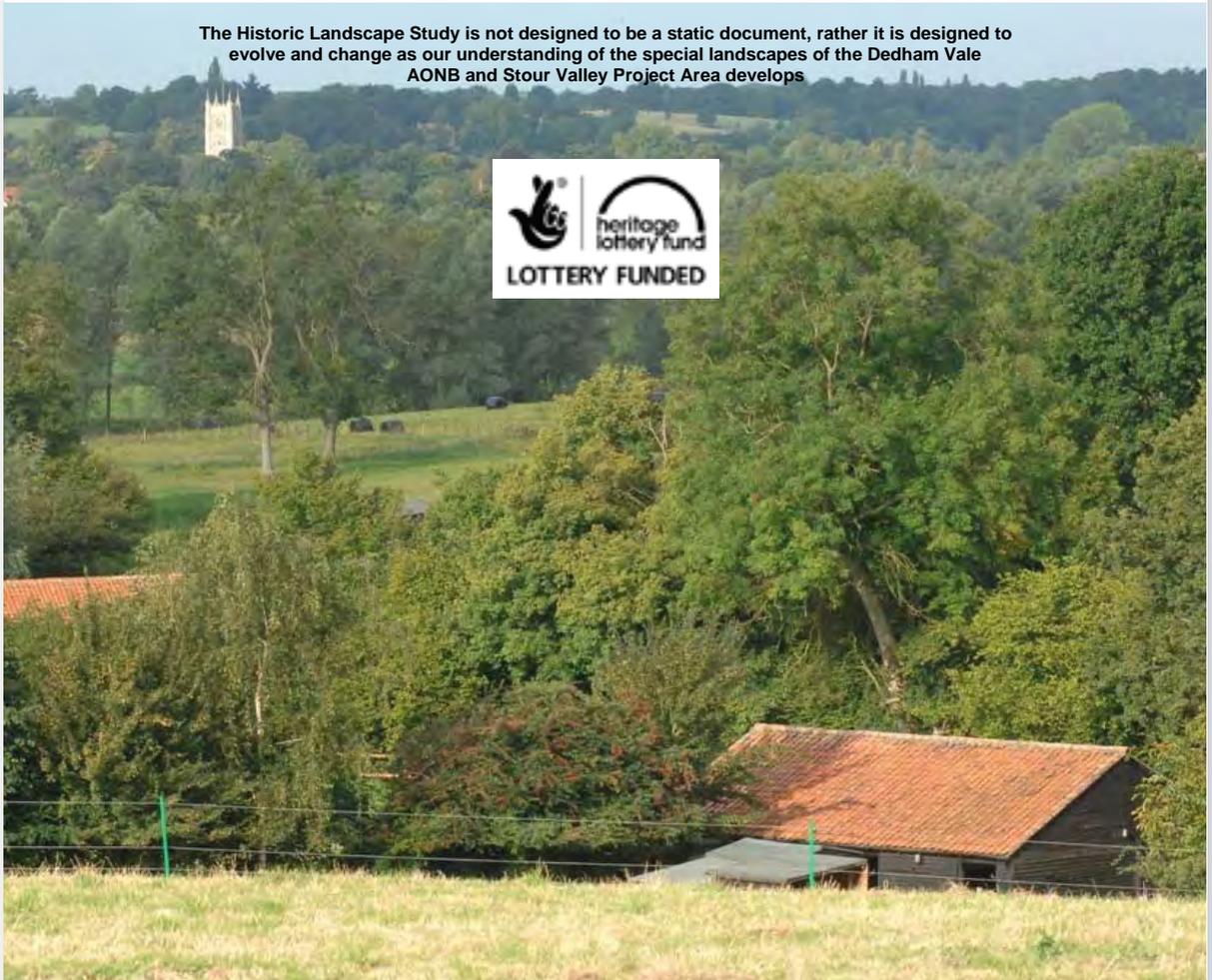


4. HISTORIC LANDSCAPE STUDY

Historic Landscape Study

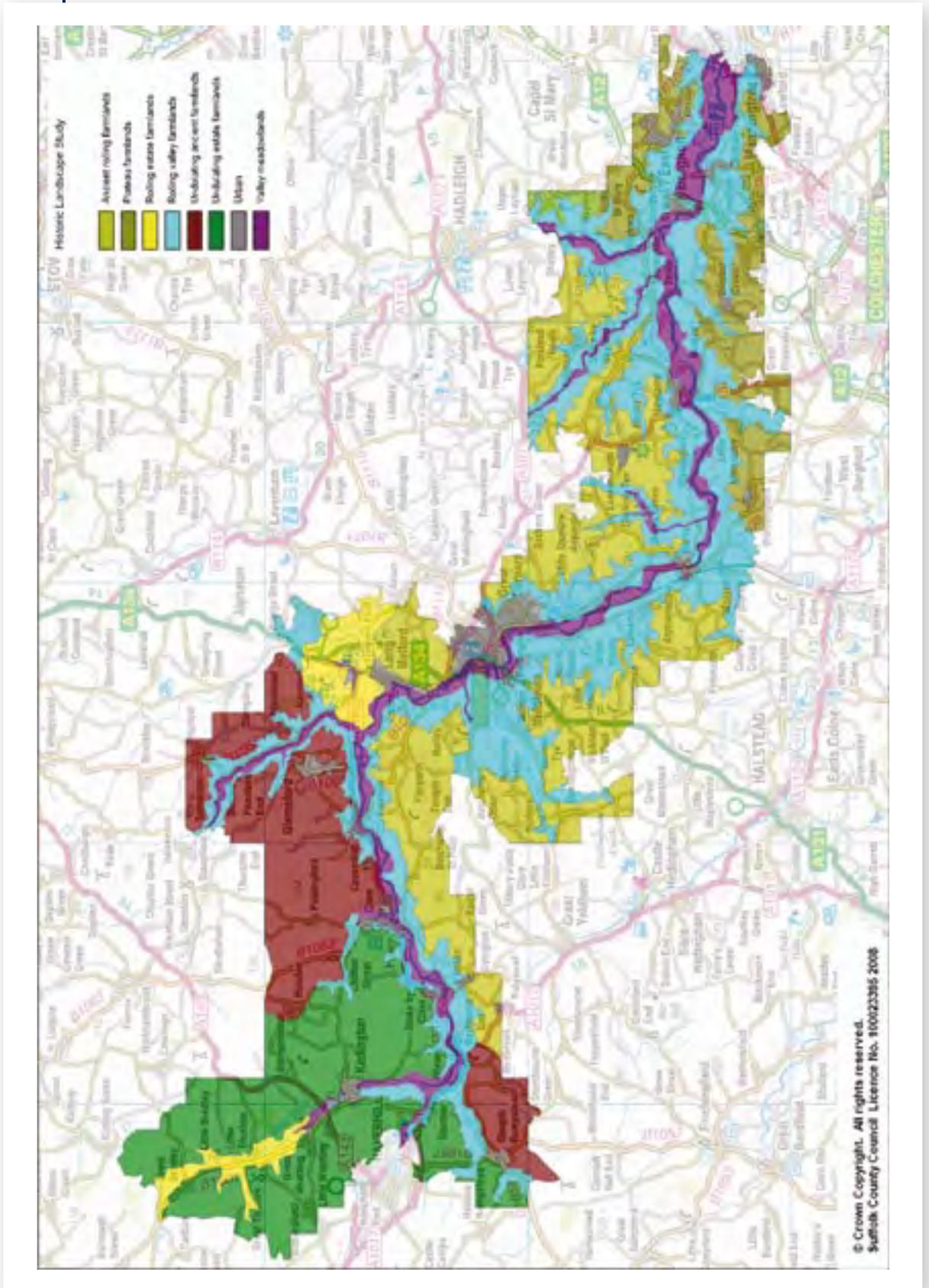
This Historic Landscape Study has been undertaken as part of the *Managing a Masterpiece: Stour Valley Landscape Partnership Scheme* funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, Local Authorities, Natural England and English Heritage.

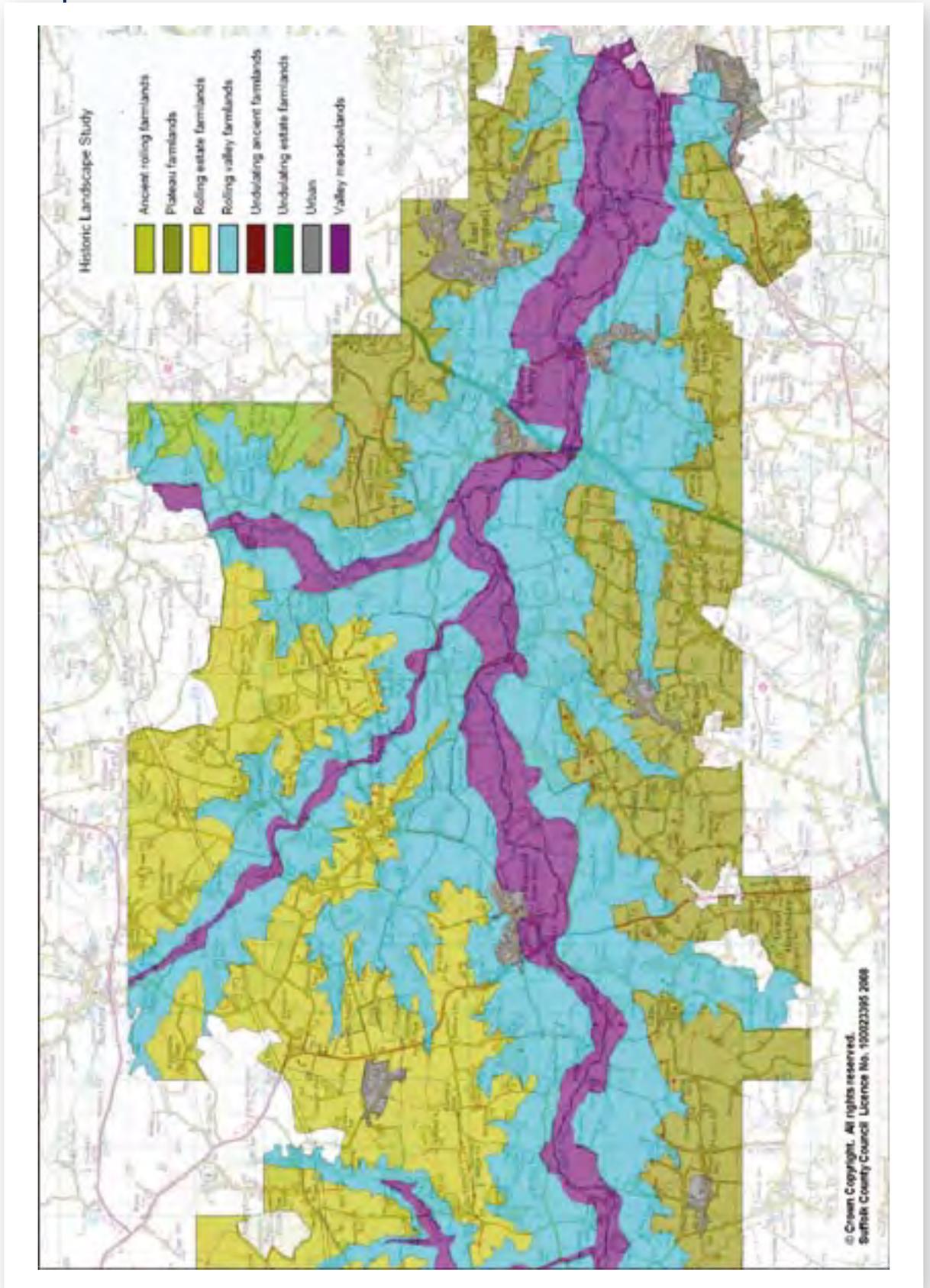
The Historic Landscape Study is not designed to be a static document, rather it is designed to evolve and change as our understanding of the special landscapes of the Dedham Vale AONB and Stour Valley Project Area develops.

