

Assessment Unit FOX03

Criteria	Susceptibility
Natural Factors	Natural factors that make the landscape less susceptible to the development scenario: • Large scale, simple landscape of predominantly medium to large arable fields in a regular pattern with sparse hedgerows Natural factors that make the landscape more susceptible to the development scenario: • Gently undulating landform that rises slightly north of Rowley's Hill • Shallow valley associated with the well treed Hoffer Brook • Generally sparse vegetation but roadside trees along the A10, shelterbelts associated with a farm and watercourses add structure to the landscape
Cultural Factors	Cultural factors that make the landscape less susceptible to the development scenario: • Residential development on the eastern edge of Foxton has an open, hard edge with few trees, and can be seen in the wider landscape • Infrastructure includes the A10 and a railway line Cultural factors that make the landscape more susceptible to the development scenario: • Unsettled rural landscape north-east of Foxton with built development limited to farms
Perceptual & Aesthetic Factors	Perceptual and aesthetic factors that make the landscape more susceptible to the development scenario: • Generally high scenic quality associated with the treed landscape and chalk hill backdrop to the north and south east • Generally strong sense of tranquillity away from the A10 corridor and railway line
Landscape Quality/ Condition	Landscape quality/condition factors that make the landscape less susceptible to the development scenario: • Fields have been enlarged and hedgerows have been removed or are fragmented Landscape quality/condition factors that make the landscape more susceptible to the development scenario: • Generally strong rural character associated with trees along with Hoffer Brook which are in generally good condition and the distinctive rolling chalk hill backdrop to the north and south east
Views & Visual Context	Views and visual context that make the landscape less susceptible to the development scenario:

Criteria	Susceptibility
	- Wooded skylines are occasionally broken by pylons, poles and wires associated with the telecommunications network Views and visual context that make the landscape more susceptible to the development scenario: - Views towards wooded horizons are generally long and open - Views southeast towards the Chalk Hills at Newton and Wimpole have scenic value - The church within Foxton is a prominent landmark above trees on skylines - Recreational users of PROW - Residential receptors on the eastern edge of Foxton
Landscape Value	Characteristics, features and qualities of landscape value that make the landscape less susceptible to the development scenario: - Relatively commonplace arable landscape - Limited time depth Characteristics, features and qualities of landscape value that make the landscape more susceptible to the development scenario: - Generally strong rural character - Scenic value and rural character associated with well treed stream and views towards the distinctive Chalk Hills - Natural value associated with trees along streams - Recreational value of the limited PROW network - Locally valued views from the eastern edge of Foxton towards Rowley's Hill
Mitigation Potential	There is potential to mitigate the type and scale of change associated with the development scenario in this area by following the relevant landscape guidelines set out in the Greater Cambridge Landscape Character Assessment (2021) where appropriate. There may be scope for strategic landscape mitigation measures to help integrate development into the landscape (such as structural planting/buffers, improving the eastern edge of Foxton where carefully designed to be compatible with the characteristics of the wider landscape). The management and enhancement of existing hedgerows and consideration of opportunities for re-planting hedgerows where these have been lost/become fragmented would be beneficial for creating a well-integrated settlement edge.

3.5.146 In summary, this is a commonplace, arable landscape, however, key characteristics which are more susceptible to the development scenario include the generally strong rural character and scenic value associated with the well treed Hoffer Brook, distinctive views towards the Chalk Hills and the natural value of trees along Hoffer Brook. Less susceptible are moving traffic on the A10 which locally erodes tranquillity, the railway line, and the large scale arable landcover pattern. Overall, this Assessment Unit is of **medium to high** sensitivity to the development scenario.

Sensitivity Level	Definition
Medium to high	Typically, a landscape containing some important components and/or has some distinctive characteristics and/or is an area in moderate to good condition. Key characteristics and valued attributes of the landscape are susceptible to the particular type and scale of change being assessed. Considerable care would be needed in locating and designing change within the landscape.

3.5.147 In this context, there are limited opportunities for residential, commercial and mixed-use development with increased height/scale in this Assessment Unit

Assessment Unit FOX04

Criteria	Susceptibility
Natural Factors	Natural factors that make the landscape less susceptible to the development scenario: - Generally large arable fields with occasional hedgerows and boundary trees Natural factors that make the landscape more susceptible to the development scenario: - Gently rolling Chalk Hills, rising to c. 42m AOD south west of Rowley's Hill - Vegetation is generally limited but shelterbelts and of woodland associated with Hoffer Brook along the south western boundary and on high ground add structure
Cultural Factors	Cultural factors that make the landscape less susceptible to the development scenario: - Infrastructure includes a railway along the northern boundary Cultural factors that make the landscape more susceptible to the development scenario: - Unsettled rural landscape east of Foxton
Perceptual & Aesthetic Factors	Perceptual and aesthetic factors that make the landscape more susceptible to the development scenario: - Generally strong sense of tranquillity - Generally high scenic value associated with the locally distinctive rolling Chalk Hills
Landscape Quality/ Condition	Landscape quality/condition factors that make the landscape less susceptible to the development scenario: - Arable fields have been enlarged and hedgerows are missing or gappy Landscape quality/condition factors that make the landscape more susceptible to the development scenario: - Strong rural character associated with the open Chalk Hills and occasional woodland in generally good condition
Views & Visual Context	Views and visual context that make the landscape less susceptible to the development scenario: - Wooded skylines are occasionally interrupted by pylons, poles and wires associated with the telecommunications network Views and visual context that make the landscape more susceptible to the development scenario: - Views from elevated locations are long and open - Recreational users of the PROW - Residential receptors on the eastern edge of Foxton

Criteria	Susceptibility
Landscape Value	Characteristics, features and qualities of landscape value that make the landscape less susceptible to the development scenario: • Commonplace arable field pattern • Limited time depth Characteristics, features and qualities of landscape value that make the landscape more susceptible to the development scenario: • Generally strong rural character associated with the distinctive rolling hills • Natural value associated with woodland and shelterbelts • Recreational value of the limited PROW network • Locally valued long, open views from high ground • Valued views from the edge of Foxton towards Rowley's Hill
Mitigation Potential	There is potential to mitigate the type and scale of change associated with the development scenario in this area by following the relevant landscape guidelines set out in the Greater Cambridge Landscape Character Assessment (2021) where appropriate. There may be scope for strategic landscape mitigation measures to help integrate development into the landscape (such as structural planting/buffers) where carefully designed to be compatible with the characteristics of the wider landscape. The management and enhancement of existing hedgerows and consideration of opportunities for re-planting hedgerows where these have been lost/become fragmented would be beneficial for creating a well-integrated settlement edge.

3.5.148 In summary, this is a rolling commonplace, arable landscape. Key characteristics which are more susceptible to the development scenario include the locally distinctive landform, high scenic value, strong rural character and sense of tranquillity, long, open views across arable fields, and natural value associated with woodland and shelterbelts. This Assessment Unit is of **medium to high** sensitivity to the development scenario.

Sensitivity Level	Definition
Medium to high	Typically, a landscape containing some important components and/or has some distinctive characteristics and/or is an area in moderate to good condition. Key

Sensitivity Level	Definition
	characteristics and valued attributes of the landscape are susceptible to the particular type and scale of change being assessed. Considerable care would be needed in locating and designing change within the landscape.

3.5.149 In this context, there are limited opportunities for residential, commercial and mixed-use development with increased height/scale in this Assessment Unit.

Assessment Unit FOX05

Criteria	Susceptibility
Natural Factors	Natural factors that make the landscape less susceptible to the development scenario: • Large scale, simple landscape of predominantly medium to large arable fields in a regular pattern Natural factors that make the landscape more susceptible to the development scenario: • Gently rolling landform rising to a high point of c. 34m at West Hill south of Foxton • Shallow valleys associated with streams in the west and Hoffer Brook along the north eastern boundary • Generally sparse vegetation but occasional small woodlands on high points, a small number of orchards associated with farms and trees along streams add structure and diversity to the landscape
Cultural Factors	Cultural factors that make the landscape less susceptible to the development scenario: • Relatively recent residential development on the southern edge of Foxton has an open, hard edge with few trees and can be seen in the wider landscape Cultural factors that make the landscape more susceptible to the development scenario: • Unsettled rural landscape south of Foxton with built development limited to farms and a cemetery • Some small hedged paddocks, trees, allotments and tree belts integrate Foxton with the wider landscape, particularly in the west
Perceptual & Aesthetic Factors	Perceptual and aesthetic factors that make the landscape more susceptible to the development scenario: • Generally high scenic quality associated with the rolling landform and distinctive hilltop woodlands, isolated trees and distant shelterbelts • Generally strong sense of tranquillity
Landscape Quality/ Condition	Landscape quality/condition factors that make the landscape less susceptible to the development scenario: • Fields have been enlarged and hedgerows are fragmented Landscape quality/condition factors that make the landscape more susceptible to the development scenario: • Generally strong rural character associated with the gently rolling Chalk Hills, hilltop woodland and trees associated with streams which are in generally good condition

Criteria	Susceptibility
Views & Visual Context	Views and visual context that make the landscape less susceptible to the development scenario: • Wooded skylines are occasionally broken by poles and wires associated with the telecommunications network Views and visual context that make the landscape more susceptible to the development scenario: • Elevated views towards wooded horizons are generally long and open, and include Foxton • Views include distinctive isolated trees, and tree belts • Views south towards the Chalk Hills to the south have scenic value • The church within Foxton is a prominent landmark above trees on skylines • Views towards the elevated chalk ridge at Newton • Recreational users of PROW • Residential receptors on the southern edge of Foxton
Landscape Value	Characteristics, features and qualities of landscape value that make the landscape less susceptible to the development scenario: • Relatively commonplace arable landscape • Generally limited rural character • Limited scenic value • Limited time depth Characteristics, features and qualities of landscape value that make the landscape more susceptible to the development scenario: • Scenic value and rural character associated with the distinctive Chalk Hills • Natural value associated with trees along streams and hilltop woodland • Recreational value of the limited PROW network • Locally valued views from the southern edge of Foxton towards West Hill and Chalk Hill
Mitigation Potential	There is potential to mitigate the type and scale of change associated with the development scenario in this area by following the relevant landscape guidelines set out in the Greater Cambridge Landscape Character Assessment (2021) where appropriate. There may be scope for strategic landscape mitigation measures to help integrate development into the landscape (such as structural planting/buffers, improving the southern edge of Foxton close to Fowlmere Road) where carefully designed to be compatible with the characteristics of the wider landscape.

Criteria	Susceptibility
	The management and enhancement of existing hedgerows and consideration of opportunities for re-planting hedgerows where these have been lost/become fragmented would be beneficial for creating a well-integrated settlement edge.

3.5.150 In summary, this is a rolling commonplace, arable landscape. Key characteristics which are more susceptible to the development scenario include the rolling landform and hilltop woodland, high scenic value, strong rural character and sense of tranquillity, long, open views across arable fields, and natural value associated with woodland including along Hoffer Brook. This Assessment Unit is of **medium to high** sensitivity to the development scenario.

Sensitivity Level	Definition
Medium to high	Typically, a landscape containing some important components and/or has some distinctive characteristics and/or is an area in moderate to good condition. Key characteristics and valued attributes of the landscape are susceptible to the particular type and scale of change being assessed. Considerable care would be needed in locating and designing change within the landscape.

3.5.151 In this context, there are limited opportunities for residential, commercial and mixed-use development with increased height/scale in this Assessment Unit.

Assessment Unit FOX06

Criteria	Susceptibility
Natural Factors	Natural factors that make the landscape less susceptible to the development scenario: - Predominantly medium to large arable fields Natural factors that make the landscape more susceptible to the development scenario: - Gently undulating landform with a shallow valley associated with a well treed stream between Shepreth and Foxton - Occasional blocks of woodland and clumps of trees in the wider landscape, as well as parkland east of Shepreth add structure and diversity - Small hedged fields close to village edges and a pattern of small scale paddocks north of Shepreth
Cultural Factors	Cultural factors that make the landscape less susceptible to the development scenario: - Settled rural landscape between Foxton and Shepreth with several farms, linear residential development along roads and infrastructure including the A10, railway line and sewage works Cultural factors that make the landscape more susceptible to the development scenario: - Much of the north western edge of Foxton is set behind a wide woodland belt along the A10, enclosed fields, and hedgerows which soften the village edge - Shepreth has a wooded edge, with parkland character along the south eastern edge and elsewhere small, enclosed fields form a transition to the open fields beyond - A windmill west of Foxton is a distinctive feature
Perceptual & Aesthetic Factors	Perceptual and aesthetic factors that make the landscape more susceptible to the development scenario: - Generally high scenic value associated with the well treed, gently undulating landform and parkland east of Shepreth - Generally strong sense of tranquillity away from the A10 - Open fields, the River Rhee, railway line and A10 provide separation between Shepreth and Foxton
Landscape Quality/ Condition	Landscape quality/condition factors that make the landscape less susceptible to the development scenario: Arable fields have been enlarged and hedgerows are limited Landscape quality/condition factors that make the landscape less susceptible to the development scenario:

Criteria	Susceptibility
	Generally strong rural character with parkland, woodland and trees in generally good condition, however this is occasionally eroded by scattered development, the A10 and railway line
Views & Visual Context	Views and visual context that make the landscape less susceptible to the development scenario: - Generally open views across arable fields towards wooded horizons which limit views out of the Assessment Unit to the north, east and west - Localised visual enclosure west of Shepreth due to parkland and small, hedged fields - Wooded skylines are occasionally interrupted by pylons, poles and wires associated with the telecommunications network Views and visual context that make the landscape more susceptible to the development scenario: - Recreational users of the PROW network - Residential receptors on the edges of Shepreth and Foxton - Locally valued views towards West Hill and Chalk Hill south of Foxton
Landscape Value	Characteristics, features and qualities of landscape value that make the landscape less susceptible to the development scenario: - Commonplace arable field pattern - Limited geological, topographical or geomorphological value - Detracting features include the A10 and railway - Generally limited rural character Characteristics, features and qualities of landscape value that make the landscape more susceptible to the development scenario: - Natural value associated with the River Rhee County Wildlife Site, woodland, ponds and trees - Time depth associated with parkland south east of Shepreth - Recreational value of the limited PROW network - Locally valued views from the edges of Foxton and Shepreth
Mitigation Potential	There is potential to mitigate the type and scale of change associated with the development scenario in this area by following the relevant landscape guidelines set out in the Greater Cambridge Landscape Character Assessment (2021) where appropriate.

