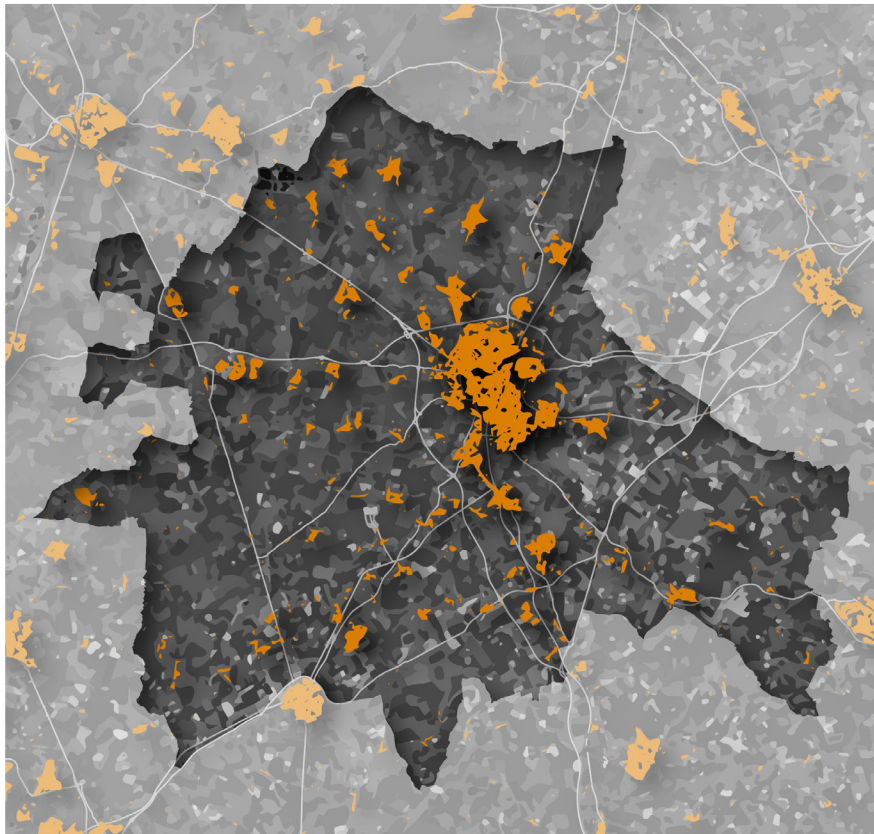


Greater Cambridge Shared Partnership
Greater Cambridge
Landscape Character Assessment



Greater Cambridge Shared Partnership
Greater Cambridge
Landscape Character Assessment

Approved

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'D. Watkins'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letter 'D' being particularly large and prominent.

Dominic Watkins

Position

Director

Date

11th February 2021

Revision

FINAL V2

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview of Greater Cambridge

- 1.1.1 Greater Cambridge comprises the local authority areas of South Cambridgeshire District (90,163 ha) and Cambridge City (4,070 ha) located within Cambridgeshire in the East of England (see **Figure 1.1**).
- 1.1.2 Covering 94,233 ha, Greater Cambridge includes the City of Cambridge and the surrounding rural landscapes and villages of South Cambridgeshire. The total population of Greater Cambridge is around 283,884¹ with over half living in rural villages within South Cambridgeshire.
- 1.1.3 The Greater Cambridge landscape is varied with intimate river valleys contrasting with open fens, wooded claylands and ridges, and rolling chalk hills. Built around the banks of the River Cam, Cambridge is a distinctive and iconic historic University city.

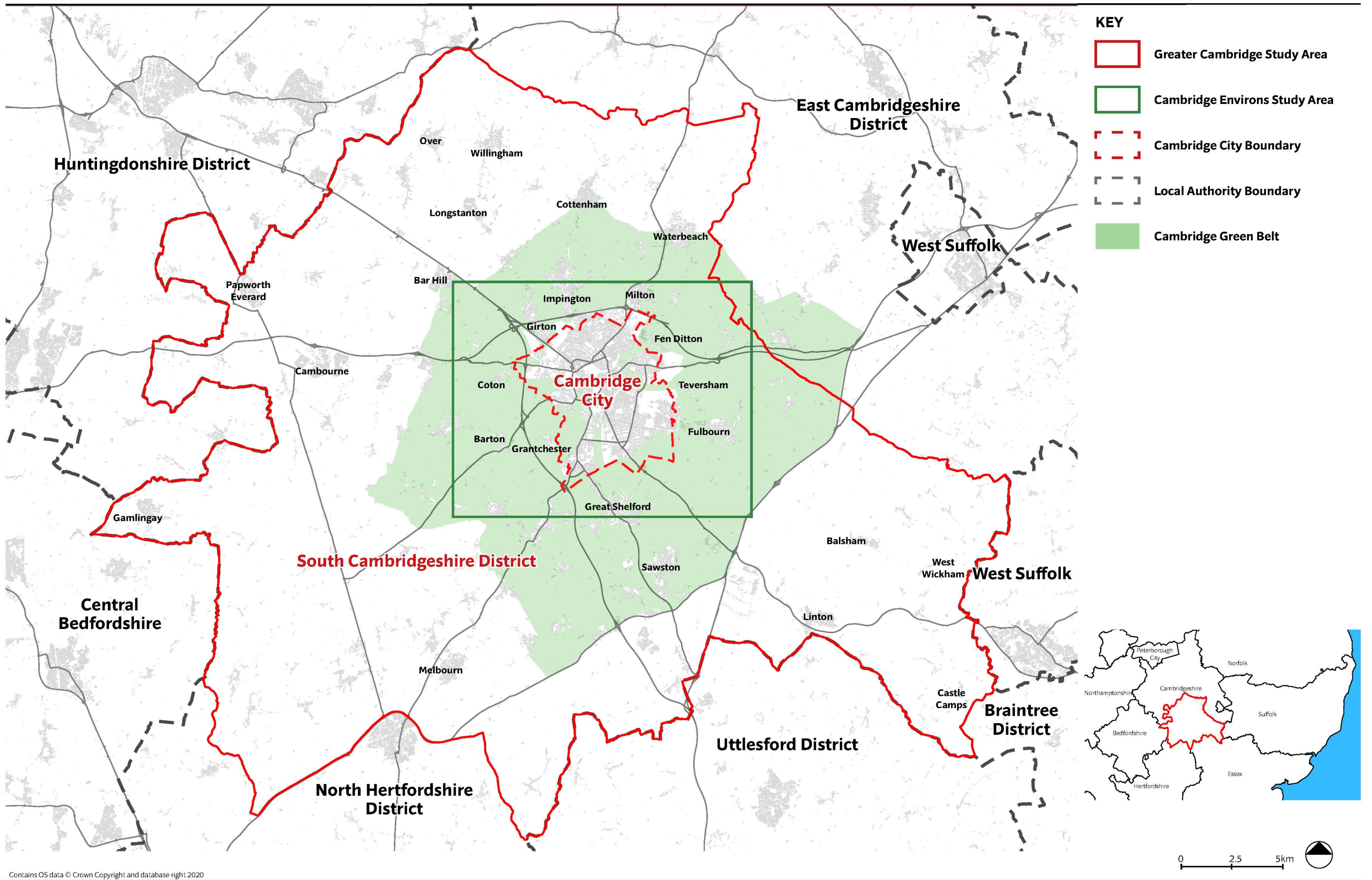
1.2 The Greater Cambridge Landscape Character Assessment

- 1.2.1 On behalf of South Cambridgeshire District Council and Cambridge City Council ('the Councils'), in May 2020 the Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service commissioned CBA to prepare an up-to-date and consistent Landscape Character Assessment of the whole Greater Cambridge area.

Study Areas

- 1.2.2 The Landscape Character Assessment has been undertaken at three scales:
- A detailed study of the landscapes within the "Greater Cambridge Study Area" defined on **Figure 1.1** (outside of the Cambridge Urban Area).
 - A high-level study of the rural villages within the South Cambridgeshire District part of the Greater Cambridge Study Area.
 - A high-level study of the landscapes and open spaces within the "Cambridge Environs Study Area" defined on **Figure 1.1** that contribute to the setting of Cambridge.

