

**Hatfield Peverel
Local Landscape Character Assessment**

for

Hatfield Peverel Parish Council

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The Landscape Partnership is registered with the Landscape Institute, the Royal Town Planning Institute, and is a member of the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment

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1 Introduction

- 1.1 The Landscape Partnership was commissioned by Hatfield Peverel Parish Council in June 2015 to undertake a Local Landscape Character Assessment for the parish of Hatfield Peverel, which is located at the southernmost tip of the district of Braintree in Essex.
- 1.2 The assessment is intended to assist the village in commenting on the appropriateness of the landscape aspects of any development within the village and/or its local setting that might come forward in the future.
- 1.3 This study builds on work undertaken at both the national, county and district level. The areas identified are effectively 'sub areas' of the character areas already established in both the Braintree District (BDC) and Colchester Borough Council (CBC) Landscape Character Assessments, undertaken by Chris Blandford Associates for BDC (September 2006) and CBC (November 2005). In the context of this study the relevant Landscape Character Areas include the 'Terling' and 'Boreham' Farmland Plateau, and 'Blackwater' and 'Lower Chelmer' River Valley and River Valley Floor.
- 1.4 The brief for the project required the following main outputs, which will be used to support Hatfield Peverel Parish Council's emerging Neighbourhood Development Plan:
 - An assessment of the landscape character and sensitivity of the landscape character around both the village and the adjacent hamlet of Nounsley, building on work undertaken at a district level; and
 - To provide a set of guidelines that inform opportunities for locating future green infrastructure and landscape enhancements to reinforce the landscape character of the village.
- 1.5 The assessment involved the identification of Local Landscape Character Areas, in both the vicinity of the existing settlement and in the more distant landscape around the fringes of the parish. It identifies the key characteristics present, as well as noting key features that should be retained and/or protected, and landscape-related opportunities and constraints. The assessment of each character area concludes with a set of landscape guidelines to inform potential locations for accommodating green infrastructure, opportunities for landscape enhancement, habitat improvements, and reinforcing the landscape character of the village.

2 Context

District Context

- 2.1 In order to assist with the development of Local Development Frameworks, Braintree District Council commissioned a Landscape Character Assessment of the district, in conjunction with the neighbouring Brentwood and Chelmsford Borough Councils and Maldon and Uttlesford District Councils. The aim of the study, completed in September 2006, was to provide a comprehensive assessment of landscape character to inform land use planning and land management decisions.
- 2.2 Although the village itself lies within one character area, the assessment identified four different Landscape Character Areas (see Figure 03) across the overall Hatfield Peverel parish:
- A7 and A7a Lower Chelmer River Valley and Lower Chelmer River Valley Floor (shared with Maldon District)
 - A9 and A9a Blackwater River Valley and Blackwater River Valley Floor (shared with Maldon District)
 - B17 Terling Farmland Plateau (shared with Chelmsford Borough)
 - B21 Boreham Farmland Plateau, within which Hatfield Peverel and Nounsley are located (shared with Chelmsford Borough and Boreham District)
- 2.3 Each Landscape Character Area is described and the Key Characteristics are defined. Key planning and land management issues are identified, and the sensitivity to change of the key characteristics and landscape elements within each of the character areas discussed. The descriptions conclude with a series of Landscape Planning and Land Management Guidelines - see Appendix A for full Character Area descriptions of each area.
- 2.4 The key characteristics of the Lower Chelmer River Valley Landscape Character Area are described as:
- Shallow valley
 - Predominantly arable farmland on the valley slopes
 - The Lower Chelmer where it meets the River Blackwater has gentle valley sides
 - Overall strong sense of place and tranquillity away from Maldon and the A12 and the railway line
 - Mixture of arable and pastoral fields on the valley floor
 - The Lower Chelmer where it meets the River Blackwater has a wide flat valley floor
 - Extensive linear poplar and willow plantations are a distinctive feature in close proximity to the river
- 2.5 The key characteristics of the Blackwater River Valley Landscape Character Area are described as:
- Shallow valley
 - The valley sides slope gently up from the valley floor
 - Predominantly arable farmland on the valley slopes
 - The Lower Blackwater near the confluence with the River Chelmer has gently valley slopes
 - Overall strong sense of place and tranquillity away from the settlements of Braintree, Witham and Maldon and the A120, A12 and the railway line
 - Mixture of arable and pastoral on the valley floor
 - The River Blackwater Valley floor north of the A120 is narrow
 - The River Blackwater near the confluence with the River Chelmer has a wide flat valley floor

- Extensive linear poplar and willow plantations are a distinctive features especially along the river banks
- 2.6 The key characteristics of the Terling Farmland Plateau Landscape Character Area are described as:
- Rolling arable farmland
 - Irregular pattern of medium to large scale fields
 - Scattered settlement pattern, with frequent small villages, typically with greens and ponds
 - Network of narrow wining lanes
 - Mostly tranquil away from the A12 and A131
- 2.7 The key characteristics of the Boreham Farmland Plateau Landscape Character Area are described as:
- Irregular field pattern of mainly medium size arable and pastoral fields, marked by hedgerows, banks and ditches
 - Small woods and copses provide structure and edges in the landscape
 - Scattered settlement pattern, with frequent small villages
 - A concentration of isolated farmsteads
 - Network of narrow winding lanes

Local Context

Landscape Capacity Analysis for Hatfield Peverel (Braintree District Council: Nov 2007)

- 2.8 In July 2007, Braintree District Council commissioned Chris Blandford Associates to prepare a landscape capacity analysis for eight key settlements in the district, to provide part of the evidence base informing the preferred options stage of the Core Strategy for the Local Development Framework. Hatfield Peverel was one of the eight settlements identified by Braintree District Council as having the potential for expansion.
- 2.9 This study used desk and field study to identify discrete 'Landscape Setting Areas' around the village, defined by the approximate extent of visibility of the settlement fringe of the village, rather than the parish boundary itself. It referenced the Landscape Character Areas identified as part of the Braintree, Brentwood, Chelmsford, Maldon and Uttlesford Landscape Character Assessment, as described above. Each area was subsequently analysed in terms of its visual, ecological and cultural sensitivity, taking into account landscape character, visual characteristics and landscape value, and the key stages of the evolution of the village through the centuries mapped.
- 2.10 The landscape capacity appraisal identified four Landscape Setting Areas that could each accommodate varying degree of change in the form of new built development. The areas were loosely arranged as quadrants around the village centre of Hatfield Peverel, with their depth ranging between 1-2km, according to the underlying landform and overlying land cover.
- 2.11 The report concluded with analysis and reporting to assess the vulnerability to loss or alteration by development of the positive landscape qualities that contribute to the Landscape Setting Areas. It then identified the capacity of each area to accommodate new housing and employment development in landscape terms..
- 2.12 Three of the Landscape Setting Areas around Hatfield Peverel were identified as having a 'Low to Medium' landscape capacity and one as having a 'Medium' capacity, with the evaluation reflected in the supporting tables and plans. These capacity levels are indicators of the likely amount of change, in terms of built development, which a particular landscape setting area can accommodate without having unacceptable adverse effects on the character of a landscape, or the way that is perceived, and without compromising the values attached to it.

- 2.13 The study concluded with a recommendation that the landscape sensitivities and values identified in the assessment should inform the land use distribution and masterplanning process, so as to reinforce local landscape distinctiveness, minimise landscape impacts and build, in a consistent form, on the existing settlement pattern.

**Evaluation of Landscape Analysis Study of Hatfield Peverel
(Braintree District Council: Nov 2015)**

- 2.14 In November 2014 Braintree District Council commissioned The Landscape Partnership to undertake an evaluation of the findings of a suite of documents that analysed the capacity of the landscape around Hatfield Peverel, together with eight other settlements in the district, to accommodate new development. The intention being that results of this study are used as part of the evidence base to inform the forthcoming Local Plan, which will set out the Council's strategy for future development and growth up to 2033.
- 2.15 The 2007 Landscape Capacity Analysis had identified the capacity of broad areas of land (termed Landscape Setting Areas) around the village to accommodate development. The aim of this 2015 evaluation study was to undertake an evaluation of these findings in order to provide a finer grain assessment of those Landscape Setting Areas identified as having a 'Low' or 'Low to Medium' capacity, to help determine which parts of these areas could better absorb development with appropriate mitigation measures and minimal impact on the landscape.
- 2.16 The study involved the drilling down of the Landscape Setting Areas to create a finer sub-division of the landscape into parcels with common characteristics, based on a combination of desktop research and field-based study. These parcels largely reflected the main natural elements of the landscape, such as rivers and floodplains, tributary valleys, valley slopes, ridgelines; and elements relating to land use, human influences, etc. A general commentary was provided for each parcel which described and assessed its key characteristics, distinctive features and landscape elements, as well as an indication of its strength of character and condition. The subsequent analysis involved the identification of a range of landscape and visual criteria, which were assessed and scored to evaluate the capacity of the landscape to accommodate new development.
- 2.17 The study concluded with findings around the arrangement of the parcels (relating to their scale, arrangement and relationship with the river valley landscapes that lie around the village) and the findings of the parcel analysis. One parcel was found as having a medium to high capacity, six parcels as having a medium capacity, with the remainder having a medium-low or low capacity. The findings were summarised to provide a narrative around the intricacies of the landscapes in each parcel that had informed the evaluation process.

3 Local Landscape Character Assessment – Methodology

- 3.1 The methodology used was based on the national guidance found in 'Landscape Character Assessment – Guidance for England and Scotland', published by Natural England in 2002.

Desk Based Stage

- 3.2 The initial stage of the Local Landscape Character Assessment involved the assessment of the study area using the existing Braintree District Landscape Character Areas. Desk-based information was also gathered from Braintree District Council and through research into landscape and environmental designations. This data was reviewed in order to identify the pattern of features that would help define the District Landscape Character Areas at a finer grain.
- 3.3 The assessment was informed by the report and corresponding mapping undertaken as part of the 2007 Landscape Capacity Analysis for Hatfield Peverel. The evaluation of key characteristics of the four Landscape Setting Areas were considered, together with the corresponding landscape sensitivity and value. The two Settlement Fringe Analysis Plans that accompanied the assessment, which identified the key landscape, visual, heritage and ecological issues relevant to each Landscape Setting Area, reinforced the desktop survey work for the Local Landscape Character Assessment.
- 3.4 Similarly, the finer grain study of the Landscape Setting Areas carried out as part of the 2015 Evaluation of Landscape Analysis Study was reviewed at the project outset. The number, size and arrangement of the 23 smaller sub-parcels on the northern, western and southern fringes of the village, together with the detailed descriptions of each landscape, informed the scale and arrangement of potential Local Landscape Character Areas.

Field Survey

- 3.5 The desk-based stage was followed by field survey work, which provided the opportunity to undertake a number of key tasks, including:
- incorporating the visual/aesthetic/perceptual dimension
 - recording the condition of the landscape
 - identifying and refining Character Areas boundaries
 - assessing any particular qualities, and/or problems in areas of particular pressure or sensitivity
 - noting distinctive features, local materials, plant species, etc.
- 3.6 A survey form was developed to ensure that a structured, consistent recording of information was achieved. Character and condition information was collected in distinct sections, in a mixture of guided responses as well in sections of free text to provide greater opportunity for description. Field survey record sheets were used to record data. A sample of the two-page pro forma used is included as Appendix B. Additional notes and photographic records supplemented the use of forms. Both notes and photographs informed the process of drafting a description of and illustrating each character area in the final report.
- 3.7 The existing built-up areas of the village were not surveyed, but the interface of the settlement with rural areas was considered. The field survey was carried out in July and August 2015, visiting all land identified within the parish boundary provided by Hatfield Peverel Parish Council. The survey was undertaken by a Chartered Landscape Architect, who was responsible for drafting the text and defining the boundaries of each landscape character area surveyed.

The characterisation process

- 3.8 Following on from the desk study and fieldwork, coherent Local Landscape Character Areas were identified. For most people, landscape is strongly associated with place and Character Areas can provide an appropriate vehicle for presenting countryside information to a public audience. In this study ten Local Character Areas were identified to form the main units of the landscape in the vicinity of the village, subdividing the broader Character Areas identified in the previous District-

wide study. Key characteristics and distinctive features of each sub area are reflected in the character areas statements in Section 4.

