hedgerows allow open views into area from nearby sports pitches, school and road;
- Area enclosed by roadside vegetation, houses and school buildings;
- Any built development would be physically and visually relate to new residential areas on the urban fringe of Braintree, in western part of area.

3.22.10 Landscape Value

Although the setting area includes no nationally, regionally and locally designated landscapes or features, there is a public footpath providing a link to rural areas east of Great Notley.

3.22.11 Summary of B22 Landscape Sensitivities and Value

Landscape Character Sensitivity	Visual Sensitivity	Landscape Value
Medium to high sensitivity as area largely open and contributes to setting of Braintree but poorly disused grassland, with strong influence of adjacent roads.	Medium sensitivity due general lack of mature vegetation structure, and availability of views into area from nearby sports pitches, schools and roads. However, area enclosed by roadside vegetation, houses and school buildings.	Medium value overall - no national, or local designations although some public footpath provision.
Medium to high	Medium	Medium

3.23 LANDSCAPE SETTING AREA B23 (refer to Landscape Assessment Figure B5)

3.23.1 Location

This landscape setting area lies on the western edge of Great Notley.

Landscape and Visual Baseline

3.23.2 Landform and Drainage

- Area occupies the sideslopes of a shallow valley, and the land gently descends towards lakes within Great Notley Country Park;
- Some drainage channels lining fields boundaries in southern parts;
- Small number of ponds, scattered throughout the area.

3.23.3 Land Use

- Great Notley Country Park, including a Discovery Centre, open air amphitheatre, large meadows; young woodland copses; remnant hedgerow structures and drainage ditches;
- Playing fields, north of the Great Notley Country Park Discovery Centre;
- Large-scale arable farmland south of Great Notley Country Park, defined by hedgerows and drainage ditches;
- Slampseys Farm, located in southern parts near A131 / B1063 junction.

3.23.4 Vegetation

- Substantial semi-natural vegetation within Great Notley Country Park;
- Artificial lakes include extensive reed habitat and bank-side vegetation;
- Large meadows within Great Notley Country Park, some of which are cut for hay, others are left to establish as wildflower meadows;
- Generally good structure of hedgerows apart from fragmented hedgerows in south-eastern parts, and some removal of hedgerows within northern parts;
- Well-enclosed by a strong structure of planting along the A131;
- Little mature vegetation structure along the A120, but with recent shrub planting along top of A120 embankment, amphitheatre mounds and A120 pedestrian overpass embankments.

3.23.5 Access

- Well-accessed by a number of public footpaths, which connect Great Notley, Rayne and countryside west of Great Notley. Recreational routes through Great Notley Country Park.

3.23.6 Settlement Edge

- The western edge of Great Notley, east of the A131, comprises modern terraced and detached houses and is well-integrated into its local landscape by a robust tree/shrub planting belt along the settlement edge;
- Urban edge of development between A131 / A120 road corridors east of the area, is poorly integrated through little mature vegetation allowing open views to large-scale commercial and office buildings;
- The southern edge of Rayne is poorly defined, with ribbon development occurring along roads that extend south from the settlement. This edge is partially screened from this setting area by mature hedgerows lining the northern side of A120.

3.23.7 Visual Appraisal

- Visibility within central parts is generally limited in by a strong structure of semi-natural vegetation and topographic variations (mainly modified);
- Intervisibility between the area and Great Notley is generally limited by mature structure of planting along the settlement edge and along the A131, allowing only filtered views to houses from southern parts of Great Notley Country Park;
- Open views in south-eastern parts due to large scale field pattern and fragmentation of hedgerow structure;
- Filtered views over the A120 to southern fringes of Rayne from north-western parts of area.

Evaluation

3.28.8 Landscape Character Sensitivity

High landscape character sensitivity overall, resulting from:

- Substantial semi-natural vegetation lining the A131 and within Great Notley Country Park, including bank-side vegetation and extensive reed habitat associated with the artificial lakes;

- Medium sensitivity along settlement edge as a substantially altered landscape but with increased sensitivity to west and to north-west where swathes of pre-18th century field enclosures are located;
- Sense of historic integrity, resulting from a wide belt of pre-18th century field enclosures in western parts defined by hedgerows of varied quality;
- Sensitivity of area reduced by fragmented hedgerows in south-eastern parts, and some removal of hedgerows within northern parts;
- Sensitivity of area also reduced by traffic movement and by the large-scale commercial and office development east of the area, between A131 / A120 road corridors;
- Contributes to a rural setting to Rayne and Great Notley and forms part of a wider belt of open countryside that extends to the west and south-west;
- Area provides an important contribution to a wider landscape on the account of the recreational facilities and semi-natural habitat associated with Great Notley Country Park.