¹ Population Reports, Cambridgeshire Insight, 2019



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Approach

- 1.2.3 The study has been undertaken in accordance with the principles of Natural England's latest guidance set out in '[An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment](#)' (2014). Details of the methodology used to undertake the Greater Cambridge Landscape Character Assessment can be found in [Appendix 1](#).
- 1.2.4 The Landscape Character Assessment identifies and records the patterns, features and elements of the various generic types of landscape and areas of distinctive character in Greater Cambridge that contribute to making one landscape different from another. It is these factors that contribute to defining local distinctiveness and sense of place.
- 1.2.5 The Landscape Character Assessment also identifies the forces for change in the landscape that are eroding or enhancing local distinctiveness and offers guidance on ways by which landscape change might best be managed to reinforce and enhance landscape character.
- 1.2.6 The Landscape Character Assessment can be used to inform monitoring of landscape change to enable the Councils to assess the practical effectiveness of existing policy, initiatives and management, and help modify these in the light of actual trends.

1.3 Uses

- 1.3.1 The Landscape Character Assessment will be used by the Councils to:
- Develop an appropriate spatial strategy in the new Greater Cambridge Local Plan
 - Develop suitable Local Plan policies to protect and enhance the area's sensitive, valued and vulnerable landscapes
 - Develop design, place-making, sustainable development and climate change policies in the Local Plan
 - Inform decision-making on planning applications
- 1.3.2 The range of potential uses and applications of the Landscape Character Assessment for spatial planning and development management also include:
- Contributing to Landscape Sensitivity/Capacity Assessments to help assess the type/scale of development that might be able to be accommodated without compromising landscape character
 - Providing an input to Sustainability Appraisals of development plans and policies
 - Providing a framework and context for the production of more detailed local landscape character assessments to support Neighbourhood Plans and Village Design Statements

- Assisting studies of development potential, for example identifying sites for new development
- Informing the siting, scale and design of development proposals, including major infrastructure projects
- Informing Landscape and Visual Impact Assessments to demonstrate the likely effects of a proposed development on the landscape
- The Landscape Character Assessment will also identify potential landscape restoration, enhancement and management opportunities to inform and support delivery of strategies and proposals outside of the planning system such as:
 - Providing a basis for the preparation of green infrastructure, biodiversity and trees/woodland strategies
 - Helping guide landscape change in positive and sustainable ways, for example programmes of woodland expansion, opportunities for large-scale tree planting for agri-forestry and carbon storage schemes and identifying new uses for degraded land
 - Informing the targeting of resources for land management and agri-environment schemes and evaluating the effectiveness of funding

1.3.3 The Landscape Character Assessment offers a common framework and source of baseline information about the Greater Cambridge landscapes within the Study Area. This framework provides a basis for adopting an integrated, positive approach to managing landscape change by all those involved with, or that have an interest in, the planning, design and management of the Greater Cambridge landscape, such as:

- Local authorities (South Cambridgeshire District Council, Cambridge City Council and Cambridgeshire County Council)
- Government agencies (e.g. Natural England, Historic England, Environment Agency, Highways England and National Rail)
- Developers, land owners and land managers
- Parish councils, community/local interest groups and voluntary organisations
- Educational establishments and research organisations

1.4 Structure of the Landscape Character Assessment

- **Chapter 2: Landscape Character Context** – this chapter outlines the national, regional, and county landscape character context for the study.
- **Chapter 3: Evolution of the Greater Cambridge Landscape** – this chapter describes the main physical influences and human/cultural influences that have shaped the evolution and character of the Greater Cambridge landscape, highlights perceptions of the Greater Cambridge landscape and considers the state of the landscape today.
- **Chapter 4: Character of the Greater Cambridge Landscape** – following an overview of the Greater Cambridge landscape classification, this chapter sets out detailed descriptions of the Landscape Character Types and component Landscape Character Areas with recommended guidelines for managing landscape change.
- **Chapter 5: Character of South Cambridgeshire’s Rural Villages** – this chapter provides a high-level study of the existing character of the rural villages within South Cambridgeshire, and includes signposts to sources of more detailed character assessment information and guidance.
- **Chapter 6: Character of the Cambridge Environs** – this chapter provides a high-level study of the landscapes and open spaces that contribute to the setting of Cambridge, and includes signposts to sources of more detailed character assessment information and guidance.

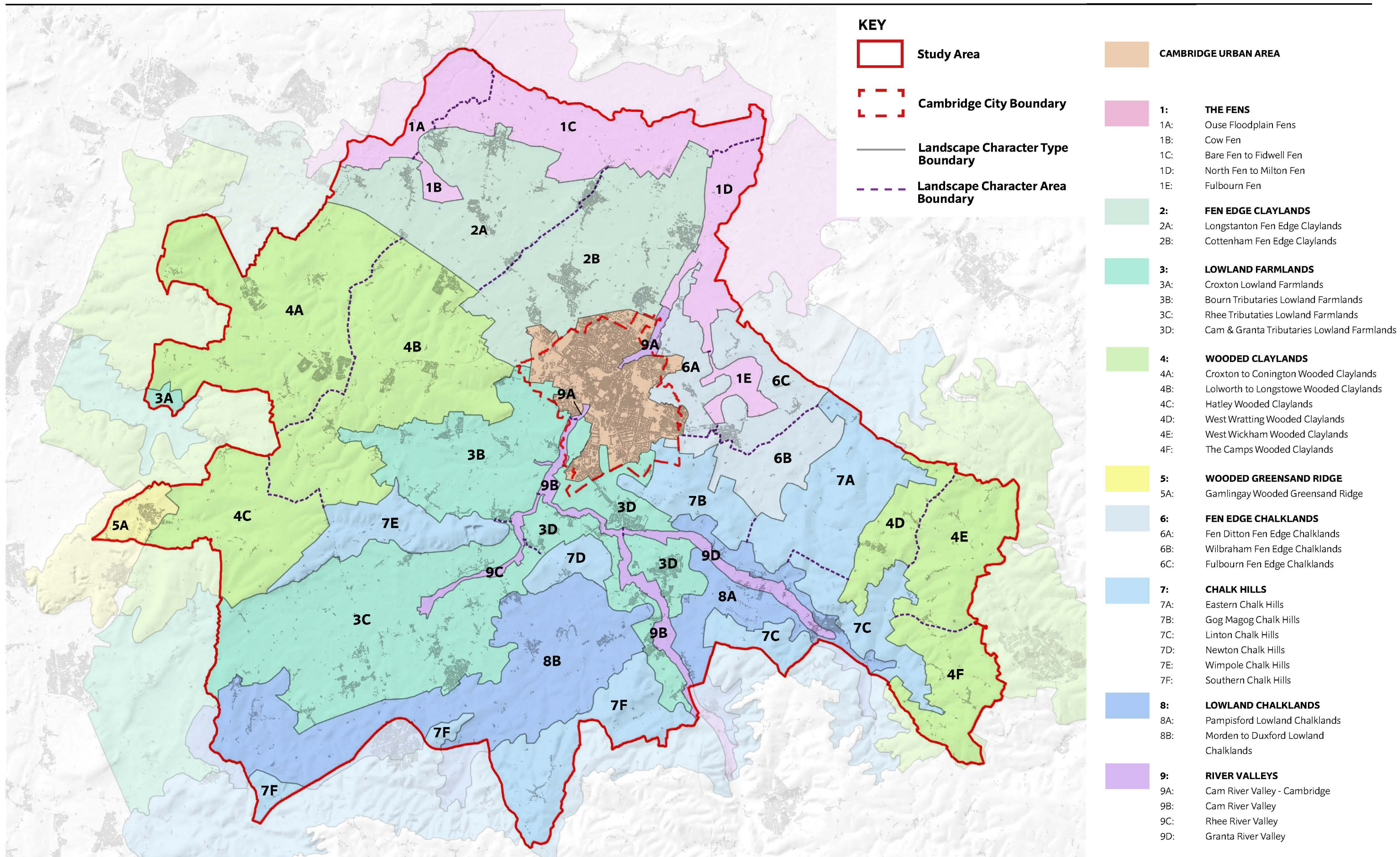
1.4.1 A glossary of terms can be found in **Appendix 6**.