Criteria	Susceptibility
	There may be scope for strategic landscape mitigation measures to help integrate development into the landscape (such as structural planting/buffers) where carefully designed to be compatible with the characteristics of the wider landscape. The management and enhancement of existing hedgerows and consideration of opportunities for re-planting hedgerows where these have been lost/become fragmented would be beneficial for creating a well-integrated settlement edge.

3.5.152 In summary, landcover comprises arable fields, woodland, parkland and small scale paddocks and hedged fields close to villages. Key characteristics which are more susceptible to the development scenario include natural value associated with the River Rhee County Wildlife Site, time depth associated with parkland south east of Shepreth, generally soft village edges and generally high scenic value. Less susceptible are large arable fields with few hedgerows, moving traffic on the A10 which locally erodes tranquillity and views which are often visually by trees and woodland. Overall, this Assessment Unit is of **medium to high** sensitivity to the development scenario.

Sensitivity Level	Definition
Medium to high	Typically, a landscape containing some important components and/or has some distinctive characteristics and/or is an area in moderate to good condition. Key characteristics and valued attributes of the landscape are susceptible to the particular type and scale of change being assessed. Considerable care would be needed in locating and designing change within the landscape.

3.5.153 In this context, there are limited opportunities for residential, commercial and mixed-use development with increased height/scale in this Assessment Unit.

Summary

3.5.154 The key findings of the Landscape Sensitivity Assessment of the fringes of Foxton are summarised in the table below.

Assessment Unit	Landscape Sensitivity
FOX01	Medium to high
FOX02	High
FOX03	Medium to high
FOX04	Medium to high
FOX05	Medium to high
FOX06	Medium to high

Shepreth Landscape Sensitivity Assessment

Assessment Units

3.5.155 The Assessment Units identified within the study area around the village of Shepreth are shown on **Figure 3.25** along with their unique reference codes.

Wider Landscape Context

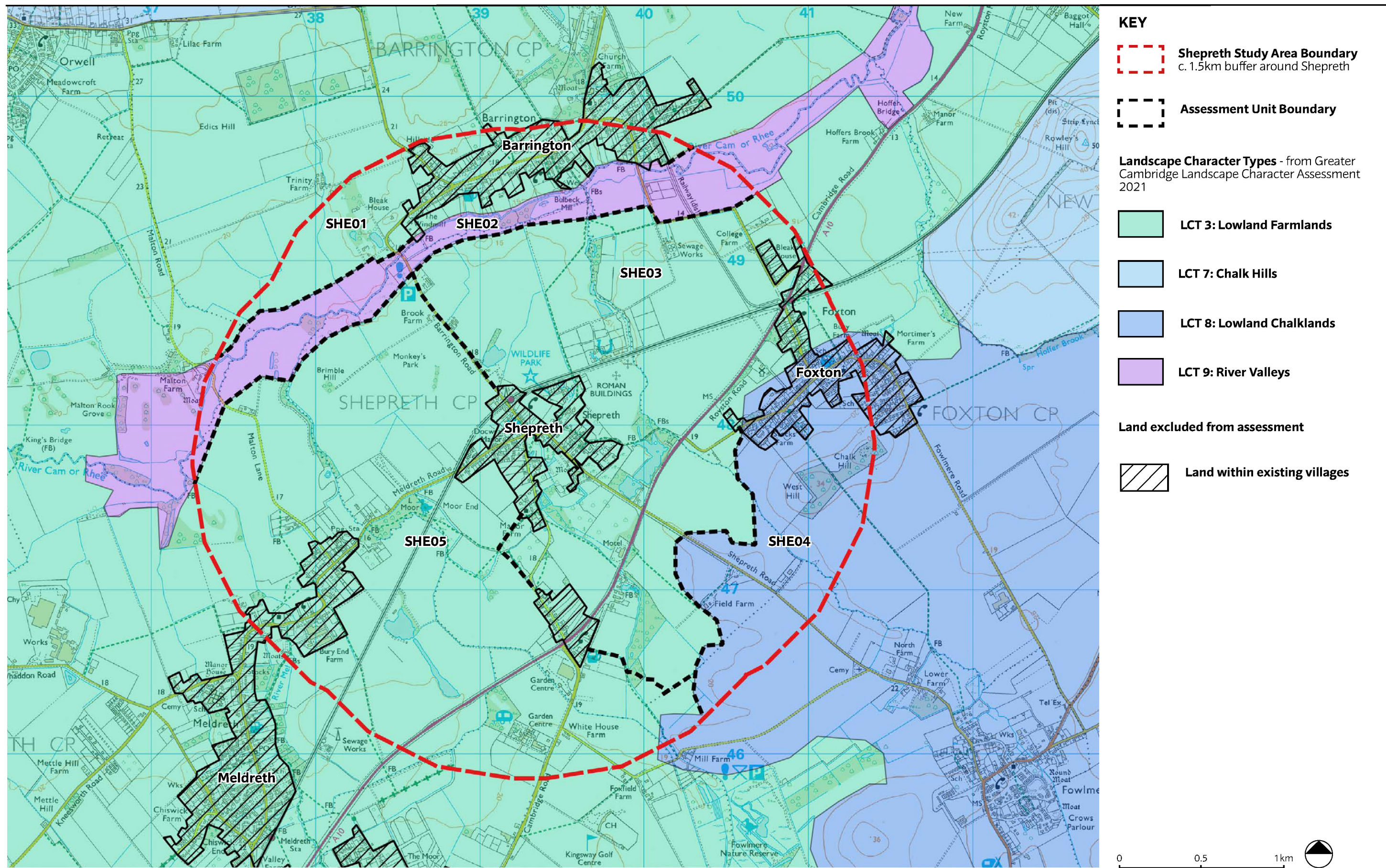
3.5.156 The wider landscape context for the village of Shepreth is provided by the following Landscape Character Types and Landscape Character Areas²⁹:

Landscape Character Types	Landscape Character Areas
LCT 3: Lowland Farmlands	3C: Rhee Tributaries Lowland Farmlands
LCT 8: Lowland Chalklands	8B: Morden to Duxford Lowland Chalklands
LCT9: River Valleys	9C: Rhee River Valley

Assessment Unit SHE01

Criteria	Susceptibility
Natural Factors	Natural factors that make the landscape less susceptible to the development scenario: • Gently undulating, indistinct landform • Large arable fields in the west with minimal hedgerows and occasional ditches Natural factors that make the landscape more susceptible to the development scenario: • Trees along roads, woodland associated with Bleak House and hedged paddocks north and south of Barrington add structure and diversity to the landscape
Cultural Factors	Cultural factors that make the landscape more susceptible to the development scenario: • Sparsely settled rural landscape west and north of Barrington • The western edge of Barrington is softened by trees, woodland and large back gardens

²⁹ See Figure 4.1 in the Greater Cambridge Landscape Character Assessment (2021)



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Criteria	Susceptibility
Perceptual & Aesthetic Factors	Perceptual and aesthetic factors that make the landscape more susceptible to the development scenario: • Generally strong sense of tranquillity • Generally high scenic value associated with the distinctive rolling chalk hill backdrop to the north
Landscape Quality/ Condition	Landscape quality/condition factors that make the landscape less susceptible to the development scenario: • Arable fields have been enlarged and hedgerows are limited Landscape quality/condition factors that make the landscape more susceptible to the development scenario: • Strong rural character associated with the small scale field pattern on the edge of Barrington, distant Chalk Hills and woodland in generally good condition
Views & Visual Context	Views and visual context that make the landscape less susceptible to the development scenario: • Wooded skylines are occasionally interrupted by poles and wires associated with the telecommunications network • Generally intimate views, enclosed by woodland and trees • Localised visual enclosure due to woodland west of Barrington • Limited access to the landscape Views and visual context that make the landscape more susceptible to the development scenario: • Long views towards wooded horizons and the distinctive Chalk Hills at Wimpole in the north and west • Residential receptors on the edge of Barrington
Landscape Value	Characteristics, features and qualities of landscape value that make the landscape less susceptible to the development scenario: • Commonplace arable field pattern • Limited geological, topographical or geomorphological value • Limited recreational value • Limited time depth Characteristics, features and qualities of landscape value that make the landscape more susceptible to the development scenario: • Generally strong rural character • Natural value associated with Barrington Pit SSSI woodland • Distinctive views towards the Chalk Hills at Wimpole

Criteria	Susceptibility
	Locally valued views from the northern and western edges of Barrington
Mitigation Potential	There is potential to mitigate the type and scale of change associated with the development scenario in this area by following the relevant landscape guidelines set out in the Greater Cambridge Landscape Character Assessment (2021) where appropriate. There may be scope for strategic landscape mitigation measures to help integrate development into the landscape (such as structural planting/buffers) where carefully designed to be compatible with the characteristics of the wider landscape. The management and enhancement of existing hedgerows and consideration of opportunities for re-planting hedgerows where these have been lost/become fragmented would be beneficial for creating a well-integrated settlement edge.

3.5.157 In summary, landcover comprises arable fields, woodland, parkland and small scale paddocks and hedged fields close to villages. Key characteristics which are more susceptible to the development scenario include the generally strong rural character, long views towards locally distinctive Chalk Hills at Wimpole, and the natural value of Barrington Pits SSSI and woodland. Less susceptible are large arable fields with few hedgerows. Overall, this Assessment Unit is of **medium to high** sensitivity to the development scenario.

Sensitivity Level	Definition
Medium to high	Typically, a landscape containing some important components and/or has some distinctive characteristics and/or is an area in moderate to good condition. Key characteristics and valued attributes of the landscape are susceptible to the particular type and scale of change being assessed. Considerable care would be needed in locating and designing change within the landscape.

3.5.158 In this context, there are limited opportunities for residential, commercial and mixed-use development with increased height/scale in this Assessment Unit.

Assessment Unit SHE02

Criteria	Susceptibility
Natural Factors	Natural factors that make the landscape less susceptible to the development scenario: - Occasionally open arable fields contrast with the intimate landscape immediately adjacent to the river Natural factors that make the landscape more susceptible to the development scenario: - Shallow valley landform associated with the sinuous River Cam including its tributaries with the River Rhee - Simple, small scale landscape comprising riparian trees, floodplain grazing marsh, good quality semi improved grassland and scattered woodland
Cultural Factors	Cultural factors that make the landscape less susceptible to the development scenario: - Infrastructure includes a disused railway south of Barrington Cultural factors that make the landscape more susceptible to the development scenario: - Sparsely settled river valley south of Barrington - Barrington has a soft, wooded southern edge with enclosed fields and paddocks with mature hedgerows
Perceptual & Aesthetic Factors	Perceptual and aesthetic factors that make the landscape more susceptible to the development scenario: - Generally strong sense of tranquillity - Generally high scenic value associated with the intimate, treed riverside - Separation between Barrington, Foxton and Shepreth
Landscape Quality/ Condition	Landscape quality/condition factors that make the landscape less susceptible to the development scenario: - Hedgerows have sometimes been removed to enlarge fields Landscape quality/condition factors that make the landscape more susceptible to the development scenario: - Trees, hedgerows and woodland are in generally good condition - Strong rural character associated with the intimate riverside trees and small fields south of Barrington
Views & Visual Context	Views and visual context that make the landscape less susceptible to the development scenario: - Strong sense of visual enclosure with short views contained by trees - Generally limited access to the landscape

Criteria	Susceptibility
	Views and visual context that make the landscape more susceptible to the development scenario: • Occasional long views towards wooded horizons and the distinctive Chalk Hills at Wimpole in the west • Skylines are generally wooded and undeveloped • High scenic value associated with the well treed and intimate riverside landscape • Recreational receptors using PROW south of Barrington • Residential receptors on the southern edge of Barrington
Landscape Value	Characteristics, features and qualities of landscape value that make the landscape more susceptible to the development scenario: • Small fields, and intimate riverside landscape considered rare in the context of Greater Cambridge • Generally strong rural character • Strong sense of time depth associated with the small scale field pattern south of Barrington • Natural value associated with woodland and trees, floodplain grazing marsh, good quality semi improved grassland and the River Rhee County Wildlife Site • Recreational value of the limited PROW network • Locally valued views from the southern edge of Barrington
Mitigation Potential	There is potential to mitigate the type and scale of change associated with the development scenario in this area by following the relevant landscape guidelines set out in the Greater Cambridge Landscape Character Assessment (2021) where appropriate. There may be scope for strategic landscape mitigation measures to help integrate development into the landscape (such as structural planting/buffers) where carefully designed to be compatible with the characteristics of the wider landscape. The management and enhancement of existing hedgerows and consideration of opportunities for re-planting hedgerows where these have been lost/become fragmented would be beneficial for creating a well-integrated settlement edge.

3.5.159 In summary, landcover comprises a mixture of woodland associated with the River Rhee, small scale pastoral fields and larger arable fields. Key characteristics which are more susceptible to the development scenario include the generally strong, intimate rural river valley character with strong rural character and high scenic value, the well-integrated southern edge of

Barrington, long views towards locally distinctive Chalk Hills at Wimpole, and the natural value of the River Rhee County Wildlife Site and woodland. Less susceptible are large arable fields with few hedgerows. Overall, this Assessment Unit is of **high** sensitivity to the development scenario.