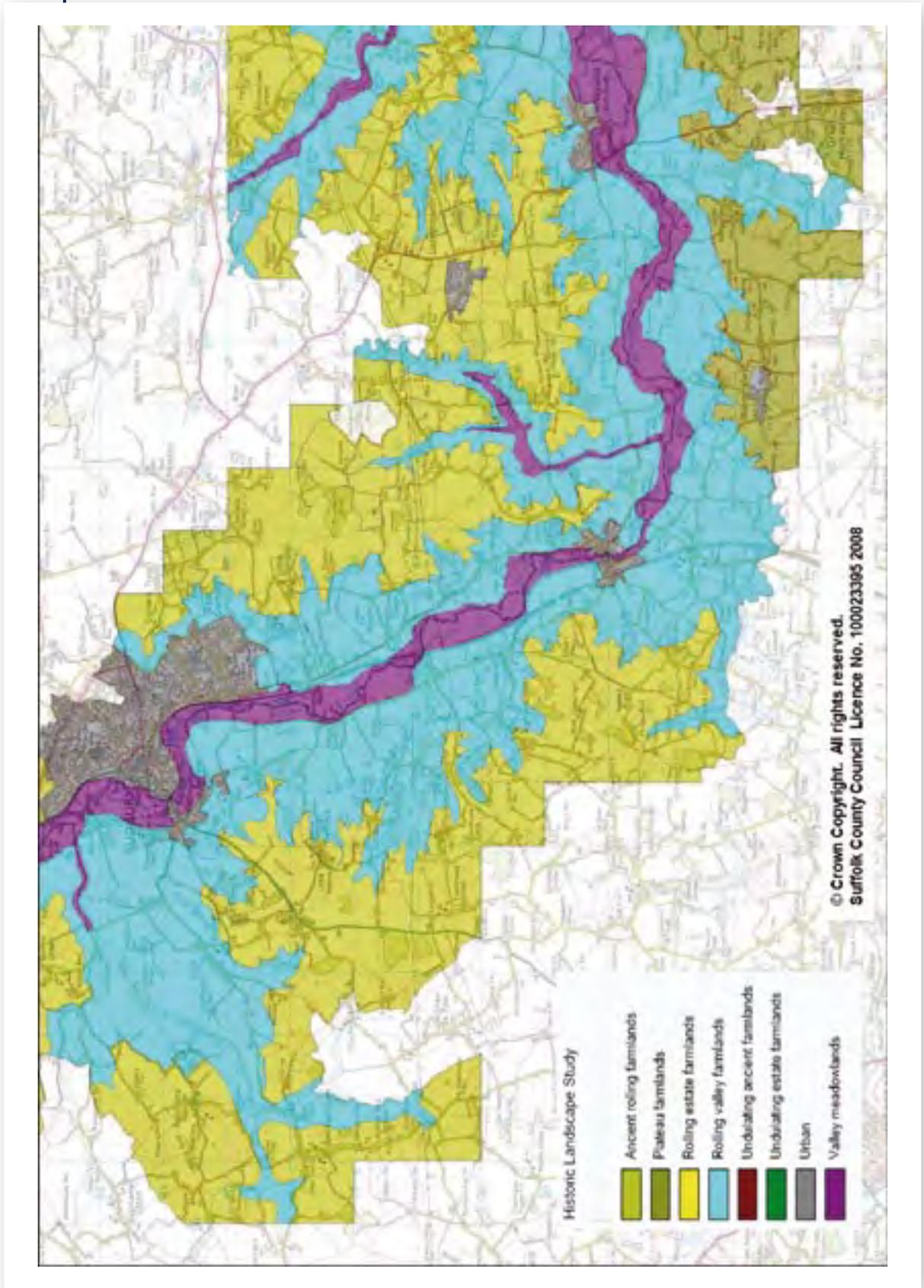


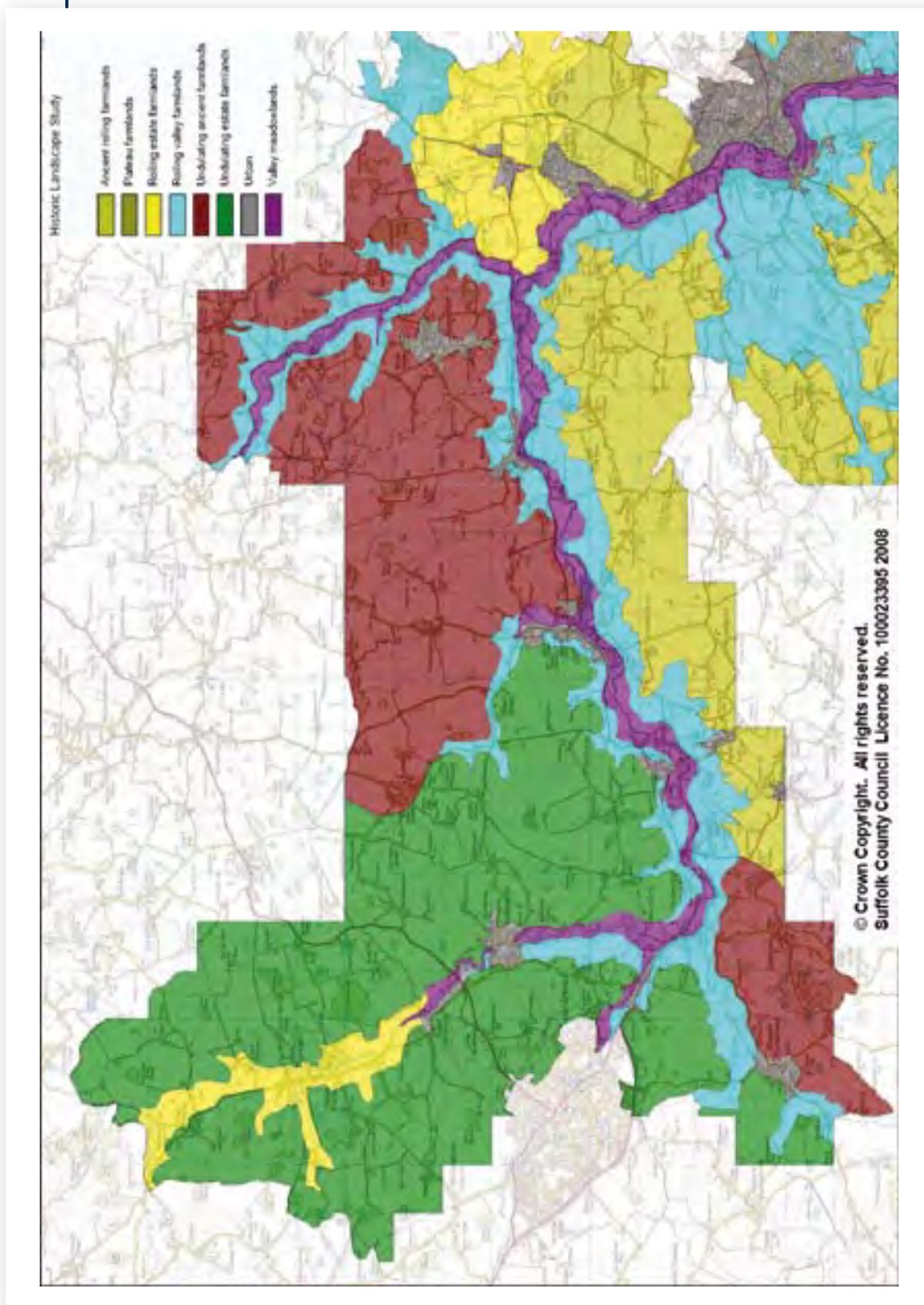
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Valley Meadowlands

Valley Meadowlands

Key Characteristics

- Quietly-flowing rivers, fringed with vegetation, running through flat valley-floor landscapes composed of alluvium or peat
- Cattle-grazed meadows divided by a network of wet ditches, but also sizeable areas converted to arable production
- Riverside trees, including pollards
- Plantations of poplars and cricket-bat willows, with occasional alder carr woodlands
- Occasional meres and small reedbeds
- Largely unsettled, but with former watermills and occasional other buildings on the higher pieces of land.

Location

- The Stour valley from Manningtree upstream to Great Wratting
- and in the valleys of the Stour's main tributaries:
 - The Stour Brook from Wixoe upstream to Haverhill
 - The Glem from Glensford upstream to Boxted
 - The Belchamp Brook for a short stretch on the Brundon/Borley border
 - The Box from Stoke-by-Nayland upstream to Boxford
 - The Brett from Higham upstream to Shelley

Geology, soils, landform and drainage

The River Stour is central to this landscape character type. It rises near the hamlet of Burton End on the border of the parishes of West Wratting and West Wickham in Cambridgeshire and flows for 42 miles to the sea at Harwich. Since 1971 the flow of water in the Stour has been supplemented by water diverted from the Great Ouse at the Denver Sluices in Norfolk under the Ely Ouse-Essex Transfer Scheme. Enabled by the Ely Ouse-Essex Water Act of 1968, this was first major inter-river transfer scheme in England and through it water is diverted down the Cut-Off Channel from Denver to Feltwell, and then piped 21 miles to Kirtling Green, where it is pumped into the Kirtling Brook, which joins the Stour at Great Bradley. Part of the water is further diverted from the Stour at Wixoe to the Colne and Pant, and from Wormingford to the Abberton Reservoir, all in Essex.

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The valley of the Stour was formed by meltwaters from the retreating icesheet of the great Anglian Glaciation, about 400,000 years ago. These laid down variable mixtures of gravel, sands, silts and clays in the valley bottom. The larger tributaries are virtually all on the northern side of the valley, reflecting the main direction of flow of the meltwaters. In many places, particularly around Sudbury and the Cornards, there are distinct river terraces reflecting different episodes of meltwater activity. Depressions in these glacial drift deposits sometimes resulted in the formation of ancient meres, such as Stour Mere, Cornard Mere and Wormingford Mere. In a few places some more recent lakes have been created by the exploitation of underlying gravel deposits, as at Flatford.

The greater part of Stour Mere in the upper Stour valley lies in the Suffolk parish of Wixoe and was being used for osier beds in the 19th century, but is now largely infilled and overgrown, but a smaller part survives as a wet area across the county boundary in Essex, where it gave name to the parish of Sturmer. *Sturmere* is recorded in the Anglo-Saxon poem about the Battle of Maldon written around AD 1000, and, as *Sturemara* in 12th-century documents concerning fishing rights in the river between it and Clare.

Wormingford Mere is famed for its story of a dragon. According to the Chronicle of St Albans, a dragon appeared at Bures in 1405 and killed the sheep of the local inhabitants, before being attacked by the bowmen of Sir Richard Waldegrave of Smallbridge Hall in Bures (just across the river from the mere). But arrows failed to pierce the hide of the monster and it took refuge in Wormingford Mere, never to be seen again. The legend was probably inspired by a misunderstanding of the name Wormingford – the first element being interpreted as being Old English *wyrm* 'a dragon or reptile'; the name in fact means 'Withermund's ford'. More prosaically, the mere was used as a duck decoy in the 19th century. A fine dragon is however depicted in the 13th-century wall paintings in Wissington church.

The river itself is first mentioned (as the *Sture*) in connection with battles at its mouth between King Alfred and a Viking fleet in AD 885. The name, which it shares with four other English rivers, is of ancient Celtic origin and probably means 'strong, powerful river'. Pronunciation varies from **Stowr** to **Stoor**.

In 1705 Parliament passed *An Act for making the River Stower navigable from the town of Manningtree, in the county of Essex, to the town of Sudbury, in the county of Suffolk*. It featured horse-drawn pairs of barges known as 'lighters' that took goods, particularly bricks, down the river and other goods back. The entire Sudbury fleet of about 20 lighters was scuttled in the Ballingdon Cut in 1914 because of invasion fears at the start of the 1st World War. The navigation never recovered and was largely disused by the 1920s, but it has an enduring fame through the depiction of its lighters and locks in the paintings of John Constable. There is also a substantial legacy of locks and weirs on the river. In the 2nd World War the western bank of the Stour from Bures to Long Melford formed part of the Eastern Command 'stop-line' of 1940 and was defended with a chain of pill-boxes and gun emplacements, most of which still survive as features on the river bank.

The soils of the flanking flat valley floors are mainly seasonally wet clays overlying alluvial deposits and peat.

Archaeology

The 20th-century exploitation of the gravel-terrace deposits in the adjacent Rolling Valley Farmlands LCT have yielded important prehistoric faunal assemblages, as at Brundon, indicating the presence of mammoths, wild horses, wild cattle and bison in a temperate, but rather open



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grassy environment, c.230,000 to 170,000 years ago. A human presence is indicated somewhat later, perhaps around 200,000 to 70,000 years ago,

Later prehistoric human activity is more abundantly indicated by cropmarks, which are only seasonably visible and then mainly from the air. At Stratford St Mary, again near the junction with Rolling Valley Farmlands, there is an important complex of cropmarks of Neolithic date: a linear cursus monument, numerous rings and a probable long barrow, suggesting that this was an important ritual centre around 3,500 to 3,000 BC. Cropmarks of another cursus at Bures St Mary lie just outside this landscape type. There are also cropmarks of numerous ring-ditches indicative of flattened Bronze Age burial mounds along the Stour valley and in the Box and Brett valleys. These date mainly from c.2000 to 1700 BC and are sometimes grouped into substantial cemeteries, as at Cavendish and Lawford.

There are the remains of Roman buildings, probably villas, at Wixoe and Kedington in the upper Stour valley.

The important Norman castle at Clare lies close to the river, as does the Norman ringwork at Court Knoll in Nayland. Clare Castle is first mentioned in 1090 and it is likely that the castle was built for Richard son of Count Gilbert (a cousin of King William) to be the *caput* or 'head' of his extensive East Anglian estate that was later known as the Honor of Clare. That he chose to make Clare the *caput*, and the fact that his dynasty took 'de Clare' as their surname, suggests that it was already a place of some importance. Richard also developed the pre-Conquest market at Clare into a borough with 43 burgesses by 1086. Clare Castle has much in common with Richard's other major castle at Tonbridge in Kent – this also is a two-bailey castle with a large motte situated beside a river and adjacent to a town. As the 12th century progressed, the powerful de Clare family acquired even greater estates elsewhere in the country (they became earls of Hertford c.1138 and of Gloucester in 1218) and they came to spend less time at Clare. However the death of Earl Gilbert in 1314 at Bannockburn brought the male line to an end and his great estates were divided between his three sisters. Clare fell to the lot of Elizabeth de Burgh, the widow of the heir to the earldom of Ulster, and from 1317 until her death in 1360, Clare Castle was the principal home of one of the wealthiest noblewomen in the country, and both castle and town were extensively rebuilt as a consequence. Her accounts also reveal that she had an exceptional private garden or *herber* within the castle precinct. After 1360 the castle again declined in importance and it was probably allowed to fall into decay during the later 15th century, with the structures being robbed for building materials. By the beginning of the 17th century it probably looked much as it does today, the site being used for a garden and for grazing purposes. It now forms the Clare Castle Country Park run by Suffolk County Council.

Court Knoll and most of the older parts of the village of Nayland lie within a southerly loop of the River Stour which is made into an island by another watercourse that cuts across the mouth of the loop, parallel to Fen Street. The place-name Nayland is derived from *atten Eilande* 'at the island'. The 'ringwork' is actually more D-shaped, enclosing nearly 2 hectares. It is surrounded by a ditch, but there is little evidence of a bank or rampart. It is likely to have been built for Swein of Essex, who is recorded in Domesday Book (1086) as having a 'hall' at Nayland. Swein was an important landholder in Essex and Suffolk and Nayland served as the centre for his estates on the Suffolk/Essex border. His estate as a whole was later known as the the Honor of Rayleigh, after his castle at Rayleigh in Essex. Swein's grandson was the ill-fated Henry of Essex, Constable of England and the King's Standard Bearer. He was accused of cowardice and was defeated in a trial by battle in 1163. He subsequently lost all his lands and ended his days as a monk in Reading Abbey. Henry's lands were taken by the King and although the documentary evidence is thin, it

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does seem that the manorial complex continued to be maintained into the late 13th century. It was probably deserted by 1668 when it was recorded as a piece of pasture, as it still is.

Two medieval religious houses also occur near the river: Stoke College at Stoke-by-Clare and Clare Priory. In 1090 Gilbert de Clare gave a collegiate church within Clare Castle to the Abbey of Bec in Normandy, but in 1124 this was moved to Stoke-by-Clare where a new priory and church were built. It became a college of secular priests in 1415 and was dissolved in 1548. The remains of the college are now a school. Clare Priory, on the opposite side of the Stour to Clare Castle (but still within a small enclave of Suffolk) was founded in 1248 by Richard de Clare, Earl of Gloucester, as the first house of the Augustinian Friars in England. The burials here of two members of the royal family – Joan of Acre (daughter of Edward I) in 1305 and Lionel, Duke of Clarence (son of Edward III) in 1377 – added greatly to its prestige. After its suppression in 1538, the site was granted to Richard Frende, later 'trumpeter to Edward VI'. The existing house consists mainly of the converted prior's lodgings; the church and most of the remainder of the complex fell into ruins. Since 1953 it has once again been a religious house of the Order of St Augustine.

Settlement and the built environment

Due to their wetness, these landscapes are now generally unsettled except for former watermill sites. At least 40 mills, some dating back to the time of Domesday Book, are known to have existed along the Stour and its tributaries. Most were flour mills, but some had more specialised uses such as fulling and paper-making. Virtually all have ceased production and have been converted to other uses, mainly domestic. The list includes Flatford Mill in East Bergholt, a brick building of 1733 made famous because of its ownership by the Constable family and its appearance in the paintings of John Constable.

There are also occasional farmsteads on the edge of the valleys or on locally higher spots, including some significant medieval and Tudor moated sites, such as Pentlow Hall, Boxted Hall, Parsonage Farm in Long Melford, Smallbridge Hall in Bures St Mary, and Garnons Farm in Wormingford. At Pentlow an oval moated site close to the river contains a fine timber-framed hall built c.1500 for Edmund Felton, however its position close to the church suggests that the site is much older. At Boxted (Suffolk) a relatively small moated site close to the River Glem is largely covered by the red-brick Hall built by the Poley family in the 16th century; this is set within a park and the moat has a tail-like extension leading to a small island that once probably bore a dovecote. Parsonage Farm, on Melford's western boundary, was formerly the Rectory and has the remains of a moat around it, reflecting the status of the medieval rectors. The additional possession of a *ponde yarde* with a *swann's tofte* and *two fish pondes*, and a *Dovecoate with a smal flight of Doves* doubtless added to their status. Smallbridge, first mentioned in the 12th century, was later a seat of the important Waldegrave family. Sir Richard Waldegrave, Speaker of the House of Commons 1381-2, was granted the right to turn his mansion here into a castle in 1384, but the house was rebuilt as a brick mansion, c.1555-72, by Sir William Waldegrave, and was visited by Queen Elizabeth in 1561 and 1579 (the house has since been extensively rebuilt, 1893-4 and 1920). Garnons takes its name from the Gernon family who owned it in the 13th and 14th centuries. In 1231 Henry III gave Ralph Gernon ten oaks for restoring his stockade which had been destroyed by fire.

Landholding and enclosure pattern

The damp nature of the land has led to a long use as meadows. The meadows of the burgesses of Sudbury, which now form part of the Sudbury Common Lands, are actually mentioned in



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Domesday Book. These meadows are now used as animal pastures rather than for hay production, as is the case with most of the surviving meadows. In the upper reaches of valleys the meadows are often narrow, but in the middle and lower reaches can be broad and substantial, as in the case of Dagfen or Henny Common Meadow at Great Henny. The meadows are divided by wet ditches or dykes that may sometimes be lined by trees or scrubby hedges. Common meadows, such as Dagfen, were also formerly partitioned internally into strips – as can be seen on the 1840 tithe map of Great Henny. The introduction of more effective land drains in the 20th century has, however, resulted in the conversion of many meadows to arable land. In the wettest areas there are occasional small reedbeds.

Trees and woodland cover

Historically, the agricultural value of the meadows precluded their use for woodland, except in the wettest areas where alder carrs were a more viable option. Some of the alder carrs still survive, but the decline in the value of meadows in the 20th century led to plantations, particularly of poplars and cricket-bat willows, being introduced into the valleys. The cricket-bat willow (*Salix alba* var. *caerulea*) is a particularly fine strain of the white willow that is said to have been discovered in Eriswell in NW Suffolk in 1803 and its descendants are used, as its name indicates, for the production of cricket bats. Commercial plantations of these were recognised as being of 'some importance' in the *Land Utilisation Survey* of the 1930s and are still a common feature in the broader parts of the valleys.