4.0 CHARACTER OF THE GREATER CAMBRIDGE LANDSCAPE

Following an overview of the Greater Cambridge landscape classification, this chapter sets out detailed descriptions of the Landscape Character Types and component Landscape Character Areas with recommended guidelines for managing landscape change.

4.1 Landscape Classification

- 4.1.1 The physical and cultural influences described in the previous chapter have combined to create the unique and distinctive character of the Greater Cambridge landscape.
- 4.1.2 The area is characterised by a diversity of landscapes and these variations and differences are represented by nine generic **Landscape Character Types**. Each of the Landscape Character Types has a distinct and homogeneous character that shares broadly similar patterns of physical and cultural attributes in terms of geology, topography, drainage patterns, land cover, ecology and historic evolution. They may occur repeatedly in the Study Area, or in just one place.
- 4.1.3 The Landscape Character Types have been further sub-divided into **Landscape Character Areas**, which are unique, individual geographical areas that share common characteristics with other areas of the same type. Each Landscape Character Area has a distinct and recognisable local identity and sense of place.
- 4.1.4 The Greater Cambridge landscape classification is illustrated on **Figure 4.1** and outlined in **Table 4.1**.
- 4.1.5 The Landscape Character Types and Landscape Character Areas shown on **Figure 4.1** has been prepared in a Geographic Information System (GIS) with mapping undertaken at a scale of 1:25,000. It should however be noted that there are subtle differences between and within the individual types and areas. The boundaries illustrated therefore usually indicate transitions rather than marked changes on the ground.
- 4.1.6 Full details of the methodology used to undertake the Greater Cambridge Landscape Character Assessment can be found in **Appendix 1**.
- 4.1.7 The relationship of the Greater Cambridge landscape classification to Landscape Character Assessments in neighbouring areas is set out in **Appendix 2**.
- 4.1.8 Field survey sheets for each Landscape Character Area are included in **Appendix 4**. These provide detailed information on distinctive landscape features, aesthetic factors, perceptual/experiential factors, distinctive views, key characteristics, evidence of landscape changes and landscape condition.



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Table 4.1 - The Greater Cambridge Landscape Classification

Landscape Character Types	Landscape Character Areas
1. The Fens	1A: Ouse Floodplain Fens 1B: Cow Fen 1C: Bare Fen to Fidwell Fen 1D: North Fen to Milton Fen 1E: Fulbourn Fen
2. Fen Edge Claylands	2A: Longstanton Fen Edge Claylands 2B: Cottenham Fen Edge Claylands
3. Lowland Farmlands	3A: Croxton Lowland Farmlands 3B: Bourn Tributaries Lowland Farmlands 3C: Rhee Tributaries Lowland Farmlands 3D: Cam & Granta Tributaries Lowland Farmlands
4. Wooded Claylands	4A: Croxton to Conington Wooded Claylands 4B: Lolworth to Longstowe Wooded Claylands 4C: Hatley Wooded Claylands 4D: West Wrating Wooded Claylands 4E: West Wickham Wooded Claylands 4F: The Camps Wooded Claylands
5. Wooded Greensand Ridge	5A: Gamlingay Wooded Greensand Ridge
6. Fen Edge Chalklands	6A: Fen Ditton Fen Edge Chalklands 6B: Wilbraham Fen Edge Chalklands 6C: Fulbourn Fen Edge Chalklands
7. Chalk Hills	7A: Eastern Chalk Hills 7B: Gog Magog Chalk Hills 7C: Linton Chalk Hills 7D: Newton Chalk Hills 7E: Wimpole Chalk Hills 7F: Southern Chalk Hills
8. Lowland Chalklands	8A: Pampisford Lowland Chalklands 8B: Morden to Duxford Lowland Chalklands
9. River Valleys	9A: Cam River Valley – Cambridge 9B: Cam River Valley 9C: Rhee River Valley 9D: Granta River Valley

4.2 Evaluation of the Landscape

Landscape Condition and Strength of Character

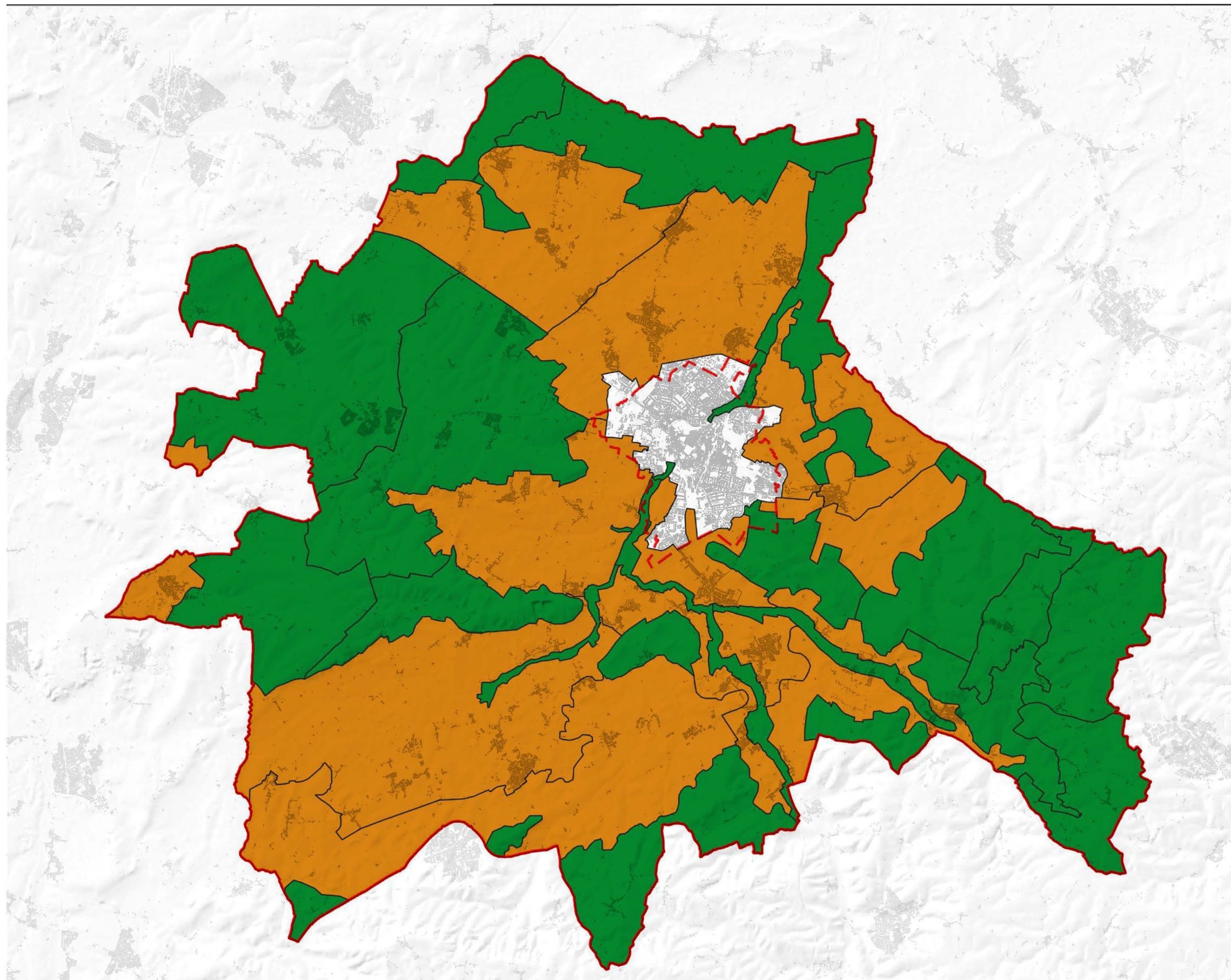
- 4.2.1 The condition of the Greater Cambridge landscape evaluated by Landscape Character Type is shown in **Table 4.2** and mapped on **Figure 4.2** based on judgements about how the condition and intactness of the different components create a perception of the overall condition of the landscape. Using professional judgement, landscape condition is defined on a three-point scale of **poor**, **moderate** or **good**, as evaluated within the character descriptions in **Section 4.7**.
- 4.2.2 The strength of character of the Greater Cambridge landscape evaluated by Landscape Character Type is shown in **Table 4.2** and mapped on **Figure 4.3** based on the combination of individual components and their contribution to landscape character. Strength of character is connected to distinctiveness and landscape integrity. It is based on judgements about how distinct and recognisable the pattern of physical and cultural attributes is that defines the character of the landscape, and the sense of place that they evoke. Using professional judgement, strength of character is defined on a three-point scale of **weak**, **moderate** or **strong**, as evaluated within the character descriptions in **Section 4.7**.