Sensitivity Level	Definition
High	Typically, a landscape containing unique/important components and/or is an area of particularly distinctive character and/or contains landscape components that are in very good condition. Key characteristics and valued attributes of the landscape are highly susceptible to the particular type and scale of change being assessed. Such change is likely to result in a significant change to character.

3.5.160 In this context, there are limited opportunities for residential, commercial and mixed-use development with increased height/scale in this Assessment Unit.

Assessment Unit SHE03

Criteria	Susceptibility
Natural Factors	Natural factors that make the landscape less susceptible to the development scenario: - Predominantly medium to large arable fields Natural factors that make the landscape more susceptible to the development scenario: - Gently undulating landform with a shallow valley associated with a well treed stream between Shepreth and Foxton - Occasional blocks of woodland and clumps of trees in the wider landscape, as well as parkland east of Shepreth add structure and diversity - Small hedged fields close to village edges and a pattern of small scale paddocks north of Shepreth
Cultural Factors	Cultural factors that make the landscape less susceptible to the development scenario: - Settled rural landscape between Foxton and Shepreth with several farms, linear residential development along roads and infrastructure including the A10, railway line and sewage works Cultural factors that make the landscape more susceptible to the development scenario: - Much of the north western edge of Foxton is screened by trees along the A10, and enclosed fields, tree belts and hedgerows which soften the village edge - Shepreth has a wooded edge, with parkland character along the south eastern edge and elsewhere small, enclosed fields form a transition to the open fields beyond - A windmill west of Foxton is a distinctive feature
Perceptual & Aesthetic Factors	Perceptual and aesthetic factors that make the landscape more susceptible to the development scenario: - Generally high scenic value associated with the well treed, gently undulating landform and parkland east of Shepreth - Generally strong sense of tranquillity away from the A10 - Open fields, the River Rhee, railway line and A10 provide separation between Shepreth and Foxton
Landscape Quality/ Condition	Landscape quality/condition factors that make the landscape less susceptible to the development scenario: Arable fields have been enlarged and hedgerows are limited Landscape quality/condition factors that make the landscape less susceptible to the development scenario:

Criteria	Susceptibility
	Generally strong rural character with parkland, woodland and trees in generally good condition, however this is occasionally eroded by scattered development, the A10 and railway line
Views & Visual Context	Views and visual context that make the landscape less susceptible to the development scenario: - Generally open views across arable fields towards wooded horizons which limit views out of the Assessment Unit to the north, east and west - Localised visual enclosure west of Shepreth due to parkland and small, hedged fields - Wooded skylines are occasionally interrupted by pylons, poles and wires associated with the telecommunications network Views and visual context that make the landscape more susceptible to the development scenario: - Recreational users of the PROW network - Residential receptors on the edges of Shepreth and Foxton - Locally valued views towards West Hill and Chalk Hill south of Foxton
Landscape Value	Characteristics, features and qualities of landscape value that make the landscape less susceptible to the development scenario: - Commonplace arable field pattern - Limited geological, topographical or geomorphological value - Detracting features include the A10 and railway - Generally limited rural character Characteristics, features and qualities of landscape value that make the landscape more susceptible to the development scenario: - Natural value associated with the River Rhee County Wildlife Site, woodland, ponds and trees - Time depth associated with parkland south east of Shepreth - Recreational value of the limited PROW network - Locally valued views from the edges of Foxton and Shepreth
Mitigation Potential	There is potential to mitigate the type and scale of change associated with the development scenario in this area by following the relevant landscape guidelines set out in the Greater Cambridge Landscape Character Assessment (2021) where appropriate.

Criteria	Susceptibility
	There may be scope for strategic landscape mitigation measures to help integrate development into the landscape (such as structural planting/buffers) where carefully designed to be compatible with the characteristics of the wider landscape. The management and enhancement of existing hedgerows and consideration of opportunities for re-planting hedgerows where these have been lost/become fragmented would be beneficial for creating a well-integrated settlement edge.

3.5.161 In summary, landcover comprises arable fields, woodland, parkland and small scale paddocks and hedged fields close to villages. Key characteristics which are more susceptible to the development scenario include natural value associated with the River Rhee County Wildlife Site, time depth associated with parkland south east of Shepreth, generally soft village edges and generally high scenic value. Less susceptible are large arable fields with few hedgerows, moving traffic on the A10 which locally erodes tranquillity and views which are often visually by trees and woodland. Overall, this Assessment Unit is of **medium to high** sensitivity to the development scenario.

Sensitivity Level	Definition
Medium to high	Typically, a landscape containing some important components and/or has some distinctive characteristics and/or is an area in moderate to good condition. Key characteristics and valued attributes of the landscape are susceptible to the particular type and scale of change being assessed. Considerable care would be needed in locating and designing change within the landscape.

3.5.162 In this context, there are limited opportunities for residential, commercial and mixed-use development with increased height/scale in this Assessment Unit.

Assessment Unit SHE04

Criteria	Susceptibility
Natural Factors	Natural factors that make the landscape less susceptible to the development scenario: • Large scale, simple landscape of predominantly medium to large arable fields in a regular pattern Natural factors that make the landscape more susceptible to the development scenario: • Gently rolling landform rising to a high point of c. 34m at West Hill south of Foxton • Shallow valley associated with an occasionally well treed stream north of Shepreth Road • Generally sparse vegetation but occasional small woodlands on high points, a small number of orchards associated with farms and trees along streams add structure and diversity to the landscape
Cultural Factors	Cultural factors that make the landscape less susceptible to the development scenario: • Relatively recent residential development on the southern edge of Foxton has an open, hard edge with few trees and can be seen in the wider landscape Cultural factors that make the landscape more susceptible to the development scenario: • Unsettled rural landscape south of Foxton with built development limited to farms • Some small hedged paddocks, trees, allotments and tree belts integrate Foxton with the wider landscape, particularly in the west
Perceptual & Aesthetic Factors	Perceptual and aesthetic factors that make the landscape more susceptible to the development scenario: • Generally high scenic quality associated with the rolling landform and distinctive hilltop woodlands, isolated trees and distant shelterbelts • Generally strong sense of tranquillity despite the harsh edge of Foxton
Landscape Quality/Condition	Landscape quality/condition factors that make the landscape less susceptible to the development scenario: • Fields have been enlarged and hedgerows have been removed or are fragmented Landscape quality/condition factors that make the landscape more susceptible to the development scenario: • Generally strong rural character associated with the rolling Chalk Hills, hilltop woodland and trees associated with streams which are in generally good condition

Criteria	Susceptibility
Views & Visual Context	Views and visual context that make the landscape less susceptible to the development scenario: • Wooded skylines are occasionally broken by poles and wires associated with the telecommunications network Views and visual context that make the landscape more susceptible to the development scenario: • Elevated views towards wooded horizons are generally long and open, and include Foxton • Views include distinctive isolated trees, with distant views of tree belts and occasional lines of poplar trees adding points of interest • Views south towards the Chalk Hills have scenic value • The church within Foxton is a prominent landmark above trees on skylines • Views towards the elevated chalk ridge at Newton • Recreational users of PROW • Residential receptors on the southern edge of Foxton
Landscape Value	Characteristics, features and qualities of landscape value that make the landscape less susceptible to the development scenario: • Relatively commonplace arable landscape • Generally limited rural character • Limited scenic value • Limited time depth Characteristics, features and qualities of landscape value that make the landscape more susceptible to the development scenario: • Scenic value and rural character associated with the distinctive Chalk Hills • Natural value associated with trees along streams and hilltop woodland • Recreational value of the limited PROW network • Locally valued views from the southern edge of Foxton towards West Hill and Chalk Hill
Mitigation Potential	There is potential to mitigate the type and scale of change associated with the development scenario in this area by following the relevant landscape guidelines set out in the Greater Cambridge Landscape Character Assessment (2021) where appropriate. There may be scope for strategic landscape mitigation measures to help integrate development into the landscape (such as structural planting/buffers, improving the southern edge of Foxton close to Fowlmere Road) where carefully

Criteria	Susceptibility
	designed to be compatible with the characteristics of the wider landscape. The management and enhancement of existing hedgerows and consideration of opportunities for re-planting hedgerows where these have been lost/become fragmented would be beneficial for creating a well-integrated settlement edge.

3.5.163 In summary, this is a rolling commonplace, arable landscape. Key characteristics which are more susceptible to the development scenario include the rolling landform and hilltop woodland, high scenic value, strong rural character and sense of tranquillity, long, open views across arable fields, and natural value associated with woodland including along Hoffer Brook. This Assessment Unit is of **medium to high** sensitivity to the development scenario.

Sensitivity Level	Definition
Medium to high	Typically, a landscape containing some important components and/or has some distinctive characteristics and/or is an area in moderate to good condition. Key characteristics and valued attributes of the landscape are susceptible to the particular type and scale of change being assessed. Considerable care would be needed in locating and designing change within the landscape.

3.5.164 In this context, there are limited opportunities for residential, commercial and mixed-use development with increased height/scale in this Assessment Unit.

Assessment Unit SHE05

Criteria	Susceptibility
Natural Factors	Natural factors that make the landscape less susceptible to the development scenario: • Predominantly medium to large arable fields Natural factors that make the landscape more susceptible to the development scenario: • Gently undulating landform west of Shepreth containing a shallow river valley • Occasional ponds and well treed streams including the River Rhee • Small hedged fields north of Meldreth and along Meldreth Road • Occasional blocks of woodland, and orchards add structure and diversity to the landscape
Cultural Factors	Cultural factors that make the landscape less susceptible to the development scenario: • Transport infrastructure includes the A10 and a railway line • Built form includes garden centres on Cambridge Road Cultural factors that make the landscape more susceptible to the development scenario: • Sparsely settled rural landscape west of Shepreth • The northern and eastern edges of Meldreth are softened by small hedged fields and trees • The western edge of Shepreth is softened by trees
Perceptual & Aesthetic Factors	Perceptual and aesthetic factors that make the landscape more susceptible to the development scenario: • Generally high scenic value associated with the gently undulating landform and well treed River Rhee, however this is locally eroded by transport corridors • Generally strong sense of tranquillity away from the A10 • Strong sense of separation between Shepreth and Meldreth, despite some linear development extending from both villages, due to open fields and hedged paddocks between the well-integrated village edges
Landscape Quality/ Condition	Landscape quality/condition factors that make the landscape less susceptible to the development scenario: • Arable fields have been enlarged and hedgerows are limited Landscape quality/condition factors that make the landscape more susceptible to the development scenario:

Criteria	Susceptibility
	Generally strong rural character associated with the well vegetated landscape and the backdrop of the Chalk Hills to the north
Views & Visual Context	Views and visual context that make the landscape less susceptible to the development scenario: - Wooded skylines are occasionally interrupted by poles and wires associated with the telecommunications network - Generally limited access to the countryside Views and visual context that make the landscape more susceptible to the development scenario: - Generally long views towards wooded horizons, and the Chalk Hills at Wimpole - Recreational users of the limited PROW network - Residential receptors on the edges of Meldreth and Shepreth
Landscape Value	Characteristics, features and qualities of landscape value that make the landscape less susceptible to the development scenario: - Commonplace arable field pattern - Limited geological, topographical or geomorphological value - Detracting features include the A10 and railway - Limited time depth Characteristics, features and qualities of landscape value that make the landscape more susceptible to the development scenario: - Strong rural character associated with the arable farmland and well treed River Rhee Corridor - Natural value associated with L-Moor SSSI, the River Rhee County Wildlife Site ponds and trees - Recreational value of the limited PROW network - Locally valued views from the northern edge of Melbourn and eastern edge of Meldreth - Valued long views towards the Chalk Hills at Wimpole
Mitigation Potential	There is potential to mitigate the type and scale of change associated with the development scenario in this area by following the relevant landscape guidelines set out in the Greater Cambridge Landscape Character Assessment (2021) where appropriate. There may be scope for strategic landscape mitigation measures to help integrate development into the landscape (such as structural planting/buffers) where carefully designed

Criteria	Susceptibility
	to be compatible with the characteristics of the wider landscape. The management and enhancement of existing hedgerows and consideration of opportunities for re-planting hedgerows where these have been lost/become fragmented would be beneficial for creating a well-integrated settlement edge.

3.5.165 In summary, this is a largely commonplace, arable landscape. Key characteristics which are more susceptible to the development scenario include soft village edges, strong rural character, long, open views across well treed arable fields including towards the Chalk Hills at Wimpole, and natural value associated with L-Moor SSSI and the River Rhee County Wildlife Site. This Assessment Unit is of **medium** sensitivity to the development scenario.

Sensitivity Level	Definition
Medium	Typically, a landscape comprising relatively commonplace components and/or has few distinctive characteristics and/or is an area in moderate condition. Key characteristics and valued attributes of the landscape have some susceptibility to the particular type and scale of change being assessed. Considerable care may be needed in locating and designing change within the landscape.

3.5.166 In this context, there are limited opportunities for residential, commercial and mixed-use development with increased height/scale in this Assessment Unit.

Summary

3.5.167 The key findings of the Landscape Sensitivity Assessment of the fringes of Shepreth are summarised in the table below.

Assessment Unit	Landscape Sensitivity
SHE01	Medium to high
SHE02	High
SHE03	Medium to high
SHE04	Medium to high
SHE05	Medium

Melbourn Landscape Sensitivity Assessment

Assessment Units

3.5.168 The Assessment Units identified within the study area around the village of Melbourn are shown on **Figure 3.26** along with their unique reference codes.