3.23.9 **Visual Sensitivity**

- Medium visual sensitivity overall due to enclosure provided by hedgerows, trees and earthworks and views obtained from well-used network of public footpaths;
- Views from Great Notley enclosed by robust roadside vegetation;
- Increased sensitivity in northern and southern parts due to loss of hedgerow structure and fragmented hedgerows, contributing to a more open skyline, more open views within the area and relatively high visibility of these parts from the rural landscape to the west and southwest.

3.23.10 **Landscape Value**

High landscape value of the setting area includes:

- Locally important recreational resource of Great Notley Country Park;
- Listed buildings at Slampseys Farm;
- Good access to the area, with a number of well-used public footpaths;
- Moderate sense of tranquillity.

3.23.11 Summary of B23 Landscape Sensitivities and Value

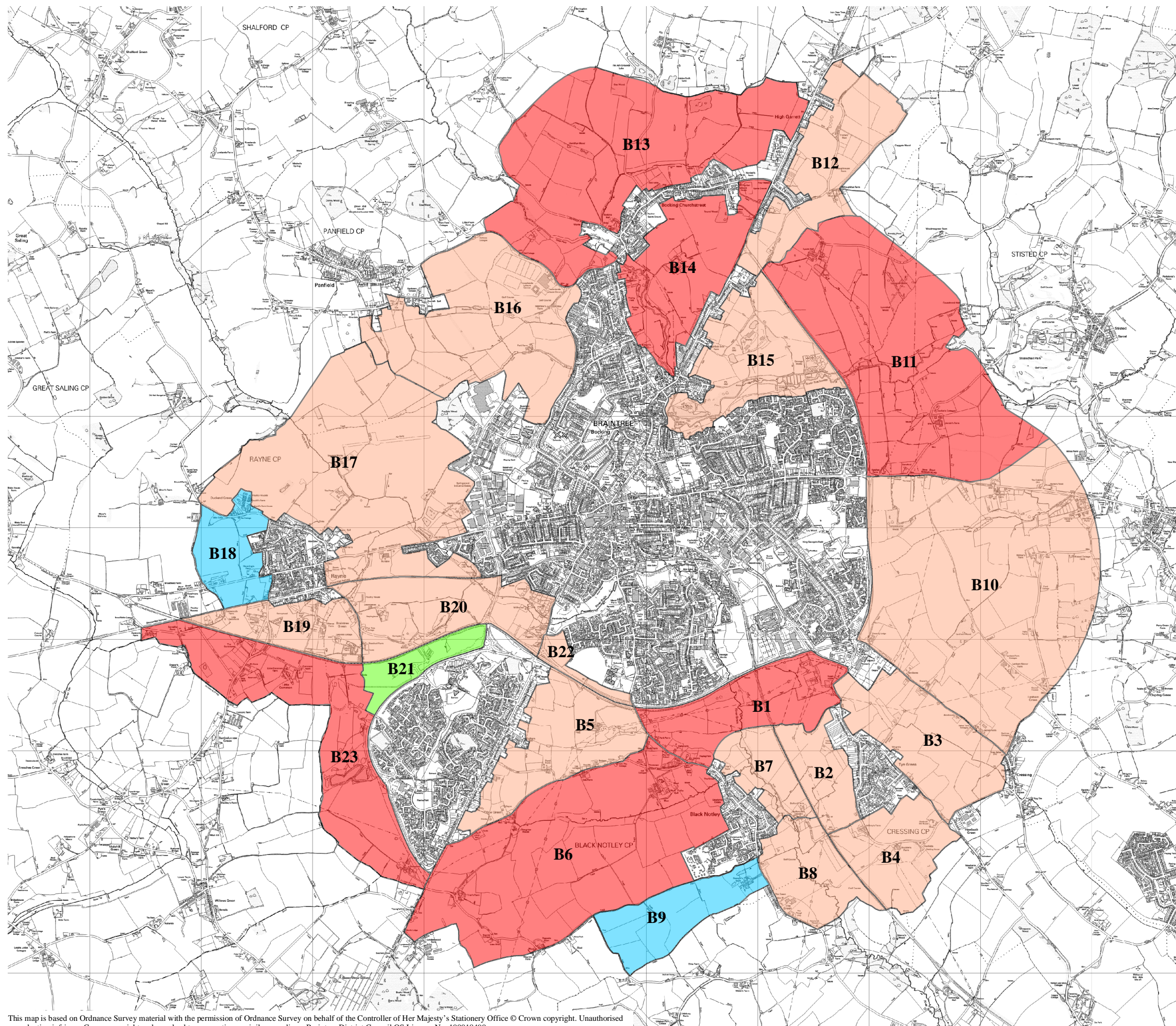
Landscape Character Sensitivity	Visual Sensitivity	Landscape Value
Medium sensitivity along settlement edge as a substantially altered landscape but with increased sensitivity to west and north-west where swathes of pre-18 th century field enclosures are located. Strong structure of semi-natural vegetation within Great Notley Park.	Medium visual sensitivity overall due to enclosure provided by hedgerows, trees and earthworks, and views from well-used public footpaths. Views from Great Notley enclosed by robust roadside vegetation. Southern part of area more open and visually sensitive.	High value due to Great Notley Country Park as a recreational resource; well-used public footpaths; moderate sense of tranquillity; and listed buildings at Slampseys Farm.
Medium	Medium	High