Table 4.2 – Landscape Condition and Strength of Character

Landscape Character Types	Landscape Condition	Strength of Character
1. The Fens	Good	Strong
2. Fen Edge Claylands	Moderate	Moderate
3. Lowland Farmlands	Moderate	Moderate
4. Wooded Claylands	Good	Strong
5. Wooded Greensand Ridge	Moderate	Strong
6. Fen Edge Chalklands	Moderate	Moderate
7. Chalk Hills	Good	Strong
8. Lowland Chalklands	Moderate	Moderate
9. River Valleys	Good	Strong

Key Landscape Sensitivities

- 4.2.3 The key landscape sensitivities of each Landscape Character Type and Landscape Character Area are evaluated within the character descriptions in **Section 4.7**. These provide a framework for informing landscape sensitivity assessments of potential changes from specific development types or land management practices.



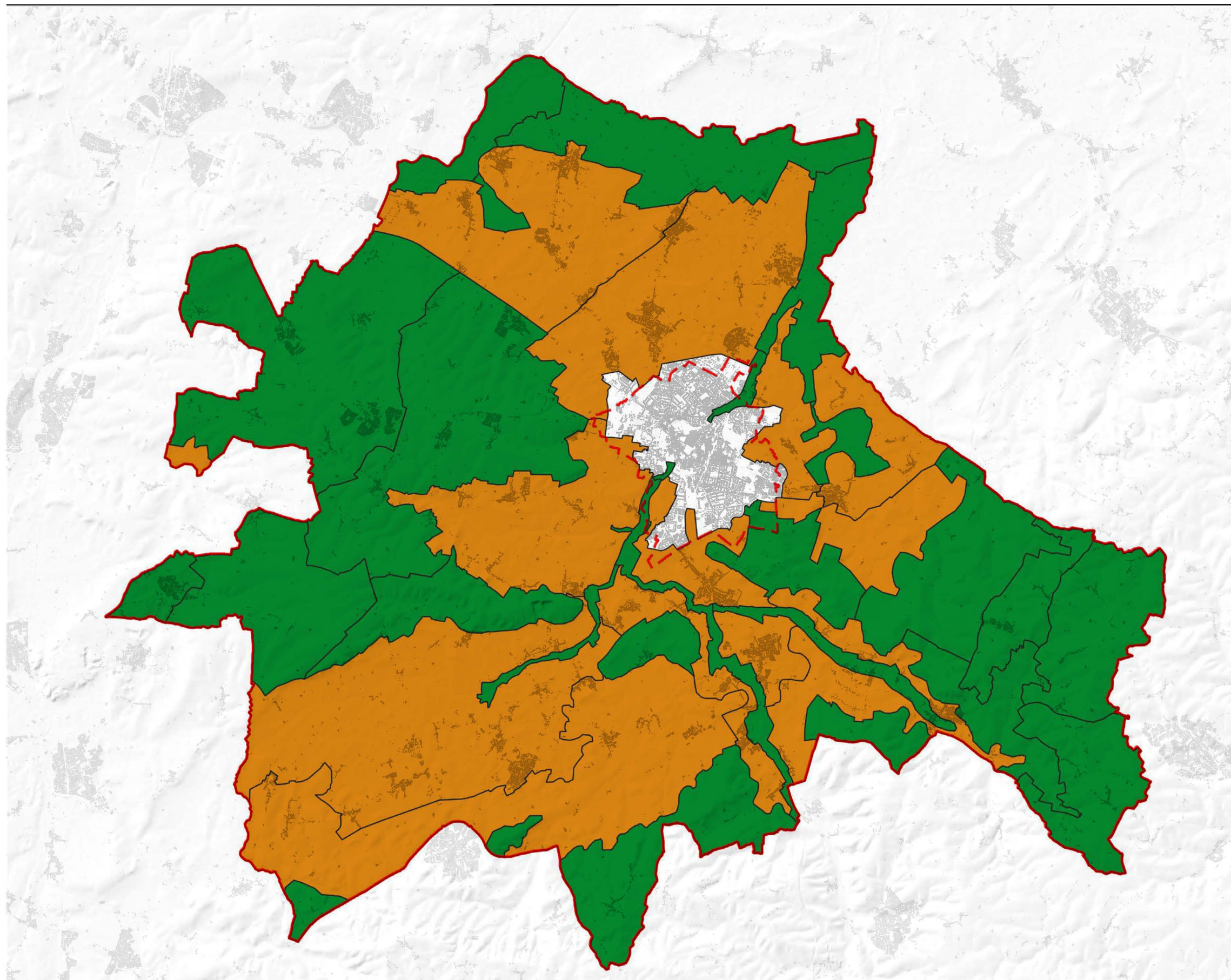
KEY

- Greater Cambridge Study Area
- Cambridge City Boundary

Condition of Landscape Character Types
(see Figure 4.1):

- Good
- Moderate

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KEY

Greater Cambridge Study Area
 Cambridge City Boundary

Strength of Character of Landscape Character Types (see Figure 4.1):

Strong
 Moderate

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4.3 Landscape Management Objectives

4.3.1 Taking into account the condition of the landscape and its strength of character, using professional judgement, recommended objectives for managing the Greater Cambridge landscape have been identified for each Landscape Character Type within the character descriptions in **Section 4.7**. In overview, the objectives for each Landscape Character Type are shown on **Figure 4.4** and summarised in **Table 4.3**.

