



KEY

-  Site Boundary
-  Study Area (2.5km distance from Site Boundary)

Colchester Borough Landscape Character Areas:

A: River Valley

- A2 - Wooded Roman River Valley
- A4 - Colne River Valley Floor
- A5 - Colne River Valley Slopes

B: Farmland Plateau

- B2 - Easthorpe
- B3 - Southern Colchester
- B4 - Great Tey
- B5 - Rochfords
- B6 - Great Horkeley

F: Wooded Farmland

- F1 - Messing Wooded Farmland

G: Principal Urban Areas

- G4 - Colchester

Braintree District Landscape Character Areas:

A: River Valley

- A4 -
- A9 - Blackwater River Valley

B: Farmland Plateau

- B18 - Silver End Farmland Plateau
- B19 - Langley Green Farmland Plateau

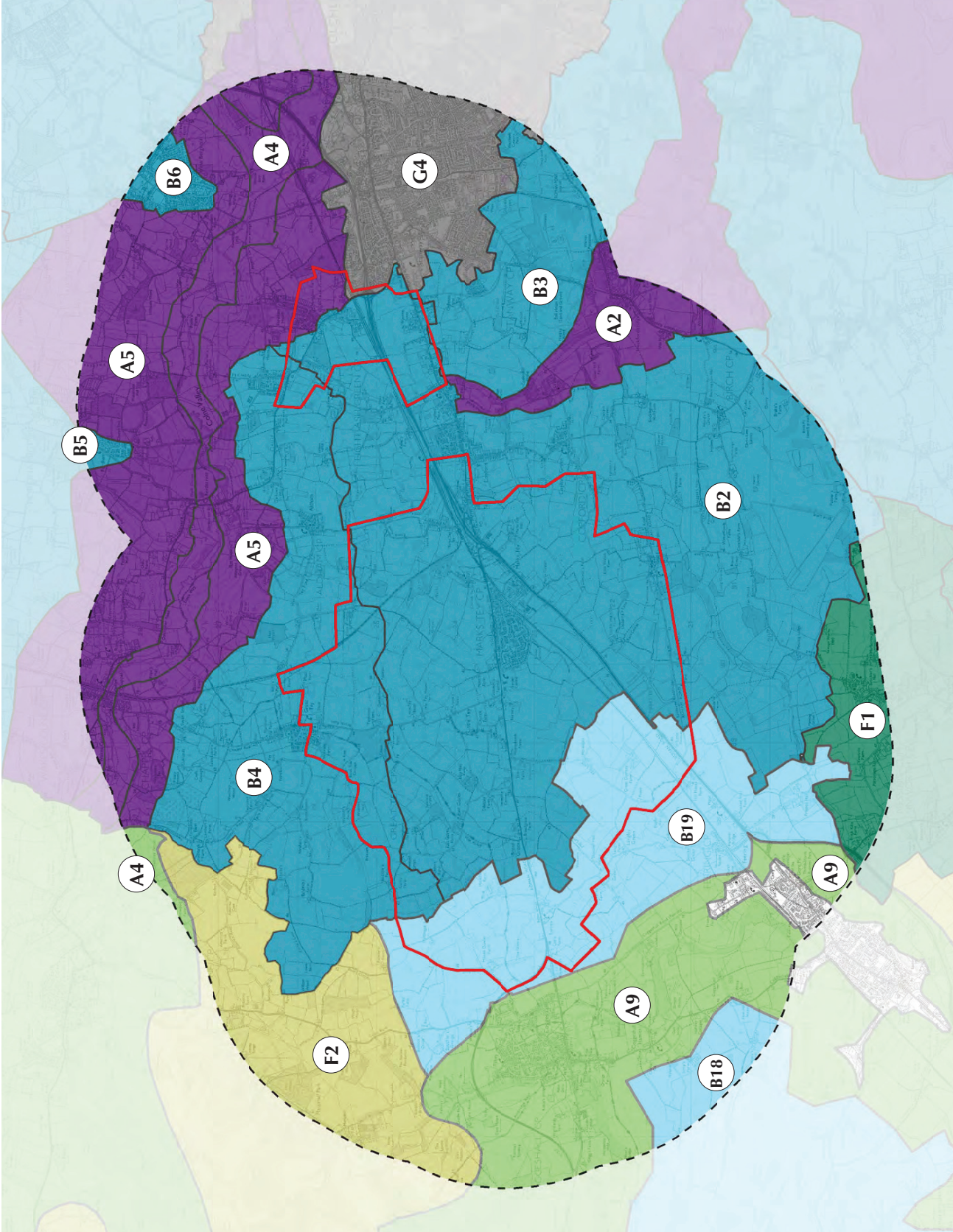
F: Wooded Farmland

- F2 - High Garrett/Markshall/Wooded Farmland

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- *Large regular fields on northern valley slopes with a concentration of smaller irregular fields at High Park Corner;*
- *Several areas of historic parkland, often associated with halls, overlooking the valley floor;*
- *Views across and within the valley restricted by large woodland areas.*

Colne River Valley Floor (A4)

- *Floodplain of the Colne River – relatively narrow in the upper reaches of the river valley and broader as the River moves eastwards towards Colchester and the Colne estuary;*
- *Meandering River Colne is narrow in comparison with the broad spread of the floodplain across which the river flows;*
- *Colne River is bridged by several roads and lanes, which connect the north and south valley slopes and facilitate views along the river corridor to the east and west;*
- *Floodplain corridor sprinkled with mills and weirs;*
- *Striking landmark viaduct crossing the river corridor at Chappel.*

Colne River Valley Slopes (A5)

- *Relatively steep v-shaped valley slopes facilitate attractive and open views across and along the River corridor;*
- *Principal road network consisting of narrow tree-lined (sometimes sunken) lanes traversing the valley sides to the north and south;*
- *A mosaic of medium to large-sized irregular and regular, predominantly arable fields with medium hedgerows containing semi-mature/ mature hedgerow trees;*
- *Some larger semi-enclosed arable fields to the west of Wakes Colne; and concentrations of smaller fields with intact hedge boundaries adjacent to settlements;*