Wider Landscape Context

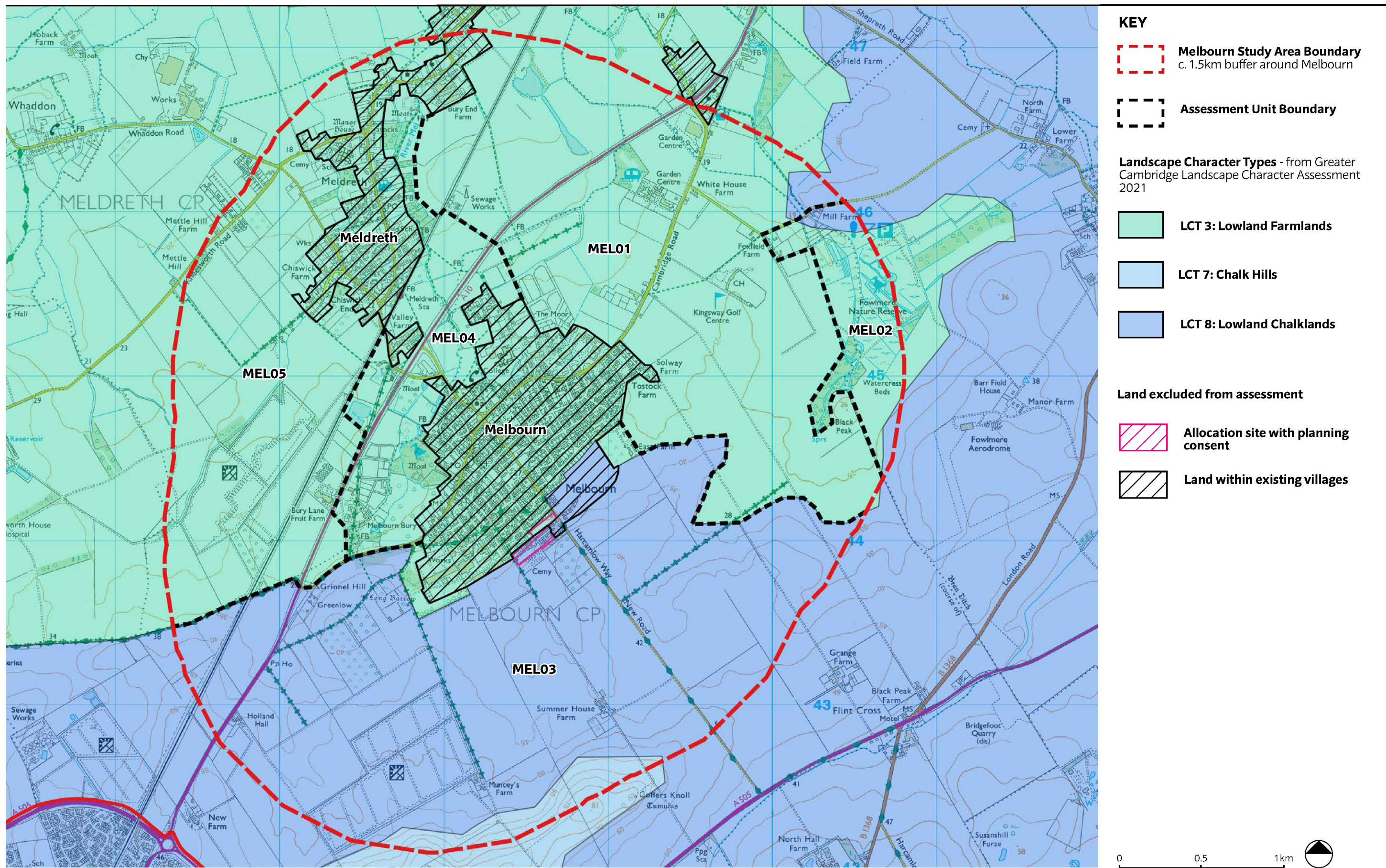
3.5.169 The wider landscape context for the village of Melbourn is provided by the following Landscape Character Types and Landscape Character Areas³⁰:

Landscape Character Types	Landscape Character Areas
LCT 3: Lowland Farmlands	3C: Rhee Tributaries Lowland Farmlands
LCT 8: Lowland Chalklands	8B: Morden to Duxford Lowland Chalklands

Assessment Unit MEL01

Criteria	Susceptibility
Natural Factors	Natural factors that make the landscape less susceptible to the development scenario: • Predominantly medium to large arable fields with occasional hedgerows and hedgerow trees Natural factors that make the landscape more susceptible to the development scenario: • Gently undulating landform containing the shallow valley of a well treed tributary of the River Rhee in the north and occasional ponds • Occasional blocks of woodland and clumps of trees in the wider landscape, including at Kingsway Golf Course add structure and diversity
Cultural Factors	Cultural factors that make the landscape less susceptible to the development scenario: • Infrastructure includes the A10, a railway line, solar PV energy development in the south east and sewage works • Sparsely settled rural landscape north and east of Melbourn with occasional built form including farms,

³⁰ See Figure 4.1 in the Greater Cambridge Landscape Character Assessment (2021)



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Criteria	Susceptibility
	garden centres on Cambridge Road and Kingsway Golf Centre Cultural factors that make the landscape more susceptible to the development scenario: The northern and eastern edges of Melbourn and eastern edge of Meldreth directly abut arable fields but are softened by trees
Perceptual & Aesthetic Factors	Perceptual and aesthetic factors that make the landscape less susceptible to the development scenario: - Generally limited scenic value associated with the gently undulating landform, large, open arable fields and transport corridors, however the distant backdrop of the Chalk Hills to the north and south adds scenic quality Perceptual and aesthetic factors that make the landscape more susceptible to the development scenario: - Generally strong sense of tranquillity away from the A10
Landscape Quality/ Condition	Landscape quality/condition factors that make the landscape less susceptible to the development scenario: - Arable fields have been enlarged and hedgerows are limited Landscape quality/condition factors that make the landscape more susceptible to the development scenario: - Generally strong rural character associated with the well treed arable landscape
Views & Visual Context	Views and visual context that make the landscape less susceptible to the development scenario: - Wooded skylines are occasionally interrupted by poles and wires associated with the telecommunications network - Generally limited access to the countryside Views and visual context that make the landscape more susceptible to the development scenario: - Generally open views towards wooded horizons and the distant Chalk Hills to the north and south - Recreational users of the limited PROW network - Residential receptors on the edges of Melbourn and Meldreth
Landscape Value	Characteristics, features and qualities of landscape value that make the landscape less susceptible to the development scenario: - Commonplace arable field pattern - Limited geological, topographical or geomorphological value - Detracting features include the A10 and railway

Criteria	Susceptibility
	- Limited time depth Characteristics, features and qualities of landscape value that make the landscape more susceptible to the development scenario: - Generally strong rural character associated with the well treed arable landscape - Natural value associated with the River Rhee County Wildlife Site ponds and trees - Recreational value of the limited PROW network - Locally valued views from the northern edge of Melbourn and eastern edge of Meldreth - Long views towards the Chalk Hills to north and south are of scenic quality
Mitigation Potential	There is potential to mitigate the type and scale of change associated with the development scenario in this area by following the relevant landscape guidelines set out in the Greater Cambridge Landscape Character Assessment (2021) where appropriate. There may be scope for strategic landscape mitigation measures to help integrate development into the landscape (such as structural planting/buffers) where carefully designed to be compatible with the characteristics of the wider landscape. The management and enhancement of existing hedgerows and consideration of opportunities for re-planting hedgerows where these have been lost/become fragmented would be beneficial for creating a well-integrated settlement edge.

3.5.170 In summary, this is a largely commonplace, arable landscape with limited time depth and detracting features including the A10 and railway. Key characteristics which are more susceptible to the development scenario include the generally strong rural character, natural value associated with the River Rhee County Wildlife Site and locally valued views towards the Chalk Hills to north and south which are of scenic quality. Overall, this Assessment Unit is of **medium** sensitivity to the development scenario.

Sensitivity Level	Definition
Medium	Typically, a landscape comprising relatively commonplace components and/or has few distinctive characteristics and/or is an area in moderate condition. Key characteristics and

Sensitivity Level	Definition
	valued attributes of the landscape have some susceptibility to the particular type and scale of change being assessed. Considerable care may be needed in locating and designing change within the landscape.

3.5.171 In this context, there are limited opportunities for residential, commercial and mixed-use development with increased height/scale in this Assessment Unit.

Assessment Unit MEL02

Criteria	Susceptibility
Natural Factors	Natural factors that make the landscape more susceptible to the development scenario: • Shallow valley landform associated with a tributary of the River Rhee • A mosaic of wetland, woodland, lowland fen and lowland calcareous grassland associated with the River Rhee at Fowlmere Nature Reserve, with arable fields to the west and south
Cultural Factors	Cultural factors that make the landscape more susceptible to the development scenario: • Sparsely settled rural landscape east of Melbourn with built form limited to farms north of Fowlmere Nature Reserve
Perceptual & Aesthetic Factors	Perceptual and aesthetic factors that make the landscape more susceptible to the development scenario: • High scenic value associated with wetland at Fowlmere Nature Reserve • Generally strong sense of tranquillity
Landscape Quality/Condition	Landscape quality/condition factors that make the landscape less susceptible to the development scenario: • In the south, field boundaries have been removed to create a large arable field Landscape quality/condition factors that make the landscape more susceptible to the development scenario: • Field boundaries are largely intact in the north • Generally strong rural character associated with the mosaic of wetland, woodland and grassland at Fowlmere Nature Reserve
Views & Visual Context	Views and visual context that make the landscape less susceptible to the development scenario: • Wooded skylines are occasionally interrupted by poles and wires associated with the telecommunications network • Localised visual enclosure within the nature reserve Views and visual context that make the landscape more susceptible to the development scenario: • Generally long views towards wooded horizons in the south • Views are of high scenic value and strong rural character • Recreational visitors to Fowlmere Nature Reserve

Criteria	Susceptibility
Landscape Value	Characteristics, features and qualities of landscape value that make the landscape less susceptible to the development scenario: • Limited geological, topographical or geomorphological value • Limited time depth Characteristics, features and qualities of landscape value that make the landscape more susceptible to the development scenario: • Strong rural character associated with the varied landcover pattern • Landcover pattern is relatively rare in Greater Cambridge • Natural value associated with Fowlmere Watercress Beds SSSI, Fowlmere Nature Reserve and River Rhee County Wildlife Site • Recreational value of Fowlmere Nature Reserve • Locally valued views from within Fowlmere Nature Reserve
Mitigation Potential	There is potential to mitigate the type and scale of change associated with the development scenario in this area by following the relevant landscape guidelines set out in the Greater Cambridge Landscape Character Assessment (2021) where appropriate. There may be scope for strategic landscape mitigation measures to help integrate development into the landscape (such as structural planting/buffers) where carefully designed to be compatible with the characteristics of the wider landscape. The management and enhancement of existing hedgerows and consideration of opportunities for re-planting hedgerows where these have been lost/become fragmented would be beneficial for creating a well-integrated settlement edge.

3.5.172 In summary, this is a landscape with a rare, mosaic landcover pattern. Key characteristics which are more susceptible to the development scenario include the strong rural character, natural value associated with Fowlmere Watercress Beds SSSI, Fowlmere Nature Reserve and River Rhee County Wildlife Site, and the recreational value of Fowlmere Nature Reserve. Overall, this Assessment Unit is of **high** sensitivity to the development scenario.

Sensitivity Level	Definition
High	Typically, a landscape containing unique/important components and/or is an area of particularly distinctive character and/or contains landscape components that are in very good condition. Key characteristics and valued attributes of the landscape are highly susceptible to the particular type and scale of change being assessed. Such change is likely to result in a significant change to character.

3.5.173 In this context, there are limited opportunities for residential, commercial and mixed-use development with increased height/scale in this Assessment Unit.

Assessment Unit MEL03

Criteria	Susceptibility
Natural Factors	Natural factors that make the landscape less susceptible to the development scenario: - Large scale, simple landscape of predominantly medium to large arable fields in a regular pattern Natural factors that make the landscape more susceptible to the development scenario: - Gently rolling landform on the edge of the Chalk Hills rising to a high point of c. 81m at Goffers Knoll on the southern boundary - Generally sparse vegetation but occasional small woodlands, including on high points, trees along field boundaries and small scale patterns associated with orchards south of Melbourn add structure and diversity to the landscape
Cultural Factors	Cultural factors that make the landscape less susceptible to the development scenario: - Infrastructure includes the A10, a railway line and solar PV energy development Cultural factors that make the landscape more susceptible to the development scenario: - Unsettled rural landscape south of Melbourn with built development comprising nurseries and farms - The southern and eastern edges of Melbourn are well integrated into the landscape by small scale orchards, woodland and trees, although new residential development east of New Road is less well integrated - A commercial development on the southern edge of Melbourn is largely softened by trees and mature hedgerows but is occasionally glimpsed in the wider landscape
Perceptual & Aesthetic Factors	Perceptual and aesthetic factors that make the landscape more susceptible to the development scenario: - Generally high scenic quality associated with the rolling landform and Chalk Hills in views to the south - Generally strong sense of tranquillity away from the A10
Landscape Quality/ Condition	Landscape quality/condition factors that make the landscape less susceptible to the development scenario: - Fields have been enlarged and hedgerows have been removed or are fragmented Landscape quality/condition factors that make the landscape more susceptible to the development scenario: - Generally strong rural character associated with the rolling landform, and views towards the Chalk Hills

Criteria	Susceptibility
Views & Visual Context	Views and visual context that make the landscape less susceptible to the development scenario: • Glimpses of solar PV development • Wooded skylines are occasionally broken by poles and wires associated with the telecommunications network Views and visual context that make the landscape more susceptible to the development scenario: • Elevated views towards wooded horizons are generally long and open • Views north towards the elevated chalk ridge at Wimpole and south towards the Chalk Hills have scenic value • Recreational users of PROW including the Wimpole Way along the north-western boundary
Landscape Value	Characteristics, features and qualities of landscape value that make the landscape less susceptible to the development scenario: • Relatively commonplace arable landscape Characteristics, features and qualities of landscape value that make the landscape more susceptible to the development scenario: • Strong rural character and high scenic value associated with the locally distinctive rolling Chalk Hills, considered relatively rare in Greater Cambridge • Natural value associated with Holland Hall (Melbourn) Railway Cutting SSSI, woodland and orchards • Time depth associated with a long barrow west of Melbourn • Recreational value of the limited PROW network including the Harcamlow Way • Residential receptors on the southern edge of Melbourn
Mitigation Potential	There is potential to mitigate the type and scale of change associated with the development scenario in this area by following the relevant landscape guidelines set out in the Greater Cambridge Landscape Character Assessment (2021) where appropriate. There may be scope for strategic landscape mitigation measures to help integrate development into the landscape (such as structural planting/buffers) where carefully designed to be compatible with the characteristics of the wider landscape. The management and enhancement of existing hedgerows and consideration of opportunities for re-planting hedgerows where these have been lost/become fragmented would be beneficial for creating a well-integrated settlement edge.