Boundaries

- 3.9 It should be recognised that although the drawing of boundary lines on a plan is an inevitable part of the process, this does not always mean that landscape character is dramatically different to either side of each and every line. Landscape character can suddenly change, e.g. at the interface of an historic parkland, at the foot of a locally steep scarp slope or at a settlement edge, but often there is a more gradual transition. In such cases the boundary line marks more a watershed of character, where the balance of the defining elements has shifted from one landscape type to another.

Local Landscape Character Areas

- 3.10 Landscape Character Areas have been defined using the survey data from the fieldwork, and are as follows:

1 River Ter North

Characterised as a stream and lower valley slopes

2 River Ter South

Characterised as a river and lower valley slopes

3 Termitts Chase

Characterised as elevated farmland

4 Wickham Bishops Road

Characterised as upper valley slopes with pits and reservoirs

5 River Blackwater

Characterised as lower valley slopes

6 Jenkins Lane

Characterised as mixed farmland

7 Sportsmans Lane

Characterised as farmland and parkland

8 Mowden

Characterised as a spur of elevated farmland between river valleys

9 River Chelmer

Characterised as lower valley slopes

10 Terling Hall Road

Characterised as elevated farmland

- 3.11 For each of the identified Local Landscape Character Areas, a description of the key characteristics has been provided – including topography, land cover, settlement, views, levels of public access and the relationship with the existing settlement.

- 3.12 The character area descriptions are supported with map extracts, overlaid with arrows to indicate the key views available within and across each of the areas, and photographs which reflect the key characteristics of each area. The length of the arrows corresponds to whether these views are short or long distance. They provide a set of guidelines around management and enhancement measures to reinforce the landscape character of both the areas and their contribution to the setting of the village, to inform opportunities for locating green infrastructure and undertaking landscape enhancements. These guidelines reference potential enhancements to public access

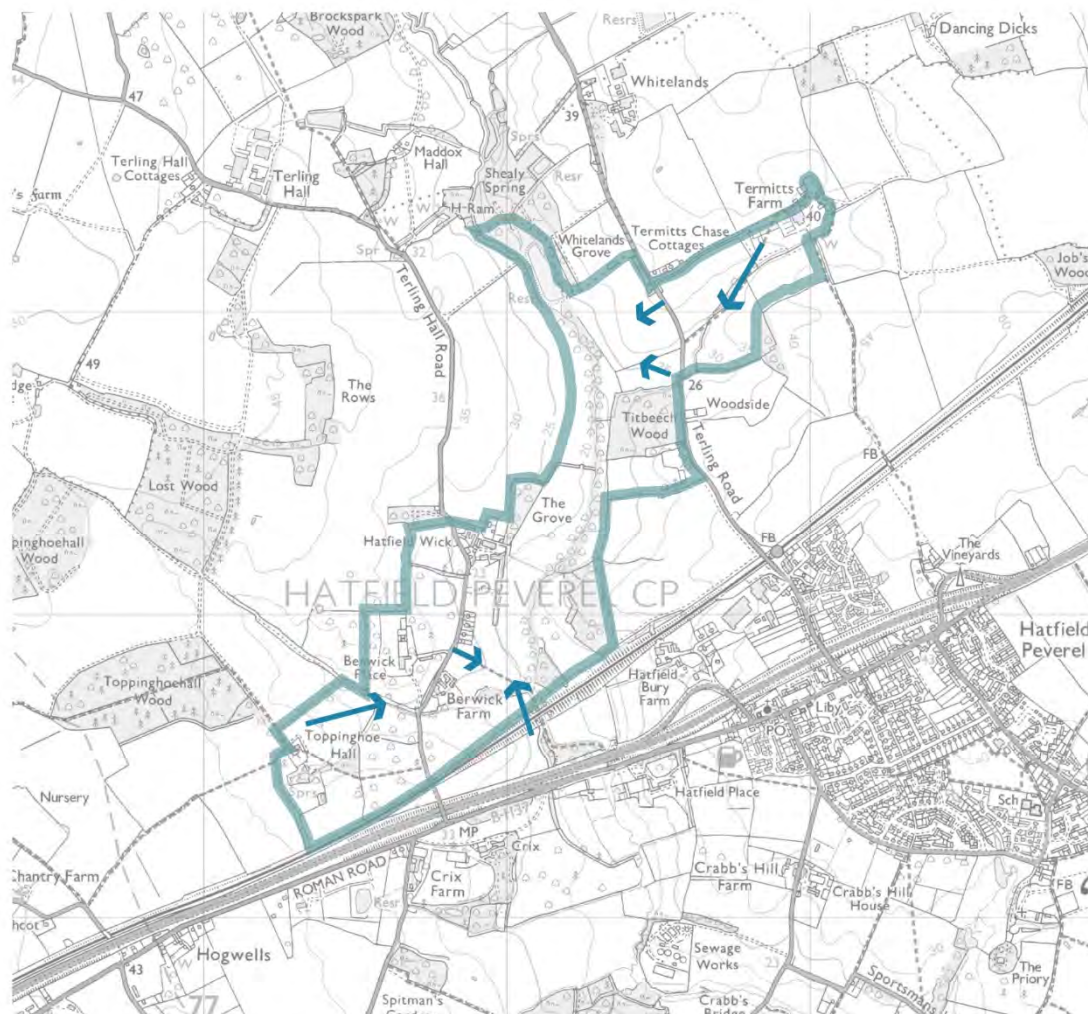
around the village fringes, maintaining key views where relevant, the safeguarding of landscape features, and the reinforcement of the distinctive features of each area.

4 Landscape Character Assessment – Local Landscape Character Areas

The arrangement of each of the character areas within the parish is shown on Figure 05 – Local Landscape Character Areas.

Local Landscape Character Area 1

River Ter North – Stream and lower valley slopes



Local Landscape Character Area with key views indicated

General Commentary:

- Located to the north of Hatfield Peverel and main line railway, the area extends northwards towards the village of Terling. The boundary of the area is loosely defined by the 25m AOD contour
- The character area comprises the river corridor, floodplain and lowest slopes of the River Ter. The river itself is a minor feature in the landscape, apparent only as a thread of trees and vegetation along the banks of the channel
- The boundary wraps around minor tributaries that feed into the river – one rising to Termitts Farm on the east side of the valley, and another rising towards Lost Wood to the south of Berwick Place on the west side of the valley
- Settlement in the area is limited, based on farmsteads and clusters of cottages at the edge of the floodplain, at the confluence of the tributaries on either side of the valley and the River Ter itself
- Land cover comprises a series of small to medium and irregularly shaped fields arranged around the river channel, under a mix of pasture and arable production. Fields are enclosed with a network of hedgerows and trees with species characteristic of a river valley landscape – alder/willow/oak etc, which link with blocks of woodland at the edge of the floodplain

- In the south of the area, the arable farmland is interspersed with specimen trees – remnants of a former parkland landscape in the vicinity of Toppinghoe Hall
- Berwick Place on the western fringes of the area, lies within gardens and grounds comprising grassland interspersed with mature trees, with hedgerows and substantial trees to the perimeter
- Public access from the village is limited to a path leading from the A12 alongside the river and beneath the main line railway. This path rises westwards towards the Terling Hall Road north of Berwick Farm. Elsewhere in the character area, a path leads to Toppinghoe Hall and connects with paths in the vicinity of the Waltham Road on the west of the parish, with another path rising to Termitts Farm in the east
- Views in and around the area are limited to views from footpaths and unenclosed sections of the roads on either side of the valley. The containment provided by vegetation along the river and on the floodplain results in short-distance views. Longer distance views into and across the valley are available at higher elevations associated with the minor tributaries, such as at Termitts Farm in the east and adjacent to Toppinghoe Hall in the west. However the framework of vegetation prevents any impression of the northern fringes of the village



View across Ter valley from Terling Hall Rd at Berwick Farm

Landscape guidelines:

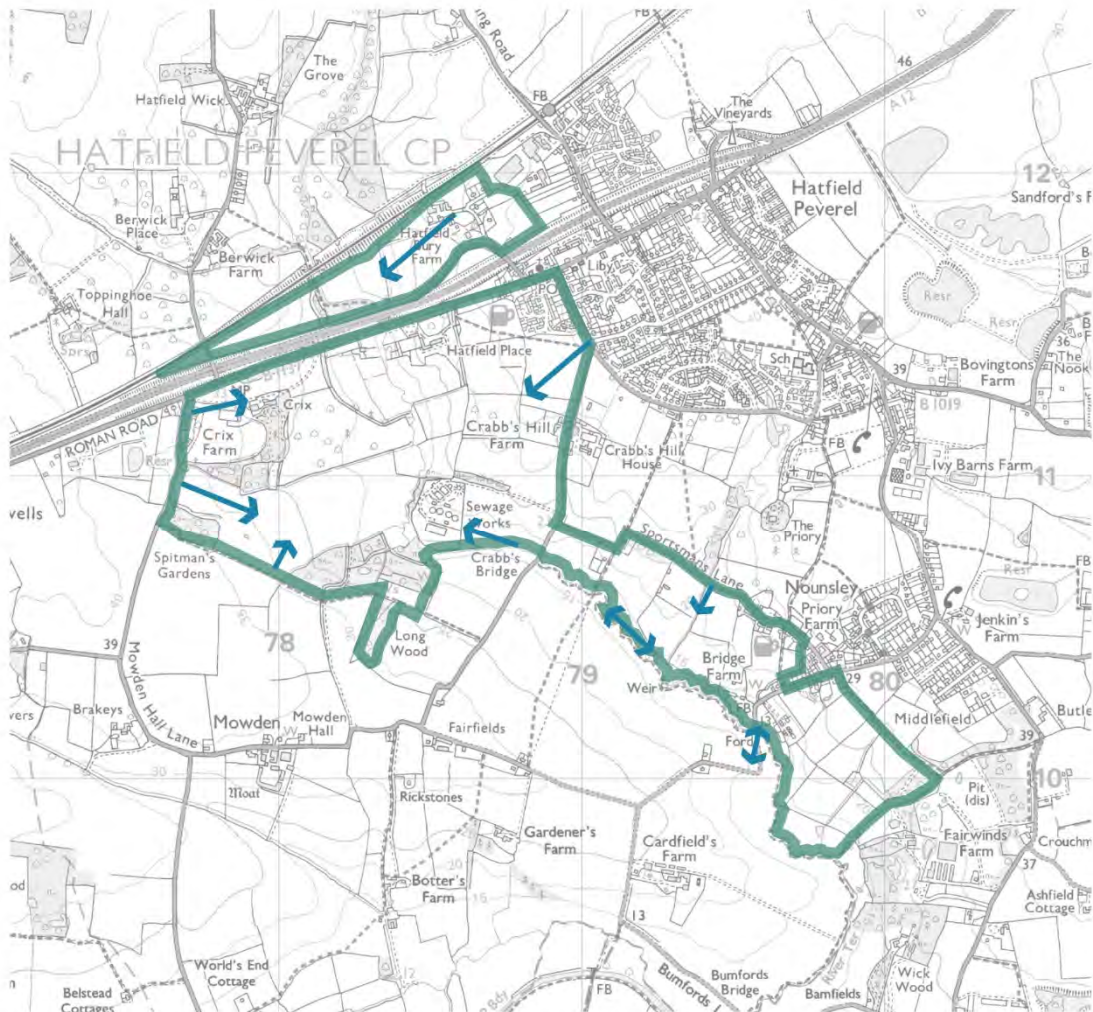
- Enhance the ecological value of the valley corridor by preserving a landscape buffer to the narrow and meandering river running through the centre of the area. The existing thread of characteristic bankside vegetation to be retained and enhanced by regular management and planting with species matching the vegetation present in adjacent sections of the river valley (alder, willow, etc.)
- Opportunity to enhance and extend the existing woodland blocks in south-eastern sections, to maintain and reinforce the visual and acoustic screen between the predominantly pastoral landscape of the character area and the mainline railway/A12 road corridor which cross the landscape directly to the south. The extension of such woodlands to the farmland to the west of Terling Hall Road would extend these screening effects to south-western sections of the area, notably to Toppinghoe Hall and footpaths leading from Terling Hall Road towards Toppinghoe Hall Wood