The edges of the rivers are studded with trees, notably willows, black poplars and alders, with some oaks and ashes in the drier spots. Native black poplars (*Populus nigra*) are now rare in the UK and the specimens on the Suffolk/Essex border are a significant proportion of the national total. Riverside willow and alder pollards are a recognised feature and are now more frequent than they were in the days of the Stour Navigation, when they would have been obstructions for the horse-drawn barges. The pollarded crack willows (*Salix fragilis*) in a popular stretch of the river between Dedham and Flatford can be seen as young specimens in photographs taken around 1900. The working of the 'willow tops' for poles, stakes and hurdles was a local industry in the early part of the 20th century, but was largely over by the early 1950s.

Some 'amenity' planting of trees in the valleys has also occurred which is out of character with the pattern, species and extent of tree cover of this landscape character type.

Visual experience

Despite its size, the Stour is often almost invisible as it flows through a flat landscape, its margins camouflaged by vegetation – it is often only at bridging points that the river becomes visible. The flanking lands are more visible and often offer wonderful examples of pristine and picturesque meadows in a wider arable landscape and, if accessible (such as the meadows of the Sudbury Common Lands), they can provide an oasis of enclosure and confined views. They are often enhanced by the presence of cattle grazing. On the drier sites or where the valley is very narrow, such as in the upper Stour, arable cultivation is the dominant feature. Many of the meadows were converted to arable in the second half of the 20th century, but in some places this has been replaced by set-aside, or grassland recreated with the aid of government environmental schemes.

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Condition

Some of these landscapes are in excellent condition, However many are affected by intakes into arable production, by horse grazing and by under grazing. The sense of tranquillity and isolation of this landscape can also be intruded upon by the development of the adjacent rolling valley landscapes which are often a focus of settlement and development.

Land management issues and options

Geology, soils, landform and drainage

- Protection and investigation of palaeo-environmental deposits
- Conservation of former navigation structures

Archaeology

- Conservation of upstanding heritage assets
- Identify priority sites for arable reversion to protect buried heritage assets

Settlement and the built environment

- Maintain and enhance the setting of the valley floor through sensitive and appropriate development control on this landscape character type and on the Rolling Valley Farmlands on the valley sides.
- Maintain the visual distinctiveness of characteristic structures such as watermills

Landholding and enclosure pattern

- Maintain the historic pattern of field boundaries and ditches
- Support the continued sensitive management of existing grass land, especially ancient meadows
- Expand the area of grassland on the valley floor

Trees and woodland cover

- Maintain the balance of tree cover on the valley floor
- Identify priorities for re-pollarding willows and to carry out this work
- Identify appropriate sites for the creation of new pollarded willow and to carry out this work

Rolling Valley Farmlands

Rolling Valley Farmlands

Key Characteristics

- Gentle valley sides with some complex and steep slopes
- Deep well-drained loamy soils
- Largely organic pattern of fields with some more regular areas
- A scattering of small landscape parks
- Small ancient woodlands on the valley fringes and in the lower Stour valley
- Sunken lanes on the valley sides
- Towns and villages with distinctive medieval cores and fine churches
- Medieval and early modern industrial activity
- Large, sometimes moated, houses

Location

This landscape character type occurs along the sides of the Stour Valley along its most of its length from Lawford and Cattawade in Brantham in the east, upstream to Kedington in the west

There are also extensions along the sides of some of the Stour's tributaries. On the north side, from east to west these are:

- The Brett upstream to Shelley and Lower Raydon
- The Box upstream to Boxford
- An unnamed stream up to Assington
- The Chad Brook up to Bridge Street in Long Melford
- The Glem up to Hawkedon
- The Chilton Stream up to Hundon

On the south side, east to west, these are:

- The Cambridge Brook to Daw's Cross and Mount Bures
- The Belchamp Brook to Gestingthorpe
- The Bumpstead Brook to Steeple Bumpstead
- The Stour Brook to Haverhill

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LDUs (north): 130-27 (nn), 130-28 (nn), 344-30 (E Bergholt south side), 344-63 (Lower Raydon to Cattawade), 344-63A (Stratford St Mary), 344-49 (Gifford's Hall Park pt), 344-51 (Shelley), 344-98 (Thorington), 214-38 (Polstead), 214-37 (Polstead), 214-52 (Tending Park & another), 214-141 (Polstead), 214-141C (Polstead), 237-47 (Long Melford), 346-140 (Long Melford), 346-139 (Stanstead), 346-138 (Glemsford), 346-137 (Stanstead to Hawkedon), 345-78 (Glemsford), 345-109 (Cavendish), 345-74 (Clare), 345-73 (Stoke-by-Clare & Clare), 345-72 (Wixoe)

LDUs (south): 314-55 (Lawford), 314-54 (Lawford Park), 314-93 (Langham), 314-95 (Hill House Dedham parkland), 314-91A (south bank of Stour, Bures Hamlet to Great Horkesley), 314-91 (Great Henny), 314-120 (Little Henny Park), 313-62 ((Belchamp Brook), 313-66 (Sudbury), 313-103 (Auberries parkland Bulmer), 313-118 (Belchamp Hall parkland), 313-105 (Liston Hall Park), 345-77 (Steeple Bumpstead to Melford), 345-114 (nn), 345-13 (Baythorne Park), 345-68 (Helions Bumpstead), 345-2 ((Kedington)

Geology, soils and landform

These landscapes occur on the sides of the valleys that cut through the thick layer of chalky till deposited by the retreating icesheet of the Anglian Glaciation. Chalk underlies the whole area, but there are only a few places where it outcrops on the valley sides, as at Ballingdon, near Sudbury, where there are disused 19th-century chalk pits and lime kilns. The valleys themselves are filled with gravel, sand and silt deposits left by torrential glacial meltwaters.

Clay laid down in meltwater lakes at the beginning of the Hoxnian interglacial at Little Cornard, south of Sudbury, were exploited in the 19th and 20th centuries for making white bricks by the Tricker family and then the Cornard Brick and Tile Company. Basal deposits of 'Lower London Tertiaries' were also used for making red bricks. Similar deposits were used for the Allen family's 19th-century Ballingdon Grove Works for making both red and white bricks. London Clay deposits are used for the Bulmer Brickworks.

A large former embayment on east side of Stour to the south of Sudbury contains part of a former river channel, now largely peat-filled and known as Cornard Mere. The Polstead Ponds in a tributary of the Box valley similarly gave rise to their parish name (Polstead = 'place at the pool') and must also represent an ancient mere.

Topography is generally sloping valley sides, usually relatively gentle, but sometimes with surprisingly complex and steep slopes, as at Shelley in the Brett valley. The soils are mainly well-drained deep loams of the Ludford series, overlying glaciofluvial drift. In places there are patches of the heavier Melford loams, while on the upper slopes and in the upper valleys there are deep clay soils of the Hanslope series. All have a good arable potential.

Archaeology

Quarrying for gravel on the river terrace at Brundon in the early 20th-century yielded important prehistoric faunal assemblages indicating the presence of mammoths, wild horses, wild cattle and bison in a temperate, but rather open grassy environment, c.230,000 to 170,000 years ago. A human presence is indicated somewhat later, perhaps around 200,000 to 70,000 years ago,

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There is abundant evidence of later prehistoric settlement in the river valley. At Stratford St Mary, on the junction with **Valley Meadowlands**, there is an important complex of cropmarks of Neolithic monuments: a linear cursus monument, numerous rings and a probable long barrow, suggesting that this was an important ritual centre around 3,500 to 3,000 BC. There are cropmarks of another cursus at Bures St Mary and numerous rings indicative of the buried ditches of flattened Bronze Age burial mounds or barrows. These ring-ditches date mainly from c.2000 to 1700 BC and are sometimes grouped into substantial cemeteries, as a Belchamp St Paul, Mount Bures, Wissington, Stoke-by-Nayland, Higham and Dedham. Many of these cropmarks are now protected as Scheduled Monuments, in recognition of their national importance.

The large D-shaped earthwork enclosure on the outskirts of Clare, now called Clare Camp but formerly *Erbury* (Old English for 'earth-fort'), may be Late Saxon or possibly even Iron Age in origin. In the Middle Ages it was certainly used as a manorial enclosure with barns, other buildings and yards, but since the 16th century it has been used as a common pasture for the poor of Clare and forms a part of Lower Common.

The grave of a Late Iron Age (early 1st century AD) nobleman, furnished with iron firedogs, wine amphorae and other pottery and glass vessels, was found at Mount Bures in 1849. There is also some evidence to suggest that may have been an Anglo-Saxon royal residence at Bures, where King Edmund of the East Angles was crowned in AD 856 (Edmund was later killed by the Vikings and declared a saint). The early 12th-century Annals of St Neots record the event as having taken place at a *villa regia* called *Burna*, which a later source says lay on the boundary of Essex and Suffolk on the river Stour. The identification is not certain, as the earliest certain forms of the name, in Domesday Book, are *Adburam*, *Bura* and *Bure*; it could even be that Sudbury was meant, as this was, and is, a much more important place (see below) and there are indications that the name was occasionally used without the Sud- prefix. St Stephen's Chapel in Bures is said to have been erected by Abbot Sampson of Bury on the coronation site, but in fact this was a private manorial chapel built for Sir Gilbert de Tany and dedicated 1213-24 by Stephen Langton, Archbishop of Canterbury. The chapel now contains three fine tombs of the de Vere family, earls of Oxford, removed from Colne Priory in Earls Colne, Essex.

Also at Mount Bures there is a well-preserved Norman castle motte beside the parish church (Norman too, but restored). There is no direct evidence for the building of the castle, but in 1086 the land here was held by Roger of Poitou (or the Poitevin – so-called because his wife was the heiress of La Marche in Poitou, France), an important Norman nobleman with lands in many counties. Roger's main interests lay elsewhere, particularly in Lancashire, but this may have formed a local centre. Curiously, Roger's mother, Mabel countess of Shrewsbury, had a castle at Bures-sur-Dive in Normandy. Alternatively, the castle may be an early 12th-century creation by Robert de Sackville, steward to Count Stephen of Blois (later King Stephen) or his son Jordan. Because of their ownership, the parish was sometimes called Bures Sackville.

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Settlement and the built environment

Overall the growth and development of villages and small towns in this landscape has been driven by the quality of the land and the agricultural prosperity that it brought. The area is also blessed with the steepest and fastest flowing rivers in the county, providing an important and reliable source of power for early industries.

Clare was one of the early centres of East Anglia's medieval wool trade and that trade was responsible for the growth of many towns and villages in the Stour valley and its tributaries, as at Cavendish, Glemsford, Long Melford, Sudbury, Bures, Nayland, Stoke-by-Nayland, Stratford St Mary, East Bergholt and Dedham. Their medieval and Tudor prosperity shows in their exceptionally rich heritage of fine timber-framed houses and magnificent churches – the latter often termed 'wool churches' in recognition of the industry that paid for them. That industry was in decline by the 17th century, slowing growth and changes to the housing stock. The centres of all these towns and villages have retained their much of their mediaeval structure, and the majority of expansion and change has occurred on the periphery.

At Clare, Callis Street and the Market Place, together, form an elongated rectangle that stretches almost from Clare Camp to the foot of Clare Castle, with the parish church near the centre. This layout is a planned layout dating from the late 11th century: the market forming a link between the two main administrative centres (the castle for the huge feudal estate and Clare Camp for the Manor farm in Clare), with the church as a central feature. The northern part, called Callis Street, narrows at the site of the ford (bridged by the 14th century) before joining the main market place. The present High Street was earlier the High Rowe of the market. This original large open area was encroached upon by houses and shops in the later Middle Ages.

Sudbury is the major town on the Stour and it had a market and burgesses by 1086. It is strategically situated on a promontory in a loop of the river and has probably been occupied since prehistoric times. Its name is recorded as *Sudberi* in AD 798 (when Bishop Ælfhun happened to die here) and means 'the south(ern) fortified place'. Its fortifications can no longer be seen, but their line is fossilised in the town's circular street-plan. 10th-century ditches have been found through excavations and the presence of Iron Age material hints at even earlier defences. It was important enough to have a mint producing coins from c.AD 997 to 1140. Around 1100 the town's moneyer, Wulfric, gave the church or chapel of St Bartholomew to Westminster Abbey, for the foundation of a small priory cell at Sudbury. The single cell chapel still survives on the edge of the town. The town expanded in the 12th century, with the addition of a new market place and two new churches – St Peter's in the market place and All Saints near the bridge across the Stour. The original church, St Gregory's, is specifically mentioned in Domesday Book and from its large endowment it must have been an Anglo-Saxon minster church. In 1375 St Gregory's was made into a college of canons by the sons of Nigel Theobald, one of the town's wool merchants. One of the sons, Simon of Sudbury, became Archbishop of Canterbury in 1375 and Chancellor of England in 1380 – in the latter role he introduced the hated Poll Tax and was beheaded by rebels in the Peasants Revolt of 1381 (his skull is still preserved in St Gregory's church). The college was surrendered to the king in 1544 and the college building was granted to Sir Thomas Paston (it has since disappeared under a 19th-century workhouse which later became a hospital). The Archbishop and his family also played a part in enlarging the Dominican friary in the town, which had been founded before 1247 by Baldwin de Shipling. This was

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Rolling Valley Farmlands

suppressed in 1538 and the site granted to Thomas Eden, clerk of the king's council – its site is now remembered only by the name Friars Street. The artist Thomas Gainsborough (1727-88) is one of the town's most famous former residents and he has a statue in the market place and his house (in Gainsborough Street) is now the Gainsborough Museum. Commercial life in the town expanded with the implementation of the Stour Navigation c.1709 and by the arrival of the railway in 1849. Urban development has now expanded into the neighbouring parishes of Ballingdon, Chilton and Great Cornard.

Dedham, which has been described as 'easily the most attractive small town in Essex', was involved with the wool trade by the mid 13th century and its prosperity reached its peak in the 15th century. It did however experience a revival as a 'genteel' town in the 18th century and gained an Assembly Room c.1745. Sherman's in the High Street is one of the town's most visually striking buildings – its pediment, multi-coloured brick and other decoration being added 1730-1 to an earlier timber building. It takes its name from Edmund Sherman, a clothier who founded a school here in 1601 (his son Edmund emigrated to Massachusetts – as did many Protestants from the Stour valley – and was the ancestor of the American Civil War general, William Tecumseh Sherman). John Constable went to school in Dedham and the town features in many of his paintings. He used the term 'Dedham Vale' for several sketches and paintings from 1802 and this has become a recognised name for the lower Stour Valley – it was used for the Dedham Vale Society in 1938 and as the name for the Stour valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) when it was declared in 1970. Castle House on the outskirts of Dedham is a 15th-century timber-framed house that was the home, 1919-59, of the painter Sir Alfred Munnings and is now the Munnings Museum.

Hall-and-church complexes that did not expand into large settlements abound in these landscapes, often architecturally significant and frequently visually stunning. At Wissington, on the Stour, the small 11th-century church containing a well-preserved 13th-century cycle of wall-paintings forms a very atmospheric group with the late-18th-century hall designed by Sir John Soane. At Polstead, on the Box, the 12th-century church contains a brick chancel arch and arcades that are possibly the earliest surviving example of English brickwork, whilst its 73ft-high stone spire is said to be the oldest in Suffolk.

The high arable capability of these landscapes is reflected in a preponderance of former manorial halls, some of which show their status by being moated, such as Ashen House, Blacklands Hall in Cavendish, Smeetham Hall in Bulmer, Shelley Hall and Braham Hall in Brantham. At Shelley, the brick hall built for Sir Philip Tilney in the 1520s is unmoated, but its contemporary garden is. The Tilneys were cousins of Queen Elizabeth I and in 1561 she visited their house.

Not moated, but with an imposing brick gatehouse giving access to an enclosed courtyard, Gifford's Hall in Stoke-by-Nayland was described by Pevsner as 'one of the loveliest houses of its date in England'. This imposing 15th-century timber and brick complex was built by the Mannock family, who had previously acquired wealth as local clothiers and merchants. The fine hammerbeam roof of the hall may be the work of the master carpenter Thomas Loveday (*fl.* 1503-36), whose work can also be seen in Gestingthorpe church (which is inscribed with his name) and probably at Steeple Bumpstead and Sturmer. The property takes its name from the knightly Gifford family, who were here from the mid 13th century; the ruined chapel of St

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Nicholas in front of the Hall is even older, having been founded by Richard le Constable in 1216, indicating that this is an old manor site.