- *Settlement pattern consists of small linear village settlements such as Wakes Colne and Eight Ash Green, adjacent to the north-south roads, which cross the River Valley; small hamlets and farmsteads.*

Easthorpe Farmland Plateau (B2)

- *Raised farmland plateau, dissected by the wooded Roman River valley in the east;*
- *A mixture of small, medium and large irregular, predominantly arable fields;*
- *Small patches of deciduous woodland and several ponds/ reservoirs;*
- *Area crossed by a network of narrow, sometimes winding lanes;*
- *Airfield, surrounded by large open fields has a dominant influence on the landscape character in the south of the area;*

- *Settlement pattern consists of small villages and hamlets with scattered farmsteads amongst predominantly arable agricultural land.*

Southern Colchester Farmland Plateau (B3)

- *An area of sloping farmland plateau (with a mixture of small, medium and large predominantly arable fields) bordered by Colchester settlement fringes to the north and the wooded Roman River Valley to the south;*
- *Influence of the military (East Donyland military training area & Middlewick Rifle Ranges) – disturbs tranquillity whilst firing practice is taking place;*
- *Several large patches of woodland extend from the northern slopes of the Roman River valley, onto the plateau;*
- *Several small lakes and ponds, within disused sand and gravel works;*
- *Character area provides physical and visual separation between Colchester urban area and the Roman River Valley;*
- *Fragmented and sometimes chaotic landscape structure with numerous unrelated land uses.*

Great Tey Farmland Plateau (B4)

- *Gently sloping farmland plateau consisting of a mixture of medium to large-scale enclosed, predominantly arable fields;*
- *Linear belts and small patches of predominantly deciduous woodland;*
- *Small nucleated settlements and scattered farmsteads;*
- *Comprehensive network of footpaths and winding lanes;*
- *Peaceful and tranquil atmosphere.*

Rochfords Farmland Plateau (B5)

- *Mixture of medium and large rolling arable fields interspersed with small woodland patches;*
- *Fields enclosed by gappy hedges, with occasional mature trees within field boundaries;*
- *Landscape feels more open and exposed in places than the adjacent Great Horkesley farmland plateau to the west;*
- *Large weatherboarded vernacular barns (for example at Fordham);*
- *Settlement pattern consists of villages with varying forms, small hamlets and scattered farmsteads*