4.0 LANDSCAPE CAPACITY EVALUATION

- 4.1 Landscape capacity refers to the degree to which a particular landscape is able to accommodate change without significant effects on its character. Reaching conclusions about capacity means making a judgement about whether the amount of change proposed can be accommodated without having unacceptable adverse effects on the character of the landscape (related to *landscape character sensitivity*), or the way that it is perceived (related to *visual sensitivity*), and without compromising the values attached to it (related to *landscape value*). Landscape capacity is the function of landscape character sensitivity, plus visual sensitivity, plus landscape value.
- 4.2 This section of the report considers the capacity of each Landscape Setting Area to accommodate a settlement extension.
- 4.3 The levels of landscape character sensitivity, visual sensitivity and landscape value for each Landscape Setting Area, as identified in Section 3.0, are set out in Table 4.1 below and illustrated on Figure B7: Braintree Landscape Capacity Evaluation Plan. The level of landscape capacity for each of these Landscape Setting Areas is also identified in this table using the matrices provided in Appendix A: Methodology for Judging Landscape Capacity.

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

Landscape Setting Area	Landscape Character Sensitivity	Visual Sensitivity	Landscape Value	Landscape Capacity
B1	High	Medium to High	Medium to High	Low
B2	Medium to High	Medium to High	Medium to High	Low to Medium
B3	Medium to High	Medium to High	Medium	Low to Medium
B4	Medium	Low to Medium	Medium to High	Low to Medium
B5	Medium to High	Medium	Medium to High	Low to Medium



KEY

Landscape Capacity

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

0 0.5 1 Kilometres
1:35,000

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Figure B7
Braintree Settlement
Landscape Capacity Evaluation

Landscape Setting Area	Landscape Character Sensitivity	Visual Sensitivity	Landscape Value	Landscape Capacity
B6	High	Medium to High	Medium to High	Low
B7	Medium to High	Medium	Medium to High	Low to Medium
B8	Medium	Medium to High	Medium to High	Low to Medium
B9	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium
B10	Medium to High	Medium to High	Medium to High	Low to Medium
B11	Medium to High	High	Medium to High	Low
B12	Medium to High	Medium	Medium to High	Low to Medium
B13	High	Medium to High	Medium to High	Low
B14	High	High	Medium to High	Low
B15	Medium to High	Medium	Medium to High	Low to Medium
B16	Medium to High	Medium	Medium to High	Low to Medium
B17	Medium to High	Medium to High	Medium to High	Low to Medium
B18	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium
B19	Medium	Low to Medium	Medium to High	Low to Medium
B20	Medium to High	Medium to High	Medium to High	Low to Medium
B21	Low to Medium	Low	Medium	Medium to High
B22	Medium to High	Medium	Medium	Low to Medium
B23	Medium	Medium	High	Low

4.4 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 it 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 Braintree are limited. However, there might be opportunities for any necessary residential or employment development to be accommodated subject to more detailed survey and analysis. The Landscape Setting Areas associated with each of these capacity levels are identified below, together with guidelines about the ways in which residential or employment development could best be accommodated within each area.

Medium to High Capacity Areas

- 4.6 Landscape Setting Area B21 has been identified as having medium to high capacity to accommodate new residential or employment development as the sensitivity of the landscape has been significantly reduced by major roads to the north and south of the area and the presence of some large-scale commercial buildings that have already been built in this area.
- 4.7 The following key opportunities for landscape enhancement within the area include:
- Reinststate the hedgerow structure within western part, to further enclose views of existing and proposed development from Black Notley Country Park;
 - Additional tree and shrub planting along the A120 and A131 to reduce the influence of traffic movement within the landscape, and allow selected channelled views to existing and new development within the area;
 - Improve legibility of public footpath networks to provide better connectivity with Great Notley Country Park.