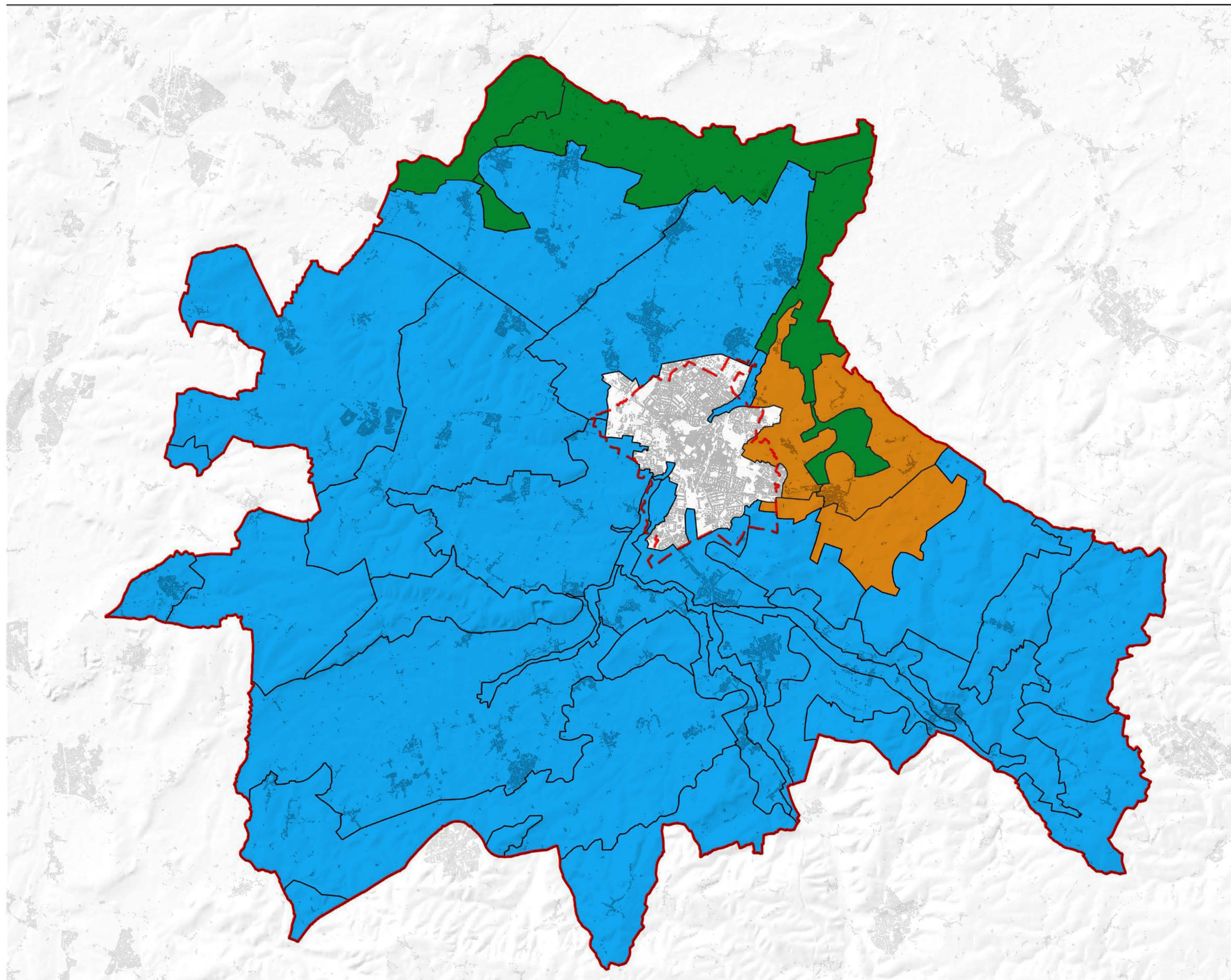
Table 4.3 – Landscape Management Objectives

Landscape Character Types	Landscape Management Objective		
	Conserve	Enhance	Restore
1. The Fens	✓		
2. Fen Edge Claylands	✓	✓	
3. Lowland Farmlands	✓	✓	
4. Wooded Claylands	✓	✓	
5. Wooded Greensand Ridge	✓	✓	
6. Fen Edge Chalklands		✓	✓
7. Chalk Hills	✓	✓	
8. Lowland Chalklands	✓	✓	
9. River Valleys	✓	✓	

4.3.2 The objectives represent different management strategies ranging from conservation of the current landscape in areas of strong character and good condition, to encouraging positive change in landscapes where the character is generally weaker and in poorer condition through enhancement, restoration or creation - as defined below:

- **Conserve:** Landscapes of strong character in good condition and therefore judged to be of high quality where emphasis should be on conservation of existing character and of particular features that contribute to this character. The aim should be to continue the current landscape management regimes and adopt best practice approaches. Great care will need to be taken in the introduction of new characteristics.
- **Enhance:** Landscapes of strong/moderate character in good/moderate condition where the emphasis should be on enhancing existing character. This may include improvements to current landscape management regimes and adopting best practice.
- **Restore:** Landscapes of moderate character in moderate condition where the emphasis should be on restoring elements of historic, ecological and amenity value that have been lost or declined. This may include re-introduction of landscape elements/features in line with best practice.

4.3.3 In some cases, landscape management objectives have been combined to reflect the individual context and requirements of a specific Landscape Character Type. The recommended management objectives are not intended to be prescriptive, and local circumstances should be taken into consideration in developing proposals for landscape change.



KEY

 Greater Cambridge Study Area

 Cambridge City Boundary

Management Objectives for Landscape Character Types (see Figure 4.1):

 Conserve

 Conserve & Enhance

 Enhance & Restore

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- 4.3.4 Whilst not applicable at a Landscape Character Type level, for specific places at a more detailed scale the appropriate landscape management objective may be 'create'. Where the strength of landscape character is weak and its condition is poor, and is not highly valued, the emphasis should be creating a new and different landscape, or accelerating change towards a new character, with positive benefits for people and the environment. This should be proactive rather than reactive, and it may be appropriate to develop plans or strategies in consultation with stakeholders to determine appropriate new character.

4.4 Landscape Guidelines

- 4.4.1 Recommended guidance on landscape management and integrating development into the landscape is provided within the Landscape Character Type and Landscape Character Area Descriptions in **Section 4.7** to help positively shape proposals and decisions in line with the overall landscape management strategy identified for each Landscape Character Type.
- 4.4.2 The aim of the guidelines is to ensure that those landscape features and characteristics identified as making a particular contribution to Greater Cambridge's local distinctiveness and sense of place are appropriately protected, managed and enhanced.
- 4.4.3 The landscape guidelines are not intended to be prescriptive, and local circumstances should be taken into consideration in proposals for landscape change.

4.5 Principles for Managing Positive Landscape Change

- 4.5.1 With regards to the design of development and land management proposals, it is recommended that the following overarching principles for managing positive landscape change are considered. In all cases, the character information about the Greater Cambridge landscape (see **Section 4.7**), South Cambridgeshire's rural villages (see **Chapter 5**) and the environs of Cambridge (see **Chapter 6**) should be used to inform proposals and decision making:
- As the local planning authorities, the Councils should use the relevant character information to assist in the development management process. Development assessed as having potential to have a significant adverse effect on valued characteristics may be a candidate for refusal or require planning conditions that ensure important features/qualities are not diminished

- Avoid a standardised “anywhere” approach to design by using the relevant character information to inform the process of negotiation between planning officers and developers, to support appropriate high-quality design and place making. The Councils should be proactive in helping developers better understand how their proposals can be designed to reflect and enhance local landscape character. For example, officers may use the relevant character information to highlight to developers the characteristic features of the landscape, villages and townscape that should be considered for enhancement, restoration or conservation etc, and identify specific criteria and landscape considerations that a development proposal should take account of prior to approval and subsequently be assessed against
- The Councils should, where appropriate, encourage developers to use local building materials, building styles, native species which are diverse and resilient in the face of climate change, and other characteristic features and elements of a particular landscape to strengthen local distinctiveness
- Developers and other agents for change should be encouraged to adopt creative solutions to conserving and/or enhancing local landscape, village and townscape character, and identify the means by which development and land management proposals might be successfully integrated into the existing landscape character. Consideration should be given to the scale of development, layout and relationship to existing development and field patterns. In addition to informing new development on greenfield sites, the relevant character information should also be used to help identify opportunities for creating new landscapes and restoring habitats on previously developed brownfield sites that offer limited landscape features for new development to refer to
- The Councils should consider the cumulative effects of small-scale development and incremental change on landscape character. Incremental changes can gradually erode landscape character and local distinctiveness if the wider context of a development or land management initiative is not considered. The character information about the Greater Cambridge Landscape in **Section 4.7** highlights key characteristics such as distinctive field patterns, features and settlement patterns that are particularly susceptible to incremental change. This information can also be used, alongside other place-specific guidance such as Village Design Guides and Neighbourhood Plans (see **Chapter 5**), to help identify the means by which such developments may be successfully incorporated into the landscape and enhance particular characteristics

- Developers should be encouraged to use the relevant character information as a baseline resource for informing Landscape & Visual Impact Assessments of development proposals in accordance with the latest edition of the Guidelines for Landscape & Visual Impact Assessment. The impact of development on key landscape features and characteristics should be assessed and where impacts are found to occur, appropriate scheme modification or mitigation measures should be required to avoid, reduce or compensate for potential adverse impacts