- Preserve the distinct rural qualities of the Terling Parish to the north of the area, including the setting of the Listed Buildings at Maddocks Hall and Terling Place directly to the north
- Opportunities to improve the network of footpaths within the river valley landscape, which is currently limited to footpaths at Termitts Farm and Berwick Farm. Footpath connections from the north side of the town are limited to the footpath that passes beneath the railway via a path along the river beneath the embankment and bridge crossing, which then rises up the valley slopes to meet Terling Hall Road north of Berwick Farm. There is potential to extend this footpath, creating a new route based on the lower valley slopes on the west side of the river, connecting with the path at Terling Hall which leads towards the cricket ground at Church Road, Terling. A pedestrian bridge over the river, and field-edge footpath in farmland to the east, would provide the opportunity for circular walks around the northern fringes of the village. It would link paths in farmland around Terling Road and Terling Hall Road on the east and west side of the river valley respectively
- Preserve the parkland landscape around Berwick Place and to the east of Toppinghoe Hall, characterised by mature trees in arable farmland and grassland which undulates around a minor stream valley which rises north-west away from the River Ter
- Manage the habitat associated with the wash lane that falls from Lost Wood to the west of the character area to the gateway to Berwick Place on Terling Hall Road, to safeguard it as a corridor for wildlife connecting the elevated arable farmland to the west and the smaller scale landscape of the river valley in the character area
- The block of ancient woodland at Titbeech Wood to be managed appropriately to ensure its longevity, benefits to wildlife and value as a feature in the local landscape
- Reinforce the characteristic native hedgerows and associated trees alongside Terling Road on the eastern side of the river valley, to provide visual containment to the valley landscape and provide definition between it and the larger scale arable farmland beyond



View along tributary stream south of Berwick Place

Local Landscape Character Area 2 River Ter South – River and lower valley slopes



Local Landscape Character Area with key views indicated

General Commentary:

- Wrapping around the south-western fringes of Hatfield Peverel, the character area stretches from the main line railway adjacent to Hatfield Bury Farm in the north, to the landscape south of the hamlet of Nounsley in the south – where it meets the parish boundary
- The character area comprises the river corridor, floodplain and lower slopes of the River Ter as it follows a downstream course on the south side of both Hatfield Peverel and Nounsley. The river itself is a minor feature in the landscape, apparent only as a thread of trees and vegetation along the banks of the channel
- The boundary is broadly based on the edge of the floodplain, which gradually widens as the river follows its course downstream. It wraps gently around minor tributaries in the vicinity of Crix to the south of the B1137 and A12 on the west side of the village
- The boundary is loosely defined by the 25m AOD contour. However, the slopes that fall gently away from Stone Path Drive in the north fall within the character area, as well as the sloping parkland landscape with close physical and visual and connections with Crix House on the westernmost edge of the character area
- The River Ter itself forms the boundary in eastern parts; as a result of the striking contrast with the large scale farmland on slopes rising away from the river in the adjacent character area at Mowden

- Settlement in the area is relatively limited, based on properties on the southern fringes of both Hatfield Peverel and Nounsley, with occasional dwellings at the edge of the floodplain such as 'Gregorys' on Sportsmans Lane. In the north of the area, properties at Stone Path Drive and William B restaurant mark the westernmost fringes of the village
- There is a clear impression of the village fringes in northern parts of the character area, with the substantial structures of the 'Arla' plant providing vertical features above an otherwise residential skyline, and the absence of vegetation to the Stone Path Drive development providing an uncharacteristic open edge between the village and adjacent countryside
- The boundary of the area is loosely defined by the 25m AOD contour
- A range of substantial period farmhouses and country houses are present, including Hatfield Place (designed by John Johnson and constructed in the 1790s), the vernacular Hatfield Bury Farm and the Grade II Listed Crix House in northernmost parts, and Bridge Farm adjacent to the fording point on the river on the southern fringes of Nounsley
- Land cover comprises a series of small to medium and irregularly shaped fields arranged around the river channel, under a mix of pasture and arable production. Fields are enclosed with a network of hedgerows and trees with species characteristic of a river valley landscape – alder/willow/oak etc. These hedgerows connect with a series of woodlands, such as the substantial block at Long Wood and scattered groups of trees on the valley slopes on the south side of Sportsmans Lane, which link with blocks of woodland at the edge of the floodplain
- A sewage works lies alongside a bend in the river to the west of Crabbs Hill, screened with mature vegetation characteristic of the river valley landscape
- Public access from the village comprises paths leading from Church Road to Hatfield Place in the north, a path connecting Crix with Long Wood and onwards to Crabbs Hill in the south, and an extension of the path from Church Road linking it with the River Ter. Access along the river itself is limited to a short path between the rail and A12 on the northernmost edge of the character area
- Views in and around the area are limited to views from footpaths and unenclosed sections of the roads, such as the gateway at the entrance to Crix House and the open field boundary to the south of Stone Path Drive. The containment provided by vegetation along the river and on the floodplain results in short-distance views across and along the river in lower sections of the valley landscape. Longer distance views into and across the valley are available at higher elevations, such as around the residential fringes of the village at Church Road, and to the south of Crix Farm – where a long view is framed by substantial blocks of woodland in the landscape
- The nature of the bridging points over the river varies considerably across the area. In the upstream sections, the crossings associated with the mainline railway and A12/B1137 road corridors are substantial and heavily engineered. As the river meanders downstream, the scale and nature of the crossings are more low-key, with a minor bridging point in the lane at Crabbs Hill, and the popular fording point at the foot of Mowden Hall Lane at the western tip of the hamlet of Nounsley



Ford across the River Ter at Bridge Farm, Nounsley



Hatfield Bury Farm on valley slopes between A12 and mainline railway

Landscape guidelines:

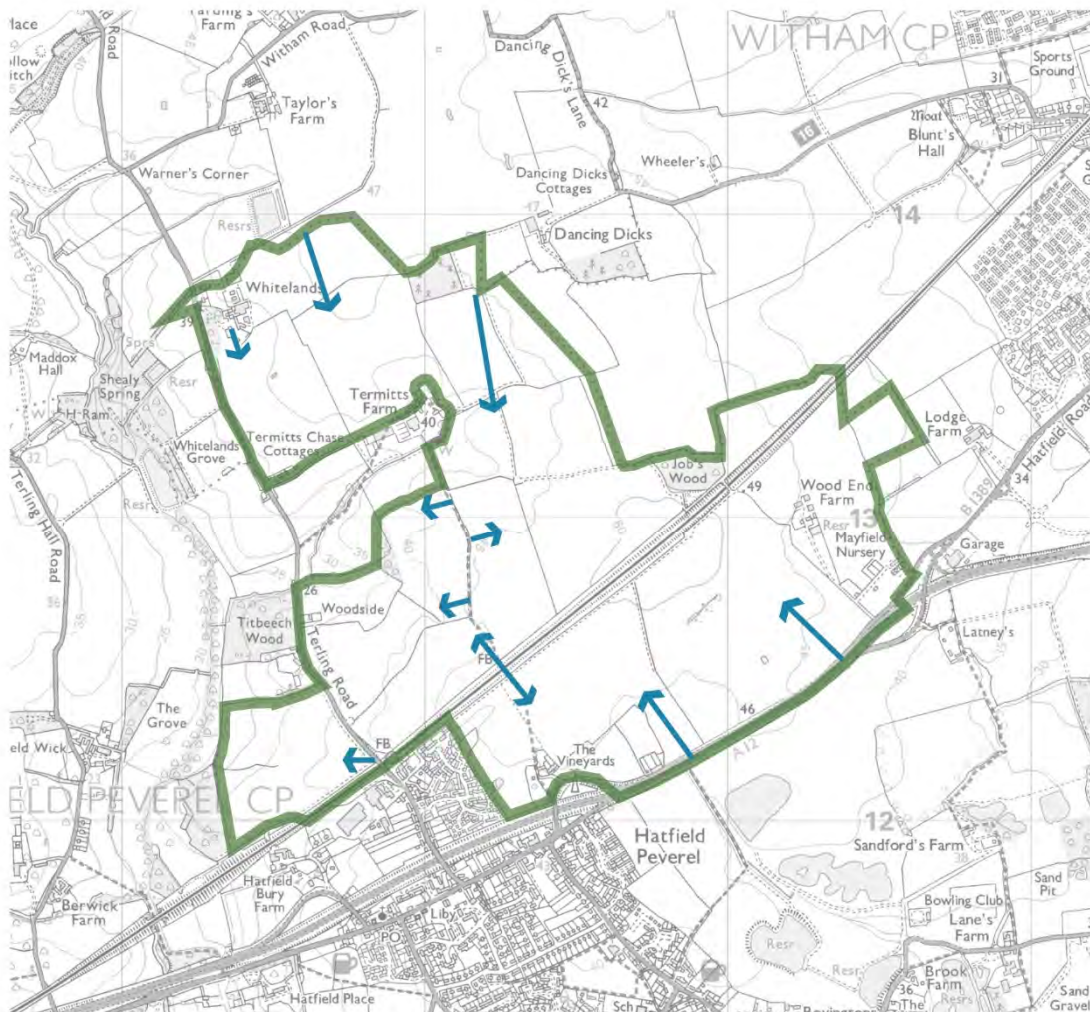
- Enhance the ecological value of the valley corridor by preserving a landscape buffer to the river channel which meanders and gradually widens along its downstream course. The existing thread of vegetation to be retained and enhanced by regular management and planting with species matching the vegetation present in adjacent sections of the river valley (alder, willow etc). New planting to unenclosed sections of the river, notably to the west of the bridge crossing at Crabbs Hill, would create both visual continuity and habitat connectivity along the length of the character area
- Opportunity to enhance and extend the existing vegetation framework, to maintain and reinforce the scale and texture of the landscape. Hedge and tree planting in more open sections, such as to the north of Long Wood on the west side of the valley and alongside Crabbs Hill, would reinforce this framework and enhance the rural characteristics of the landscape to the south of the village

- The setting of the period properties/vernacular farmhouses above the lower valley slopes in northern sections of the area (e.g. Hatfield Bury Farm, Crix and Hatfield Place) to be preserved. The setting to these properties is characterised by views across the grassland and pasture of the gently falling valley slopes, towards the narrow and meandering river channel which is perceptible only via the thread of trees to the banksides. The existing breaks in vegetation along the B1137 are to be retained, to maintain the impression of the river valley landscape on the approaches to Hatfield Peverel from the west
- The substantial block of Ancient Woodland at Lost Wood to be safeguarded and buffered to ensure its longevity, benefits to wildlife and value as a feature in the local landscape. Direct links with hedges and field margins to be retained and enhanced to maximise habitat connectivity in and around the river valley landscape
- Preserve the small to medium scale to the landscape, which is characterised by a network of fields which reflect the pre-18th century and 18th-19th century pattern of enclosure. These fields are generally well-enclosed by well-maintained hedges and small woodlands, particularly around the hamlet of Nounsley in the east. These features to be preserved and management to safeguard the rural character of the southern fringes of the village
- The peaceful and rural qualities of the valley landscape, including the setting of the fording point on the western fringes of Nounsley, provides a green corridor wrapping around the southern fringes of the village. The distinctive landscape of the area is to be safeguarded to preserve the landscape setting to Hatfield Peverel
- The existing views in the valley landscape around the southern fringes of the village are framed by blocks of woodland and hedges associated with the valley slopes and the stream corridor itself. Baddow Ridge is occasionally glimpsed in views from the valley slopes in the north of the character area, while the impression of Hatfield Peverel in views from the south is limited to glimpses of properties nestling within a framework of mature vegetation in the vicinity of Church Road and Sportsman's Lane. The location, characteristics and visual qualities of these views should be retained and enhanced to ensure the setting of the southern fringes of the village
- Opportunities to improve the network of footpaths within the river valley landscape, which is currently limited to footpaths south of the river beyond the character area, and a path along the valley slopes in the south western corner. There is potential to extend these paths, creating a new route between Crabb's Bridge and the existing path along the river close to Hatfield Bury Farm in the north, passing alongside the sewage works, to provide a continuous walk alongside the Ter. This path would link with bridge crossings in the area, creating a series of circular walks in the farmland landscape on the southern fringes of the village



Open valley slopes to the south of Stone Path Drive

Local Landscape Character Area 3 Termitts Chase – Elevated farmland



Local Landscape Character Area with key views indicated

General Commentary:

- Located to the north of Hatfield Peverel and main line railway, the area extends northwards towards the village of Terling and eastwards towards the residential fringes of Witham
- The character area comprises an elevated farmland plateau between the valley landscapes of the Rivers Ter and Blackwater, with a high point of 50m AOD at Job's Wood. It falls gently eastwards to the upper valley slopes of the Ter and wraps around a minor tributary valley that rises towards Termitts Farm, punctuating the western boundary of the character area
- The western boundary is loosely defined by the Terling Road which marks the transition with the valley slopes of the River Ter to the west. However, in the south western corner, the boundary wraps around a rectangular field with the same elevation and large scale as the remainder of the area
- Settlement in the area is limited, based on farmsteads at the fringes, such as The Vineyard and Wood End Farm associated with the A12 on the southern boundary. The geometry of the residential development between the A12 road corridor and railway is a response to these transport corridors, with vegetation along garden boundaries providing a screen to the adjacent farmland. The farmstead at Whitelands in the north western corner includes a range of commercial uses in the former farmhouse itself, with associated parking along the Terling Road

- Land cover comprises a series of large and geometric fields, frequently reflecting the pre 18th century and 18th-19th century pattern of field enclosure, under arable cultivation. Fields are enclosed with a generally intact network of hedgerows which link with small blocks of woodland at the fringes of the area
- The landscape between the rail and road corridors forms part of the character area, sharing the same scale, elevation and land use as the landscape to the north. The rail line sits in a small cutting across this high ground, the line-side vegetation sharing similar qualities to the hedge network in the adjacent landscape
- Public access from the village is limited to a single path which leads into the farmland landscape from the north eastern fringes of the village at The Vineyards, with a footbridge crossing over the mainline railway. The path crosses farmland to the north as far as Termitts Hall, where it turns westwards to the River Ter
- Broad open views are possible across the open arable farmland that characterises the area, as well as across the gently falling valley slopes to the west. These views are experienced from open sections of the Terling Road on the western edge, from the footpath that leads to Termitts Farm, and from farmland beyond the character area around Dancing Dick's Lane



Farmstead and businesses at Whitelands on the Terling Road



Southward view towards Termitts Farm from parish boundary

Landscape guidelines:

- Preserve and enhance the pattern of boundary hedges and associated trees to maintain and enhance the pattern of pre 18th century and 18th-19th century field enclosure present in many parts of the landscape. Landscape management to be supplemented with new hedge and tree planting in gappy sections, and the introduction of small blocks of woodland where it would not compromise agricultural production. This landscape framework would ensure habitat connectivity between woods and hedges in the area, and the range of habitat types in the valley landscape of the River Ter to the west
- Provide landscape definition to the southern boundary through the planting of tree belts in keeping with the scale of the A12 road corridor. Such planting would provide a visual break between the elevated farmland around Termitts Farm and the valley slopes of the River Blackwater to the south-east, whilst also contributing to the sense of separation between Hatfield Peverel and Witham
- Maintain the characteristics of the empty landscape, free of settlement other than the business uses at Whitelands and farmsteads at the margins. The open farmland landscape contributes to a sense of separation between Hatfield Peverel and Witham which are just 1.8km apart. This sense of an empty landscape prevails across the swathe of farmland between the rail and road corridors, characterised by the same elevation, scale and rectangular arrangement
- Retain key views from high points in the local landscape, such as around the local high point of 50m AOD at Job's Wood, to maintain an impression of landscapes associated with distant river valleys
- The distinct rural nature of the landscape, across which broad views are possible should be safeguarded. New planting in southern parts, as described above, would reduce the impact of noise and light from the mainline railway and A12 road corridor, and reinforce this rural character
- Opportunities to soften the existing village fringes in the vicinity of Woodland Close and Hawthorn Road with green open space, hedgerows and small groups of trees connecting with the existing pond and mixed vegetation to garden boundaries
- Opportunities to improve the network of footpaths on the elevated farmland landscape between Hatfield Peverel and Witham, currently limited to a single route leading from 'The Vineyards' on the north eastern fringes of the village to Termitts Farm and onwards to Terling Road. There is potential to create new routes leading north east from Termitts Farm towards the Witham Road and Dancing Dicks Lane (following field edges and existing tracks such as the one skirting Whitelands in the

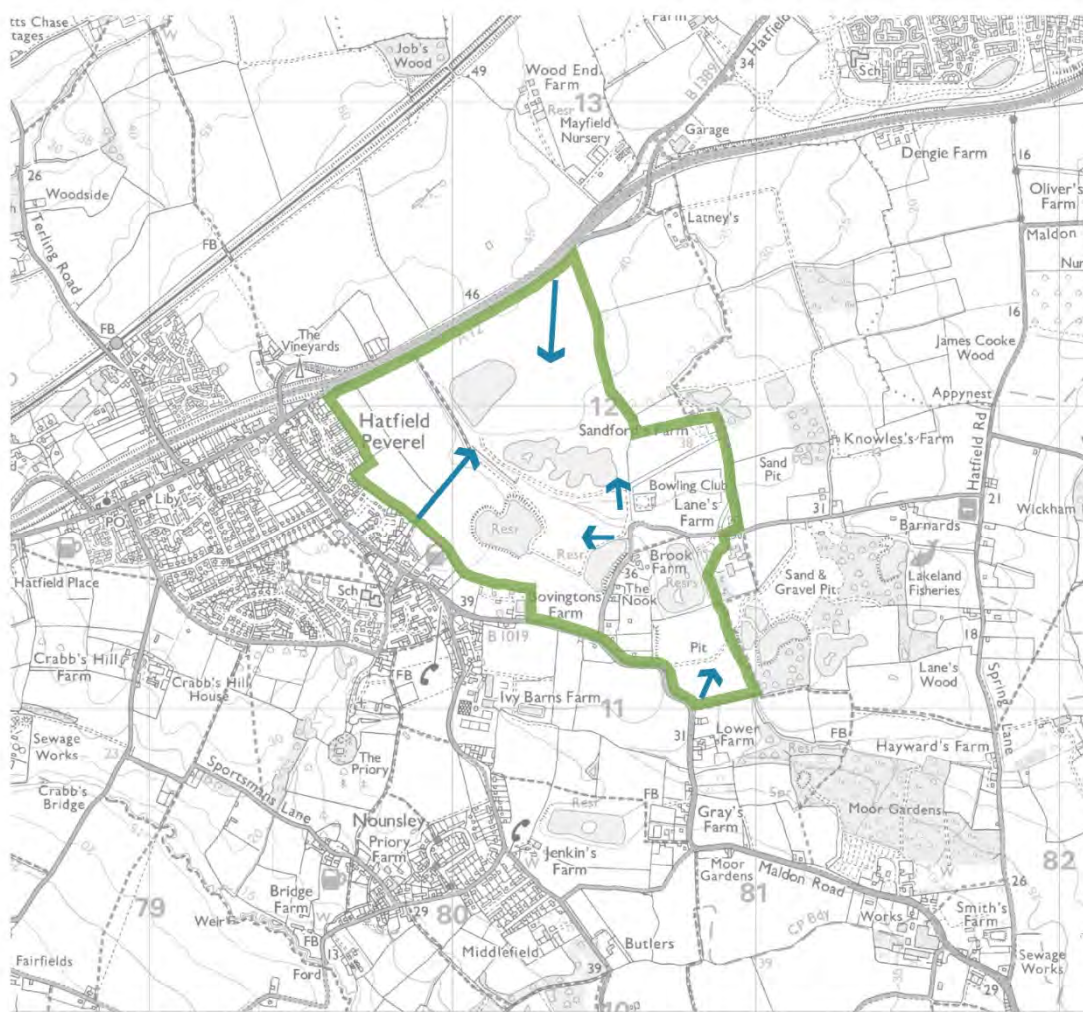
northernmost point in the area. Such routes would provide new circular walks for the benefit of residents in both Hatfield Peverel and Witham, and provide connections between the settlements



View across farmland east of Whitelands

Local Landscape Character Area 4

Wickham Bishops Road – Upper valley slopes with pits/reservoirs



Local Landscape Character Area with key views indicated

General Commentary:

- Located directly to the east of the village, the area comprises the farmland landscape to the north of the B1019 Maldon Road. The residential roads and roads and cul-de-sacs to the north of this meandering road mark the westernmost boundary while the heavily trafficked A12 provides a linear northern boundary
- The eastern boundary of the area is characterised by the transition between farmland that has experienced man-made alterations, such as quarrying for sand and gravels, and the less disturbed farmland landscape in the character area to the east. Although both areas occupy the gently falling valley slopes to the River Blackwater, the man-made modifications are a key feature of the area
- The character area marks the transition between the elevated farmland to the north, and the valley slopes to the River Blackwater to the east. It comprises farmland on the upper valley slopes, falling eastwards from approximately 40m AOD to 35m AOD
- Land cover comprises a series of large and geometric fields under arable cultivation – with occasional field hedges occasionally present. Within this farmland landscape are a series of irregularly shaped reservoirs, created as a result of former sand and gravel extraction. The reservoirs are fringed with a band of trees and scrub, including characteristic water's edge species such as alder and willow. A number of the lakes are used by angling clubs (Cleverley Mere Syndicate & Colchester Angling Preservation Society), with access for parking/fishing being from Wickham Bishops Road

- Settlement in the area comprises a series of detached dwellings arranged along the Wickham Bishops and Maldon Roads, creating a residential cluster at their intersection. There is a sharp transition between the existing residential fringes beyond, and farmland within the area, reflected in the linear rear garden boundary line to Gleneagles Way and Woodham Drive. The density of residential development increases along the northern boundary, ranging from loosely arranged and occasionally vernacular properties on southern sections of the Maldon Road, to the geometry around Woodham Drive. The interface with the adjacent valley slopes is occasionally harsh, such as the geometry of the substantial conifer hedges to rear garden boundaries east of Old School Court
- The well-used Wickham Bishops Road rises up the valley slopes within the character area, providing access to the recreational facilities such as sports pitches and fishing lakes on the village fringes
- The recently developed football pitches and bowling green occupy a restored quarry site on the lower valley slopes in the east, again accessed from the Wickham Bishops Road
- Farmland in the south of the area is smaller scale, with pockets of pasture fringed with mature hedgerows meeting rear garden boundaries. The pasture extends to a further fishing lake at Lakeland Fishery, accessed from the Wickham Bishops Road
- Public access from the village is limited to a path which leads into the farmland landscape from the north-eastern fringes of the village at Old School Court, off the Maldon Road, which crosses a field and follows a hedge line towards a path that runs alongside the A12. The path meets the slip road from the A12 adjacent to the car park to 'Ds Diner'. In the south of the area, a footpath runs alongside a section of the Wickham Bishops Road to provide a short off-road route – set to the rear of hedges and trees along the roadside
- Broad open views are possible across the open arable farmland that characterises the area, punctuated by the vegetation that fringes the reservoirs scattered across the landscape. Views from paths include glimpses of the distant ridge line at Wickham Bishops to the east of the River Blackwater. Traffic on the A12 road corridor, as well as developments on the western fringes of the nearby town of Witham, are clearly apparent in views from northernmost parts of the area