Medium Capacity Areas

- 4.8 Landscape Setting Areas B9 and B18 have been identified as having medium capacity to accommodate new built development.
- 4.9 Landscape Setting Area B9 lies to the south of Black Notley. It is partially enclosed by a minor hillspur, some 400 to 600 metres to the south of the settlement, and by a

well treed hedgerow, some 200 metres to the southwest of Stanton's Farm. New residential development could be accommodated to the north of this hedgerow if a new tree/shrub belt is established alongside it to help enclose views of any new residential development to north of hedgerow. A second tree/shrub belt should also be established alongside the hedgerow that extends southwards from the western edge of the settlement. The area has a lower capacity to accommodate employment development, as this would not be consistent with the form and scale of the existing settlement fringe. Other opportunities for helping accommodate residential development within the area include:

- Enhancing the hedgerow structure within the area, and strengthen through planting where appropriate to local landscape character, especially to west and south of The Green;
- Additional shrub planting to help integrate the harsh linear edge to The Green into the local landscape.

4.10 Landscape Setting Area B18 lies on the western edge of Rayne. It is partially enclosed by a low knoll, some 300 to 400 metres to the west of the settlement. New residential development could be accommodated to the east of this knoll if a new tree/shrub belt is established to link existing areas of trees to the north and south of the knoll. The area has a lower capacity to accommodate employment development as this would not be consistent with the form and scale of the existing settlement fringe. Other opportunities for helping accommodate built development within the area include:

- Additional tree and shrub planting to help integrate the western fringes of Rayne;
- Enhancing the hedgerow structure within the area, and strengthen where appropriate to the local landscape character, particularly in central and western parts where hedgerow loss is significant;
- Potential recreational open space between knoll and Pods Lane to the west;
- Additional shrub planting to help integrate the edges of farm and industrial developments along Dunmow;
- Improve public footpath network in western parts of the area.

Low to Medium Capacity Areas

- 4.11 Landscape Setting Areas B2 to B5, B7 to B8, B10, B12, B15 to B17, B19 to B20 and B22 have been identified as having low to medium capacity to accommodate new residential development.
- 4.12 New residential development could be accommodated along some of fringes of Tye Green and Black Notley (Landscape Setting Areas B2 to B4 and B7 to B8), providing that new tree/shrub belts are established to help accommodate this new development, that the direct relationships between the countryside and the edges of the settlements closest to the historic core of Black Notley and the late-19th century part of Tye Green are maintained and that other features of landscape and heritage importance are also maintained. These areas have a lower capacity to accommodate employment development as this would not be consistent with the form and scale of the existing settlement fringe. Other opportunities for helping accommodate built development within the area include reinstating the local structures of hedgerow and additional tree/shrub planting to help soften the appearance of some settlement edges. Opportunities should also be taken provide a landscape recreational corridor alongside the River Brain, which passes through Landscape Setting Areas B7 and B8 and to extend this recreational corridor northwards to the town centre and southwards to the open countryside.
- 4.13 New residential development could be accommodated within Landscape Setting Area B5 providing that it is accommodated within some of the enclosed fields alongside the eastern fringe of Great Notley and that new tree/shrub belts are established in association with these hedgerows along the outer edges of these hedgerows. The area has a lower capacity to accommodate employment development, as this would not be consistent with the form and scale of the existing settlement fringe.
- 4.14 New residential development could be accommodated within the far eastern part of Landscape Setting Area B20 or within the northern part of Landscape Setting Area B19. The area has a lower capacity to accommodate employment development as this would not be consistent with the form and scale of the existing settlement fringe. Opportunities should also be taken provide a landscape recreational corridor alongside the River Pant, which passes through the far eastern part of this setting area and to extend this recreational corridor eastwards to the town centre and westwards to the open countryside.