Great Horkesley Farmland Plateau (B6)

- *Small to medium scale arable fields with concentrations of mature trees at field boundaries;*

- *Interesting field pattern consisting of small, regular fields to the south of Boxted and also to the east of Great Horkesley;*
- *Orchards in close proximity to Great Horkesley;*
- *Farmland plateau crossed in a north-south direction by two straight roads, which connect with Colchester's northern settlement fringe. Linear settlement pattern extends from the layout of these roads;*
- *A network of narrow lanes (sometimes sunken), which are lined by trees and hedges connect the remainder of the character area with the two main north south roads;*
- *Hedgerows are diverse and well managed/ clipped in most places.*

Messing Wooded Farmland (F1)

- *Sparse settlement pattern consisting of the small village of Messing, and a number of small isolated farmsteads;*
- *Elevated plateau landform which is situated on a broad ridge and dissected by small streams, providing undulations in topography;*
- *Large areas of mixed woodland (for example Layer Wood and Pods Wood);*
- *Number of small ponds and lakes;*
- *Single mature trees at field boundaries or standing within fields.*

3.3.10 The Braintree District Landscape Character Assessment⁹ has identified the following landscape character areas within the Study Area. These are shown on **Figure 3.5**:

Colne River Valley (A4)

- *Shallow river valley with relatively steep valleysides, which varies in width throughout its length.*
- *The meandering River Colne and its tributaries are narrow in comparison with the broad spread of the floodplain across which the river flows.*
- *River Colne is bridged by roads and lanes, which connect the north and south valley slopes, and facilitates views along the river corridor.*
- *Land use adjacent to the river is predominantly pastoral grazed by horses.*
- *The A1017 runs through the centre of the valley parallel with the river.*
- *The views are enclosed by trees and settlements.*
- *On the valley slopes the land use is predominantly arable.*

⁹ Braintree District Landscape Assessment, Chris Blandford Associates (2006)

Blackwater River Valley (A9)

- *Shallow valley.*
- *The valley sides slope gently up from the valley floor.*
- *Predominantly arable farmland on the valley slopes.*
- *The Lower Blackwater near the confluence with the River Chelmer has gently valley slopes.*
- *Overall strong sense of place and tranquillity away from the settlements of Braintree, Witham and Maldon and the A120, A12 and the railway line.*

Silver End Farmland Plateau (B18)

- *Gently undulating farmland.*
- *Irregular predominantly large arable fields marked by sinuous hedgerows.*
- *Many small woods and copses provide structure and edges in the landscape.*
- *Scattered settlement pattern, with frequent small villages.*
- *Network of narrow winding lanes.*
- *Mostly tranquil character away from the major roads.*

Langley Green Farmland Plateau (B19)

- *Flat to gently sloping landform.*
- *Dominated by large arable fields.*
- *Generally gappy and fragmented field boundaries especially adjacent to roads.*
- *Settlement pattern consists of small villages with scattered farmsteads amongst predominantly arable land.*
- *The houses are predominantly modern constructed from brick.*
- *Overall strong sense of place and tranquillity away from the A120, A12 and the railway line.*

High Garrett/Markshall Wooded Farmland (F2)

- *Flat to gently undulating landform.*
- *Strong pattern of large and small woods, including distinctive ancient lime woods.*
- *Regular medium to large arable fields, bounded by low well trimmed thick hedgerows and some mature hedgerow trees.*
- *Open to enclosed character depending on density of woodlands.*
- *Many small farmsteads and occasional villages.*
- *Several Halls and estates.*

Townscape Character Areas

3.3.11 The following Townscape Character Areas¹⁰ in Colchester are inter-visible with, or are immediately adjacent to, the Site (see **Figure 3.6**):

F1 - Villa Road

3.3.12 *'This area of predominantly semi-detached, two-storey housing lining Villa Road which is a busy vehicular route. Residential properties have small front gardens, which provide varying habitats for wildlife, and are approximately post-war in date. Shops and a library at the northern end of the area contribute to a relatively busy character. Although views to the north and south along Villa Road are generally enclosed by housing which faces the road, in places views to the east across playing fields and west, across farmland, can be gained.'*