Farmland on village fringes east of Gleneagles Way – A12 visible on the horizon



Sports pitches at the Keith Bigden Memorial Ground, Wickham Bishops Road

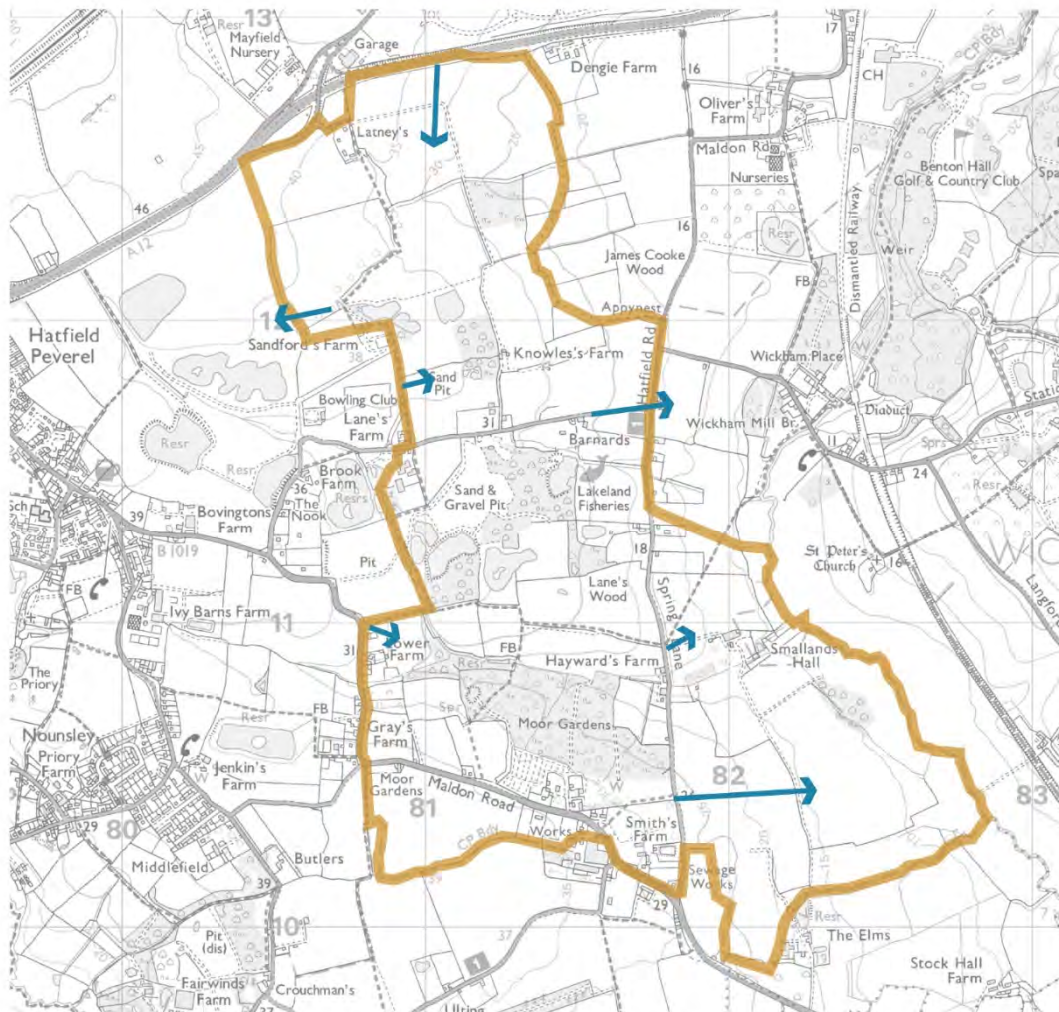
Landscape guidelines:

- Provide landscape definition to the northern boundary through the planting of tree belts in keeping with the scale of the A12. Such planting would provide a visual break between the noise, lighting and structures associated with the road and the gentle upper valley slopes of the River Backwater. Such planting would also provide an acoustic buffer between the road corridor and properties on Gleneagles Way/B1019 Maldon Road. It would provide a partial screen to the western fringes of Witham, which are currently visible on the horizon in views from the northern fringes of the village, whilst also contributing to the sense of separation between Hatfield Peverel and Witham
- Enhance the ecological value of the area by retaining and enhancing the existing hedgerows across the valley slopes by management and new planting, and the restoration of the former network of hedgerows where they would not compromise agricultural production. This landscape framework would create both visual continuity and habitat connectivity across the character area, and enhance the rural characteristics of the landscape to the east of the village
- The broad open views across arable farmland on the gently falling valley slopes, in which occasional glimpses towards the steep ridge at Wickham Bishops are possible, are to be safeguarded. The stands of trees that fringe the fishing lakes/reservoirs within the open farmland landscape, punctuating these views, should be retained and enhanced through management and new planting with species characteristic of the valley landscape of the River Blackwater
- Retain the smaller scale and finer grain of the landscape in the south of the area, characterised by smaller fields and pockets of pasture around Bovingtons Farm and Brook Farm on either side of Wickham Bishops Road
- Opportunities to improve the network of footpaths in and around the upper valley slopes, which are currently limited to a short circuit around arable farmland, originating from a path at Old School Court. The introduction of new routes would provide connections with existing paths running along the lower valley slopes between 'Latneys' in the north and the potential Country Park (identified in planning policy) at Barnards Farm Pit in the south, creating a series of circular paths around the Wickham Bishop Road. These routes would also provide an off-road connection to the new sports clubhouse and facilities at the Keith Bigden Memorial Ground, currently only accessible via the Wickham Bishops Road. The existing footpath intersection with the northern fringes of the village adjacent to 'D's Diner' should be improved as a pedestrian gateway to the village



View east from track to Sandford's Farm – to the ridge & church spire at Wickham Bishops

Local Landscape Character Area 5 River Blackwater – Lower valley slopes



Local Landscape Character Area with key views indicated

General Commentary:

- Located on the eastern fringes of the Parish, the character area stretches from the A12 road corridor on the westernmost fringes of Witham in the north, towards farmland on the fringes of Langford in the south
- The character area comprises the river corridor, floodplain and lower slopes of the River Blackwater as it follows a downstream course to the south of Witham. The river itself is a minor feature in the landscape, apparent only as a thread of trees and vegetation along the banks of the channel, which gradually widens as the river follows its course downstream
- The western boundary is loosely defined by the 35m AOD contour on the valley slopes, which fall to approximately 25m AOD adjacent to the Hatfield Road in the north eastern corner. The eastern boundary is broadly based on the edge of the floodplain and river corridor which define the Parish boundary, at a level of approximately 5m AOD
- Land cover comprises a mix of medium to large scale arable farmland interspersed with pockets of grassland. A network of woodlands, tree belts and hedgerows on the steeper valley slopes to the west of Spring Lane provides a backdrop of mature vegetation in westward views towards the fringes of Hatfield Peverel from the valley landscape to the east, screening all impressions of the village beyond. Farmland to the east of Spring Lane has a more denuded feel, with no hedgerows present on the lane-side verges and an absence of hedges and woodland in an area of large-scale arable farmland

- Uppermost parts include a number of former sand and gravel workings, largely invisible in the surrounding landscape as a result of screening by hedges and blocks of woodland in the local landscape. The Braintree District Council Site Allocations Development Plan identifies a site for a potential Country Park at Dannatts Pit on the Wickham Bishops Road, on the site of one of these former workings in the centre of the area
- The area is lightly settled, with a number of properties arranged along the Hatfield Road and Spring Lane that runs north-south along the lower valley slopes, together with occasional properties along the Wickham Bishops Road. These range from the chalet-style property at Lakeland Fisheries, to substantial period properties such as Pear Tree Hall and Smallands Hall, to a small Caravan Club site and tearoom at Haywards Farm on Spring Lane
- A range of premises lie alongside the B1019 Maldon Road on the approach to the village in the south east, such as 'Countryside Outdoor Leisure' caravan sales and the Ernest Doe machinery sales and servicing depot, creating a pocket of commercial uses in the otherwise rural landscape
- A number of paths exist in farmland between the Maldon Road and Spring Lane, providing access along and across the valley slopes. Footpaths are fewer in farmland in the northern and southernmost parts, limiting connections between Witham to the north and Wickham Bishops to the east
- Views in and around the area are possible from footpaths and unenclosed sections of the roads, such as the Hatfield Road in the north, and elevated sections of Spring Lane in the south. The locally steep valley sides to the east of the River Blackwater and the spire of St Bartholomew's at Wickham Bishops are key features in these outward views
- The eastern fringes of the village are not visible as a result of the rising landform to the west of the area. However, there is a clear impression of the residential and commercial fringes to Witham in views from northern parts of the landscape, seen beyond the busy road corridor that crosses the horizon line to the north.



Hedges, broad verges and vernacular properties on Spring Lane



View north towards Witham from Spring Lane

Landscape guidelines:

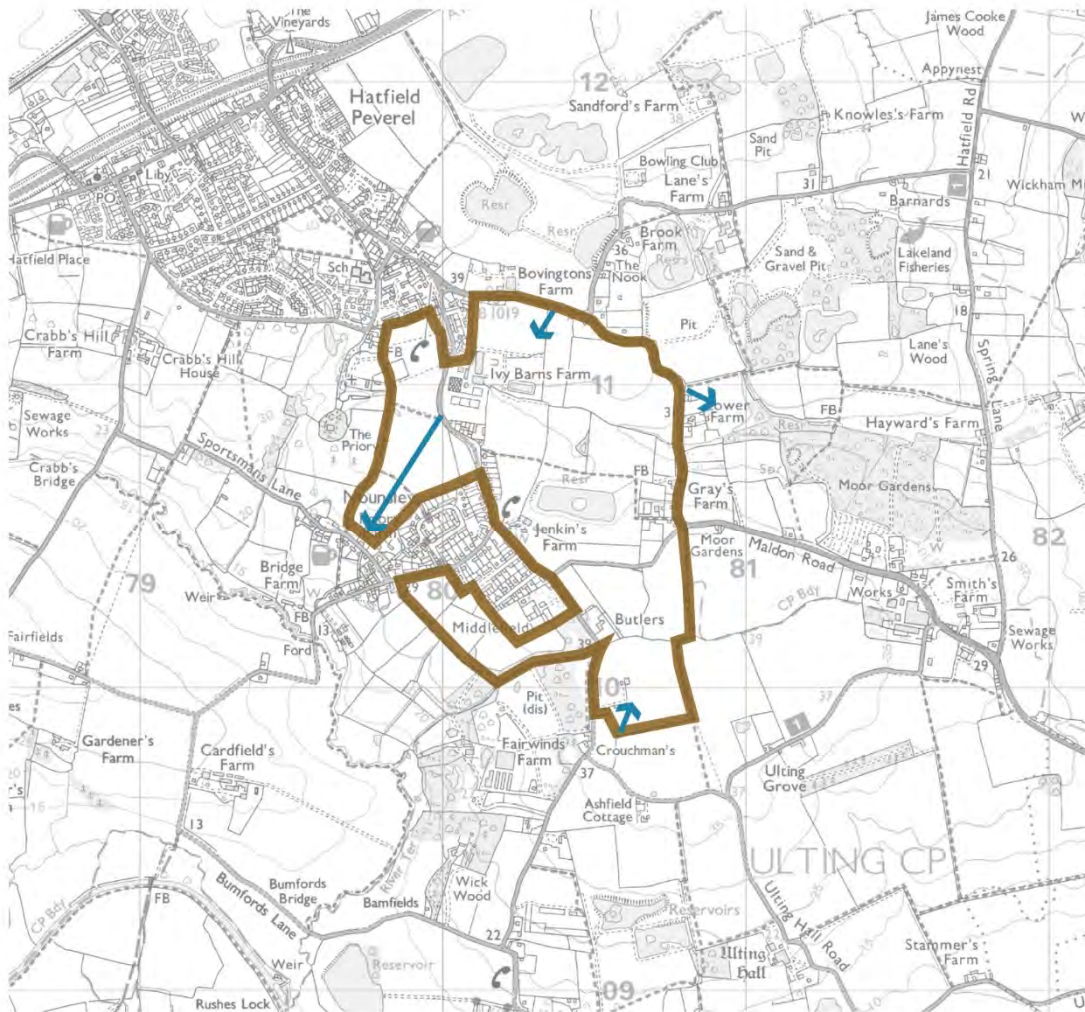
- Provide landscape definition to the northern boundary through the planting of tree belts in keeping with the scale of the A12. Such planting would provide a visual break between the noise, lighting and structures associated with the road and the gentle lower valley slopes of the River Backwater. Such planting would also provide an acoustic buffer between the road corridor and properties such as Appynest on the Hatfield Road and properties around the Wickham Bishops Road. This planting would provide a partial screen to the western fringes of Witham, which are currently visible on the horizon in views from northern parts of the area, whilst also contributing to the sense of separation between Hatfield Peverel and Witham
- The setting of the period properties/vernacular farmhouses arranged around Spring Lane on the valley slopes (e.g. Pear Tree Hall and Smalllands Hall Farm) should be preserved. This setting is characterised by views across the medium to large scale arable fields on the gently falling valley slopes towards the distant meandering river, perceptible only via the thread of trees to the banksides
- Opportunity to enhance and extend the existing vegetation framework, to maintain and reinforce the scale and texture of the landscape. Hedge and tree planting in more open sections, such as to the east of Spring Lane in the far east of the area, would reinforce this framework and enhance the rural characteristics of the landscape on the valley slopes of the River Blackwater
- Enhance the ecological value of the area by retaining and enhancing the existing hedgerows across the lower valley slopes and edge of the floodplain by management and new planting. Opportunities to restore the former network of hedgerows, particularly where they reflect the pre-18th or 18th-19th century pattern of enclosure. This landscape framework would create both visual continuity and habitat connectivity across the character area, and enhance the rural characteristics of the landscape to the east of the village
- Restore the characteristic roadside hedgerows to sections where they have been lost alongside Hatfield Road and Spring Lane, in keeping with adjacent sections