The workshops of the medieval cloth trade have left few obvious traces as most were accommodated within domestic settings. More intensive industrial use is only recorded to the south of Sudbury in the Stour valley and in the Gipping valley. The former comprised the former Ballingdon Grove Works, where a grouping of 19th-century chalk pits, lime kilns, a maltings and a brickworks were linked by the Ballingdon Cut to the Stour, which had been made navigable under an Act of 1705. A number of Stour lighters (timber barges) were scuttled in the Cut during World War I and twelve still remain submerged in the water of the canal. In the lower Stour valley, the late-19th-century xylonite works at Brantham necessitated the building of Brantham New Village as an extension to the Cattawade hamlet. This was accompanied by sports fields and areas of allotments for the factory workers.

Landholding and enclosure pattern

This landscape type is largely concerned with the valley sides, for, except in the smaller valleys, the valley bottoms are included in **Valley meadowlands**. These valley sides have a long history of arable use. The evidence for the former presence of 'common' or 'open' arable fields in these valleys is strongest in the western and central parts of the Stour valley. There was 19th-century parliamentary enclosure that included some common arable at Haverhill (1853 and 1857), Kedington (1853) and at Cornard (1813). On the Essex side of the Stour, there was parliamentary enclosure at Sturmer (1853), Belchamp Otten and Walter (1840) and Middleton (1843); there was also some at Dedham on the lower Stour (1802). There is map evidence of 1600 for some common arable at Great Henny, but only very limited suggestions of common fields on the detailed 1580 and 1613 maps of nearby Long Melford.

The overall impression is one of limited panels of former common fields on some of the valley sides, particularly in the west, but counterbalanced by a large amount of anciently enclosed fields without a common field ancestry. The field patterns reflect this, with large amounts of sinuous field boundaries with substantial hedges interspersed with some more rectilinear fields where larger units have been enclosed or reorganised. Roads running up the valleys sides can be deeply set, caused by long use on soft substrata, as can be seen at Great Henny.

It is noticeable that in the upper Stour valley, from Long Melford westward to Steeple Bumpstead, all the larger villages are on the north (Suffolk) side of the valley; to the south (in Essex) there are only small hamlets and dispersed farmsteads. The reasons for this are not completely clear, but it may be linked to the extent to which the land was organised into common fields in the Middle Ages. Another factor may be the strong involvement of the Suffolk villages with the medieval wool trade.

The high arable potential of most of the soils means that greens and other areas of common pasture are infrequent. Some of the place-name evidence for 'commons' – such as Sturmer Common and Dane Common in Kedington, Kedington Common, Southfield Common and Welchmere Common in Little Cornard – refer to former common arable fields not common pastures (a usage more typical of counties such as Hertfordshire than Suffolk).



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The soils on these valley sides are deep, easily worked and loamy, so there has been little opportunity or incentive for the creation of large parks. Tendring Park at Stoke by Nayland is one of the more significant exceptions. Originally a medieval deer park called Stoke Park, it takes its present name from its medieval owners who came from Tendring in Essex. Their heirs were the Howards, dukes of Norfolk, who had one of their principal seats here in the 15th and early 16th centuries. Their mansion was rebuilt before 1723 by Sir John Williams, a London merchant who was 'the greatest exporter of cloth in England'. Williams also added a fashionable garden canal to the park which still exists, together with a beautiful Fishing Lodge or Temple at one end, which was added later in the 18th century. The Williams mansion was replaced in 1784 by a new one on a new site, designed by Sir John Soane for Sir Joshua Rowley. The park was redesigned by Humphry Repton (Red Book 1791) for Sir William Rowley. The Hall was demolished in 1955, but the park and the estate still survive.

Other, smaller, parks include Baythorne Park in Birdbrook (stuccoed brick house 1668 for George Pyke), Liston Hall (largely demolished 1951, but two of its four mid-18th-century corner pavilions remain), The Ryes at Little Henny (brick house 1809 for Nathaniel Barnardiston; property named after John de Ry, living 1269), Auberries in Bulmer, Langham Hall (stuccoed house 1756 for Jacob Hinde) and Lawford Hall (timber-framed house 1583 for Edward Waldegrave, but hidden behind a brick front of c.1756), together with Belchamp Hall on the Belchamp Brook and at Gifford's Hall and Polstead Hall in the Brett valley. Auberries provided the setting for Thomas Gainsborough's iconic portrait, c.1750, of Mr and Mrs Andrews (now in the National Gallery). He shows the newly-wed (and only recently gentrified) Robert Andrews and Frances Carter proudly surveying their estate – the oak tree behind them is still there, but their house was rebuilt by a new owner after Robert's death in 1806, and further enlarged in 1835 (the property's name commemorates a medieval owner, Thomas Aubery, living 1361). Red-brick Belchamp Hall in Belchamp Walter was built c.1720 for John Raymond and still has elements of its 18th-century garden (though with 19th- and 20th-century modifications) – a raised terrace with summer houses at each end and a now-dry garden canal (another longer canal with a curved end lies a short distance to the south-east).

There has been little in the way of common pasture in this landscape because of the quality of the soils. Where common pasture existed at all it was found in valley floor locations such as at Sudbury. Other reference to commons in this landscape usually refers to former common arable land, such as *Kedington Common*, *Southfield Common* and *Welchmere Common*. There were, however, a few small greens which are now remembered, if at all, by their names – such as Smith's Green at Steeple Bumpstead, Cranmore Green in Long Melford, and the vanished *Bures Green* and *Weston's* or *Wiston* Green on the north side of Smallbridge Hall (the names reflect the fact that the green was divided by the Bures St Mary/Wissington (or Wiston) parish boundary).

Trees and woodland cover

In the upper Stour valley the ancient woodland is mainly confined to the upper slopes of the valleys and is mostly in relatively small parcels. Two significant large woods partly in this landscape are the adjacent Lineage Wood and Spelthorn Wood in Long Melford (both recorded by name from the 14th century). Ancient woodland is more numerous in the lower valley, with examples at Arger Fen in Bures St Mary, Nayland



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End Wood in Nayland, Creak's Grove in Little Horkesley, Slough Grove in Great Horkesley, and Little Wood, Boxtedhall Wood, Cophedge Wood and Ash Wood, all in Boxted (Essex). Modern plantations are also more numerous in the lower valley, as around Boxted, Langham and in the nearby Black Brook valley.

At Polstead, the decaying remains of its famous Gospel Oak lie between the church and the Hall. Reputed to have been the oldest living thing in Suffolk, it collapsed in 1953. Polstead was also reputed for its cherries (Polstead Blacks) by the early 19th century. Few cherry orchards now remain, though they are still commemorated in local place-names: Cherrytree Farm, Cherry Billy's Lane and Cherry Meadow.

Visual experience

This is a rich and varied landscape with its concentration of prosperous mediaeval towns and villages, contrasting with the smaller and less glamorous settlements of the surrounding plateaux. The steeper valleys and sunken lanes contrast clearly to most of the other valley networks in the county.

This landscape type embraces some of the most famous views and sites of Suffolk, East Anglia and England. The Stour valley is internationally renowned as 'Constable Country', being the inspiration for many of the landscape paintings of John Constable. The landscape has also inspired other artists, such as Thomas Gainsborough, Sir Alfred Munnings, Sir Cedric Morris and John Nash. This artistic legacy led to its designation as an Area of Outstanding National Beauty in 1970. The Constable-related complex at Flatford Mill features on many tourist itineraries, as do the monumental 'wool churches' and picturesque villages such as Cavendish and Nayland with their wealth of medieval and Tudor timber-framed buildings.

Condition

Much of this landscape retains its historic patterns, of both the agricultural and built environment. However, the western parts of this landscape beyond Melford and Liston are of a more open arable character. Eastwards from here the valley sides are dissected and wooded and grassland is often much more in evidence, as is the presence of small parks and designed landscapes. The Stour and its tributaries have been subject to some gentrification, with significant changes in land use, such as the increase in horse pastures and the loss of much commercial orchard production, however much of this landscape is in excellent condition.

Land management issues and options

Geology, soils, landform and drainage

Archaeology

- Conservation of upstanding heritage assets
- Identify priority sites for arable reversion to protect buried heritage assets



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Rolling Valley Farmlands

Settlement and the built environment

- **Undergrounding of wires** - In valley side landscapes such as these this can create significant improvements in the condition of these landscapes
- Maintain and enhance the landscape setting through sensitive and appropriate development control

Landholding and enclosure pattern

- Maintain the historic pattern of field boundaries and ditches
- Support the continued sensitive management of existing grass land, especially parkland
- **Changes in landuse** that effect character and condition of the landscape, such as the expansion of horse. Support the use of best practice that minimises the impact of these changes on the wider use through use of sympathetic materials and siting.
-

Trees and woodland cover

- Maintain the balance of tree cover
- **Woodland management** - encourage and support the removal of conifers from ancient woodland sites as well as appropriate deer management to maintain the condition of these important historic landscape features

Historic Landscape Character Study

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3 Rolling Estate Farmlands

Rolling Estate Farmlands**Key Characteristics**

- Gently sloping valley sides and plateau fringes
- Generally deep loamy soils
- An organic pattern of fields modified by later realignment
- Important foci for early settlement
- Coverts and plantations with some ancient woodlands
- Landscape parks

Location

This landscape character type occurs in two separate locations:

- The upper Stour valley and its tributaries, from Great Wratting upstream to Great Bradley and the Suffolk/Cambridgeshire county boundary (in this location it absorbs a narrow continuation of Valley Meadowlands and forms the valley-side component to Undulating Estate Farmlands
LDU : 503-128
- The middle Stour valley in the Long Melford area, including part of the valley of its tributary, the Chad Brook (here it forms the valley-side component to Ancient Rolling Farmlands)
LDUs : 194-25, 194-43, 194-46, 290-21, 290-41, 290-44 and 290-45

Geology, landform and soils

These are gently sloping valley sides and plateau fringes with loamy or silty soils derived from glacial outwash and till deposits. The soils in this landscape are mainly the deep, well-drained, clayey loams of the Ludford or Melford series.

Archaeology

The valley-side locations of this landscape type, with their combination of access to water and arable potential, attracted settlement from an early date. Striking cropmarks at Long Melford seem to show a long Neolithic burial enclosure or mound overlain by a circular Bronze Age one – this suggests that there were farming communities in this part of the Stour valley that were sufficiently settled to undertake substantial monumental works by the 4th millennium BC. There are other cropmarks of ring-ditches (indicative of flattened

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Bronze Age burial mounds) at Long Melford and an isolated one at Great Bradley. There is evidence Iron Age activity in the form of pottery and metalwork. Roman roads converge towards Long Melford and there may have been a Roman military presence there (and indeed a Roman iron sword of the 1st century AD has been found in Melford). Certainly, a substantial Roman settlement underlies the medieval market town. This settlement was surrounded by Roman villas and the modern town is similarly surrounded by the substantial county houses of Melford Hall, Kentwell Hall and (formerly) Acton Place.

Settlement and the built environment

Settlement in the upper Stour valley is mainly concentrated in a string of small villages close to the river. The parishes are long and thin, with the villages and the river at their centres and their farmland extending up on both sides of the valley in narrow strips. Flint is very much in evidence as a building material, often used with red brick, but white brick is used as a status symbol for some of the larger houses. Notable among the villages is Little Thurlow, the centre of an estate formed by Sir Stephen Soame, Lord Mayor of London 1598-9. His brick school and E-plan almshouse (both with heraldic displays over their entrances) remain, but his mansion burnt down in 1809, to be replaced by the existing Little Thurlow Hall in the 1840s. The layout of its splendid early-18th-century formal garden, shown in detail on a map of 1735, survives largely intact, including the long garden canal.

At Great Thurlow there is a medieval hall-and-church complex at the heart of the village, with the existing Hall being an 18th-century stuccoed brick structure, probably built for the Vernon family who were there by 1736. Through the inheritance of larger Vernon properties (Orwell Park in Nacton and Wherstead Hall) the use of this Hall was reduced and by the mid-19th-century it was only in seasonal use as a shooting box. Both Thurlows are now part of the extensive Vestey estate. The 18th-century and later farm buildings include an impressive 8-bay black-boarded barn which flanks the road and a timber-framed and plastered dovecote, now converted to domestic use.

Great Bradley also has a hall-and-church complex, with the parish church lying in front of the remains of a moat that surrounded the demolished hall – its brick replacement now stands just outside western side of the moat. A possible garden canal lies to the east of the moat, parallel with the river. Earthworks in the semi-parkland field to the north of Little Bradley church may be the sites a former manor house and a parsonage. The Le Hunt family inherited the manor of Harveys alias Bradley Netherhall in the 16th century but suffered as a result of the Civil War and seem to have abandoned their house in the later 17th century. In the 18th century the estate was held by the non-resident Dickens family of Branches Park in Cowlinge and later by the Lamprell family, who developed Little Bradley Hall (now Hall Farm) to the east of the church and Little Bradley Place (now Little Bradley House) to its north. One of the Lamprells, William, was also a malster and had developed Maltings Farm as an orderly malt office by 1843.

In the middle Stour valley the dominant settlement is the large village of Long Melford, though there are a number of dispersed farmsteads and major houses within its large parish. Melford was an important estate of the abbots of Bury St Edmunds, gifted to them c.1042-66 by 'earl' Ælfric son of Wihtgar, the administrator of West Suffolk, and granted a

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market and a fair by the king in 1235 (with another grant in 1330). The long main street of the village, thick with historic timber-framed buildings, gives way to a large, open, triangular green at its north end. The narrow end of this green starts just beyond a bridge over the Chad Brook and extends up the slope to the cathedral-like parish church at its high, wide, northern end. It is recorded as *Le Chirchetye* in 1442 and as *Melforde Greene* in 1580. Within the green there is a 16th-century ornamental redbrick water conduit and the base of a former medieval cross. Melford Fair was held here for three days in Whitsun week, the last day being a cattle sale. The redbrick and turreted mass of Melford Hall dominates the east side of the green – this, the imposing mansion of Sir William Cordell, Master of the Rolls 1557-81, replaced an earlier manor house of the abbots of Bury St Edmunds. Originally quadrangular and with two entrance forecourts on the side furthest from the green, it was later reduced to its present E-shape (now in the care of The National Trust). Extensive gardens are shown around the Hall on a map of 1613, including three large rectangular ponds with a cruciform building (probably a dovecote) between two of them (these are named as the *ponde yarde* in 1580 and still survive as the prosaically-named Square Pond and Horse Pond – the last being an amalgamation of two of the ponds). A visitor in 1621 enthused about the gardens and noted that ‘there are few the like in England’. The gardens are now mainly 20th-century in character, with some fine specimen trees. An octagonal Tudor banqueting house perches on the brick wall dividing the Hall garden from the green, simultaneously providing the occupants with views of both. Along the west side of the green there is a mixed fringe of large brick houses and terraced cottages, mainly 18th- and 19th-century in appearance but often of medieval origin. The orderly arrangement of house plots around the margin of the green may indicate settlement planning by the medieval abbots. At the north end, and clearly an intrusion onto the green, is Trinity Hospital, a quadrangular group of redbrick and stone almshouses that was founded by Sir William Cordell in 1573 and remodelled in 1847. This partly obscures Holy Trinity church, which was rebuilt in the late 15th century by two of the region’s great master masons, Simon Clerk and John Melford, and is widely regarded as one of the finest churches in England,

To the north of the green, and set apart in the middle of its own lands, is Kentwell Hall. Kentwell appears as a separate vill or settlement in Domesday Book (there named as *Kanewella*) and has always had a separate manorial history to the rest of Long Melford. The name seems to contain a Celtic river name (as in the several rivers named Kennet) plus an explanatory Old English *wella* ‘stream’ and probably refers to a small tributary of the Glem that flows south-westward past Kentwell Downs from a plantation 600m to the north-west of the present Hall. The plantation is said to contain the site of the medieval chapel of St Ann and may also be the site of the medieval *Kentewellehalle* – the present Hall originated in a property acquired by a John de Luton in 1315/6 and is referred to in 15th- and early 16th-century documents as *Lutons* or *Lewtons*. The knightly Clopton family acquired it in the late 14th century and built the existing redbrick E-shaped house in the 16th century. This is set within a large rectangular moat and has a separate garden moat at its rear. The approach to the house is down a long tree-lined avenue that is referred to as the ‘New Walk’ in 1678.

The remains of a circular moat surround Acton Hall. *Acuntune* is recorded in AD 1000-2, but the moat was probably constructed in the later 12th or 13th century by the Norman

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Hodebovile family. The Hall was later the home of Dame Alice de Bryene, whose *Household Book 1412-13* is one of the key documents for life in a 15th-century knightly household and has been published in several forms. She died in 1435 and her fine monumental brass is in nearby Acton Church, as is the famous military brass of her great-grandfather, Sir Robert de Bures, who died in 1331.