- 4.15 New built development could be accommodated within Landscape Setting Area B10 providing that it is developed in association with a new tree/shrub belt alongside the public byway that links Lanham Wood with Templeborder Wood. Other opportunities for helping accommodate built development within the area include enhancing the hedgerow structure within the area, especially in central and western parts, and providing additional shrub planting to help integrate the A120 into the local landscape.
- 4.16 New built development could be accommodated within the enclosed fields along the eastern fringes of High Garrett (Landscape Setting Area B12), providing that new tree/shrub belts are established in association with the easternmost hedgerows. There are some opportunities for accommodating new residential or employment development along the western fringe of Braintree within Landscape Setting Areas B16 and B17, particularly on the northern and southern edges of the Springwood Industrial Estate. There are also some limited opportunities for accommodating new residential or employment development along the eastern fringe of Braintree within Landscape Setting Area B15. New tree/shrub belts should be provided in association with existing hedgerows and these should be particularly robust if this parcel of land is to accommodate new employment development. Opportunities should also be taken to provide a landscape recreational corridor alongside the River Pant, which passes through the centre of the B17 setting area and alongside the River Blackwater, which passes through the southern part of the B15 setting area.
- 4.17 Landscape Setting Area B22 lies on the southern edge of Braintree, between London Road and Notley Road. Opportunities for helping accommodate residential or employment development within the area comprise additional tree and shrub planting along the A120 and London Road to provide visual enclosure of any potential settlement within western parts of the area. The opportunity should also be taken to improve the legibility of public footpath networks and provide better connectivity with countryside east of Great Notley.

Low Capacity Areas

- 4.18 Landscape Setting Areas B1, B6, B11, B13 to B14 and B23 have been identified as having low capacity to accommodate new built development. This low capacity reflects the relatively high landscape sensitivities and/or landscape value associated with these areas.

- 4.19 There are very limited opportunities for accommodating new built development within Landscape Setting Area B1 as the land forms part of a historically open area to the north of Tye Green and Black Notley. However, the following measures should be adopted to help accommodate any such development:-
- Tree/shrub planting to help accommodate development into the local landscape;
 - Enhancing the hedgerow structures within the area;
 - Additional shrub planting to help integrate the electricity substation into the local landscape;
 - Enhance opportunities for public access in western parts of the area;
 - Improve connections between Tye Green and Black Notley;
- 4.20 New residential or employment development could be accommodated within the open, large-scale fields in the southern part of Landscape Setting Area B23, providing that a new and substantial structure of tree and shrub planting is developed in these parts of the setting area and the setting of the listed buildings at Slampseys Farm. The following key opportunities for landscape enhancement within the area include:
- Enhancing the hedgerow structure within the area, especially in northern and southern parts;
 - Additional shrub planting along the A120 and southern parts of the A131 to reduce views of traffic movement within the area and help integrate the linear edge of the road corridor;
 - Enhancing the hedgerow structure between the sporting fields and large-scale commercial and office development to the east of the area to help enclose views of this development.
- 4.21 There are few opportunities for accommodating new built development within Landscape Setting Area B6, B11, B13 and B14 on account of the relatively high landscape value and sensitivities of this area. Opportunities should still, however, be taken to enhance these areas (e.g. by the development of a landscape recreational corridor alongside the River Blackwater).

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. It is likely that areas with medium or medium to high landscape capacity 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 landscape capacity, or even lower, may contain some locations that are suitable, in landscape and visual terms, for limited development (e.g. minor settlement extensions). The landscapes are typically small in scale with, at least, a moderate amount of visual enclosure.
- 5.5 It is recommended that development briefs should be prepared for all sites that are identified in the Core Strategy as having capacity for development. These briefs should take account of the setting area appraisals, identifying:-

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

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

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

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

APPENDIX A
METHODOLOGY FOR JUDGING LANDSCAPE CAPACITY

METHODOLOGY FOR JUDGING LANDSCAPE CAPACITY

A1.0 Methodology for Judging Landscape Capacity

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

A1.1 Landscape Character Sensitivity

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

Natural factors – extent and pattern of semi-natural habitat

Cultural factors – land use, enclosure pattern

Landscape condition – representation of typical character

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

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

Table A1: Landscape Character Sensitivity Definitions

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

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

A1.2 Landscape Value

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

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

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

Table A2: Landscape Value Definitions

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

A1.3 Visual Sensitivity

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

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

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

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

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

Sensitivity of view:

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

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

Table A3: Visual Sensitivity Definitions

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

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

A1.4 Defining Landscape Capacity

- 1.4.1 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.
- 1.4.2 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).
- 1.4.3 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.
- 1.4.4 The overall capacity of a Landscape Setting Area to accommodate new built development has been determined by integrating overall landscape sensitivity and landscape value in accordance with using the matrix set out in Table A5 overleaf.

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

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

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

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

APPENDIX B
FIELD SURVEY SHEET

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

A. LOCAL LANDSCAPE SETTING

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

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

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

B. POTENTIAL MITIGATION OF LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL IMPACTS

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