- Enhance the ecological value of the valley corridor of the River Blackwater on the eastern side of the area by preserving a landscape buffer to the narrow and meandering river channel. The existing thread of characteristic bankside vegetation to be retained and enhanced by regular management and planting with species matching the vegetation present in adjacent sections of the river valley (alder, willow, etc.)
- The blocks of large and small woodlands between the Maldon Road and Spring Lane to be managed appropriately to ensure their longevity, benefits to wildlife and value as a feature in the local landscape. Direct links with hedges and field margins to be retained and enhanced to maximise habitat connectivity on the undulating valley slopes
- The steep slopes and wooded ridge to the east of the River Blackwater at Wickham Bishops are a key feature of eastward views from footpaths and roads, with the church spire at the highest point forming a distinct landmark. The landform is seen rising away from a band of vegetation which defines the channel of the River Blackwater, creating a strong sense of a river valley landscape. Views to be safeguarded and enhanced to ensure the distinct setting to the eastern fringes of the village
- Although there is a good network of footpaths on the valley slopes, there is the potential for additional routes which could connect with the B1018 Maldon Road and provide linkages between Hatfield Peverel and the southern fringes of Witham. Such a path would improve connections with the proposed Country Park at the centre of the character area
- Any proposals to reflect the intentions for the proposed Country Park located on the site of the former Dannatts Quarry at Barnards Farm Pit adjacent to the Wickham Bishops Road. The existing framework of hedges and small woodlands, and network of footpaths to the north of the Maldon Road, to be retained and enhanced to provide easy access between the eastern fringes of the village and the recreational landscape associated with the proposed Country Park



Open arable fields east of Spring Lane – view towards Witham and Wickham Bishops

Local Landscape Character Area 6 Jenkins Lane – Mixed farmland



Local Landscape Character Area with key views indicated

General Commentary:

- Located directly south east of the village, the area wraps around the eastern fringes of Nounsley. It comprises a mix of rural uses between the B1019 Maldon Road and the Ulting Road
- The character area is largely level and broadly based on the 35m AOD contour, marking the transition between the substantial village to the north, and the valley landscape of the River Ter to the south
- Settlement in the area comprises scattered properties along the B1019 Maldon Road and a cluster of cottages at Letche's Green at the Jenkins Lane junction. A mix of properties and farm-related uses are arranged to either side of the Ulting Road as it runs through the character area, ranging from Upson's Farm Sales at Ivy Barns Farm in the north, to the substantial 'Middlefield' on the village fringes in the south. The fringes of both the village and hamlet are clearly visible from the adjacent farmland, given the intermittent vegetation along the garden boundaries of the detached houses and bungalows arranged alongside the roads
- The area is well served with footpaths, with several links along field edges between the Ulting and Maldon Roads. To the east of the Ulting Road, three paths cross the landscape in an east-west direction, creating a series of circular routes in the farmland landscape between Hatfield Peverel and Ulting. A footpath runs along the length of a green lane along the western boundary of the area, connecting with Sportsmans Lane and providing direct access to the rural river valley landscape to the south of the village. The lane is set within mature hedges and trees, which provide a strong framework of vegetation on the western boundary of the character area

- Land cover comprises a series of small to medium fields farmed as both pasture and for cereals, set within a largely intact framework of field hedges. A geometric shaped agricultural reservoir to the east of Jenkins Farm is imperceptible in this framework of vegetation
- The open farmland to the west of the Ulting Road provides a degree of separation between properties on the southern fringes of Hatfield Peverel (at Ingelrica Avenue) and the northern fringes of the hamlet of Nounsley to the south. A recreation ground lies alongside the road, adjacent to properties on the northern fringes of Nounsley
- In the north western corner, a plot of allotments provides a transition between the built up fringes of the village to the north and the arable farmland to the south. The western edge of the allotments meets the churchyard of St Andrew's church and grounds of The Priory beyond; the eastern edges stretches to rear gardens of the Ulting Road
- Occasional views are possible, from footpaths and at breaks in the roadside and field hedgerows, of areas of pasture, with glimpses of the distant landscape beyond the River Ter in south-facing views. Any views from the Maldon Road are limited by the banked sides and roadside hedges; whereas views from the Ulting Road are more open – particularly on the approach to the village from the south, where the derelict farm cottage at 'Crouchmans' is a relic of the former pattern of farming/settlement in the area
- Long distance views towards Baddow Ridge to the south of the River Chelmer are possible from the Ulting Road and associated footpaths



View north from Ulting Lane towards the village fringes at Ingelrica Avenue and allotments

Landscape guidelines:

- The open farmland to the west of the Ulting Road provides a distinct break between the main village and the hamlet at Nounsley, and provides open views across the field that falls gently towards the well-used green lane running along the eastern boundary of The Priory. The open nature of the landscape allows for distant views towards Baddow Ridge and Danbury on the south side of the Chelmer valley. The arable farmland provides a transition between properties around Church Road on the southern fringes of the village and the wider rural landscape to the south. The open farmland should be retained, to maintain the sense of separation between village and hamlet and preventing the coalescence of the two
- Retain and enhance the amenities on the southern fringes of the village, including the allotments site off Church Road, burial ground to the east of St Andrew's Church, and playground alongside the Ulting Road. There is potential to integrate these facilities into the landscape by the introduction of hedge and tree planning to the perimeter, thereby enhancing the rural qualities of the landscape to the south of the village

- Enhance the ecological value of the area by retaining and enhancing the existing hedgerows around field margins and roadsides, such as alongside Jenkins Lane, achieved by management and new planting. This landscape framework would enhance the impression of the small scale landscape and improve habitat connectivity across the character area, thereby reinforcing the rural characteristics of the landscape to the south of the village
- Retain the small to medium scale and pastoral nature of the landscape, characterised by small fields and pockets of pasture to the east of Ivy Barns Farm, where the field pattern reflects the pre-18th century pattern of field enclosure
- Retain the hedgerows and trees alongside the B1019 Maldon Road, to provide a landscape buffer to the busy road corridor and maintain an over-riding sense of a peaceful farmland landscape
- The numerous public footpaths in the area to retained and enhanced with hedge planting to either side, to enhance their function as corridors for wildlife in the landscape to the south of the village
- Residential developments on the northern fringes of Nounsely, such as at Sportsmans Lane and Priory Farm Road are clearly visible in views from the southern fringes of Hatfield Peverel. New hedge and tree planting around the fringes of the hamlet would help to screen these properties in views from footpaths and properties around the Ulting Road, and enhance the rural characteristics of the hamlet

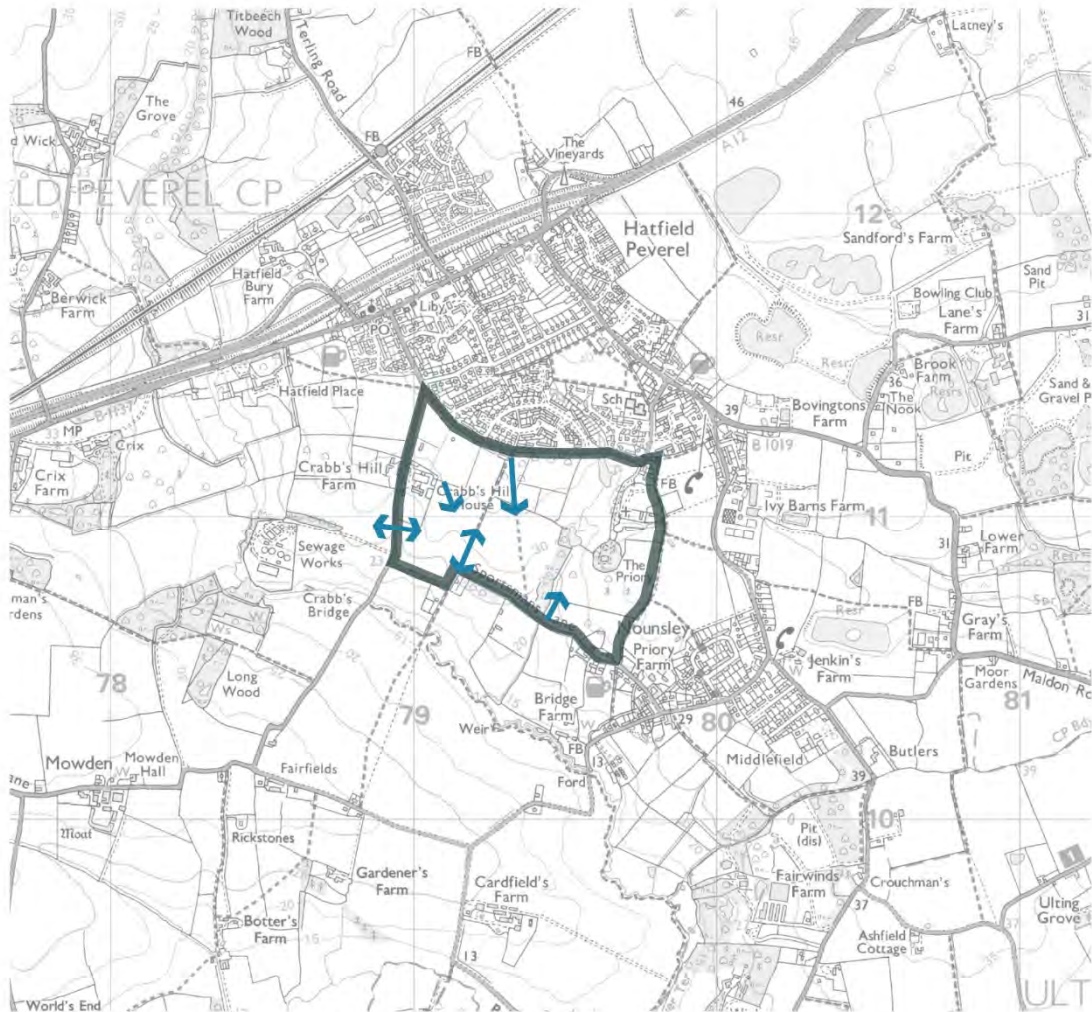


Entrance to churchyard at St Andrew's church on western boundary



View south from Ulting Road with wooded ridge on distant horizon

Local Landscape Character Area 7 Sportsmans Lane – Farmland and parkland



Local Landscape Character Area with key views indicated

General Commentary:

- Located directly to the south of the village, the area comprises a landscape compartment on the upper valley slopes of the River Ter between Church Road (at approximately 35m AOD) and Sportsmans Lane (at approximately 25m AOD)
- The busy Church Road forms the northern boundary of the character area, defining the edge of the residential fringes of Hatfield Peverel, skirting the southern fringes of the village between the B1137 and main village street in the west and the B1019 and village school/playground in the east
- The village cricket ground, set within a framework of trees and hedgerows, lies alongside Church Road, accessed via a locked gate. To the west of the cricket ground, a small natural pond is set within an area of woodland on the Crabb's Hill/Church Road junction; forming part of a network of water bodies on the southern fringes of the village
- The western boundary of the area is characterised by residential and commercial uses alongside Crabb's Hill, such as Hatfield Peverel Nursing Home at Crabb's Hill House. These properties are set within a framework of mature vegetation which provide a degree of visual containment on the western fringes
- The landform undulates around a minor tributary valley which defines the western boundary to the grounds of The Priory (Registered Park and Garden), which is apparent as a series of ponds and larger water bodies, such as at Willow Rise and within the grounds of The Priory