A series of industrial estates (Crestland, Bull Lane and Acton Place) now occupy the site of Acton Place, a great mansion with a sad history. The property was acquired in 1708 by Robert Jennens, the son of a wealthy Birmingham ironmaster and an aide-de-camp to the duke of Marlborough. Before his death in 1725 he employed James Gibbs to build him a large house with two equally large linked pavilions. His son William, who was a godson to King William III, became a reclusive miser who died in 1798, reputedly worth in excess of £800,000. Dying without a will, the inheritance of his great estate was disputed and is said to have provided inspiration for Charles Dickens's *Bleak House*. The main block of the house and one pavilion were demolished c.1825 and the remaining pavilion went in 1961. The remains of an early 18th-century garden canal do, however, survive between the industrial estates and the road – the last remnant of the glories of Acton Place.

Landholding and enclosure pattern

Although there was some parliamentary enclosure of common-field arable in the upper Stour valley area (Great Bradley 1815, Great Thurlow 1825, Great Wratting 1817), the amounts were small and its landscape effect was limited. Much of the landscape was already enclosed by the early 18th century, as is shown on a 1735 map of the Thurlows. In the Melford area there was no parliamentary enclosure and there is a high correlation between the fields shown on late-16th and early-17th-century maps and those existing now or recorded on 19th-century maps. The eastern edge of the Melford area includes a part of the western boundary of a Late Saxon estate whose bounds were recorded in AD 1000-2 – in the will of Ælfflæd, the widow of Ealdorman Brihtnoth of Essex. This part of the boundary runs along the Chad Brook (*burnan*) from Roydon Drift (*Rigendune*) to a bend called *Humelcyrre* (later *Humbelchar*). The eastern boundary of the estate runs along an 'old hedge' (*ealdan hege*) underlining the potential ancientness of parts of this landscape.

The 16th- and 17th- century maps show both Melford Hall and Kentwell Hall surrounded by their demesne fields, with peripheral areas of parkland. For Melford Hall this was a wooded area 770m to the east of the Hall, on a slope beside the Chad Brook, referred to as *le Small Park* (60 acres) in 1386, *Lytle Park wode* (77 acres) in 1442 and *Little Park* in 1580, with an adjacent area called *The Warren* (1580). At Kentwell a park to the north-west of the house near Kentwell Downs is mentioned in 1501 and a map of 1613 has fields in that area (on the plateau some 700m from the Hall – in **Undulating Ancient Farmlands**) called *The Park*, *The Park Laye*, *Park Ponds* and *Coney Hill*. But by 1736 a landscape park had been established encircling Melford Hall and other were to follow at Kentwell Hall and Acton Place by 1783. The Acton one was largely disparked in the 19th century but the other two parks reached their greatest extent in that century, before suffering partial deparking in the earlier part of the 20th century. In the later 20th century there was some parkland restoration and new oak avenues planted in the 1980s in the Melford park.

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A substantial deer park containing a moated lodge was in existence to the north of the gardens of Little Thurlow Hall by 1735 and may have been established by Sir Stephen Soame around 1600 – its form form can still be traced but it is no longer a park. A park was also established around Great Thurlow Hall by 1783, but on a more modest scale.

Trees and woodland cover

The parkland history gives a general 'wooded' feel to much of the landscape, but largely in the form of groves and belts, rather than as large areas of woodland. Exceptions are Spelthorne Wood and Lineage Wood on the eastern edge of the Melford area – these are both important ancient woods with histories extending back into the 14th century and probably beyond. Some of the groves in Kentwell Park also have long histories – Doghouse Grove was *Monks Spring* in 1613 and Norman's Grove was *Monks Grove*.

The woodland framing mutes the estate character, but it is still present.

Visual experience

In general this rolling landscape with a combination of woodlands that have a tidy estate countryside feel, reminiscent of the muted estate pattern of the **Undulating Estate Farmlands**.

In the upper Stour valley the main road runs parallel to the river, from village to village, with intermittent side roads running off at right angles up the gentle slopes of the valley sides. Much of the former meadowland along the river is now in arable cultivation, and the landform is so shallow that this scarcely 'reads' as a river valley, just part of the rather bleak, very open, wider landscape. There are wide verges, some rough hedges with oaks, horse paddocks around settlements and manicured parkland trees in pasture.

In the middle Stour the valley perception is also limited, with Melford Green and its associated housing being the dominant impressions. The parks have limited road incursions into this landscape, though the late-20th-century Melford By-pass (A134) now cuts across the former Little Park and Acton Park areas. Even so much of the valley of the Chad Brook is secluded and out of sight, even when it runs parallel to Bull Lane on the eastern approach to Long Melford village. The western approach to the village along Windmill Hill and Westgate Street (A1092) is on high ground and there are few views of the Stour valley.

Condition

The influence of single estate ownership remains strong over much of this landscape, so the condition is often good despite the post war modification of the field patterns; In these areas hedges woods and trees are well maintained as is much of the built features of an estate landscape.

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Land management issues and options

Geology, soils, landform and drainage

Archaeology

- Conservation of upstanding heritage assets
- Identify priority sites for arable reversion to protect buried heritage assets

Settlement and the built environment

- Maintain and enhance the landscape setting through sensitive and appropriate development control

Landholding and enclosure pattern

- Maintain the historic pattern of field boundaries and ditches
- Support the continued sensitive management of existing grass land, especially parkland

Trees and woodland cover

- Maintain the balance of tree cover

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Ancient Rolling Farmlands

Ancient Rolling Farmlands

Key Characteristics

- Rolling arable landscape of chalky clays and loams
- Dissected widely and sometimes deeply, by river valleys
- Field pattern of ancient random enclosure. More regular fields linked to localised areas of late enclosure of heathland and common fields.
- Substantial open areas created by post-WWII agricultural changes
- Hedges of hawthorn and elm with oak ash and field maple as hedgerow trees. Localised areas of holly hedges.
- Scattered ancient woodland parcels containing a mix of oak, lime, cherry, hazel, hornbeam, ash and holly
- Network of winding lanes and paths often associated with hedges, creating visual intimacy
- Dispersed settlement pattern of loosely clustered villages, hamlets and isolated farmsteads of mediaeval origin
- Hamlets often associated with greens or the remains of greens
- Farmstead buildings are predominantly timber-framed, the houses colour-washed and the barns blackened with tar. Roofs are frequently tiled, though thatched houses can be locally significant

Location

This landscape type is found on the higher ground on the edges of the valleys in two principal areas:

- On the east and north sides of the Stour from the south side of Long Melford to the north side of Sudbury, and then from Great Cornard southwards to Bures St Mary, eastwards to Leavenheath and Stoke-by-Nayland, then on the east side of the Rover Box from Boxford southwards to Withermarsh Green
LDU: 133-36 (Polstead)
- On the south and west sides of the Stour from Ridgewell in the west through to Foxearth in the east, then southwards through Bulmer and Twinstead to the edges of Mount Bures.



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LDUs: 318-75 (Ashen), **318-104** (Bulmer parkland), **318-119** (Little Henny parkland) and **0-60** (Bures Hamlet).

Geology and landform

These are rolling clayland landscapes dissected, sometimes deeply, by river valleys. Although the main soil type is derived from chalky clays left behind by the great Anglian Glaciation, the dissection of this deposit by the area's rivers has produced a variety of soil types. The heaviest clays that are prone to water logging are on the interfluvial plateaux, while lighter soils are found on the valley sides. In some areas there are also areas of sand associated with rivers. In places there are areas of glacial sand and gravel that were large enough to produce heaths.

Archaeology

There is a cropmark of a possible Neolithic long barrow on the southern outskirts of Long Melford and, nearby, two ring-ditches indicating flattened Bronze Age burial mounds. Two areas on the outskirts of Whitestreet Green in Polstead have produced evidence of Late Iron Age 'Belgic' cremation cemeteries. A Roman villa is known near Rodbridge Corner, which is one of number in the territory surrounding the Roman settlement that underlies Long Melford. The church at Little Cornard, not far away, has a large number of Roman bricks in its walls and towers. There is also a Roman building and tile kilns in the vicinity of Alphamstone church.

There is a small (15m diameter) circular embanked enclosure in Abbas Wood at Great Cornard that is undated, but could be early medieval. Another larger (94 x 80m), sub-rectangular banked enclosure is in Grange Wood at Nayland. This too is undated but may be related to the manor of Wissington/Wiston Grange that belonged to Hugh de Hosdene in 1086 and was later given by him to Thetford Priory.

Settlement

The settlement pattern in the two areas of this landscape type is similar, with dispersed farmsteads of medieval origin interspersed with some occasional small villages and hamlets. There is a frequent occurrence of small- to moderate-sized greens or tyes, frequently linear or triangular in shape. These greens mostly represent subsidiary settlements within their parishes and many were enclosed in the 18th and 19th centuries. After enclosure they were often infilled with housing and now survive only as place-names.

The farms are large but are predominantly owner-occupied rather than estate owned. The farmstead buildings are predominantly timber-framed, the houses colour-washed and the barns blackened with tar. Roofs are frequently tiled, though thatched houses can be locally significant.

On the Essex side, between Haverhill and Sudbury, there is a distinctive group of places that all share a common name – Belchamp Otten, Belchamp St Paul, Belchamp Walter, plus a lost Belchamp St Ethelbert (*Bello Campo Sancti Adelberti* 1230, which was



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incorporated into Ovington in 1473). The modern forms of the name have been influenced by the French for a 'beautiful field', but this is really an Old English name that meant something like 'the settlement on the baulk or ridge', referring to the peninsula of land that lies between the Stour and the Belchamp Brook. Belchamp St Paul was given to St Paul's Cathedral in London in AD 939 (the gift of *Bylcham* being confirmed by King Athelstan c.970). Paul's Hall and the church form a neat church-and-hall complex of likely Late Saxon date. The existing Hall is a timber-framed building of early 16th-century date, but there is also a 7-bay aisled barn that was rebuilt c.1200 incorporating a pair of posts that are two centuries older. There is another hall-and-church complex at Belchamp Walter. This *Belhcham* was willed by the Anglo-Saxon noblewoman Leofgifu to 'her lady' (the queen) c.1040, having freed all the men on the estate. It takes its present name from Walter de Teye, its owner in 1297, being earlier called *la Contesse* (1285) after the Countess of Oxford. There are other hall-and-church complexes at Gestingthorpe (another of Leofgifu's possessions – *Gristlyngthorp* was given to the abbey at Bury St Edmunds) and at Ovington. The Ryes at Little Henny (a brick house built in 1809 for Nathaniel Barnardiston) also represents a former hall-and-church complex, but the adjacent church of Little Henny was already in ruins by the 18th century and the hall now bears a name derived from its owner in 1269, John de Ry. The park around the house was developed by Barnardiston to complement his new house on the site of the old hall. At Ridgewell the hall and church form a loose group on the eastern edge of the village, which has formed around a small green. Foxearth church and its moated late 13th-century Hall also form a loose hall-and-church group.

The church at Stoke-by-Nayland is referred to in the will of Ealdorman Ælfgar of Essex, c.AD 950, and in 1000-2 as the 'holy foundation at Stoke (*halgan stowæ et Stocæ*) in which my ancestors lie buried' in the will of his daughter Ælfflæd, the widow of Ealdorman Brihtnoth (the doomed hero of the Battle of Maldon). The gifts to this church by the families of the ealdormen of Essex suggests that they intended it as a major monastery, but in that they were thwarted by royal intervention after Ælfflæd's death and the bequests ended up powering the growth of the abbey at Bury St Edmunds. The property now called Stoke Priory was built by Isaac Hoy in 1829 and named in memory of this early monastery. The settlement that has grown up around the church has developed around two small adjacent greens (Church Street and The Downs) on one side, with two parallel streets (Back Street and Polstead Street) forming a further two sides. The church has a prominent position overlooking the Stour valley and its lofty tower features in several of Constable's paintings.

Bulmer Tye is shown as a long narrow green on 18th-century maps but has lost its green character (it is recorded as *Bulmere Tye* in 1310, suggesting that it and the main village of Bulmere probably take their name from a former mere in the valley of the Belchamp Brook). There were similar linear greens at Alphamstone Green, at Cornard Tye and at Whitestreet Green in Polstead, but they too have lost their green character. Smaller, mainly triangular greens, are recorded at Borley Green, Twinstead Green (*Twinstead Tye* 1600), Horne's Green in Bures, Cuckoo Tye in Long Melford (*Thurgoristye* 1442, *Cowckhouse Tye* 1580 and finally evolved into *Cuckoo Tye* by 1783), Newman's Green in Acton, Bures Green, Sacker's Green in Newton, Dorking Tye in Assington, Hagmore Green in Boxford, and Withermarsh Green in Stoke-by-Nayland. This may be the



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Wythermerested of 1327, but much earlier Withermarsh formed part of one of the estates of the noblewoman Ælflæd and is named in her will, 1000-2, as *Wifærmyrsc* and *Hwifermyrsc* ('the quivering marsh'). The avenue that leads from this green to Gifford's Hall was already in existence in 1783. Potters Tye Farm on the Long Melford/Acton boundary is a relict of a triangular green which had characteristically complicated name evolution – *Tallichetye* in 1442, *Tallydye Tye* 1580, *Talage Tye* 1660/1, *Stalage Tye* 1783 and *Stalhouse Tye* 1873. Highlanders Farm in Long Melford is a relict of *Cox Green* and the isolated late medieval house at Sawyer's in Bures is the last surviving property on the former *Sayers tye*, which takes its name from its 14th-century owners.

Claret Hall in Ashen is on the site of a Domesday settlement called *Clare*, which later acquired a French diminutive ending to become *Clarette* (1125-47) or 'little Clare' to distinguish from the larger Clare on the Suffolk side of the Stour. Abbas Hall in Great Cornard takes its name from its ownership by the Abbess of West Malling in Kent; Cornard having been granted to it by Robert fitz Hamo, the Norman conqueror of Glamorgan (d. 1107). The existing house was built for the steward of the abbess's manor in Cornard and its 2-bay aisled hall has been dated to c.1290 by dendrochronology. Moated Clees Hall (*Clees Hall* 1640) in Alhamstone takes its name from John Clee who was living in 1372, but was earlier the 'manor of Fytz Jeffreys', named after Ralph fitz Geoffrey de Alfameston, living in 1248. It was also called *Fytz Jeffrys Stubbyng*, suggesting the property was formed from a woodland assart.

Costen's Hall in Little Cornard (now demolished) was previously known as Caxton's or Cawston's, taking its name from Richard de Caketon, who was alive in the 1290s. The Hall has been demolished but its farm buildings largely survive. These are a striking group of brick buildings set around an octagonal courtyard. They date from 1844 and were built for George Mumford, the tenant of Lord Walsingham. Peyton Hall in Bures Hamlet was the property of Robert de Peytone c.1320 and Gedding Hall in Leavenheath was the property of Edmund de Geddyng in 1327.

Leavenheath is largely a creation of the 19th and 20th centuries. 18th-century maps show a large heath on the borders of Assington, Polstead, Nayland, Stoke-by-Nayland and Wissington called *Leaden Heath* (*Levynhey* 1292, *Levenesheth* 1351, *Leaden or Leaven Heath* 1838). The 1292 form of the name suggests that this was originally a *hey* or wood. The heath was enclosed in 1817, giving a landscape of straight roads and geometric land units. Leavenheath became a separate chapelry in 1863 and a parish in 1868. Parts of the former heath saw substantial residential development in the 20th century, including the creation of a new village green. Cock Street is a settlement on the former eastern edge of the heath and Honey Tye is on its southern edge. The nearby Polstead Heath was also enclosed in 1817 and has similarly seen residential development on the post-enclosure land parcels.

Pentlow Tower is a landmark on the southern side of the Stour. This 28m (90ft) tall hexagonal brick tower was built by rev. Edward Bull in 1859 as a monument to his parents. It is said to command a view of 41 churches in the surrounding landscape.



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Landholding and enclosure pattern

The enclosure pattern over a lot of the landscape retains much of the organic pattern of ancient and species-rich hedgerows and associated ditches. The hedges are frequently high and wide and have a strong visual impact. There are however some areas of field amalgamation and boundary loss, especially on the interfluves between the numerous small valleys. The dissected form of this landscape has reduced the scope for the really extensive field amalgamation found in some other parts of the county. It has ancient woodland scattered throughout in blocks that are often larger than the surrounding fields.