H1 - Queensbury Avenue: Copford

3.3.13 *'This area of post-1960s housing dates approximately to the late 1980s/early 1990s. The area has a relatively tranquil feel with semi-detached and detached houses set out along a number of quiet dead-end roads leading off Queensbury Avenue (set back from the main London Road). There is consistency in materials and detailing, with most houses having private front gardens and drives. The area overlooks playing fields to the west and a belt of woodland to the north.'*

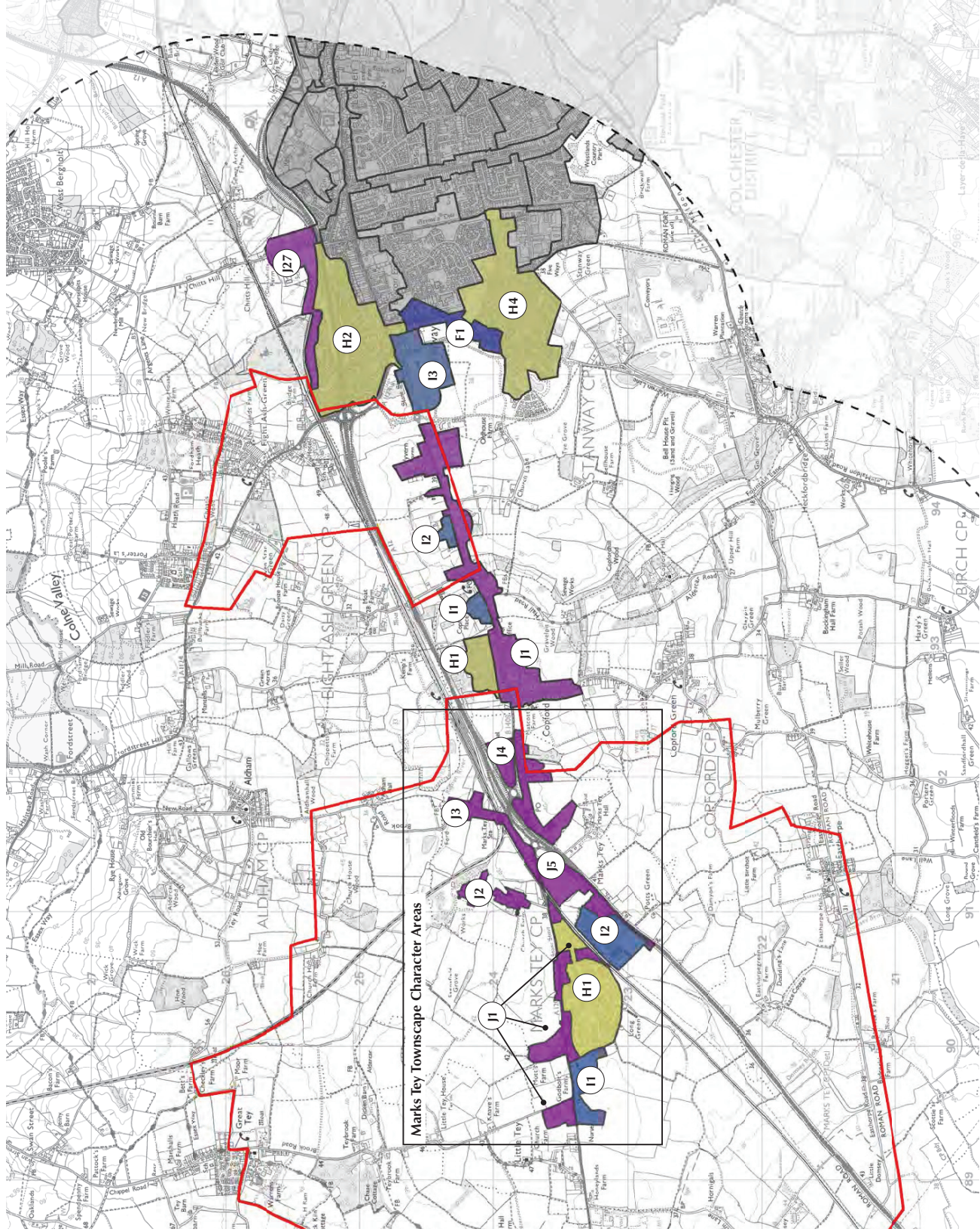
H2 - Lucy Lane

3.3.14 *'This large area of post-1960s suburban housing is situated at the north western edge of urban Colchester, overlooking open countryside to the west and partly contained by the main railway line to the north. The area is split into northern and southern suburbs by the A12 (dual carriageway) which brings associated noise and disturbance. Housing is situated in close proximity to farmland plateau to the west (but is separated by a slip-road to the A12).'*

H4 - Blackberry Road

3.3.15 *'This suburb of post-1960s housing is situated at the south western edge of Colchester urban area, overlooking abandoned gravel pits to the west. A new housing development is currently under construction to the west, within the Stanway Pit area. A large belt of open playing fields separates the area from housing to the north. The area overlooks open countryside to the south and west. Generally, there is little diversity in streetscape, with utilitarian paving and lighting.'*

¹⁰ Townscape Character Assessments of Colchester, Tiptree, West Mersea and Wivenhoe , Chris Blandford Associates (2006)



KEY

- Site Boundary
- Study Area (2.5km distance from Site Boundary)

Colchester Townscape Character Areas:

F: Inter-War/Post-War Suburbs

F1 - Villa Road

H: Post-1960s Suburbs

H1 - Queensbury Avenue: Copford
 H2 - Lucy Lane
 H4 - Blackberry Road

I: 20th Century Retail, Commerce & Industry

I1 - Copford Place
 I2 - London Road: Copford
 I3 - Tollgate

J: Mixed Age Suburbs

J1 - London Road: Copford
 J27 - Halstead Road