3.5.174 In summary, the locally distinctive Chalk Hills have scenic value and strong rural character. There is natural value associated with Holland Hall (Melbourn) Railway Cutting SSSI, woodland and orchards, and time depth associated with a long barrow west of Melbourn as well as recreational value of the limited PROW network including the Harcamlow Way. Long, open views across the Chalk Hills are locally valued. These key characteristics are more susceptible to the development scenario. Less susceptible is the large scale open, arable landscape pattern and solar PV energy development. Overall, this Assessment Unit is of **medium to high** sensitivity to the development scenario.

Sensitivity Level	Definition
Medium to high	Typically, a landscape containing some important components and/or has some distinctive characteristics and/or is an area in moderate to good condition. Key characteristics and valued attributes of the landscape are susceptible to the particular type and scale of change being assessed. Considerable care would be needed in locating and designing change within the landscape.

3.5.175 In this context, there are limited opportunities for residential, commercial and mixed-use development with increased height/scale in this Assessment Unit.

Assessment Unit MEL04

Criteria	Susceptibility
Natural Factors	Natural factors that make the landscape more susceptible to the development scenario: • Shallow valley landform associated with the well treed River Mel and containing several ponds • Intricate, small scale land pattern close includes enclosed riverside pasture, woodland and parkland which contrast with wider arable fields • Parkland associated with Melbourn Bury, and clumps of trees add structure and diversity
Cultural Factors	Cultural factors that make the landscape less susceptible to the development scenario: • Infrastructure includes the well treed A10 and railway line which both sever the Assessment Unit for much of its length Cultural factors that make the landscape more susceptible to the development scenario: • Unsettled gap between Meldreth and Melbourn with built form limited to occasional farm buildings • Woodland, orchard and trees provide soft edges to both Melbourn and Meldreth
Perceptual & Aesthetic Factors	Perceptual and aesthetic factors that make the landscape less susceptible to the development scenario: Eroded sense of tranquillity due to the A10 Perceptual and aesthetic factors that make the landscape more susceptible to the development scenario: • High scenic value associated with intimate landscape of parkland, woodland and riverside pasture
Landscape Quality/Condition	Landscape quality/condition factors that make the landscape more susceptible to the development scenario: • Field boundaries are generally intact • Generally strong rural character associated with the intricate, small scale landcover pattern west of Melbourn
Views & Visual Context	Views and visual context that make the landscape less susceptible to the development scenario: • Wooded skylines are occasionally interrupted by poles and wires associated with the telecommunications network • Generally visually enclosed due to trees and woodland Views and visual context that make the landscape more susceptible to the development scenario: • Occasional long views towards wooded horizons

Criteria	Susceptibility
	• Recreational users of PROW including the Harcamlow Way Long Distance Path which follows the southern boundary • Residential receptors on the edges of Melbourn and Meldreth
Landscape Value	Characteristics, features and qualities of landscape value that make the landscape less susceptible to the development scenario: • Detracting features include the A10 and railway Characteristics, features and qualities of landscape value that make the landscape more susceptible to the development scenario: • Strong rural character associated with the varied landcover pattern and gently undulating valley landform • Landcover pattern is relatively rare in Greater Cambridge • Trees and small scale landcover forms separation between Melbourn and Meldreth • Natural value associated with Melwood Local Nature Reserve, watercourses, ponds, orchard, parkland, woodland and trees • Time depth associated with parkland west of Melbourn • Recreational value of the PROW network including the Harcamlow Way Long Distance Path on the southern boundary • Locally valued views from the Harcamlow Way, western edge of Melbourn and southern and western edges of Meldreth
Mitigation Potential	There is potential to mitigate the type and scale of change associated with the development scenario in this area by following the relevant landscape guidelines set out in the Greater Cambridge Landscape Character Assessment (2021) where appropriate. There may be scope for strategic landscape mitigation measures to help integrate development into the landscape (such as structural planting/buffers) where carefully designed to be compatible with the characteristics of the wider landscape. The management and enhancement of existing hedgerows and consideration of opportunities for re-planting hedgerows where these have been lost/become fragmented would be beneficial for creating a well-integrated settlement edge.

3.5.176 In summary, this assessment unit comprises intimate riverside pasture, woodland and parkland associated with the River Mel. Key characteristics which are more susceptible to the development scenario include the varied landcover pattern, time depth associated with parkland, separation between Melbourn and Meldreth, natural value of Melwood Local Nature Reserve, and recreational value of PROW including the Harcamlow Way. Views enclosed by trees and woodland, and the well treed A10 and railway are less susceptible to the development scenario. Overall, this Assessment Unit is of **high** sensitivity to the development scenario.

Sensitivity Level	Definition
High	Typically, a landscape containing unique/important components and/or is an area of particularly distinctive character and/or contains landscape components that are in very good condition. Key characteristics and valued attributes of the landscape are highly susceptible to the particular type and scale of change being assessed. Such change is likely to result in a significant change to character.

3.5.177 In this context, there are limited opportunities for residential, commercial and mixed-use development with increased height/scale in this Assessment Unit.

Assessment Unit MEL05

Criteria	Susceptibility
Natural Factors	Natural factors that make the landscape less susceptible to the development scenario: • Gently undulating landform • Predominantly medium to large arable fields with occasional hedgerows and hedgerow trees Natural factors that make the landscape more susceptible to the development scenario: • Smaller scale field pattern in the north • A well treed stream adds structure to the landscape • Occasional orchards, a fruit farm and woodland add diversity to the landscape
Cultural Factors	Cultural factors that make the landscape less susceptible to the development scenario: • Sparsely settled rural landscape west of Melbourn and Meldreth • Infrastructure includes the A10, a railway line and solar PV development Cultural factors that make the landscape more susceptible to the development scenario: • Meldreth has a soft edge due to woodland, orchard and trees
Perceptual & Aesthetic Factors	Perceptual and aesthetic factors that make the landscape less susceptible to the development scenario: • Solar PV panels and transport corridors locally detract from scenic quality Perceptual and aesthetic factors that make the landscape more susceptible to the development scenario: • Generally strong sense of tranquillity away from the A10 corridor
Landscape Quality/Condition	Landscape quality/condition factors that make the landscape less susceptible to the development scenario: • Arable fields have occasionally been enlarged and hedgerows are limited Landscape quality/condition factors that make the landscape more susceptible to the development scenario: • Generally strong rural character associated with the well treed landscape, however this is locally eroded by infrastructure and scattered built development including solar PV panels
Views & Visual Context	Views and visual context that make the landscape less susceptible to the development scenario: • Views are generally contained by trees

Criteria	Susceptibility
	- Wooded skylines are occasionally interrupted by poles and wires associated with the telecommunications network Views and visual context that make the landscape more susceptible to the development scenario: - Recreational users of PROW including the Harcamlow Way Long Distance Path along the southern boundary - Residential receptors on the south and western edges of Meldreth
Landscape Value	Characteristics, features and qualities of landscape value that make the landscape less susceptible to the development scenario: - Limited geological, topographical or geomorphological value - Commonplace arable fields - Detracting features include the A10, railway and solar PV energy development - Limited time depth Characteristics, features and qualities of landscape value that make the landscape more susceptible to the development scenario: - Generally strong rural character associated with the well treed landscape - Natural value associated with pockets of orchard and woodlands - Recreational value of the PROW network including the Harcamlow Way Long Distance Path on the southern boundary - Locally valued views from the Harcamlow Way and southern and western edges of Meldreth
Mitigation Potential	There is potential to mitigate the type and scale of change associated with the development scenario in this area by following the relevant landscape guidelines set out in the Greater Cambridge Landscape Character Assessment (2021) where appropriate. There may be scope for strategic landscape mitigation measures to help integrate development into the landscape (such as structural planting/buffers) where carefully designed to be compatible with the characteristics of the wider landscape. The management and enhancement of existing hedgerows and consideration of opportunities for re-planting hedgerows where these have been lost/become fragmented would be beneficial for creating a well-integrated settlement edge.

3.5.178 In summary, this is a commonplace arable landscape. Key characteristics which are more susceptible to the development scenario include the generally strong rural character, recreational value of PROW including the Harcamlow Way and the soft edge of Meldreth. Key characteristics which are less susceptible to the development scenario include large arable fields, views visually enclosed by trees and infrastructure including the A10, railway and solar PV energy development. Overall, this Assessment Unit is of **medium** sensitivity to the development scenario.

Sensitivity Level	Definition
Medium	Typically, a landscape comprising relatively commonplace components and/or has few distinctive characteristics and/or is an area in moderate condition. Key characteristics and valued attributes of the landscape have some susceptibility to the particular type and scale of change being assessed. Considerable care may be needed in locating and designing change within the landscape.

3.5.179 In this context, there are limited opportunities for residential, commercial and mixed-use development with increased height/scale in this Assessment Unit.

Summary

3.5.180 The key findings of the Landscape Sensitivity Assessment of the fringes of Melbourn are summarised in the table below.

Assessment Unit	Landscape Sensitivity
MEL01	Medium
MEL02	High
MEL03	Medium to high
MEL04	High
MEL05	Medium

Bassingbourn Landscape Sensitivity Assessment

Assessment Units

3.5.181 The Assessment Units identified within the study area around the village of Bassingbourn are shown on **Figure 3.27** along with their unique reference codes.

Wider Landscape Context

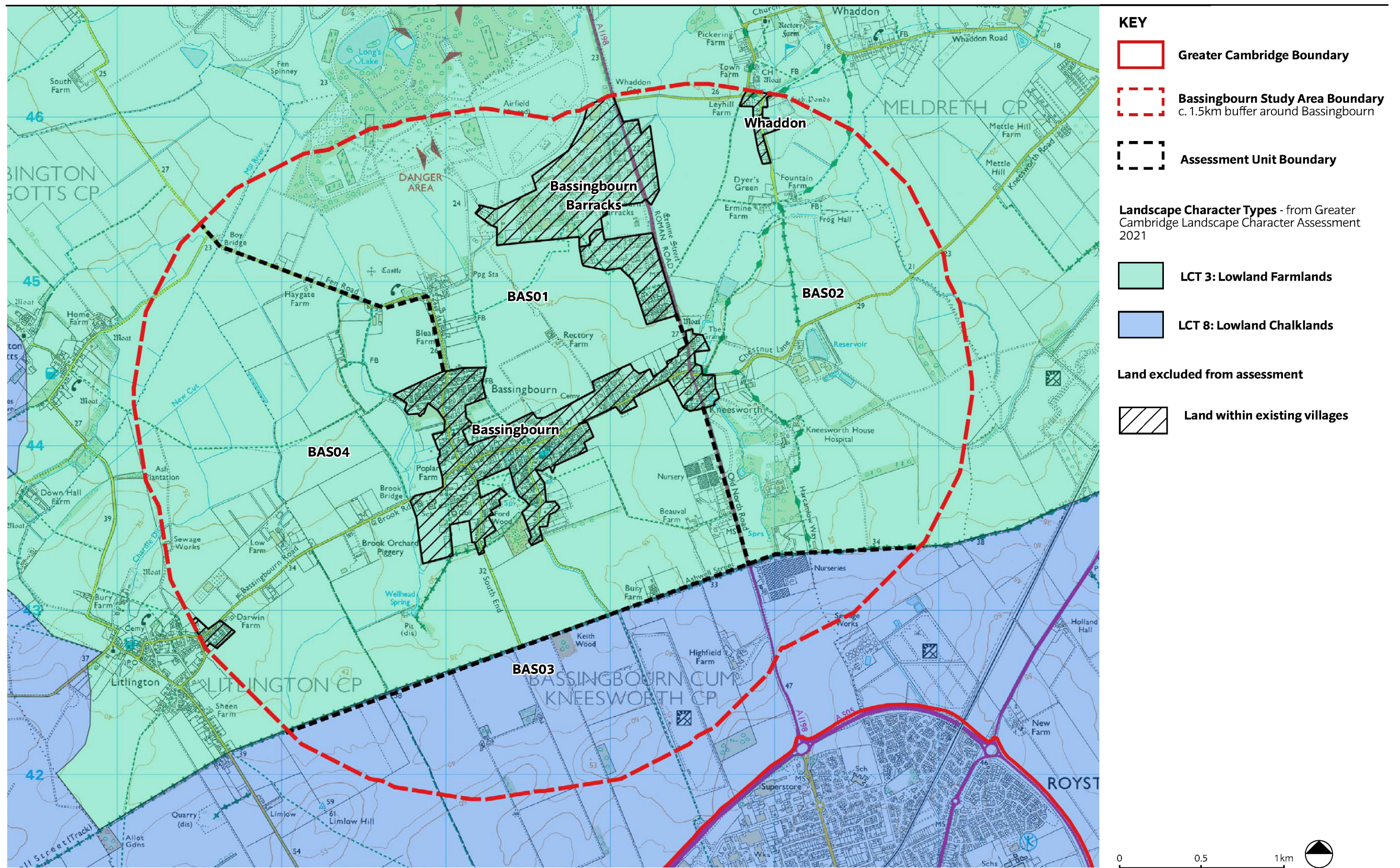
3.5.182 The wider landscape context for the village of Bassingbourn is provided by the following Landscape Character Types and Landscape Character Areas³¹:

Landscape Character Types	Landscape Character Areas
LCT 3: Lowland Farmlands	3C: Rhee Tributaries Lowland Farmlands
LCT 8: Lowland Chalklands	8B: Morden to Duxford Lowland Chalklands

Assessment Unit BAS01

Criteria	Susceptibility
Natural Factors	Natural factors that make the landscape less susceptible to the development scenario: • Gently undulating landform rising slightly in the south towards Bassingbourn • Predominantly medium to large arable fields Natural factors that make the landscape more susceptible to the development scenario: • Small scale fields north west of Bassingbourn • Generally sparse vegetation but small woodland blocks, shelterbelts and clumps of trees add structure and diversity • Mill River in the west is well treed
Cultural Factors	Cultural factors that make the landscape less susceptible to the development scenario: • Settled rural landscape with Bassingbourn Barracks to the east, Bassingbourn to the south, Kneesworth to the

³¹ See Figure 4.1 in the Greater Cambridge Landscape Character Assessment (2021)



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Criteria	Susceptibility
	south east, linear residential development along roads and a farm • The A1198 Ermine Street Roman Road forms part of the eastern boundary • Disused airfield north of Bassingbourn Barracks Cultural factors that make the landscape more susceptible to the development scenario: • Residential development in Bassingbourn and Kneesworth is well integrated into the wider landscape through long back gardens, trees and mature hedgerows • Bassingbourn Barracks is generally well screened by strong woodland belts and unobtrusive in the wider landscape
Perceptual & Aesthetic Factors	Perceptual and aesthetic factors that make the landscape more susceptible to the development scenario: • High scenic quality associated with the well treed landscape which has a generally strong sense of enclosure • Generally strong sense of tranquillity, locally eroded by traffic on the A1198 • Enclosed fields create separation in the small gap between Bassingbourn and Kneesworth
Landscape Quality/ Condition	Landscape quality/condition factors that make the landscape less susceptible to the development scenario: • Fields have been enlarged and hedgerows are limited Landscape quality/condition factors that make the landscape more susceptible to the development scenario: • Strong rural character in the well treed landscape
Views & Visual Context	Views and visual context that make the landscape less susceptible to the development scenario: • Well treed Assessment Unit with limited long views due to woodland and trees Views and visual context that make the landscape more susceptible to the development scenario: • Generally open views towards wooded horizons • Skylines are generally undeveloped and wooded • The church spire in Bassingbourn is a key landmark on skylines • Recreational users of PROW • Residential receptors on the northern edge of Bassingbourn and Kneesworth

Criteria	Susceptibility
Landscape Value	Characteristics, features and qualities of landscape value that make the landscape less susceptible to the development scenario: • Limited geological, topographical or geomorphological value • Relatively commonplace arable landscape • Limited time depth Characteristics, features and qualities of landscape value that make the landscape more susceptible to the development scenario: • Strong rural character and high scenic value associated with the densely treed landscape • Natural value associated with Bassingbourn Barracks County Wildlife Site, woodland and trees • Recreational value of limited PROW network • Locally valued views from the northern edge of Bassingbourn and Kneesworth across arable fields
Mitigation Potential	There is potential to mitigate the type and scale of change associated with the development scenario in this area by following the relevant landscape guidelines set out in the Greater Cambridge Landscape Character Assessment (2021) where appropriate. There may be scope for strategic landscape mitigation measures to help integrate development into the landscape (such as structural planting/buffers) where carefully designed to be compatible with the characteristics of the wider landscape. The management and enhancement of existing hedgerows and consideration of opportunities for re-planting hedgerows where these have been lost/become fragmented would be beneficial for creating a well-integrated settlement edge.

3.5.183 In summary, this is a commonplace, large scale arable landscape that appears well treed due to soft settlement edges, dense woodland on the edge of Bassingbourn Barracks and occasional mature tree field boundaries. Key characteristics which are more susceptible to the development scenario include the well-integrated settlement edges, natural value associated with Bassingbourn Barracks County Wildlife Site, woodland and trees, and open views across arable fields to treed horizons. Key characteristics which are less susceptible to the development scenario are the commonplace arable landcover pattern and relatively few long views due to woodland and trees.

Overall, this Assessment Unit is of **medium** sensitivity to the development scenario.

Sensitivity Level	Definition
Medium	Typically, a landscape comprising relatively commonplace components and/or has few distinctive characteristics and/or is an area in moderate condition. Key characteristics and valued attributes of the landscape have some susceptibility to the particular type and scale of change being assessed. Considerable care may be needed in locating and designing change within the landscape.

3.5.184 In this context, there are limited opportunities for residential, commercial and mixed-use development with increased height/scale in this Assessment Unit.

Assessment Unit BAS02

Criteria	Susceptibility
Natural Factors	Natural factors that make the landscape less susceptible to the development scenario: - Predominantly medium to large arable fields with limited hedgerows and occasional small blocks of woodland Natural factors that make the landscape more susceptible to the development scenario: - Gently undulating landform rising in the south - Waterbodies include streams which are occasionally well treed, ponds south of Kneesworth and several reservoirs - Generally sparse vegetation but occasional woodland blocks, shelterbelts and clumps of trees add structure and diversity
Cultural Factors	Cultural factors that make the landscape less susceptible to the development scenario: - Highways include the A1198, a straight Roman Road 'Ermine Street' which forms much of the western boundary - The Wireless Station Business Park is relatively well screened however large buildings can be glimpsed in the wider landscape Cultural factors that make the landscape more susceptible to the development scenario: - Settled rural landscape with several farms east of Bassingbourn Barracks and Kneesworth, and south of the small village of Whaddon - Residential development in Kneesworth is well integrated into the wider landscape through strong tree belts - Residential development at Whaddon is well integrated into the landscape by trees - Bassingbourn Barracks is generally well screened and unobtrusive
Perceptual & Aesthetic Factors	Perceptual and aesthetic factors that make the landscape less susceptible to the development scenario: - Generally limited scenic quality associated with large scale open arable fields and limited hedges, however views north and south towards the distant rising Chalk Hills are of scenic value Perceptual and aesthetic factors that make the landscape more susceptible to the development scenario: - Generally strong sense of tranquillity away from the A1198 corridor

Criteria	Susceptibility
Landscape Quality/Condition	Landscape quality/condition factors that make the landscape less susceptible to the development scenario: - Limited rural character associated with the large scale open arable fields and limited hedgerows - Fields have been enlarged and hedgerows are limited
Views & Visual Context	Views and visual context that make the landscape less susceptible to the development scenario: - Wooded skylines are occasionally interrupted by poles and wires associated with the telecommunications network Views and visual context that make the landscape more susceptible to the development scenario: - Views towards wooded horizons and the gently rising Chalk Hills to the north and south are generally long, open and expansive - The church spire in Bassingbourn is a key landmark on skylines - Recreational users of PROW including the Harcamlow Way Long Distance Path - Residential receptors on the eastern edge of Kneesworth
Landscape Value	Characteristics, features and qualities of landscape value that make the landscape less susceptible to the development scenario: - Relatively commonplace arable landscape - Limited geological, topographical or geomorphological value - Limited rural character associated with large arable fields - Generally limited scenic value, however views towards the distant rising Chalk Hills contribute scenic quality Characteristics, features and qualities of landscape value that make the landscape more susceptible to the development scenario: - Natural value associated with woodland and trees - Time depth associated with Ermine Street and Ashwell Street Roman Roads along the western and southern boundaries - Recreational value of the PROW network including the Harcamlow Way Long Distance Path - Locally valued views from the Harcamlow Way, eastern edge of Kneesworth and southern part of Whaddon across arable fields
Mitigation Potential	There is potential to mitigate the type and scale of change associated with the development scenario in this area by following the relevant landscape guidelines set out in the

Criteria	Susceptibility
	Greater Cambridge Landscape Character Assessment (2021) where appropriate. There may be scope for strategic landscape mitigation measures to help integrate development into the landscape (such as structural planting/buffers) where carefully designed to be compatible with the characteristics of the wider landscape. The management and enhancement of existing hedgerows and consideration of opportunities for re-planting hedgerows where these have been lost/become fragmented would be beneficial for creating a well-integrated settlement edge.

3.5.185 In summary, this is a large scale, relatively commonplace arable landscape. Views across farmland with few hedgerows are open and expansive. Key characteristics are more susceptible to the development scenario include views towards the distant Chalk Hills to north and south, including from the Harcamlow Way, which add some scenic value, time depth associated with straight Roman roads, soft village edges, and natural value associated with woodland and trees. Large scale arable farmland with few hedges, commercial development east of Kneesworth and moving traffic on the A1198 which erodes the sense of tranquillity are less susceptible to the development scenario. Overall, this landscape is of **medium** sensitivity to the development scenario.

Sensitivity Level	Definition
Medium	Typically, a landscape comprising relatively commonplace components and/or has few distinctive characteristics and/or is an area in moderate condition. Key characteristics and valued attributes of the landscape have some susceptibility to the particular type and scale of change being assessed. Considerable care may be needed in locating and designing change within the landscape.

3.5.186 In this context, there are limited opportunities for residential, commercial and mixed-use development with increased height/scale in this Assessment Unit.

Assessment Unit BAS03

Criteria	Susceptibility
Natural Factors	Natural factors that make the landscape less susceptible to the development scenario: • Large scale, simple landscape of predominantly medium to large, long, linear arable fields in a regular pattern Natural factors that make the landscape more susceptible to the development scenario: • Gently rolling Chalk Hills rising to the south • Generally sparse vegetation but occasional small woodlands and occasional fragmented hedgerows add structure to the landscape
Cultural Factors	Cultural factors that make the landscape less susceptible to the development scenario: • Occasional large farm buildings and solar PV energy development • Highways include the A1198, a Roman Road 'Ermine Street' Cultural factors that make the landscape more susceptible to the development scenario: • Unsettled rural landscape with built development comprising nurseries and a farm
Perceptual & Aesthetic Factors	Perceptual and aesthetic factors that make the landscape more susceptible to the development scenario: • Generally high scenic quality associated with the rolling landform and hilltop woodland • Generally strong sense of tranquillity away from the A1198
Landscape Quality/ Condition	Landscape quality/condition factors that make the landscape less susceptible to the development scenario: • Fields have been enlarged and hedgerows are limited Landscape quality/condition factors that make the landscape more susceptible to the development scenario: • Generally strong rural character associated the rolling landform and hilltop woodland
Views & Visual Context	Views and visual context that make the landscape less susceptible to the development scenario: • Localised glimpses of solar PV development • Views to the south east include distant, large scale industrial development on the northern edge of Royston • Wooded skylines are generally undeveloped, however are occasionally interrupted by telecommunications poles and wires

Criteria	Susceptibility
	Views and visual context that make the landscape more susceptible to the development scenario: • Views across rolling hills towards wooded horizons are generally long and open • Recreational users of PROW including the Harcamlow Way along Ashwell Street Roman Road
Landscape Value	Characteristics, features and qualities of landscape value that make the landscape less susceptible to the development scenario: • Relatively commonplace arable landscape Characteristics, features and qualities of landscape value that make the landscape more susceptible to the development scenario: • Locally distinctive rolling Chalk Hills with strong rural character and high scenic value • Natural value associated with woodland • Time depth associated with Ashwell Street Roman Roads • Recreational value of the limited PROW network • Valued views from PROW
Mitigation Potential	There is potential to mitigate the type and scale of change associated with the development scenario in this area by following the relevant landscape guidelines set out in the Greater Cambridge Landscape Character Assessment (2021) where appropriate. There may be scope for strategic landscape mitigation measures to help integrate development into the landscape (such as structural planting/buffers) where carefully designed to be compatible with the characteristics of the wider landscape. The management and enhancement of existing hedgerows and consideration of opportunities for re-planting hedgerows where these have been lost/become fragmented would be beneficial for creating a well-integrated settlement edge.

3.5.187 In summary, rolling Chalk Hills are locally distinctive, however the landcover pattern of large scale arable fields is simple and commonplace within Greater Cambridge. Key characteristics which are more susceptible to the development scenario include the landform, strong rural character, high scenic value, distinctive hill top woodland, long, open views, and time depth and recreational value associated with Ashwell Street Roman Road. Overall, this

Assessment Unit is of **medium to high** sensitivity to the development scenario.

Sensitivity Level	Definition
Medium to high	Typically, a landscape containing some important components and/or has some distinctive characteristics and/or is an area in moderate to good condition. Key characteristics and valued attributes of the landscape are susceptible to the particular type and scale of change being assessed. Considerable care would be needed in locating and designing change within the landscape.