There was some Parliamentary enclosure of common-field arable in the Sudbury area: at Belchamp Otten and Belchamp Walter (1840) on the Essex and at Great Cornard (1813) on the Suffolk side. This has given some larger, more regular and, despite the enclosure, still relatively open fieldscapes.

There were also some substantial heaths in the area to the east of Sudbury. These were enclosed in the 18th and 19th centuries and now only survive as place-names associated with late field boundaries, as at Leavenheath and Polstead Heath.

South of a line between Hadleigh and Sudbury orchards become a much more prominent land use.

Trees and woodland cover

The woodland cover is largely ancient semi-natural woodland consisting of oak, lime, cherry, hazel, hornbeam, ash, holly and elm. The presence of small-leaved lime in many of the woods in the eastern part of the area is especially noteworthy.

There are only scattered parcels of woodland in the western part of this landscape type, but there is a more significant group between Bulmer and Twinstead, comprising Parsonage Wood, Butlers Wood (taking its name from the Botiller family, landowners here in the 14th century) Waldegrave Wood and Twinstead Hall Wood – but even here 19th-century and earlier maps indicate that there was formerly more woodland here.

Abbas Hall Wood in Great Cornard is supposed to be the wood portrayed in Thomas Gainsborough's early masterpiece of c.1748 that was later entitled 'Gainsborough's Forest', with the additional subtitle of 'Cornard Wood' in 1828 (now in the National Gallery). A church tower with a spire is glimpsed through the middle is taken to be Little Cornard, but that church has only a small (?19th-century) pointed lantern on its tower rather than a spire. An earlier version of this scene, painted c.1740, has recently (2009) come to light.

The largest group of surviving ancient woodland is at Cornard and Assington, where Assington Thicks, Mumford's Wood and Lord's Wood were all once part of a larger Assington Thicks. (Mumford's Wood commemorates George Mumford of nearby Costen's Hall, whose farm buildings are referred to above).



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Leadenhall Wood is a much reduced fragment of a larger wood that formerly fringed the northern edge of *Leaden Heath*. There was also woodland on the southern edge too – Rowley Grove and Breach Grove still survive but *Kingsfield Wood* and *Farthing Grove* have gone. There were also woods around the edges of Polstead Heath: Stack Wood on the north, Howe Wood and King Harry's Grove on the west side, and Millfield Wood on the south – though some are reduced in size. The occurrence of these heath-edge woods supports the idea that the heaths themselves were once probably wooded too (see about *Leaden Heath*, above).

Between Polstead and Withermarsh there is another group of ancient woods – Mark Wood, Long Wood and Hazel Grove.

The hedgerow trees are of typical clayland composition, oak, ash, field maple and blackthorn, with suckering elm, which is especially abundant in those areas with the lightest soils, where it often makes up almost all of the woody component of the hedgerows. In some places there are 'landowner-distinctive' boundaries such as the predominantly holly hedges found around the Gifford's Hall Estate in the Brett Valley. Oak trees are usually prominent and compliment the parcels of woodland in this area, adding to the generally wooded feel of the landscape. In terms of crop production, cereals and oilseed rape dominate the cropping, the latter making a significant visual contribution.

Visual experience

The clay plateau extending between Ridgewell in the west to Foxearth in the east is very gently undulating, just one step up from flat, mainly in arable cultivation but with a sprinkling of improved pasture and small geometric woodlands, including a young oak plantation. Throughout there are widely spaced isolated houses. This is an open, empty-seeming landscape, consisting of horizontal elements, with few trees. Where they are present, as in alder shelterbelts around former orchards (now grubbed out and returned to pasture and horse paddocks) the local landscape appears more treed; there are some low hedges, and some mature trees within hedges, or skinny tree rows, but these are not strong elements. The Belchamps have a remote feel, not being on the road to anywhere in particular.

The area towards Bures in the south is on sloping ground with extensive views, including the settlement of Bures and the more wooded Suffolk side of the Stour valley. This is an open area, with no woodland, a lack of settlement and a sparse transport network, which give it a remote quality. The field pattern is mainly small to medium scale, with sinuous to curving field boundaries. Roadside hedges are tall but may be lost or gappy within fields and there is a contrast between the sunken lanes enclosed by tall hedges and the more open arable landscape.

The area to the east of the Stour is a flat to gently rolling plateau intersected with stream and river valleys, creating very articulated and diverse landforms. It is generally in arable cultivation, occasionally irrigated, interspersed with woodlands and some pasture and sprinkled with small hamlets. Although the A134 is a major route through this unit, elsewhere there are narrow lanes edged with holly and field maple, with large field oaks and an occasional conifer plantation. To the south of Boxford there are fairly extensive



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orchards. Horse pastures may be edged with low white fences which jar with the more natural hedged landscape around. Houses can be of red brick with slate or thatch roofs, Victorian or late Georgian or, much more frequently, timber-framed with colourfully painted plaster

Condition

Although there are some areas of extensive field amalgamation overall the landscape is largely intact, and accessible through a dense network of winding roads with wide verges. In some places there are significant areas of development pressure and land-use change to commercial activities. These tendencies are especially noticeable on the outskirts of Sudbury. The creation of pony paddocks is also a growing feature. In these areas the rural agricultural character of the landscape is clearly diluted.

Land management issues and options

Geology, soils, landform and drainage

Archaeology

- Conservation of upstanding heritage assets
- Identify priority sites for arable reversion to protect buried heritage assets

Settlement and the built environment

- Maintain and enhance the landscape setting through sensitive and appropriate development control
- Conserve and enhance the open areas and boundary features of the greens and tyes
- Conserve traditional farm buildings and their settings

Landholding and enclosure pattern

- Maintain the historic pattern of field boundaries and ditches
- There is considerable potential for restoration and replanting of hedges in this landscape. There are also opportunities to support the management of woodlands and reduce the isolation of woodland blocks within this landscape
- Changes in land-use that effect character and condition of the landscape, such as the expansion of horse pastures. Support the use of best practice that minimises the impact of these changes on the wider use through use of sympathetic materials and siting.



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Trees and woodland cover

- Maintain the balance of tree cover
- Woodland management - encourage and support the removal of conifers from ancient woodland sites as well as appropriate deer management to maintain the condition of these important historic landscape features
- There are opportunities to create re-create some of the lost woodlands within this landscape, but the locations must be chosen to reflect the local landscape character and to avoid archaeological sites

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Undulating Estate Farmlands

Undulating Estate Farmlands

Key Characteristics

- Undulating arable landscape
- Large villages on the edges of the area, but within it only scattered hamlets and occasional farmsteads
- Important stock of medieval moated sites, and of medieval and Tudor timber-framed and brick buildings
-
- Large fields, often with insubstantial hedges, resulting from 19th-century enclosure of extensive common. Especially in the western half
- Field pattern elsewhere rationalised by estate ownership
- Oak, ash and field maple as hedgerow trees
- Plantation woods in the areas of late enclosure, but some significant ancient woods in the northern parts.

Location

This landscape type occurs in the upper Stour valley on the undulating higher land between the valleys (ie the 'interfluves'). It is found in these 4 relatively small areas:

- between the valleys of the Chilton Stream and Stour (Clare to Wixoe and north to the Bradleys)
- between the Stour and the Stour Brook (on the north side of Haverhill and north to the Bradleys)
- between the Stour Brook and the Bumpstead Brook (south-east of Haverhill)
- between the Bumpstead Brook and some of its tributaries (west of Steeple Bumpstead)

LDUs: 303-127E (Stoke by Clare), **303-127W** (Stoke by Clare), **304-69** (Steeple Bumpstead), and **304-88** (Steeple Bumpstead).

Geology, soils and landform

The chalky boulder clay or till deposited by the great Anglian Glaciation forms the foundation of this area, but it is dissected, relatively deeply, by streams and rivers. The result is a landscape that undulates, sometimes strongly, in contrast to the landscape of the north Suffolk claylands, which have very little relative relief. The soils are

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predominately Hanslope clays that are relatively free draining because of the slopes that they lie on and their composition.

Archaeology

The cropmark of a Neolithic causewayed enclosure on a promontory in a bend of the Stour at Kedington suggests that this area had sufficient agricultural communities by 3000 BC to undertake the building of monuments of a ritual nature. Cropmarks of ring-ditches (indicating flattened Bronze Age burial mounds) at Great Bradley and Withersfield show a continuing human presence in the 2nd millennium BC. A Late Iron Age wine amphora found at Kedington in the 19th century probably came from the burial of a local chieftain. A later, Roman, amphora was found at Great Wratting.

On the western outskirts of Haverhill there are the enigmatic earthworks called Haverhill Castle. A manor called *le Castell* or *Castell-hall* was held in the late 14th and early 15th centuries by the earls of Stafford, as co-heirs of the great feudal Honor of Clare. In 1302/3 this had been held by a Roger de Nevyle, as a tenant of Gilbert de Clare, earl of Gloucester. A document of 1338 refers to *le Castlegate* and *Castelfeld* and a fee called *Nevillesse*, once held by a Gilbert de Nevilla. A Gilbert de *Nivella* or de *Neiella* is named, c.1152-73, as one of the 'barons and other faithful men' of the de Clares who had made a donation to their new priory at Stoke-by-Clare – in Gilbert's case he had given the tithes of his land at Haverhill. The earthworks look more like a moated site than a castle, but may be the remains of a small, non-standard, defensive site belonging to the civil war period in the reign of King Stephen.

A number of other, more standard, medieval moated sites also occur across this landscape – see below in the Settlement section.

Settlement

The town of Haverhill and a number of substantial villages, such as Kedington, Steeple Bumpstead, Clare, and Stoke-by-Clare, lie on the edges of this landscape type, but within it, settlement occurs mainly in widely spaced small greens or small linear hamlets (often called 'ends' or 'streets'), with a scattering of dispersed farmsteads, sometimes moated. This settlement pattern is a reflection of the farming history of this area, with a higher incidence of common fields resulting in a tendency for nucleated settlements. As already noted, these nucleated settlements lie of the edges of this landscape type. The component parts of the Undulating Estate Farmlands are mainly made up of the 'upland' parts of the territories of those settlements. The hamlets variously named 'greens', 'ends' and 'streets' mostly represent small daughter settlements in that upland.

Haverhill had a market by 1086 (a third of this belonged to Tihel of Helléan, a Breton lord who is commemorated in the name Helions Bumpstead), but the ownership of the remainder is not recorded in Domesday Book, but it must have been the de Clare family). Its Domesday-period church has disappeared, but lay on the higher ground on the edge outskirts of the later town and from this was known as the *Overchurche* or *Bovetownechurch*, sometimes abbreviated to *Botton church*, a name now surviving as Burton End. By the 12th century the market was in its present position nearer the river and

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had acquired a chapel of St Mary (the earlier church was also dedicated to St Mary, but because of the *Botton* name, was later misidentified as being dedicated to St Botolph). This became the *Netherchurch* and finally, from the late 16th century, the only church. There was some textile manufacturing in the town in the Middle Ages but its textile industries grew greatly from the late 18th century. The firm of D. Gurteen and Sons was founded in 1784 and their large Chauntry Mill works have dominated the centre of the town since they were built in 1856. Initially making drabett (a coarse linen and cotton cloth) and smocks, they later expanded to other textiles including horsehair-weaving and coco-matting. Silk works were brought to the town in 1828 by Stephen Walters of Spitalfields in London. In 1828 Stephen Walters of Spitalfields in London brought silk works to a town that was then essentially one long street that ran parallel to the Stour Brook. Enlargement came when the railway reached the town from two directions – in 1863 from the Colne Valley and Halstead line to Haverhill South, and in 1865 from the Great Eastern line to Haverhill North. From 1955 onwards further enlargement came as part of the London 'overspill' plan.

Kedington has also grown since 1960 as a dormitory settlement to Haverhill. Up until the end of the 18th century the village was dominated by its moated Hall, but both are now gone. Here was the 'Godly household' of the Puritan Barnardiston family, leaders of the Parliamentarians in Suffolk in the English Civil War, and the home to the young Sir Samuel Barnardiston, who, with his neatly cut hair, was the original 'roundhead'. The adjacent church, however, still has an impressive series of Barnardiston monuments – so much so that it has been dubbed the Westminster Abbey of Suffolk. An earlier history for the settlement is hinted at by the Late Saxon stone cross with a crucified Christ in the chancel window and the Roman bricks built into the church's walls. The Risbridge Union Workhouse was built here in 1856 and later transformed into the Risbridge Hospital, and since the 1990s, into a housing development.

More characteristic of the landscape type are the small greens such as East Green and Ever Green in Great Bradley, Calford Green and Woodland Green in Kedington, Sowley Green in Great Thurlow, Little Thurlow Green, and Burton Green in Withersfield. In a few cases, there are hints that some of these settlements have Late Saxon origins – Brockley Green in Hundon, for instance, stems from the Domesday-period settlement of *Brochola*. The 'ends' – Dash End in Kedington, Kedington End on the Kedington/Sturmer boundary, Boyton End in Stoke-by-Clare and Temple End in Little Thurlow – have a similar distribution to the greens, but lack their characteristic open spaces, being essentially roadside hamlets. Temple End commemorates a land grant there, before the 1270s, by Roger and William le Bretun to the Knights Templars. Boyton End lies near to the former *Boyton Green* and to the existing Boyton Hall Farm, all descended from the Domesday settlement of *Boituna*. Domesday Book also refers two *Boitunas* (one distinguished from the other by the term *alia* 'other'), the second being Boyton Hall on the Little Wratting/Haverhill boundary. Both Boytons are near parish boundaries (as are many of the other Boytons) and the first element may be Old English *boia* 'a boy, a servant' – perhaps in the sense of the Boytons' relationship to their 'parent' settlements.

In addition to the greens and ends, a sprinkling of moated sites indicates that there were also a number of substantial dispersed farmsteads of medieval date, eg Norley Moat

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House in Little Bradley, the Old Rectory at Barnardiston, Pinhoe Hall in Hundon, Chantry Farm in Withersfield and Great Wilsey Farm in Little Wrating. The settlement at Norley Moat was also called *Overhall* and was in existence by the 1190s. A number of these moated sites were still occupied farmsteads in the 19th century, but are now deserted, eg Glebe Farm in Great Thurlow and Ganwick on the Great Wrating/ Barnardiston boundary. Another now empty moated site at Little Thurlow, called The Island, is shown as being a lodge within the deer park attached to Little Thurlow Hall on a map of 1735.

Chapel Farm on the Haverhill/Little Wrating is the site of the medieval chapel of Our Lady in the lost settlement of *Alverton* or *Alderton*, recorded in the 15th century. A more recent loss is the hamlet of *Hogstreet* in Kedington, which has gone since the 19th century, as has the nearby farmstead of *Little Wilsey* in Little Wrating. *Sotterley Green* and *Granger's Green* in Great Wrating have also gone. Further to the east, the medieval settlement of *Fornham* in Stoke-by-Clare has also disappeared (together with its 13th-century oratory) – its final manifestation was as *Farnham Wood* in the 19th century.

This tendency for the desertion of small settlements on the one hand, and the growth of the larger villages on the other, has accentuated the nucleated settlement pattern and the emptiness of the surrounding farmland.

Landholding and enclosure pattern

Common or open fields form a strong part of the agricultural history of this area, particularly of the lands to the west of the Stour. 18th and 19th-century maps of Haverhill show extensive common fields around the town – *Chimswell Common, Wallstreet Common, Broad Croft Common, Little Mill Field, Rookwood Common, Small Hill Field, Hales Common, Chapel Common, Mill Hill Field, West Field, Building Common, France Building Common and Mill Field Common*. Similar areas are recorded at Great Wrating (*Snite Field, White Croft Field, Wrating Mill Field Common, Red Field, Mayners Common, Great Galley Field and Great Rowleys Common*) and Kedington (*Dane Common, Blackmoor Common, Sturmere Common, Mere Common and Foxearth Common*). The use of the term 'common' in these names to mean 'common fields' rather than 'common pastures' is more typical of counties to the west, such as Hertfordshire.

There was 19th-century parliamentary enclosure that included common-field arable at Great Bradley (1815), Great Wrating (1817), Great Thurlow (1825), Haverhill (1853 and 1857), Kedington (1853), Little Wrating (1853), Sturmer (1853), and Witherfield (1854). As a result, the area has greater similarities to adjacent areas of Cambridgeshire than to most of the rest of the Stour valley. The late enclosure of these common fields has given a landscape with many straight field boundaries and a scattering of straight-sided plantations.