- Land cover comprises a range of village edge uses, ranging from paddocks and sports facilities mixed with small to medium sized arable fields and areas of grassland. The notable St Andrew's church and The Priory occupy the eastern parts, characterised by mature trees in a parkland setting
- The substantial residential developments on the north side of Church Road are largely screened by the mature hedging on the south side of Church Road, providing a distinct transition between the village and adjacent countryside
- As well as the footpath along the green lane on the eastern boundary of the area, two footpaths follow the falling valley slopes between Church Road and Sportsmans Lane. The paths meet at a small parking area adjacent to the Scout HQ on the southern fringes of the village, where they follow the edge of a plot of allotments to the rear of this building, and cross paddocks which lie between the car park and grounds to The Priory directly to the east
- Occasional views into and across the landscape beyond the character area are possible, from breaks in the vegetation along Crabbs Hill, Church Road and Sportsmans Lane, as well as from footpaths across fields within the area. These include views into and across the valley landscape at breaks in the hedge line along Church Road, and from the footpaths that lead from the higher ground at the edge of the village on Church Road towards Sportsmans Lane on the lower valley slopes to the south. They include an impression of the River Ter in mid-distance, and glimpses towards the wooded Baddow Ridge on the horizon line. Further glimpses across the gently falling upper valley slopes are possible from breaks in the hedge line along Crabbs Hill, and between blocks of vegetation on the fringes of Hatfield Peverel Nursing Home
- Glimpses of the house and grounds of The Priory are possible in oblique views along Church Road, and from the driveway opening adjacent to the (currently vacant) 'Sportsmans Arms' public house



Field edge footpath between Sportsmans Lane and Church Road



Paddocks and footpaths to the south of Church Road

Landscape guidelines:

- Enhance the ecological value of the area by retaining and enhancing the existing hedgerows around residential boundaries, field margins and roadsides, such as vegetation around the fringes of the cricket club and Hatfield Peverel Nursing Home on Crabbs Hill. The management and reinforcement of the framework of trees and hedgerows with new planting would enhance the impression of the rural landscape on the southern fringes of the village and improve habitat connectivity across the character area. The vegetation also screens views back towards the village from the open farmland landscape around Mowden Hall Lane to the south, reducing the impact of the residential developments to the north of Church Lane in the otherwise rural views
- The springs, ponds and water bodies present in the area should be retained and enhanced through informed management, given their function as part of a network of water bodies within the built up residential areas of the village as well as on its fringes
- Retain and enhance the amenities on the southern fringes of the village, including the allotments site and Scout HQ on Church Road, as well as the cricket ground directly to the west
- The glimpsed views towards and across the valley landscape on the southern fringes of the village provide a close connection between the village and the adjacent rural landscape, and should be safeguarded and enhanced through selective management of vegetation in and around the view corridor
- The two public footpaths in the area to retained and enhanced with hedge planting to either side, to enhance their function as corridors for wildlife in the landscape to the south of the village. There is an opportunity to provide a footpath link alongside the hedge line on the south side of the allotments, to provide a direct off-road connection to Crabbs Hill and the western fringes of the village

Note:

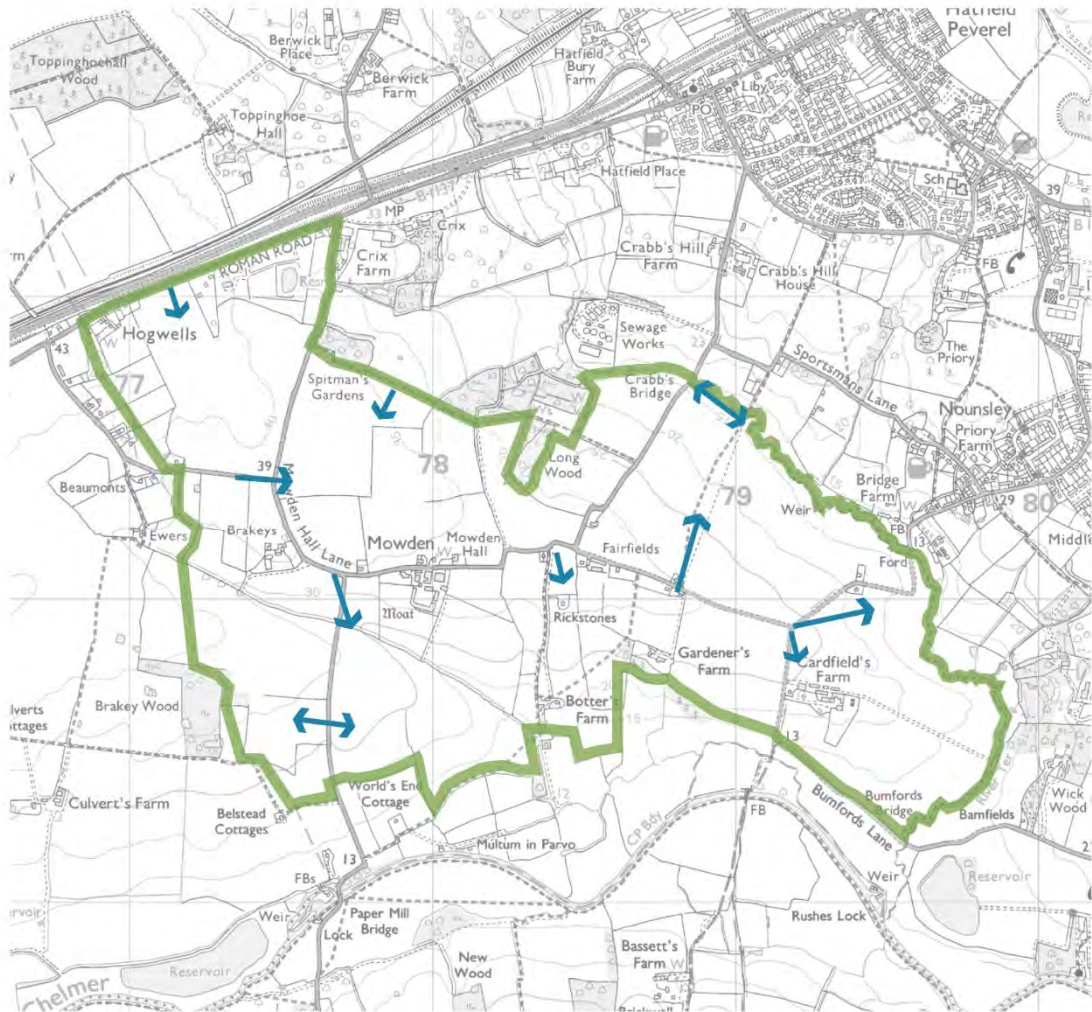
- The guidelines exclude the privately owned and inaccessible 'The Priory' on Church Road. It is assumed that the ongoing management of the grounds (designated Registered Park and Garden) would be as per the guidance and advice of Historic England.



View east along Sportsmans Lane

Local Landscape Character Area 8

Mowden – Spur of elevated farmland between river valleys



Local Landscape Character Area with key views indicated

General Commentary:

- The character area is offset from the south-western fringes of Hatfield Peverel by the valley landscape of the River Ter. It comprises a spur of elevated farmland between the valley landscapes of the Rivers Ter and Chelmer on the southernmost edge of the parish
- Land cover comprises open arable farmland, stretching from the road corridors of the B1137 and A12 in the north-west to the confluence of the two rivers in the far south-east
- The boundary is loosely defined by the 20m contour that marks the transition between the edge of the floodplain/lower valley slopes, and the undulating farmland associated with the spur. In north-eastern parts, the channel of the River Ter itself forms the boundary, given that the farmland on the valley slopes shares the characteristics of the large scale farmland landscape
- Settlement is dispersed across the landscape, with historic farmsteads and associated cottages arranged along a central vein that follows the elevated spur that stretches along the landscape. This spur falls from 40m AOD around Hogwells and Mowden Hall Lane, to approximately 15m AOD around the lower valley slopes to the east of Cardfield's Farm. The elevated cluster around Mowden Hall at the centre are notable features, clearly visible in the surrounding farmland landscape
- There is little impression of the B1137 and A12 on the northern boundary, given the vegetation alongside the road corridor and associated with garden boundaries

- Land cover comprises a series of large and geometric fields under arable cultivation. Fields are enclosed with a generally intact network of hedgerows which link with occasional and small blocks of woodland at the fringes of the area. The landscape in the easternmost parts is open and unenclosed, with clear views towards the village fringes from both Mowden Hall Lane and Bumfords Lane adjacent to Cardfield's Farm
- Public access in the area is limited, and based largely on the fringes of the area. It comprises a path along the intimate and meandering channel of the River Ter on the northern boundary, connecting with a route that rises up the valley slopes towards 'Fairfields' on Mowden Hall Lane. This links with two paths that fall back down the valley slopes to the River Chelmer, which extend along the lower valley slopes towards the amenities at Paper Mill Bridge
- Broad open views are possible across the open arable farmland that characterises the area. The lack of containment by vegetation allows for long distance views into and beyond the river valley landscapes on the boundaries of the area, with the wooded Baddow Ridge providing the backdrop in views to the south. Properties on the fringes of Hatfield Peverel are visible in views to the north, nestled within a framework of established hedges and woodlands - as per the view from Mowden Hall Lane below



View slopes to the south of Mowden Hall

Landscape guidelines:

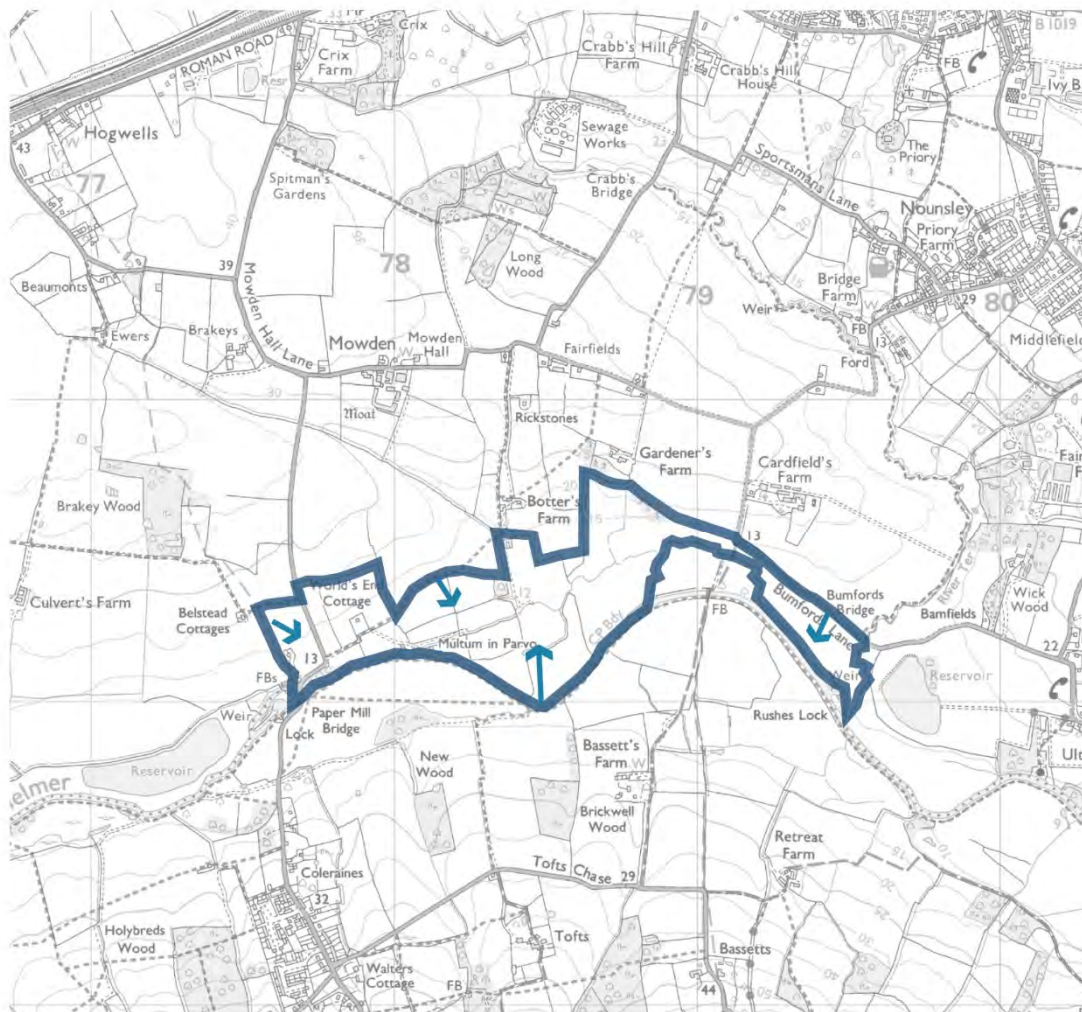
- Preserve and enhance the pattern of boundary hedges and associated trees to maintain and enhance the pattern of pre 18th century and 18th-19th century field enclosure present in parts of the landscape, notably on the high ground around Mowden Hall. Management of trees and hedges should be supplemented with new planting in gappy sections, and the introduction of small blocks of woodland where it would not compromise agricultural production. New hedging to be encouraged around Mowden Hall Lane and Cardfield's Farm in eastern parts, where little of the characteristic framework of hedging and associated trees remains intact. This landscape framework would ensure habitat connectivity between the character area, habitats in the neighbouring valley landscapes of the Rivers Ter and Chelmer which wrap around the area, and blocks of woodland in the adjacent landscape
- Maintain the key characteristics of the open and medium to large scale landscape, in which the adjacent valley landscapes of the Rivers Ter and Chelmer are apparent. The sense of openness to the valley slopes should be retained, to reinforce the strong agricultural character and dispersed settlement pattern of properties based on the spur of ground between the valley landscapes of the Rivers Ter and Chelmer
- Retain key views from high points in the local landscape, such as around Mowden Hall, to maintain an impression of landscapes associated with distant river valleys