Marks Tey Townscape Character Areas

H: Post-1960s Suburbs

H1 - Ashbury Drive & Godmans Lane

I: 20th Century Retail, Commerce & Industry

I1 - Coggeshall Road Nurseries
 I2 - Dobbies Lane

J: Mixed Age Suburbs

J1 - Coggeshall Road
 J2 - Church Lane
 J3 - Station Road and North Lane
 J4 - London Road East
 J5 - London Road West



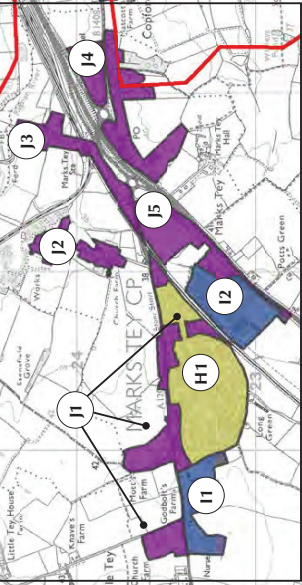
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Marks Tey Townscape Character Areas



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Housing is predominantly two-storey and comprises a mixture of detached and semidetached buildings. Cul-de-sacs and avenues have a quieter character than the main Blackberry Road.'

I1 - Copford Place

- 3.3.16 *'This relatively small commercial and retail area lines the former main road to London (London Road), which connects Copford and Stanway (in the west) to Colchester (in the east). The area contains a few small shops and services for the village, which are accessed from London Road. Some buildings face the road, whilst others are slightly set back.'*

I2 - London Road: Copford

- 3.3.17 *'This area contains a large garden centre (Wyevale) and associated car park. A public house is also located in the southwestern corner of the site. Vegetation lines the southern edge of the area and separates the garden centre and car park from London Road (adjacent to the south).'*

I3 – Tollgate

- 3.3.18 *'This Character Area encompasses several large retail units (including electrical and furniture warehouses) and a large superstore (Sainsbury's). The area is split into two sites, Tollgate East and Tollgate West, which are separated by Tollgate Road. Buildings are generally large pre-fabricated warehouse units, built from a combination of brick and corrugated iron/metal. Buildings are surrounded by large tarmac car parks, containing utilitarian lighting and street furniture and small pockets of planting (shrubs and bushes). There is generally little visual interest, however a range of different signs associated with different retail units provides colour and some variation in character.'*