Estates were frequently the movers behind the parliamentary enclosure in the 19th century and there is a strong estate character throughout much of this landscape.

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Trees and woodland cover

The woodland cover is strongest in the northern part of this area, in the Wrattings, Thurlows and Bradleys. Significant ancient woods include Trundley Wood in Great Thurlow, Abbacy Wood (*Ashburnhay Coppice* 1543-4 – ‘the *hay* [wood] by the stream called the *Ashburn*’) in Great Wrating, and Littley Wood and North Wood in Withersfield. Trundley Wood has maintained its size, but Abbacy Wood is much reduced from its 18th-century size. Park Tuft in Little Thurlow is a wooded-up part of the deer park recorded there in 1735 (the nearby Park Grove lay outside the park and appears as a partial plantation in 1735). The largest ancient wood in the southern part was Lord’s Wood in Stoke-by-Clare, but this too is now reduced in size. This is recorded as the wood of the ‘lord prior’ of Stoke-by-Clare Priory in the 13th century, when it was called *Stokeho*. It was a coppice wood when it was given to the priory in 1124, indicating a long history as a managed woodland.

The other woods are mainly small broadleaved plantations, which though ubiquitous, do not have the interlocking pattern that is found further north.

Visual experience

The views in this landscape are often of open, undulating, farmland, reflecting its former common field origins. Scattered woodland cover (or non at all) and a sparse hedge network mean the large scale and shape of the landform is the key visual characteristic.

In the east here are very long views, including over the river valley, which in the south is very shallow and tends to lack riparian vegetation. To the north there is more vegetation and views are of riparian trees rather than the (small) river itself. Field boundaries tend to be minimal, with gappy tree rows, sometimes silhouetted against the skyline, but are quite variable.

To the west the gently undulating arable farmland is often open and occasionally bleak, but occasionally with views framed by woods. There are ditches to the roadsides with unmanaged shrubby vegetation and some hedges with hedgerow trees, mainly young.

To the south, there are again arable fields on undulating terrain. Long views are available, filtered by tree rows along some field boundaries, which are generally in poor condition with few hedges. These fields are of medium size, sub-regular to irregular in form. Parts are very bleak with few hedgerows or trees, just the occasional distant tree line and a few field boundary oaks. There are also a few small woods and their sparse distribution and the open terrain increases their prominence

Condition

In much of this landscape the pressure of industrial farming on the management of land and the larger field size has modified this landscape removing much of the detail of the field pattern.

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Land management issues and options

Geology, soils, landform and drainage

Archaeology

- Conservation of upstanding heritage assets

The medieval moated sites are important visible archaeological features of this landscape and they need to be safeguarded and supported with appropriate grant aid and management advice, especially relating to the control of scrub and trees, as this has the potential to cause considerable damage to these sites.

- Identify priority sites for arable reversion to protect buried heritage assets

Settlement and the built environment

- Maintain and enhance the landscape setting through sensitive and appropriate development control

Landholding and enclosure pattern

- Maintain the historic pattern of field boundaries and ditches

There is some potential for restoration and replanting of hedges in this landscape. However the form and species should be selected with care as the areas of late enclosure in the west of the area will require a different form and species mix from the those towards the eastern side.

The undulating nature of this landscape means that carefully located woodland and hedge planting could have a significant landscape impact over a wide area.

- Support the continued sensitive management of existing grass land, especially parkland

Trees and woodland cover

- Maintain the balance of tree cover

There are opportunities to support the management of woodlands and to restore the former size of some of the woodland blocks in this landscape

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Undulating Ancient Farmlands

Undulating Ancient Farmlands

Key Characteristics

- Undulating arable landscape
- Villages with substantial churches and old houses, often timber-framed and thatched.
- Hamlets associated with small triangular greens or linear 'ends' and 'streets'.
- Dispersed farmsteads, often moated and with fine medieval and Tudor timber-framed and brick buildings .
- A predominantly irregular field pattern, but with some more regular units on the valley-side slopes
- Oak, ash and field maple as hedgerow trees
- Substantial open areas created for by post WWII agricultural improvement
- Studded with blocks of ancient woodland
- A large-scale landscape with long undulating open views. Trees, either in hedges or in woods, are always a prominent feature
- In the undulating landscape, crop production, especially oilseeds can be visually prominent.

Location

This landscape type occurs on the north side of the middle Stour valley, around Glemsford and Long Melford, and to the south of the Bumpstead Brook near Steeple Bumpstead. It is characteristic of the undulating higher land above the valleys

LDUs: 238.16 (Hartest), **238-124** (Glemsford), **194-46** (Long Melford), **346-139** (Stansted), **504-90** (Birdbrook), and **504-107** (Moyns Park)

Geology, landform and soils

The elevated plateau of chalky clay till laid down by the Anglian glaciation is however much dissected by small valleys, giving a markedly undulating landscape, with some quite

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steep slopes. The sloping land, combined with the high chalk content of the glacial till, has created a large area of clay soils of the Hanslope series that are good for arable farming, (in contrast to more the difficult to cultivate Beccles series found on the clay plateau of High Suffolk).

Archaeology

Prehistoric barrows (burial mounds) may have existed at Birdbrook Hall and at Chadwells Farm, also in Birdbrook, a Roman cemetery was found in 1779. There have also been finds of prehistoric and Roman artefacts in the Glem valley at Boxted and nearby, in Stanstead, a Roman villa has been partially excavated (one of a number in the vicinity of the Roman settlement underlying Long Melford).

At Colt's Hall in Cavendish there is a faint earthwork that may be the remains of a small Norman ringwork. The site has yielded Saxo-Norman Thetford Ware, as well as medieval pottery, and may have been built by the family of Roger de St Germain, one of the tenants of the powerful de Clare family in 1086. The family were still there in the 12th century, being succeeded by the de Greys in the 14th century (hence its alternative name of Greys Manor) and the Colts in the late 15th century (Sir George Colt was knighted at his house called Colts Hall by Queen Elizabeth in her Progress of 1578).

The house called Chipley Abbey in Poslingford is on the site Chipley Priory, a house of Augustinian Canons founded before 1235. Always a small priory, it was annexed to Stoke-by-Clare College in 1455, but its chapel was still in use in 1535. The chapel was later used as a cow-house before being demolished in 1818. The existing house incorporates a small part of the west range of the monastery and is partly surrounded by a moat; the monastic fishponds also survive.

To the east of Birdbrook, the area is crossed by the earthworks of the dismantled Colne Valley and Halstead Railway running between Haverhill and Chappel – opened in 1860, it was closed just over a century later in 1965. The tree-covered line remains a prominent landscape feature.

Settlement

The area contains a number of villages of moderate size – Stanstead, Poslingford, Boxford, Hundon, Hartest, Somerton and Birdbrook – as well as five larger ones on its edge: Long Melford, Glemsford, Cavendish, Clare and Steeple Bumpstead. All were in existence by 1086 and the sizeable endowment of Hundon church, together with its exceptionally large parish, suggest that it was the site of a Late Saxon minster church. The discovery in 1687 of an apparent Viking burial of c.AD 953 in the churchyard strengthens this possibility. The well-endowed Domesday church at Hartest could similarly have been a minster, though Hartest is also unusual in that the medieval church is situated at the south-east corner of a triangular green of about 2 acres. It is first recorded as *Herdherst* ['herd or stag wood'] around 1030, when it already belonged to the abbey at Ely, having been given by the parents of Abbot Leofsige around AD 990.

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Glemsford is situated on a spur between the Stour and the River Glem, and has evolved from the knitting together of five settlement clusters – the church area, a small triangular green called Fair Green (where a fair for ‘pedlery and toys’ was held every 24th June) with a northern extension called Brook Street, another triangular green called Tye Green and a southern street extension along Skates Hill. It was an important centre for the late medieval and Tudor wool trade, with a large number of clothiers. It even produced its own distinctive undyed white cloths called *Glaynesfordes*. The woollen cloth trade had declined greatly by 1824 when a silk mill was set up here. The textile industry was further supplemented in 1844 by the establishment of a horsehair-seating and cocoa-nut-fibre matting works by H. Kolle & Sons of London. Glemsford’s industrial portfolio also included a soap and candles works, brick works, and a flax factory. The silk works remain, but the three-storey horsehair factory has been converted to housing.

The steeple of Steeple Bumpstead is not a spire, but a reference to its substantial, late 11th-century, church tower – it was *Bumstede ad Turrim* [‘Bumpstead at the tower’] in 1259. The settlement grew up beside the Bumpstead Brook and the second part of the name means ‘the place at the reeds’ (Old English *bune* + *steda*). In area, it is the smaller of the two Bumpsteads and was sometimes called Parva or Little Bumpstead. Although not officially a market town, its inhabitants were wealthy enough to build a fine Moot Hall in the late 16th century.

In addition to the villages, there is a small scattering of hamlets with ‘green’, ‘end’ and ‘street’ names, such as Cross Green in Hartest, Bulley Green in Poslingford, Finkle Green in Birdbrook, Fenstead End in Boxted, Mile End in Hartest, Wales End in Cavendish, and New Street, Plum Street and Brook Street in Glemsford. The greens tend to be small and triangular, while the ends and street are usually linear roadside settlements. There are also a number of dispersed farmsteads, some of which can be shown to be of some antiquity. Clopton Hall in Poslingford is recorded as *Cloptuna* in Domesday Book and Houghton Hall in Cavendish is recorded there as *Hoketona*. Houghton Hall later acquired the status symbol of a moat and medieval moats surround a number of the other dispersed farmsteads: Moat Farm in Boxted, the Old Rectory and Moat Farm in Birdbrook, and Latchley’s Farm (named after Henry de Lacheleye, 1310) in Steeple Bumpstead. There are also the remains of a moat around the grand (Listed Grade I) 16th/early 17th-century house of timber and brick built by Sir Thomas Gent and his son Henry at Moyns Park in Steeple Bumpstead, though the property takes its name from the family of Robert le Moigne, who was there in 1254.

Gifford’s Hall in Shimpling formerly lay on the edge of a small triangular green and was recorded as *Gyffords Farme* in 1580, taking its name from the family of Robert Giffard who was living in 1327. New House Farm in Poslingford, despite its name, is also an old property – it is referred to in 1572 as ‘a messuage newly built called the Newhowse’. Even then, it was not totally new because it was built on the site of the manor of *Bustalmynes*, named after John Burstemyn who was also living in 1327. The property was further enhanced in the early 18th century by the Golding family, who constructed a garden canal and avenues within their small park there. Kiln Farm at the northern end of Long Melford (recorded as *The Kell Home Stall* in 1613 and as *Kilne ffarme* in 1660/1) probably takes its

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name from a kiln producing bricks for the nearby 16th-century mansion of Kentwell Hall, the fuel coming from the adjacent Kiln Grove (*The Kell Grove* in 1613).

There is a wealth of medieval and Tudor timber-framed and brick buildings in this area, as can be seen around the edges of the very picturesque green at Hartest and at Steeple Bumpstead.

Landholding and enclosure pattern

This is predominantly an area of 'ancient enclosure', with an irregular pattern of fields bounded by large, long-established hedges. However in Glemsford it was noted as late as 1855 that 'Part of the parish is still in large *open fields*' and the tithe map of 1840 records a number of one-acre strips in large fields called *Gravel Pit Common*, *Longland Common*, *Great and Little Seldom Field*, and *Great Cobs Croft* running up the valley side in the south-west corner of the parish. The common-field strips have disappeared without a formal enclosure award, but this is still a large, open, arable area.

Trees and Woodland cover

The area is well stocked with ancient woods. Stanstead Great Wood, at 55ha (137 acres) is the largest, but there are many others of moderate size: Hundon Thicks; Easty Wood in Cavendish; King's Wood, Long Wood and Shadowbush Wood in Poslingford; Asgood Wood, Park Wood, Lownage Wood, Longley Wood and Oak Grove in Boxted; Court Wood and Lumpit Wood in Glemsford (both coppice woods in 1840). Many of the groves on the Kentwell Hall estate in Long Melford, appear on a map of 1613: Kiln Grove (*The Kell Grove*), Cold Grove (*Ten Acre Spring*), Ashen Grove (*The Cock shot spring*), Long Spong (*Puttock Row Spring*) and Blakes Ley Grove (*Blakes Grove*). These woods are usually situated on the tops of the more poorly-drained clay hills. The long-enclosed nature of the landscape has helped to preserve the woods by excluding the grazing livestock that would otherwise have diminished the resource.

There are alder shelterbelts and plantations associated with the 20 acre vineyard at Giffords Hall in Shimpling.

Visual experience

In general there are long open views across this undulating landscape, trees, either in hedges or in woods, always a prominent feature. This is in contrast with the plateau claylands of High Suffolk where the views although open, are gently rolling farmland on which woodland is almost entirely absent. Medium to large sub-regular fields with oaks and some elm in the surrounding hedges, which are generally low.

Boxted has poplars on rough ground in the middle of the settlement and is surrounded by sloping arable with large isolated houses. Flint and brick walls, elm and sunken lanes with new hawthorn hedges are local features.

Around Steeple Bumpstead there is a mix of well maintained but gappy hedges, some roadside trees and small, often coniferous, plantations, with a few pockets of pasture used

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as horse paddocks. Other tree species include ash, beech and oak, with willow on the boundary near Steeple Bumpstead, where there is a small watercourse, and some untrimmed elm hedges. Moyne Park lies at the heart of a stud farm estate and is not visible from any public roads, but there are PROWs through the parkland. It is also very well screened by judiciously placed tree belts and plantations, within which arable fields are tucked in, with no pasture visible. Around the boundary there are conservation headlands in the medium size, regular arable fields, with low, narrow hedges and ditches to the roadside.

Condition

The historic pattern of field boundaries has been degraded through 20th-century agricultural rationalisation that has resulted in a large number of hedges being removed.

Land management issues and options

Geology, soils, landform and drainage

Archaeology

- Conservation of upstanding heritage assets
- Identify priority sites for arable reversion to protect buried heritage assets

Opportunities to target arable reversion or shallow cultivation on significant archaeological sites

Settlement and the built environment

- Maintain and enhance the landscape setting through sensitive and appropriate development control

Landholding and enclosure pattern

- Maintain the historic pattern of field boundaries and ditches

There is considerable potential for restoration and replanting of hedges in this landscape. There are also opportunities to support the management of woodlands and reduce the isolation of woodland blocks within this landscape. The undulating nature of this landscape means that carefully located woodland and hedge planting could have a significant landscape impact over a wide area.

Trees and woodland cover

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- Maintain the balance of tree cover
- Woodland management - encourage and support the removal of conifers from ancient woodland sites as well as appropriate deer management to maintain the condition of these important historic landscape features
- There are opportunities to create new woodlands within this landscape, if the location is chosen to reflect the local landscape character and to avoid archaeological sites

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Plateau Farmlands

Plateau Farmlands

Key Characteristics

- Plateaux of land between and above the river valleys
- Loamy soils amenable to arable farming, though with considerable former heathland areas
- Large areas of planned landscape with straight roads and field boundaries interspersed with areas with more sinuous lanes and boundaries
- Strong tendency for linear settlements, often gappy, along roads in the southern part
- Irrigated crops
- Distinctive use of holly in hedges
- Plantation woodland

Location

This landscape character type occurs in two relatively small areas on the edges of the valley at its eastern end:

- Firstly, on the north side of the River Stour, on the plateau edge extending from Holton St Mary in the west, through Great Wenham to East Bergholt in the east.
LDUs: 130-9 (east edge of East Bergholt), **130-29** (no name), **130-31** (East Bergholt), **130-35** (no name), **130-84** (no name), **130-124** (East Bergholt), **344-63N** (Lower Raydon to Cattawade).
- Secondly, on the south side of the Stour, from Wormingford in the west to Lawford in the east.
LDUs: 0-101 (Langham to Great Horkesley), **0-96** (Hill House Park, Dedham), **0-100** (Dedham Heath), **0-53** (Lawford Park part) and **0-57** (Lawford, west of Lawford Park).

Geology and landform

The plateaux are generally flat or very gently rolling and consist of mixed glacial till or glaciofluvial deposits. In the both areas there are surface layers of variable thickness of fine-grained loess deposits, derived from windblown material from glacial sources. The soils are mainly deep loams (mainly Tendring and Hornbeam 3) which can experience some seasonal waterlogging, but are generally free draining. This allows for the

Plateau Farmlands

production of irrigated crops, as well as cereals, in what is a predominantly arable landscape.