4.6 Landscape Planning Policy Recommendations

- 4.6.1 It is recommended that the Councils undertake a review of the current approaches to landscape protection in their adopted Local Plans in light of the Government's National Planning Policy Framework and Planning Practice Guidance highlighted in **Section 2.5**.
- 4.6.2 In line with the approach taken by the European Landscape Convention, Natural England and recent planning appeal decisions, it is considered that all landscapes have some degree of value and therefore not only landscapes protected by legislation or those which are locally designated in a development plan can be "valued landscapes".
- 4.6.3 The Councils may wish to consider adopting either a "local landscape designations approach" or a "character-based approach" for meeting their overall objective with respect to landscape policy for protecting and enhancing the character, diversity and natural beauty of all landscapes in Greater Cambridge.
- 4.6.4 Adopting a character-based approach, supported by the Landscape Character Assessment, would require a robust and clearly justified overarching landscape policy for the entire Local Plan area, rather than just for areas protected by local landscape designations.
- 4.6.5 It is recommended that this overarching landscape policy should:
- Highlight the importance of protecting and enhancing the character, diversity and natural beauty of all landscapes in Greater Cambridge
 - Emphasise, wherever possible, opportunities to introduce new landscape features to compensate for loss or degradation elsewhere as a result of a proposal. For example, this might include ensuring that where a particular habitat or area of planting is lost, habitat creation or planting is undertaken at a suitable location close by to offset the loss and in addition provide a net environmental gain
 - Seek to ensure that change is appropriate to the relevant Landscape Character Type and Landscape Character Area, and the features and characteristics that define their local distinctiveness. Where relevant, the experiential and perceptual aspects of landscape character, such as a sense of tranquility, remoteness and wildness, should also be considered

- 4.6.6 The landscape policy should make reference to the Greater Cambridge Landscape Character Assessment, which provides character information and guidelines that can be used to help development proposals respond positively to the distinctive character and valued qualities of the Greater Cambridge landscape, South Cambridgeshire's rural villages and the environs of Cambridge.
- 4.6.7 With regards to criteria-based policies for site allocations in the Local Plan, it is recommended that these include a requirement to provide strategic landscape mitigation and enhancement measures for integrating new development into the surrounding landscape. The site allocation policies should be informed and supported by the relevant character information and associated guidance identified in the Greater Cambridge Landscape Character Assessment, taking into account the principles highlighted in **Section 4.5** as appropriate and the Greater Cambridge Green Infrastructure Opportunity Mapping Study.

4.7 Landscape Character Descriptions

4.7.1 The landscape descriptions set out in this chapter are structured as outlined below:

Landscape Character Types

Location plan and illustrative photograph.

Description:

- Key Characteristics
- Physical Influences
- Biodiversity
- Historic Landscape Character
- Settlement Form and Built Character
- Access to the Landscape

Evaluation:

- Key Landscape Features
- Forces for Change
- Condition
- Strength of Character
- Key Landscape Sensitivities

Landscape Guidelines:

- Guidance for Landscape Management
- Guidance for Integrating Development into the Landscape

Landscape Character Areas

Map, location plan and illustrative photographs.

Description:

- Key Characteristics
- Character Description

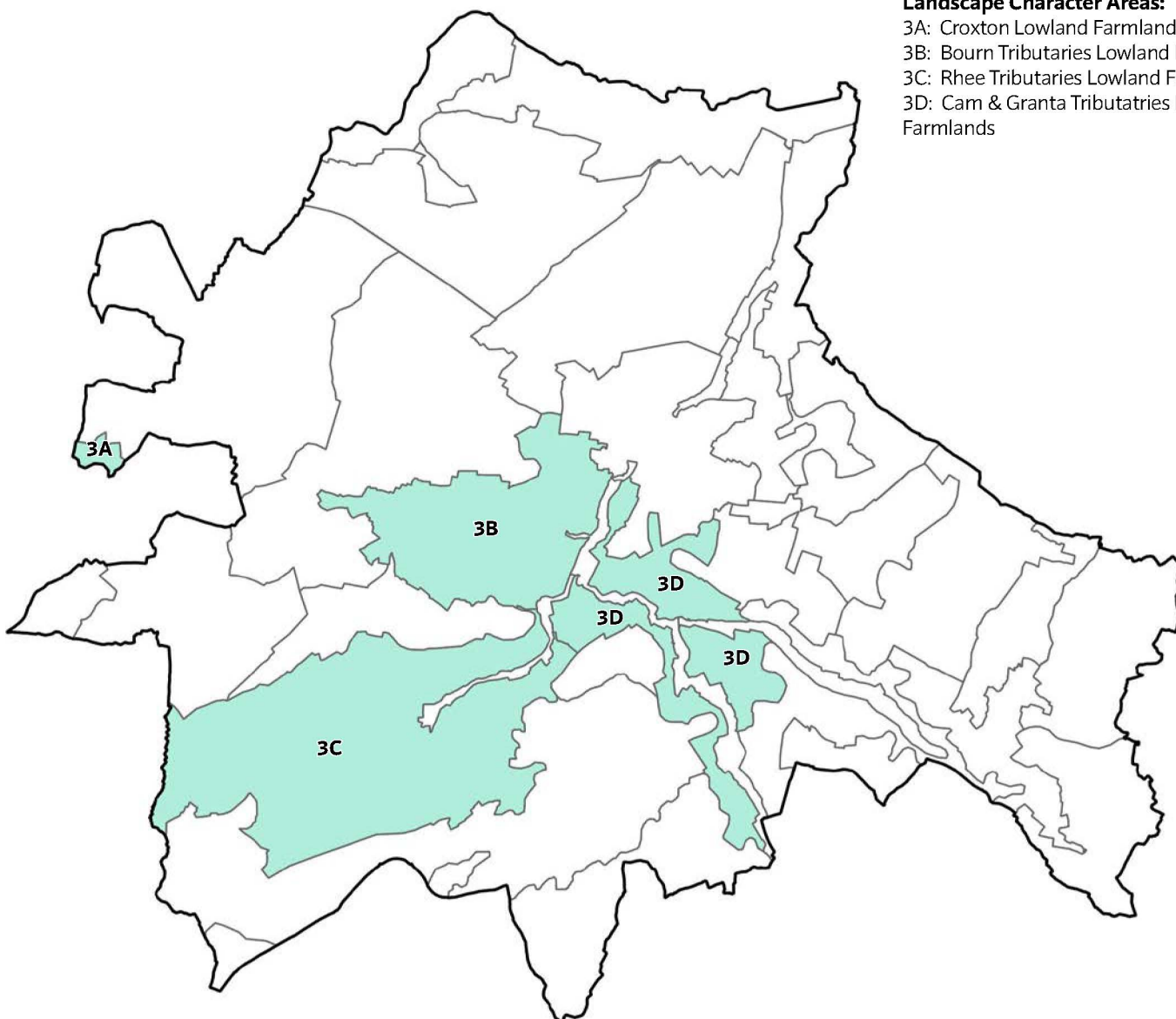
Evaluation:

- Specific Landscape Sensitivities
- Specific Landscape Guidelines

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER TYPE 3: LOWLAND FARMLANDS

Landscape Character Areas:

- 3A: Croxton Lowland Farmlands
- 3B: Bourn Tributaries Lowland Farmlands
- 3C: Rhee Tributaries Lowland Farmlands
- 3D: Cam & Granta Tributaries Lowland Farmlands



LANDSCAPE CHARACTER TYPE 3: LOWLAND FARMLANDS

The Lowland Farmlands Landscape Character Type (LCT) is a gently undulating, intensively farmed arable landscape encompassing densely settled, wide, flat river valleys and their tributaries.

Description

Key Characteristics

- Low-lying, gently rolling topography crossed by river corridors and drained by small streams
- Open character and often extensive views
- Productive, intensively farmed, predominantly arable landscape that has experienced significant modification during the 20th century, resulting in amalgamation of fields
- Generally sparse woodland cover and fragmented network of hedge boundaries
- Woodland and traditional orchards often define the edge of settlements
- Scattered Medieval moated sites and stone churches are characteristic features
- A well settled landscape with a relatively dense rural settlement pattern comprising large and small villages and outlying farmsteads

Physical Influences

The topography of this LCT is quite varied, with a general range from c.10m AOD alongside the River Valleys to c.35m-40m AOD as the land begins to rise into the Wooded Claylands landscape to the north and west and the Lowland Chalklands to the south.