- The distinct rural nature of the landscape, across which broad views are possible, is to be safeguarded. New planting alongside the B1137 on the northern boundary of the area, as described above, would reduce the impact of noise and light from this road and the adjacent A12 road corridor and reinforce this rural character in northern parts
- Opportunities to improve the network of footpaths on the spur of farmland which falls gently eastwards towards the confluence of the rivers, with additional links between the valley landscapes in the vicinity of Cardfield's Farm on Bumfords Lane



View north to Hatfield Peverel from Mowden Hall Lane

Local Landscape Character Area 9 River Chelmer – Lower valley slopes



Local Landscape Character Area with key views indicated

General Commentary:

- Located on the southernmost fringes of the parish, the area is based on the floodplain and lower valley slopes of the River Chelmer
- The River Chelmer and Blackwater Navigation river is apparent on the southernmost boundary, reflected by a swathe of vegetation along the gently curving channel line, which runs between Heybridge Basin on the Blackwater Estuary, and Springfield Basin close to the heart of Chelmsford
- The boundary of the area is loosely defined by the belt of mature trees at the edge of the floodplain, loosely based on the 15m AOD contour. This vegetation frames, and occasionally limits, views between the character area and the adjacent valley slopes
- Settlement in the area is limited to Worlds End Cottage and Smugglers Barn, which are set within pasture and mature trees on the north side of the floodplain, accessed via a track from the lane to Mowden
- Land cover comprises a series of small to medium and irregularly shaped areas of grassland and pasture, defined by a network of drainage ditches and framed by hedgerows and tree line characteristic of a river valley landscape. The engineered waterway of the Chelmer and Blackwater Navigation dissects this organic landscape pattern, creating a smooth line across the landscape

- Paper Mill Lock on the western most tip of the area provides a hub of activity in an otherwise tranquil river valley landscape, with canal cruises, walks, tearooms and car parking around the bridges, weir and lock
- Public access from the Hatfield Peverel is limited to a path leading from Paper Mill Lock towards Mowden on the northern boundary, from which occasional views into the valley floor are possible. A path on the southern bank of the river links with footpaths in the vicinity of Little Baddow to the south
- Views are otherwise limited to those from boats on the canal on the southern boundary, and glimpses from Bumfords Lane on the valley slopes to the north of the area. Northward views into and across the river valley are possible along the length of Tofts Chase to the south of the River Chelmer, from which distant views towards the southern fringes of Hatfield Peverel are possible



Northwards view across River Chelmer from Tofts Chase

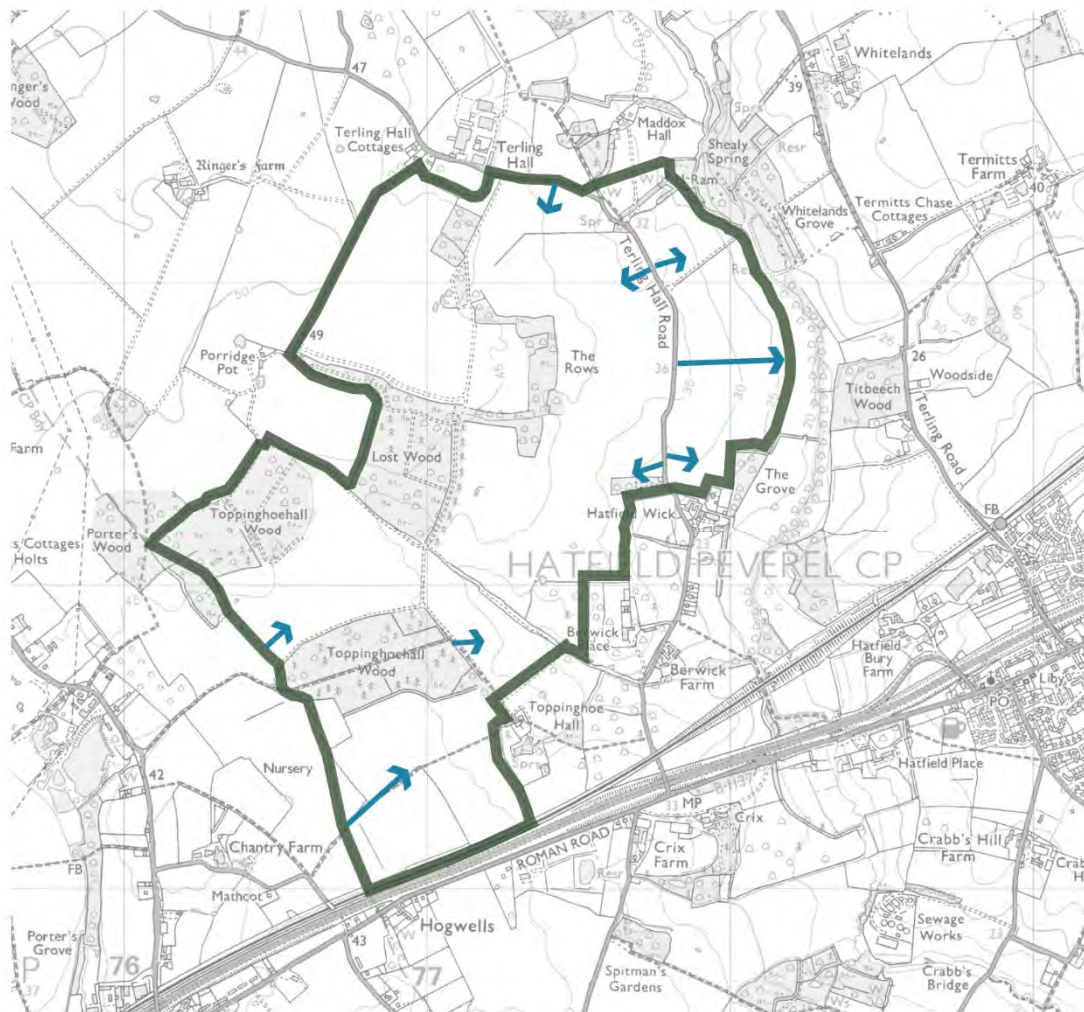
Landscape guidelines:

- Enhance the ecological value of the valley corridor by preserving a landscape buffer to the river which flows along the southern boundary of the parish. The thread of characteristic bankside vegetation to be retained and enhanced by regular management and planting with species matching the vegetation present in adjacent sections of the river valley (alder, willow etc)
- Opportunity to introduce small blocks of woodland, to maintain and reinforce the characteristics of the predominantly pastoral valley landscape, in keeping with adjacent sections of the river valley
- Preserve the distinct setting of the facilities and attractions at Paper Mill Bridge and lock/weir, which provide a pocket of activity in an otherwise peaceful valley landscape
- Opportunities to improve the network of footpaths within the river valley landscape, which is currently based on a footpath alongside the River Chelmer beyond the parish boundary to Hatfield Peverel. There is potential to extend the footpath that rises away from the valley towards Botter's Farm, creating a new route running eastwards along the valley slopes towards Bumfords Lane and Bumfords Bridge, thereby improving access on the north side of the river and linking with adjacent footpaths in the parish
- Reinforce the characteristic landscape of pasture enclosed with native hedgerows and associated trees on the valley floor and lower valley slopes, to provide visual containment to the river landscape and provide definition between it and the larger scale arable farmland beyond



Footpath and valley landscape alongside World's End Cottage

Local Landscape Character Area 10 Terling Hall Road – Elevated farmland



Local Landscape Character Area with key views indicated

General Commentary:

- Located to the north-west of Hatfield Peverel and offset from it by the valley landscape of the River Ter, the area extends northwards from the main line railway and the road corridors on the A12 and B1137 towards the village of Terling
- The eastern boundary is loosely based on the 25 AOD contour that defines the transition between the gently falling valley slopes within the area and the adjacent floodplain. The boundary wraps around the minor tributary that rises around Toppinghoe Hall and Berwick Place on the eastern boundary, which is further defined by a transition to a landscape of grassland and pasture
- The character area comprises large scale arable farmland on the upper valley slopes and on the westernmost edge of the parish, which levels out at approximately 50m AOD on the parish boundary where it meets the adjacent plateau
- The landscape is rural and unsettled, with views towards the properties arranged along the Witham Road west of the area and Terling Hall Road east of the area limited by the substantial blocks of woodland present. The only impression of the nearby village is the occasional glimpses of the substantial structures associated with the 'Arla' plant close to the station on the Terling Road on the horizon line to the east
- The open large scale farmland provides a distinctly rural character on the northern fringes of the village, and contributes to a sense of separation between it and the fringes of Chelmsford approximately 4km to the west

- Land cover comprises a series of large and geometric fields under arable cultivation, interspersed with a series of substantial and occasionally Ancient Woodland blocks. The network of field hedgerows is fragmented, with remnants of former hedgerows present along the Terling Hall road on the eastern boundary
- The mainline railway, B1137 and A12 on the southern boundary are partially screened by a belt of highway planting along the transport corridors. This reduces the impact of the road on the otherwise open landscape to the south of Toppinghoe Hall Wood, where a footpath across arable farmland is unenclosed by hedgerows
- Two footpaths cross the landscape in southern parts of the area, providing connections between Toppinghoe Hall on the eastern boundary and the Witham Road beyond the parish boundary. One of these crosses through and along the edge of the block of ancient woodland at Toppinghoehall Wood
- Broad open views are possible across the open arable farmland that characterises the area, as well as across the gently falling valley slopes to the east. These views are experienced from open sections of the Terling Hall Road on the eastern edge, and from the farmstead at Terling Hall on the northernmost tip



View south east from farm hardstanding on Terling Hall Road

Landscape guidelines:

- Preserve and enhance the pattern of boundary hedges and associated trees to maintain and enhance the pattern of field enclosure, with new hedge and tree planting where gaps are present. This landscape framework would ensure habitat connectivity between the substantial blocks of woodland in the area and the range of habitat types in the valley landscape of the River Ter to the east
- Restore hedgerows to the Terling Hall Road in the east of the area in keeping with the characteristic hedges in the landscape around Terling, with occasional breaks to allow for views across falling farmland towards the river valley to the east
- Provide landscape definition to the southern boundary through the planting of tree belts in keeping with the scale of the A12 road corridor. Such planting would provide a visual break between the elevated farmland around Toppinghoe Hall and the valley slopes of the River Ter to the east, whilst also contributing to the sense of separation between Hatfield Peverel and Boreham to the west
- Maintain the characteristics of the empty landscape, free of settlement other than the farmstead at Terling Hall adjacent to the northern boundary, and the Grade II Listed wing of the previously more substantial house at Toppinghoe Hall
- Retain key views from high points in the local landscape, such as around the footpath which follows the eastern edge of Toppinghoe Hall Wood at approximately 40m AOD, to allow views into the river valley landscape to the east

- The distinct rural nature of the landscape, across which broad views are possible is to be safeguarded. New planting in southern parts of the area, as described above, would reduce the impact of noise and light from the mainline railway and A12 road corridor, and reinforce this rural character
- Opportunities to improve the network of footpaths on the elevated farmland landscape, using existing tracks within the farmland landscape. A new route from the existing path at Toppinghoe Hall Wood, running northwards towards Lost Wood and onwards to the farmstead at Terling Hall, would create a connection with the existing path leading from Terling Hall Road to the village of Terling. Additional paths running east-west across farmland in the area would improve access to the river valley landscape to the east, and connect with potential future links along the river valley corridor. Such routes would provide new circular walks for the benefit of residents in both Hatfield Peverel and Terling



View south from Toppinghoe Hall towards railway and A12