3.5.188 In this context, there are limited opportunities for residential, commercial and mixed-use development with increased height/scale in this Assessment Unit

Assessment Unit BAS04

Criteria	Susceptibility
Natural Factors	Natural factors that make the landscape less susceptible to the development scenario: - Predominantly medium to large arable fields with occasional fragmented hedgerows and hedgerow trees Natural factors that make the landscape more susceptible to the development scenario: - Gently undulating landform rising towards the Chalk Hills in the south - Well treed stream north of Wellhead Spring - Generally sparse vegetation but around the edges of Bassingbourn is a small scale landcover pattern comprising orchards, lowland fen, woodland, shelterbelts and clumps of trees which add structure and diversity to the landscape
Cultural Factors	Cultural factors that make the landscape less susceptible to the development scenario: - Settled rural landscape between Bassingbourn and the villages of Abington Pigotts and Litlington - Highways include the A1198, a Roman Road 'Ermine Street' which forms much of the eastern boundary - Built development includes several farms, linear residential development and a nursery along the A1198 and a sewage works on the western boundary Cultural factors that make the landscape more susceptible to the development scenario: - Residential development in Bassingbourn is well integrated into the wider landscape through small scale paddocks, orchard, shelterbelts and clumps of trees
Perceptual & Aesthetic Factors	Perceptual and aesthetic factors that make the landscape less susceptible to the development scenario: - Generally limited scenic quality associated with large scale open arable fields, although views of the Chalk Hills to the north and south add scenic value Perceptual and aesthetic factors that make the landscape more susceptible to the development scenario: - Generally strong sense of tranquillity away from the A1198 corridor
Landscape Quality/ Condition	Landscape quality/condition factors that make the landscape less susceptible to the development scenario: Fields have been enlarged and hedgerows are limited Landscape quality/condition factors that make the landscape more susceptible to the development scenario:

Criteria	Susceptibility
	Generally strong rural character associated with large scale arable fields, trees associated with villages and occasional trees in the wider landscape
Views & Visual Context	Views and visual context that make the landscape less susceptible to the development scenario: - Wooded skylines are occasionally interrupted by poles and wires associated with the telecommunications network - Strong localised sense of visual enclosure due to well treed landscape close to Bassingbourn Views and visual context that make the landscape more susceptible to the development scenario: - Views towards wooded horizons are generally long, open and expansive - Views towards the distinctive elevated Chalk Hills to the north and south add scenic value - The church spire in Bassingbourn is a key landmark on skylines - Recreational users of PROW - Residential receptors on the western and southern edges of Bassingbourn
Landscape Value	Characteristics, features and qualities of landscape value that make the landscape less susceptible to the development scenario: - Limited geological, topographical or geomorphological value - Relatively commonplace arable landscape - Limited time depth Characteristics, features and qualities of landscape value that make the landscape more susceptible to the development scenario: - Natural value associated with woodland and trees - Time depth associated with Ermine Street and Ashwell Street Roman Roads - Recreational value of the PROW network - Locally valued views from the western edge of Bassingbourn
Mitigation Potential	There is potential to mitigate the type and scale of change associated with the development scenario in this area by following the relevant landscape guidelines set out in the Greater Cambridge Landscape Character Assessment (2021) where appropriate. There may be scope for strategic landscape mitigation measures to help integrate development into the landscape

Criteria	Susceptibility
	(such as structural planting/buffers) where carefully designed to be compatible with the characteristics of the wider landscape. The management and enhancement of existing hedgerows and consideration of opportunities for re-planting hedgerows where these have been lost/become fragmented would be beneficial for creating a well-integrated settlement edge.

3.5.189 In summary, this is a commonplace open arable landscape with limited vegetation. Key characteristics which are more susceptible to the development scenario include the small scale landscape pattern associated with Bassingbourn, Time depth associated with Ermine Street and Ashwell Street Roman Roads and long views, including towards the Chalk Hills to north and south. Key characteristics which are less susceptible to the development scenario include the generally sparse vegetation and the simple landcover pattern. Overall, this Assessment Unit is of **medium** sensitivity to the development scenario.

Sensitivity Level	Definition
Medium	Typically, a landscape comprising relatively commonplace components and/or has few distinctive characteristics and/or is an area in moderate condition. Key characteristics and valued attributes of the landscape have some susceptibility to the particular type and scale of change being assessed. Considerable care may be needed in locating and designing change within the landscape.

3.5.190 In this context, there are limited opportunities for residential, commercial and mixed-use development with increased height/scale in this Assessment Unit.

Summary

3.5.191 The key findings of the Landscape Sensitivity Assessment of the fringes of Bassingbourn are summarised in the table below.

Assessment Unit	Landscape Sensitivity
BAS01	Medium
BAS02	Medium
BAS03	Medium to high
BAS04	Medium

APPENDIX A

Methodology

METHODOLOGY

Step 1 – Define the Purpose and Scope of the Assessment

Purpose

In line with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework and Planning Practice Guidance, the purpose of the Landscape Sensitivity Assessment is to support and be a part of the evidence base for the Greater Cambridge Local Plan and Sustainability Appraisal.

Together with the Greater Cambridge Landscape Character Assessment, the Greater Cambridge Landscape Sensitivity Assessment provides a comprehensive understanding of the distinctive features and qualities of the Greater Cambridge landscape and its sensitivity to future development and land use change.

The Landscape Sensitivity Assessment will be used by GCSP to:

- Help in developing an appropriate spatial strategy in the Greater Cambridge Local Plan
- Assist with decision-making in the location of site allocations and broad locations for infrastructure
- Inform the review and drafting of suitable Local Plan policies to protect and enhance sensitive and valued landscapes susceptible to particular types of development
- Assist in developing design, place-making and sustainable development/climate change policies in the Local Plan
- Inform development management/decision-making on planning applications in relation to the location/landscape context, design and mitigation of different types of development
- Help in identifying opportunities for landscape restoration, enhancement and management
- Provide a baseline assessment of the current landscape's sensitivities, qualities and values as a tool for monitoring and managing landscape change to inform future decision-making

- Support other studies/guidance that forms part of the evidence base for the Local Plan (particularly the Green Belt Assessment and Green Infrastructure Opportunity Mapping)

The Landscape Sensitivity Assessment can also be used by applicants to inform the production of Landscape and Visual Impact Assessments for planning applications.

The objective of part 1 of the Landscape Sensitivity Assessment is to assess, at a strategic level, the relative landscape sensitivity of selected areas to particular types and scales of residential, commercial and mixed-use development.

Scope

The phase 1 scope for the Part 1 Landscape Sensitivity Assessment comprises:

Cambridge (2.5km study areas)

- Northern Fringe
- Eastern Fringe
- Southern Fringe
- Western Fringe

Fen Edge Villages (1.5km study areas)

- Over
- Willingham
- Swavesey
- Longstanton and Northstowe
- Cottenham
- Waterbeach
- Oakington
- Girton
- Histon and Impington
- Milton

Western Claylands Villages

- Bar Hill & Dry Drayton (1.5km study area)
- Papworth Everard (1.5km study area)
- Lower, Great and Upper Cambourne (3.5km study area)
- Hardwick (1.5km study area)
- Comberton (1.5km study area)

Western Greensand Village

- Gamlingay (1.5km study area)

Chalklands Villages

- Fulbourn (1.5km study area)
- Great Shelford and Stapleford (1.5km study area)
- Sawston (1.5km study area)
- Great and Little Abington (3km study area)
- Whittlesford and Whittlesford Bridge (3km study area)
- Duxford (1.5km study area)
- Linton (1.5km study area)
- Foxton (1.5km study area)
- Shepreth (1.5km study area)
- Melbourn (1.5km study area)
- Bassingbourn (1.5km study area)

Where appropriate, the following are excluded from the study areas:

- Committed strategic sites with planning consent
- Land outside the Greater Cambridge boundary

In defining individual study areas, small villages/hamlets are considered as landscape features (alongside woodlands, fieldscapes, etc) and as such these may be dissected by the Study Area boundary.

Limitations

This study provides an assessment of the relative sensitivity of landscapes within the identified study areas to residential, commercial and mixed-use development at a strategic scale based on testing indicative development scenarios. Care should be taken not to interpret the results as a definitive statement on the suitability of a specific location, layout or design for a particular development.

As with all criteria-based assessments, which are to a greater or lesser extent subjective, a degree of caution is required in its interpretation to avoid the suggestion that certain landscape features or qualities can be absolutely associated with certain sensitivities. In reality, landscape sensitivity is the result of a complex interplay of often unequally weighted variables based on professional judgement.

There may be some criteria which are more important to landscape character in a particular area when assessed at a strategic level. Where there are variations in

relation to the sensitivity of individual landscape features within an overall assessment, these are highlighted in the assessment findings where appropriate.

This study does not provide an assessment of the landscape's capacity to accommodate a particular amount of residential, commercial and mixed-use development. In line with Natural England's guidance, the Landscape Sensitivity Assessment can be used to influence where, and how much, residential, commercial and mixed-use development might be located in areas of lower landscape sensitivity without undesirable impacts on landscape character and the visual resource. However, judgements on 'how much' development might be accommodated cannot be based on landscape sensitivity alone and the results of this study will need to be considered along with other constraints and wider policy considerations.

This study is not a substitute for detailed technical siting, design and landscape and visual impact assessments for specific developments, and all proposals will need to be assessed on their individual merits against suitable criteria-based policies in the Local Plan addressing additional site-specific planning issues not covered by this study such as:

- Ecological issues
- Cultural heritage/archaeological issues
- Visual amenity issues
- Technical design/feasibility issues

Step 2 – Gather Information to Inform the Assessment

Sources of landscape character and visual evidence

The following sources of evidence and guidance are used to inform the assessment where applicable:

- Greater Cambridge Landscape Character Assessment (February 2021):
 - Landscape Character Type and Landscape Character Area descriptions and guidelines (Chapter 4.0)
 - Character of South Cambridgeshire's Rural Villages (Chapter 5.0) – including:

- South Cambridgeshire Village Design Guides SPD (Adopted 2021)
- South Cambridgeshire Conservation Area Appraisals/Management Plans SPDs (2020)
- South Cambridgeshire Villages Capacity Study (1998)
- Character of the Cambridge Environs (Chapter 6.0)
- Greater Cambridge Strategic Heritage Impact Assessment (Draft, 2021)
- Greater Cambridge Green Infrastructure Opportunity Mapping Study (2021)
- 1:25k Ordnance Survey mapping (latest version downloaded May 2021)
- Aerial photography (latest Bing and Google Earth imagery accessed May-July 2021)

Development Scenarios

Judgements concerning whether a landscape may be able to accommodate change are informed by the likely interactions between the landscape and visual susceptibility and value of the defined area, and the key attributes of the type and scale of development under consideration.

In line with the purpose of this study, the following residential, commercial and mixed-use development typologies were agreed with the GCSP as the development scenarios for testing through the assessment process:

- **Around the urban edge of Cambridge** – typologies here follow the typical height/scale of existing new developments around the City for example Great Kneighton and Trumpington Meadows (between 2-5 storeys for residential development and 2-4 storeys for commercial development).
- **Within and around the edge of existing village settlements** – typologies here are typically between 2-3 storeys for residential development and 1-2 storeys for commercial development.
- **Opportunities for residential/commercial development with increased height/scale** – are considered where it is considered appropriate in landscape terms to divert from the typical height/scale of existing new development in specific areas.

Assessment Criteria and Susceptibility/Value Indicators

Refer to Natural England's definition of Landscape Sensitivity, Landscape Susceptibility and Landscape Value as set out in Approach section above.

Taking into account the baseline character of the landscape as described in the Greater Cambridge Landscape Character Assessment, a bespoke set of assessment criteria and indicators used for assessing the susceptibility and value of the landscape to the residential, commercial and mixed-use development scenarios is set out in **Table 1.1**.

Landscape Sensitivity Definitions

Taking into account the criteria and indicators for assessing the susceptibility and value of the landscape, the bespoke sensitivity levels used for assessing the overall sensitivity of the Greater Cambridge landscape to the residential, commercial and mixed-use development scenarios is set out in **Table 1.2**.

Table 1.1 – Assessment Criteria and Susceptibility/Value Indicators

Sensitivity Criteria	Susceptibility/Value Indicators
Natural Factors	Landform – Open, highly prominent and distinctive or intricate and complex landforms with sharp changes in level are likely to be more susceptible to a development scenario than flat and indistinct landforms. The criteria also considers whether the development scenario would interrupt the relationship between distinctive landform features such as escarpments, prominent hills or plateaux. In some locations the development scenario may affect skyline character.
	Landscape pattern/landcover/scale – Landscapes with a small scale, complex and intricate landscape pattern arising from landcover elements including settlement, field pattern or vegetation cover are likely to be more susceptible to a particular development scenario than landscapes with a simple landcover pattern. Landscapes enclosed by buildings, trees and woodlands may offer more opportunity to accommodate a particular development scenario.
Cultural Factors	Built development/settlement pattern – The absence of modern built development/infrastructure, infrequent/limited residential built form, dispersed settlement/sparsely settled/un-populated areas, and/or the presence of small scale historic/vernacular settlement/buildings/ structures, is likely to make a landscape more susceptible to a particular development scenario.
	Relationship to settlement edge – This considers the nature of any adjoining settlement edge (whether it is positive or negative, smooth, linear or indented). The landscape is more susceptible where a particular development scenario would not successfully integrate with the existing settlement edge and would disrupt the functional relationship with the surrounding countryside.
Perceptual and Aesthetic Factors	Sense of tranquillity – Landscapes with a strong sense of tranquillity or that have a strong rural feel will be more susceptible to a particular development scenario where this would cause disturbance to and loss of this valued rural quality.
	Scenic quality – Landscapes with a high scenic quality and higher concentration of special qualities and/or which form the setting to such landscapes are likely to be more susceptible to the development scenarios. This is because of the potential for loss or disturbance to their integrity and scenic value compared to landscapes which are strongly influenced by intrusive manmade structures and human activity.