The presence of puddingstone – a sandstone conglomerate with flint pebbles – is a feature of the Norman church tower at Boxted and the chancel walls of Langham church.

Archaeology

There is a burial mound or barrow at Lawford, which is an outlier to the very rich series of prehistoric funerary sites and enclosures that are more extensively seen in the adjacent Rolling Valley Farmlands. A Roman presence is indicated by the arterial Roman road (now the A12) that runs up from the south Langham to Stratford St Mary and beyond. Another Roman road runs through Great Horkesley northwards to Nayland. Roman bricks are also found in the Norman tower of Worningford church and in the walls of Langham church, indicating nearby sources of Roman building materials.

The Priory, to the north of Little Horkesley church, incorporates part of a small Cluniac priory founded c.1127 by Robert son of Godebold and Beatrice his wife. This was a daughter-house of the larger Cluniac priory at Thetford and was suppressed by Cardinal Thomas Wolsey in 1525, to provide endowments for his ill-fated college foundations at Oxford and Ipswich.

Settlement and the built environment

The settlement pattern is generally one of hamlets, with occasional larger villages and dispersed farmsteads in the north, whilst in the south there is now a strong linear character to the settlements as houses have spread along the roads. At East Bergolt, several of the settlements on the edge of the former East Bergholt Heath (enclosed 1817-8) have experienced significant 20th-century growth, becoming more nucleated villages, their origin being only dimly acknowledged in place-names such as East End and Gaston End. The enclosure of even larger areas of heathland in Dedham, Boxted and Great Horkesley (mainly 1803 for Dedham and 1815 for Boxted and Horkesley) has however resulted in the growth of linear settlements along the post-enclosure road, though the more nucleated hamlet of Boxted Cross has grown at the northern end of the former Boxted Heath.

There was some earlier linear settlement beside the long *Horksley Causeway* (so-called in 1838) in Great Horkesley, a narrow linear green on the line of a former Roman road. This was *Horksley Street* in 1443, *The Causeway* in 1777 and is now the A134 road – the wide 'roadside wastes' having been enclosed in 1815. *Hey Green*, also in Great Horkesley, was another smaller linear green – it was *Heyestreet* in 1328-9 and *Hey Green* in 1777, but is now a deserted spot in farmland. A third linear green in that parish was called *Westwodetye* in the late 14th century, *Westwood Green* in 1777 and seems to have been partially replaced soon afterwards by the enlarged grounds of Westwood House, now Westwood Park. The small triangular green called *Langham Moor* (1777) is now just a hamlet at a crossroads.



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Boxted church with its Norman tower lies on a slight promontory not far from Boxted Hall. The latter is a timber-framed house of mixed date, part of which follows a layout that was documented in 1325 on the death of Peter de Boxted. The house was then moated and had an upper chamber over its drawbridge – some ponds east and north-east of the house may be the remains of the moat. Rivers Hall, also in Boxford but on another promontory, takes its name from Richard de la Riviere (living 1310) and was called *Ryvereshalle* by 1391. It had an ‘outer’ moat in 1586, but is now only partly moated and the existing timber-framed L-plan house is 16th century in date, with pargetting dated 1715. Songers, an isolated house in Cage Lane near Boxted Cross, is perhaps the oldest non-manorial house in Essex and is small two-bayed aisled hall of the first half of 13th century.

Lawford Hall, set within its own park, is a timber-framed house of 1583, built for Edward Waldegrave, which is hidden behind a Georgian brick façade of c.1756. The grazed parkland has some large tree, mainly oaks. Lawford church, just outside the park, has a chancel that has been described as ‘one of the most splendid monuments of its date in Essex’ – its date is early 14th century and material whitish-yellow bricks banded and chequered with flint and other stone.

In a much more modern style is the Boxted Waterworks, built in 1932-3 for the South Essex Waterworks Company.

Landholding and enclosure pattern

The landscape of this LCT is variable in character: there are areas of ‘ancient countryside’ with old, sinuous hedge lines, but also substantial areas where the boundaries are the straight type of ‘planned landscape’. In the southern part, there was Parliamentary enclosure of common field arable in Dedham in 1803. The enclosure award also included a large area of open heath, and the large areas of heathland were similarly enclosed in nearby Boxted and Great Horkesley in 1815. East Bergholt Heath, in the northern part of this area, was also enclosed by a Parliamentary act, in 1817-8. The enclosure of all these heaths has resulted in a landscape with straight ‘surveyors’ roads and the geometric fields and land units typical of late enclosure. The straight Long Road in Dedham is a good example of this.

The farm sizes are not large although the large amount of parliamentary enclosure often gives an ‘estate’ character. Parkland grazing is also a feature.

Trees and woodland cover

The large heaths in the southern part were originally part of a large royal forest that extended southwards into West Bergholt, Lexden and Mile End. Named as a wood called *Cestrewald* in 1181 and as *foresta regis de Cestrewald in Kingeswod* in 1249, its name means the ‘fort at/in the wood’ and is probably a reference to Pitchbury Ramparts, an Iron Age fort in the southern part of Great Horkesley. Originally it was much wooded, and timber was being taken from it for buildings in the 13th century. A heath is first recorded at



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Dedham in 1412-3 and the *heth of Boxted* is noted in the early 16th century, though John *atte Hath* and Geoffrey *atteheth* are recorded in Boxford in 1250 and 1272. Dedham Heath was largely enclosed in 1803 and part of the former heath area became Hill House Park. Horkesley and Boxted heaths were enclosed in 1815.

Medieval deer parks also seem to have evolved out of this forest – at Great Horkesley there was a park attached to the manor of Nayland (on the Suffolk side of the Stour) which later became the Horkesley Park estate. There was an ancient oak here called King John's Oak which finally blew down in 1928. In 1189 Henry of Cornhill was granted the right to enclose and impark his woods at Langham. This is referred to as the *parcum de Leineham* in 1221 and as *Leyngham Park* in 1292; it now is represented by Park Lane Farm. Large areas of woodland associated with the park were still surviving in 1777 (as *Langham Lodge Woods*), but these have disappeared and the area bears the imprint of the 2nd World War Boxted Airfield, built 1942-3, closed 1947.

A large area of woodland called *Great Dedham Birch Wood* (*Byrcherde* 'birch yard' in 1432) was still surviving beside Dedham Heath in 1838, but has now disappeared, leaving behind a hamlet called Birch Wood and the Birchwood service station on the A12. The birch component of these heathland woods is reinforced by other 'birch' names in the area, such as Burkett's Lane (= *le Birchet* 1291 = 'the birches'). In contrast, Boxted is 'the place with beech trees' (Old English *boc* = beech).

Despite these substantial losses, woodland is still a consistent feature of this landscape, but in smaller units and mostly in the form of plantation woodland often associated with parklands. In these instances non-native landscape planting makes a major impact with important specimens of species such cedar and *wellingtonia*.

Visual experience

In the landscape around East Bergholt, once away from the transport corridors, there is a strong sense of isolation and tranquillity in a network of quiet lanes and tall hedgerows. The farmland is all in arable cultivation, with medium to large fields in a sub-regular pattern defined by rough, gappy hedges of hawthorn; there are a few field oaks and small copses with a little holly, typical of these light soils.

At Dedham, the flat former has mainly 20th-century ribbon development along the straight roads, but slightly dispersed to give a semi-rural rather than a suburban character. Horse pastures at the eastern end modulate to arable cultivation at the western end. This former heathland has been significantly modified but retains its open character due to the poor soils that inhibit tree growth. The small enclosure parcels have given fields that are among the smallest in the Stour Valley area. There are some good hedges, with scrub oak trees within them.

At Langham, the land is mainly in arable cultivation, with a very irregular field pattern, defined by low, gappy hedges with few hedgerow trees, except to the south-east where there are some hedges and tree rows, with holly as a distinctive local element.



Historic Landscape Character Study

Plateau Farmlands

Condition

The condition of this landscape is mixed, with some areas slightly degraded, but there are also gems such as the lanes, hedges and pollard oaks of area to the north of East Bergholt.

Land management issues and options

Geology, soils, landform and drainage

Archaeology

- Conservation of upstanding heritage assets
- Identify priority sites for arable reversion to protect buried heritage assets

Settlement and the built environment

- Maintain and enhance the landscape setting through sensitive and appropriate development control

Landholding and enclosure pattern

- Maintain the historic pattern of field boundaries and ditches
- There is considerable potential for restoration and replanting of hedges in this landscape. Although care should be taken that the design and species selection reflect local variation in character, especially in areas of enclosed heath and common.
- Changes in landuse that effect the character and condition of the landscape, such as the expansion of horse paddocks need careful consideration. Support should be given to examples of best practice that minimise the impact of these changes on the landscape through the use of sympathetic materials and siting.
- There are opportunities to recreate some of the lost heathlands in this landscape, especially where there are indicators of surviving heathland flora and fauna.

Trees and woodland cover

- Maintain the balance of tree cover
- There are opportunities to recreate some of the lost woodlands within this landscape, if the location is chosen to reflect the local landscape character and to avoid archaeological sites



Historic Landscape Character Study

Outline of the methodology used for the Historic Landscape Study for the Dedham Vale AONB and Stour Valley Project Area

The objectives of this study were twofold: to build on and enhance existing landscape characterisation work within Suffolk and Essex, by focusing on the historic environment, and to produce outline land management guidance for two user groups.

In order to incorporate the relevant historic data available through HLC and HERS data for both counties, it was necessary to re-evaluate the existing LDUs within the project area derived for both counties, chiefly through examination of the HLC data. Once this element of the process had been completed to produce a digital map of 'historic' units, field survey was necessary to validate the revised unit boundaries, to inform the description of the influence of upstanding historic elements on the landscape character of each unit and to provide material for the written characterisation of each unit. The characterisation work includes below-ground archaeology, historic landscape features and the historic built environment, including detailed information on some urban areas which have not previously been examined in this structured way.

Refinement of Land Description Units (LDUs)

The Suffolk LCA is based on a division of the mapped landscape of the county into polygons known as Land Description Units (LDUs). These relatively homogenous units of land are derived by desk study from map information and represent the 'building blocks' of landscape character. These were derived at a county scale for the LCA, operating at a scale of about 1:50,000, thereby nesting within the national (ie Level 1) data while remaining relevant and appropriate to more detailed analysis at Level 3, where HLC operates.

The sequence of LDU mapping reflects the evolution of the landscape and its character, with the physical dimension being mapped first as a context for the expression of the overlying cultural patterns. The attributes for each of the resulting LDUs are recorded and stored in a Geographic Information System (GIS) database. A series of definitive attributes (both physiographic and cultural) is used to determine precise boundaries for each of the LDUs.

LDUs are mapped at a scale where local landscapes are identifiable and understood and at which a range of local planning and land management initiatives are most appropriately delivered. Critically, LDUs at this scale provide the spatial framework which gives local relevance to strategic initiatives and landscape meaning to the site specific. While Character Areas provide a regional perspective and HLC offers a context for site specific decision making, LDUs provide the integrating level of assessment that gives *context* to the site specific and *detail* to the regional.

For this project a more detailed approach was necessary. The LDUs for the AONB area have already been subdivided into Landscape Character Parcels (LCP), at a scale of 1:25000. The LDU boundaries for the entire Stour Valley Project Area required redefinition from their relevance at 1:50000 scale to accuracy at this more refined scale, primarily drawing on the

digital OS mapping and the Suffolk and Essex HLC datasets to do so.

These revised LDUs provided the basis for the derivation of the subunits that were the framework for HERS analysis and field survey. The HLC datasets provided the key resource for this. Analysis focused on change of pattern relevant to the scale and scope of the project, and resulted in the pattern of 26 original LDUs (plus one newly created catch-all area that was outside the original area of LDU coverage) being subdivided into 146 sub-units. Of these 46 were urban (and therefore outside the scope of the survey for the project), leaving 98 subunits for survey.

Assessment of urban areas

There was a requirement in the project brief to consider 'urban' areas within the project area, which are usually 'washed over' during the landscape characterisation process, which focuses on broader landscape elements and recognises that urban areas require a different methodology. Their primary characteristics are often subsumed and concealed by the built environment, which appears often to be of greater relevance in defining the historic and current character of the landscape. All urban areas within the project area were defined as part of the refinement of the LDUs into project units; those within the larger settlements of Long Melford, Dedham and Clare were further surveyed and analysed using both HLC and HERS data. These settlements were subdivided into areas displaying distinct groupings of historic development as demonstrated through the built environment and the type and number of historic elements was detailed.

Field survey

As the LDUs defined as part of the Suffolk landscape characterisation process and the units for Essex had been redefined as part of this project, it was necessary to carry out a field survey, partly to validate the revised boundaries and also to enable the drafting of the characterisation of each new unit – the extent to which the archaeological and historic elements present within the landscape are visible and contributing to the current landscape. Much of the archaeology lies below ground; it appears superficially to make little contribution to the current landscape and, due to its low visibility, requires specific guidance to prevent its further destruction or disturbance from construction or farming practices. The upstanding historic elements however, are highly visible throughout the towns and villages of the project area as well as within the wider landscape and are of great significance in defining its character. A specially designed survey form was used to enable the consistent retrieval and assessment of the contribution of these elements to the landscape character of each unit.

Each new unit or polygon was analysed in the field, using the survey form, and information on elements such as the form and pattern of individual settlements and field systems and the form, size and composition of woodland and other semi-natural habitats was gathered, as well as the extent to which historic elements are dominant within the landscape of each unit. [It should be noted that the field survey was carried out in January 2009 which, while it enabled clear views of many elements without the interruption of vegetation, did reduce the extent to which information on biodiversity and species variation could be gathered.]

Written characterisation

The report on each project unit echoes and elaborates on the format used for the Suffolk LCA. Each unit is assigned an individual number and name and it is assigned a character type, thereby linking it clearly to the published landscape type data for Suffolk. The information for each unit continues with a summary description, encapsulating all the assembled information, then a list of key characteristics, which enables a clear comparison between different units. Physical influences – geology and soils, topography and drainage and land cover, are drawn from the LDU information in the database, amended as necessary to reflect a finer grain of information. Historic and cultural influences are derived from a combination of existing LDU data, HLC and HERS data and field survey. They cover current and past land use, field and woodland pattern, settlement pattern, transport pattern and historic features, including listed buildings and archaeological features. The sensitivity, condition and pressures for change were also examined and provided the information necessary to produce a summary management guideline for each unit.

Broad management objectives for each polygon

These were inferred from professional judgement, the consultants' knowledge of East Anglia and their experience of similar work in other counties. For consistency they were confined to one of three 'prescriptions': conserve, strengthen or restore, and were derived for each of the units within the project area.

Database and report structure

All the data gathered for each polygon was entered into a Microsoft Access database, compatible with the database produced for the Suffolk LCA. Fields that were outside the final scope of the project but within the original brief were also included to facilitate later input by project staff. From this a variety of reports may be generated, including the reports generated for each of the units created. These reports follow the format set out above for the written characterisation.

Unit No 214 - 52 LCT Type Rolling farmland - settled with trees

Name

Tendring Hall Park

Summary Description

This unit contains the remains of a landscape park of c. 100 hectares, designed by Humphry Repton around 1791. It is listed Grade II on the English Heritage Register. The main part of the parkland remains in pastoral cultivation, with a variety of parkland trees, but many of the oaks are stag-headed and there is no longer a focal point building - Tendring Hall Farm is now the dominant building and is largely surrounded by large arable fields. Designed features such as a rectangular waterbody/ fishpond and lake remain, but there is no public access or footpaths, except along the drive to the farm.

Key Characteristics

Landscape park

Designed features such as rectangular waterbody and lake persist but are not visible within the wider landscape

Few parkland trees, many in poor condition

Gently rolling lower valley slopes on north bank of Stour

Pasture

Physical Influences

Geology & Soils Sandy brown soils

Topography & Drainage Gently rolling lower valley slopes

Biodiversity Moderate to high

Land Cover Ancient farmlands

Historic and Cultural Influences

Land Use Pastoral farmland with parkland trees

Field & Woodland Pattern None - informal parkland

Settlement Pattern None - focal mansion no longer exists

Transport Pattern None

Historic Features Repton- designed parkland; veteran parkland trees

Sensitivity, Condition and Pressures for Change

Sensitivity High

Condition Poor to fair

Pressures Change to arable cultivation; death of parkland trees

Vision and Objectives

Vision & Objectives

Management Guidelines

Management prescription Conserve and strengthen

Maps (West and East) showing newly derived Stour Units