The underlying geology of the LCT is principally Gault Clay, comprising of Jurassic and Cretaceous clay sediments. This is overlain in places by Quaternary glacial and fluvial deposits including boulder clay or till. This transitions to chalk overlain with alluvium silt, clay, sand and gravel through the south of the LCT.

The soils of the LCT vary with the underlying geology, with the most fertile, lime-rich, loamy and clayey soils in the north. Soils become more free-draining and are lime-rich and loamy in the south of the LCT, with moderate levels of fertility.

The landscape is drained by small streams, which are often visually indistinct. The more substantial watercourses, such as Bourn Brook and the River Cam/Rhee are tree-lined along much of their courses and more identifiable through the lower-lying landform.

Biodiversity

This is a productive, intensively farmed, agricultural landscape in which arable land use predominates with some areas of pasture and orchards. There are patches of wet woodland and wet grassland along watercourses.

There are a small number of statutory nature designations within the Lowland Farmlands, including Kingston Amenity Area Local Nature Reserve and a handful of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) including Fowlmere Watercress Beds, former pits and meadow sites.

There are also a number of County Wildlife Sites (CWS) within the Lowland Farmlands, including the courses of the River Cam/Rhee and Bourn Brook and several tributary streams. Some of the CWS are also ancient woodland and nature reserves.

Priority Habitats within the Lowland Farmlands include scattered deciduous woodland; small patches of good quality semi-improved grassland, lowland calcareous grassland, lowland meadows and lowland fens; and scattered traditional orchard particularly in proximity to settlements.

Tree cover is characterised by groups of trees around settlements and farmsteads and scattered, small blocks of mixed woodland across the undulating landform. Fields and roadsides are occasionally bound by hedges that are generally low and well-trimmed and often gappy. Treed watercourses are distinctive features through the lower-lying landform. Trees around settlement edges contribute to localised, more intimate landscape scale and a large number of these are protected by Tree Preservation Orders (TPO).

Historic Landscape Character

Historically, dense woodland and heavy soils deterred prehistoric farmers. The majority of the existing settlements had been founded by Medieval times.

There are a number of moated sites through the Lowland Farmlands, which were established to make use of the water-retentive soils that gave protection to homesteads within the newly settled landscape. There is also evidence of medieval agricultural systems visible in the landscape through the survival of ridge and furrow in places.

Field systems include a mix of rectilinear and sinuous patterns, reflecting the process of planned surveyor enclosure from common fields. All fieldscapes have experienced significant modification during the 20th century, which has resulted in removal of hedgerows and amalgamation of fields.

The present landscape character derives from the scattering of historic, small settlements and farmsteads, interspersed with farm woodlands. The villages have generally strong, historic, linear form with rows of cottages and a few, larger farmsteads. Larger settlements occur in the east of the LCT, with their origins at the crossing points of the river and in proximity to historic communications routes.

The Lowland Farmlands contain a variety of historic sites and features. The route of Ermine Street Roman Road (now A1198) is a long, straight route that passes through this LCT; evidenced by cropmarks, parish boundaries and archaeological investigations in various locations along it.

There are several designated historic sites within the Lowland Farmlands, including registered parklands and Scheduled Monuments. A number of the settlements have designated Conservation Areas that identify the historic core and contain a variety of listed buildings. There are several designated and undesignated moated sites in the southwest of the LCT.

Settlement Form and Built Character

This is a well settled landscape that is crossed by the major river corridors. There is a relatively dense, largely nucleated, rural settlement pattern composed of large and small villages, and outlying farmsteads.

The historic villages are mostly linear in form, with modern infilling and expansion evident, particularly in the east of the LCT where they have developed along key routes into Cambridge. In the west of the LCT there are distinctive lines of smaller villages, along the base of the Wimpole Chalk Hills to the south and Wooded Claylands to the north.

The main building materials through the Lowland Farmlands include Gault Clay, brick, clay tile, render and thatch. Church spires and towers are prominent features on the skylines through the Lowland Farmlands.

The relatively high density of settlement, intensive agriculture and major transport routes that pass through it mean that it is often a busy, rural landscape. The western part of the LCT is generally less populated, with smaller isolated villages. Settlement size increases east, towards Cambridge and villages are more closely located and have grown to meet commuter demand.

Access to the Landscape

The Lowland Farmlands are crossed by a number of major roads, linking from surrounding towns, through villages into Cambridge from the south, west and southwest. The M11 cuts through the east of the area, linking southeast between Cambridge and London. The A1198 follows a long, straight route from Huntingdon through the Lowland Farmlands to Royston and beyond the District, along the line of Ermine Street Roman Road.

Between the major roads is a range of B- and minor roads that connect between the various village settlements and provide a robust network across the lowland landscape. This is a well-connected landscape, evidenced by the settled character of the Lowland Farmlands.

There are a large number of Public Rights of Way through this landscape, linking between settlements, through parklands and across the river valleys. These routes include stretches of the Harcamlow Way long distance path that passes through the west of the LCT, into Wimpole Park.

There are a small number of visitor sites and attractions within this LCT, including nature reserves, wildlife park, campsites and Trumpington Meadows Country Park on the southwest edge of Cambridge.

Evaluation

Key Landscape Features

- Low-lying, gently rolling, rural landscape
- Scattered, small woodlands often focussed on the edges of the village settlements and in proximity to watercourses
- Characteristic stone churches and scattered Medieval moated sites within and in proximity to the village settlements
- A well settled landscape comprising of large and small villages and outlying farmsteads connected by major and minor roads

Forces for Change

- Intensive arable agriculture has resulted in amalgamation of fields and removal of hedgerows and other key habitats between the village settlements. Changes in agri-environmental schemes and agricultural subsidies could result in further fragmentation of ecological networks and conversion/expansion of farmsteads
- Further loss of traditional orchards and small-scale field systems in proximity to the traditional settlements, through development expansion, change of land use and intensification and modernisation of farming practices
- Loss and fragmentation of woodland and hedge boundaries that would result in change in visual and ecological character
- Climate change and land use change could lead to increased risk of flooding, which would alter the ecological networks, resulting in shift in species composition and requiring alterations in management
- Development pressures, particularly for new housing which would affect the rural character of the existing village settlements and could result in settlements appearing to coalesce along main transport routes
- Increase in farm sizes and larger farm units that would be prominent in the landscape

Condition

The Lowland Farmlands is an intensively farmed LCT. It maintains a tranquil and rural character due to the dispersed hierarchy of settlements from large villages to outlying farmsteads. Scattered small scale woodlands are a distinctive feature that have lost some connectivity through changes in land use. The overall condition of the landscape is perceived to be **moderate**.

Strength of Character

This is an intensively farmed, often busy rural landscape with areas of tranquillity away from major transport routes. The landscape is judged to be of **moderate** strength of character with few distinguishing features. Moated sites and small, scattered woodlands are particular features of this landscape, often located within and around the edges of the village settlements. Modern expansion of the villages has been limited across much of this LCT, with some sprawl taking place along major transport routes to the south of Cambridge.

Key Landscape Sensitivities

- Rural tranquillity
- Hierarchy of water courses that provide valuable networks of wetland habitat
- Scattered pattern of small woodlands
- Surviving Medieval moated sites
- Dispersed, rural settlement pattern

Landscape Guidelines

The overall management objective for the Lowland Farmlands LCT is to **conserve** the tranquil, rural landscape with its network of scattered small woodlands, surviving moated sites and dispersed pattern of rural villages and to strengthen its character through measures to minimise the urbanising influence of large villages, new settlement and transport routes. **Enhancements** to woodland and linking vegetation features should also be encouraged to retain or enhance biodiversity and visual character.