Sensitivity Criteria	Susceptibility/Value Indicators
Landscape Quality/ Condition	Intactness of field boundaries – Considers the scale and integrity of field boundaries (hedgerows/trees/ditches). Intact hedgerows/tree boundaries can help screen development but can also be more susceptible to loss/degradation from a particular development scenario, particularly historic hedgerows.
	Sense of place/rural quality – Landscapes with a strong rural character in good condition and with features worthy of conservation, will be more susceptible to a particular development scenario because of the potential impact on their legibility and upon features and combinations of elements which may be difficult to replace. This applies to landscapes with semi-natural habitats and valued natural features such as woodland/hedgerows with good connectivity.
Views and Visual Context	General visibility/types of views/intervisibility – The likelihood of a particular development scenario being visible depends on the scale of the development, the landform in which the development would be sited, and the screening opportunities afforded by the land cover, particularly buildings, trees and woodlands (taking into account seasonal variations). Landscapes which are visually contained with limited inward and outward views are likely to be less susceptible to a particular development scenario than open landscapes with extensive inward and outward views. This considers the visual relationship of the Assessment Unit with any existing settlement edges, whether there are any visual detractors which may reduce its susceptibility influences and whether a particular development scenario is likely to be well accommodated into its surroundings. Intervisibility between Assessment Units is also important.
	Skylines and other focal points – Skylines can be susceptible to a particular development scenario as they are generally widely visible with features typically being seen in relief against a light sky. Undeveloped rural skylines are particularly susceptible as are attractive skylines which form a backdrop to settlement. The presence of distinctive or historic landscape features such as hilltop monuments, church spires/towers or historic villages are also more susceptible . Assessment Units may form part of, or may have a strong visual link to, a distinctive skyline.

Sensitivity Criteria	Susceptibility/Value Indicators
	The nature, composition and characteristics of the existing views experienced – Landscapes of attractive scenery, character, quality, integrity, strong sense of place and local distinctiveness will typically be more susceptible to a particular development scenario than less scenic areas. This includes landscapes that are designated for their natural beauty, but also areas of undesignated landscape, including scenic areas with strong character.
	Receptor types – Residents, communities, people engaged in outdoor recreation where the landscape is part of the experience, visitors to landscape whose interest is focussed on natural and built heritage assets, and users of scenic routes are likely to be more susceptible to a particular development scenario. Transport users (particularly of high-speed roads) are usually considered less susceptible receptors, unless the road is considered to be a scenic route or important gateway to a destination.
	The level of access and relative numbers of people likely to be affected – The greater the number of sensitive visual receptors in an area, the more susceptible the area will be to change from a particular development scenario. This includes receptors within the Assessment Unit as well as receptors that may lie further away but in locations which have direct and open views towards the Assessment Unit (such as views from elevated hill forts/trig points.)
Landscape Value	Strength of landscape character/quality and condition – Landscapes with a strong and positive character in good condition and with features worthy of conservation, are likely to be more susceptible to a particular development scenario because of the potential impact on their legibility and upon features and combinations of elements which may be difficult to replace.
	Rarity – Landscapes which are commonplace are less likely to be valued than landscapes that are unique or rare as these are often irreplaceable and are likely to be more susceptible to a particular development scenario
	Geological, topographical and geomorphological value – This considers the shape and scale of the land and the extent that there may be distinctive and valued geological, topographical or hydrological features, which are more susceptible to a particular development scenario. Such features may be distinctive in their own right or may have influenced the creation of areas of distinctive and valued landscape character.

Sensitivity Criteria	Susceptibility/Value Indicators
	Historic landscape value – A landscape that displays historic continuity and time depth (as reflected in the presence of nationally designated historic landscape assets, and/or is important to the setting/identity of heritage assets), and/or is associated with significant artistic or literary references and/or displays historic landscape patterns including field patterns or dykes are likely to be more susceptible to a particular development scenario.
	Natural value – Landscapes with a strong and positive character in good condition and with features worthy of conservation, are likely to be more susceptible to a particular development scenario because of the potential impact on their legibility and upon features and combinations of elements which may be difficult to replace. This applies to landscapes with semi-natural habitats and valued natural features such as woodland and hedgerows with good connectivity.
	Recreational value – Landscapes that make an important contribution to the recreational use and enjoyment of an area are likely to be more susceptible to a particular development scenario. Indicators include the presence of nature reserves, country parks, allotments, outdoor sports facilities, public rights of way, green corridors, scenic routes and promoted viewpoints. This also includes recognised scenic or promoted tourist routes on an Ordnance Survey map, tourist map or within guidebooks.
	Scenic and other aesthetic and perceptual and experiential qualities – Landscapes that are defined by the presence of distinctive, dramatic or striking patterns of landform or land cover, or by strong aesthetic response to qualities such as rural character (traditional land uses with few human influences), perceived naturalness, sense of remoteness or tranquillity and dark skies, are likely to be more susceptible to a particular development scenario.
	Valued views – Views of heritage significance to and from the City of Cambridge, and views from promoted trails, viewpoints and outdoor destinations identified from an Ordnance Survey map, tourist map or guidebook are likely to be more susceptible to a particular development scenario. Views across the countryside towards historic villages with prominent church spires are also likely to be more susceptible to a particular development scenario.

Sensitivity Criteria	Susceptibility/Value Indicators
Mitigation Potential	This section provides guidance on the potential to mitigate the type and scale of change associated with the development scenario with reference to the Greater Cambridge Landscape Character Assessment's landscape guidelines (and other relevant sources of guidance), the scope for strategic landscape mitigation measures (such as structural planting/buffers) and opportunities for landscape enhancement/restoration where appropriate.

Table 1.2 – Overall Landscape Sensitivity Definitions

Sensitivity Level	Definition
High	Typically, a landscape containing unique/important components and/or is an area of particularly distinctive character and/or contains landscape components that are in very good condition. Key characteristics and valued attributes of the landscape are highly susceptible to the particular type and scale of change being assessed. Such change is likely to result in a significant change to character.
Medium to high	Typically, a landscape containing some important components and/or has some distinctive characteristics and/or is an area in moderate to good condition. Key characteristics and valued attributes of the landscape are susceptible to the particular type and scale of change being assessed. Considerable care would be needed in locating and designing change within the landscape.
Medium	Typically, a landscape comprising relatively commonplace components and/or has few distinctive characteristics and/or is an area in moderate condition. Key characteristics and valued attributes of the landscape have some susceptibility to the particular type and scale of change being assessed. Considerable care may be needed in locating and designing change within the landscape.
Medium to low	Typically, a landscape containing relatively unimportant components and/or has few distinctive characteristics and/or is an area in low to moderate condition. Key characteristics and valued attributes have limited susceptibility to the particular type and scale of change being assessed. Although change can potentially be accommodated, care would still be needed in locating and designing such change within the landscape.
Low	Typically, a landscape containing relatively unimportant components and/or has limited distinctive characteristics and/or is an area in poor condition. Key characteristics and valued attributes are less likely to be adversely affected by the particular type and scale of change being assessed. Change can potentially be accommodated without undue negative consequences.

Step 3 – Assess Landscape Sensitivity

In line with the purposes and scope of the study set out in Step 1, “Assessment Units” comprising parcels of land with similar landscape characteristics are identified and mapped within the identified study areas. These are generally based on the relevant Landscape Character Types and Landscape Character Areas defined in the Greater Cambridge Landscape Character Assessment³², which have been sub-divided, where appropriate, to reflect specific landscape features and characteristics at a more local scale identified from analysis of OS mapping, aerial images and field survey information.

Based on the information and development scenarios set out in Step 2, and supplemented by field surveys as appropriate, strategic level assessments are undertaken for the “Assessment Units” around each settlement or broad location/site using the relevant Assessment Criteria and Susceptibility/Value Indicators set out in **Table 1.1** and the Overall Landscape Sensitivity Definitions set out in **Table 1.2**.

The sensitivity judgements represent the typical level of sensitivity across the entire Assessment Unit and are specific to the particular landscapes of Greater Cambridge. Variations in the distribution of distinctive characteristics and valued attributes identified in the Greater Cambridge Landscape Character Assessment may influence the level of landscape sensitivity in particular parts of an Assessment Unit. Where there are variations in relation to the sensitivity of individual landscape features these are highlighted in the assessment findings where appropriate.

The field surveys are undertaken from publicly accessible places (roads, public rights of way etc) between April and July 2021 when trees and other vegetation are coming into leaf.

Step 4 – Reporting

The findings of the Landscape Sensitivity Assessments for each settlement or broad location/site are reported as follows:

- **Settlement Name/Location Description**
- **Assessment Units Map** – showing the boundaries of the Assessment Units mapped for each settlement or broad location/site and their unique reference codes
- **Wider Landscape Context** – identification of the relevant Landscape Character Type(s) and Landscape Character Area(s) identified by the Greater Cambridge Landscape Character Assessment that provide the wider landscape context for each settlement or broad location/site

³² See Figure 4.1 in the Greater Cambridge Landscape Character Assessment (2021)

- **Landscape Sensitivity Assessment** – a standard assessment proforma for each “Assessment Unit” structured around the assessment criteria supported by an overall assessment of each unit’s level of landscape sensitivity
- **Summary** – a table containing an overview of the key findings of the landscape sensitivity assessment for each settlement or broad location/site

Appendix B

Glossary of Terms

Glossary of Terms³³

Ancient woodland Woods that are believed to have been continuous woodland cover since at least 1600 AD.

Assessment unit Assessment units are reporting units which may be Landscape Character Areas or Landscape Character Types, or subdivisions of either, depending upon the scale and purpose of the Landscape sensitivity assessment. These may also be referred to as land parcels or sensitivity parcels. They may be informed by desk and field study and will be areas of broadly similar characteristics.

County Wildlife Sites Non-statutory areas of local importance for nature conservation that complement nationally and internationally designated geological and wildlife sites.

Elements Individual parts which make up the landscape, such as, for example, trees, hedges and buildings.*

Feature Particularly prominent or eye-catching elements in the landscape, such as tree clumps, church towers or wooded skylines OR a particular aspect of the project proposal.*

Green corridor A strip of green land that connects green areas or hubs and allows the movement and dispersal of wildlife, usually through urban landscapes. Green corridors can also be used to link housing areas to, for example, cycle networks, places of employment, town centres and community facilities, thus promoting walking and cycling.

Key characteristics Those combinations of elements which are particularly important to the current character of the landscape and help to give an area its particularly distinctive sense of place.*

Landscape means an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors **

Landscape character A distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements in the landscape that makes one landscape different from another, rather than better or worse.*

Landscape Character Areas (LCAs) These are single unique areas which are the discrete geographical areas of a particular landscape type.*

Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) The process of identifying and describing variation in the character of the landscape, and using this information to assist in managing change in the landscape. It seeks to identify and explain the unique combination of elements and features that make landscapes distinctive. The process results in the production of a Landscape Character Assessment.*

³³ Adapted from Natural England's 'An Approach to Landscape Sensitivity Assessment' (2019)

Landscape Character Types (LCTs) These are distinct types of landscape that are relatively homogeneous in character. They are generic in nature in that they may occur in different areas in different parts of the country, but wherever they occur they share broadly similar combinations of geology, topography, drainage patterns, vegetation, and historical land use and settlement pattern, and perceptual and aesthetic attributes.
*

Landscape Sensitivity Within the context of spatial planning and land management, landscape sensitivity is a term applied to landscape character and the associated visual resource, combining judgements of their susceptibility to the specific development type / development scenario or other change being considered together with the value(s) related to that landscape and visual resource. Landscape sensitivity may be regarded as a measure of the resilience, or robustness, of a landscape to withstand specified change arising from development types or land management practices, without undue negative effects on the landscape and visual baseline and their value.

Landscape Susceptibility Within the context of spatial planning and land management, landscape susceptibility is the degree to which a defined landscape and its associated visual qualities and attributes might respond to the specific development type / development scenario or other change without undue negative effects on landscape character and the visual resource.

Landscape value The relative value that is attached to different landscapes by society. A landscape may be valued by different stakeholders for a whole variety of reasons.*

Local Nature Reserves Accessible sites with wildlife or geological features that are of special interest locally, which offer people opportunities to study or learn about nature or simply to enjoy it.

Lodes Navigable channels used to transport goods across the fen

Overall sensitivity A term applied when landscape sensitivity reporting is generalised across the assessment unit (even though it must be accepted that such sensitivity to particular developments is likely to vary within the assessment unit).

PROW Public Rights of Way including footpaths, bridleways, byways open to all traffic and restricted byways.

Sensitive Quick to detect, respond to, or be affected by slight changes or influences

Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) Sites designated under the Wildlife and Conservation Act 1981 (as amended) for their outstanding interest in respect of flora, fauna, geology and or limnology (inland aquatic ecosystems).

Susceptible – likely to be influenced or harmed by a particular thing ***

Special Qualities A term often used in relation to National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty taken to mean qualities relating to wildlife and cultural

heritage, in addition to qualities relating to natural beauty. Usually defined in the management plan for the area.

‘Tranquillity’ Tranquillity is defined by GLVIA3 as ‘a state of calm and quietude associated with peace, considered to be a significant asset of landscape’. The term can also be synonymous with freedom from human activity and disturbance and is commonly associated with sense of wildness and remoteness. Tranquillity cannot readily be defined as an absolute environmental characteristic as human perceptions, as well as factual evidence, need to be considered. In the context of this study, it is most relevant to consider the relative sense of tranquillity between different landscapes taking into account the assessors’ perceptions (as reflected in the Greater Cambridge Landscape Character Assessment 2021 and field survey work for this study).

SOURCES:

* Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (2013), Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Third Edition, Routledge.

** Council of Europe (2000), European Landscape Convention, Council of Europe, Florence, Oct 2000.

*** Oxford University Press (2005), Compact Oxford English Dictionary.