J1 - London Road: Copford

- 3.3.19 *'This area encompasses buildings that have developed from several different architectural ages along the line of the main London Road, running through the villages of Stanway and Copford, to the west of Colchester and east of Marks Tey. Copford has a relatively mixed character with a jumble of businesses lining London Road, adjacent to post-1960s bungalows and other residential properties. Stanway has a traditional 'village' character with a village green, which is overlooked by shops and a post office.'*

J27 - Halstead Road

3.3.20 *'This relatively small area of mixed age suburbs lines Halstead Road, which is at the northwestern edge of Colchester's urban area, in close proximity to Eight Ash Green. Properties within this area have developed along the line of Halstead Road and generally face the road, with several detached houses. The streetscape is varied, with visual interest provided by vegetation within small front gardens. The area has a generally quiet and fairly secluded character.'*

3.3.21 The following Townscape Character Areas in Marks Tey are inter-visible with, or are immediately adjacent to, the Site (**Figure 3.6**):

H1 - Ashbury Drive & Godmans Lane

3.3.22 *'This large area of post-1960s housing is situated at the western end of Marks Tey, to the south of London Road and north of the A12/railway corridor. Buildings are set out in a curvilinear street pattern and consists of a combination of detached and semi-detached housing, which is predominantly built of grey or yellow brick. Most houses have front gardens and drives, with generally a clear definition between public and private space. Character is generally secluded, with views across open countryside from Wilson's Lane, which runs along the southern edge of the area.'*

I1 - Coggeshall Road Nurseries

3.3.23 *'This Character Area encompasses a relatively large group of nursery buildings at the western end of Marks Tey, which have a colourful and lively character. A large car park is associated with the buildings, and colourful signage welcomes visitors to stop. The area is situated directly off the main road corridor and views across open farmland can be gained to the north and south, giving an overall sense of space.'*

I2 – Dobbies Lane

3.3.24 *'This Character Area encompasses a group of relatively large commercial and warehouse units (including timber yard) and works to the north of the A12 and south of the railway corridor. Overall character is harsh, although surrounding vegetation does soften the built form.'*

J1 - Coggeshall Road

- 3.3.25 *'This Character Area encompasses buildings, which have developed along the line of Coggeshall Road (the main road which connects Marks Tey to London Road and Colchester to the east and open countryside to the west). Built form consists of a mixture of architectural styles and ages, from Victorian to post-1960s. Mott's Farm (and associated buildings along Mott's Lane) has also been included within this Character Area. Street pattern is linear, with lanes leading off Coggeshall Road to the north and south. There is variety in plot sizes and proportions, however most properties face the road corridor. Belts of mature vegetation provide some sense of enclosure along the northern side of Coggeshall Road; however, views across open farmland plateau and the tower of St. Andrews Church can be gained to the north.'*

J2 - Church Lane

- 3.3.26 *'This Character Area is separate from the main area of development along Coggeshall Road and encompasses a relatively distinctive arrangement of buildings, which are centred on St. Andrews Church (towards the northern end of Church Lane). Church Lane is relatively narrow and has a kink in layout halfway along the route, which allows a surprise view of the church which is set back from the road and adjacent buildings. A small group of buildings associated with quarry works dominate the character of the northern end of Church Lane.'*

J3 - Station Road and North Lane

- 3.3.27 *'This Character Area encompasses a mixture of post-war and post-1960s bungalows and houses that line North Lane, to the north of the railway line and station. Marks Tey junction (containing the railway station, associated utility buildings and car parking) dominates the Character Area at the southern end of North Lane. Brightly coloured signage (associated with the nurseries opposite Marks Tey roundabout also) influences the mixed character of this area. Views across open fields can be gained from the northern edge of this area, however to the south, character is dominated by roundabouts, the railway line and roads.'*

J4 - London Road East

- 3.3.28 *'This Character Area comprises development to the south of the A12 railway corridor along the northern and southern sides of London Road. Character is generally fragmented and chaotic, with a mixture of building styles, ages and uses. Some recognisable sense of place is provided by views to farmland to the south of the railway corridor.'*