Guidance for Landscape Management

- Manage the agricultural landscape and soils both for production and opportunities to improve biodiversity
- Conserve and enhance existing watercourses to enhance the ecological value of the farmed landscape
- Conserve areas of grazing marsh, and scattered deciduous woodland and orchards of high ecological value
- Conserve and enhance existing hedgerows and consider opportunities for re-planting hedgerows where these have been lost/become fragmented
- Protect the sites and features of archaeological and historic interest
- Encourage opportunities to expand and link woodland, hedgerows and other semi-natural habitats to benefit biodiversity and managing key views across the rural landscape

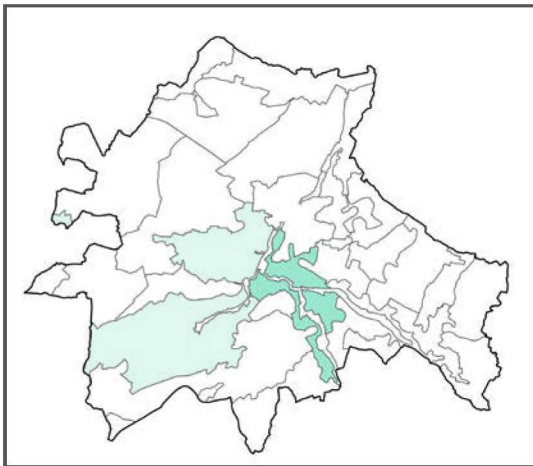
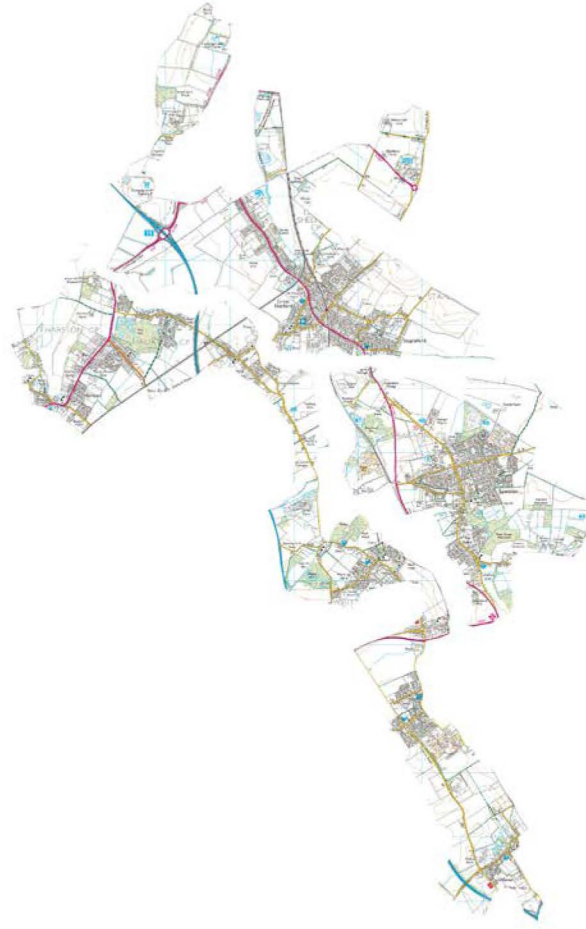
Guidance for Integrating Development into the Landscape

- Conserve the historic villages through avoidance of ribbon development and coalescence with nearby settlement
- Manage the scale, siting and design of settlement expansion to avoid incongruous development in the rural landscape
- Maintain the distinctive settlement pattern of the area and its local context
- Ensure density and pattern of new developments reflect that of existing villages and hamlets
- Avoid backland and cul-de-sac developments where possible
- Ensure buildings are arranged in continuous frontages within village cores and are arranged in loose knit patterns facing the street on more peripheral sites
- Ensure new developments are integrated with sufficient space for garden and street tree planting where applicable
- Enhance village gateways and, where appropriate, consider provision of appropriate planting on village approaches
- Take opportunities to create new village greens and/or wildlife areas within new developments.
- Ensure new developments integrate/connect with existing Public Rights of Way (PROW) within development layout
- Ensure new developments reflect the form, scale and proportions of the existing vernacular buildings of the area and pick up on traditional local building styles, height, materials, colours and textures
- Retain hedges along roads
- Enclose boundaries facing the street on village peripheries with hedge and tree planting
- Avoid the use of standardised and intrusive urban materials, street furniture, lighting and signage as part of traffic calming measures wherever appropriate
- Ensure new agricultural buildings, such as large storage sheds, are sited and designed to reduce their apparent mass, minimising their impact on the wider landscape by the appropriate use of texture, colour and planting

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREAS

- **3A: Croxton Lowland Farmlands**
- **3B: Bourne Tributaries Lowland Farmlands**
- **3C: Rhee Tributaries Lowland Farmlands**
- **3D: Cam & Granta Tributaries Lowland Farmlands**

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA 3D: CAM & GRANTA TRIBUTARIES LOWLAND FARMLANDS



3D: CAM AND GRANTA TRIBUTARIES LOWLAND FARMLANDS LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA

Cam and Granta Tributaries Lowland Farmlands Landscape Character Area (LCA) is distinguished by its wooded appearance, which makes it more visually enclosed than the other Lowland Farmlands, and by the relatively built up and suburban character of its villages.

Description

Key Characteristics

- Wider floodplain of the River Cam or Rhee and River Cam or Granta
- Shelterbelts and scattered blocks of deciduous woodland including historic parkland at Sawston Hall provide visual enclosure
- Dense pattern of large commuter villages with a suburban character and industrial influences, eroding rural character
- Transport networks including railway and major road networks fragment the area
- Green corridor including Hobson's Park and the rising foothills of the Gog Magog Hills to the east contributes to the setting of Cambridge

The Cam and Granta Tributaries Lowland Farmlands LCA. It is a gently undulating, low lying area, occurring in three places surrounding the narrow River Valleys of the River Cam and River Rhee. It has high points of c. 40m AOD north of Ickleton and Stapleford, where the Gog Magog Hills start to rise to the east, and a low point of c. 10m AOD in Trumpington Meadows Country Park. The LCA contains a number of minor tributaries of the River Cam, Rhee and Granta, and Hobson's Brook, an engineered watercourse designed in the 17th century to bring fresh water into the centre of Cambridge. A number of former clay pits often include waterbodies surrounded by woodland that benefit biodiversity and recreation.

The predominant land cover comprises medium to large, generally rectangular fields in an irregular pattern with low trimmed, fragmented hedgerows and few trees. Occasional pockets of small-scale fields, including fragments of orchards, southeast of Sawston and East of Harston have a localised intimate character and visual enclosure. Shelterbelts and blocks of woodland throughout the LCA, including woodland associated with designed parkland at Sawston Hall, combine to create a wooded appearance and provide visual enclosure. Views across arable fields are short, towards treed horizons. Floodplain grazing marsh occasionally extends from LCA 9B: Cam River Valley, which combines with small fragments of lowland meadow, deciduous woodland and a pocket of calcareous grassland at Sawston Hall to add ecological variety to the landscape. In the north, a green corridor east of Hobson's Brook, which includes Hobson's Park Bird Reserve, provides an important contribution to the setting of the southern part of Cambridge, and a sense of separation between Trumpington and Addenbrooke's Hospital. It provides a tranquil contrast to the urban edge, and a link through the wider green corridor to the north to the centre of Cambridge via the E2 European Long Distance Route.

The LCA is fragmented by several key busy routes into Cambridge, including the A10 and A1201. Large villages which have developed along these routes are well suited for commuting to Cambridge and London, via the nearby M11 and the train line on the western side of the area. Villages generally have strong, historic linear form, though the majority, including Sawston, Shelford and Harston, have expanded through cluster or ribbon development, and this has led to a more suburban feel on the approaches to the city through this area. Once isolated farms tend to be on the edge of settlements, with large barns occasionally prominent on the edges. Industrial development on the northeastern edge of Sawston, south of Duxford, and along the river corridors combines with the large suburban villages and the busy major highways network to erode the rural character of the small-scale riverside location. Woodland within the landscape, and shelterbelts around settlements and industrial developments give an overall relatively enclosed character, increase the “greenness” of the landscape setting, and screen views. This restricts views towards built form, as well as more distant views to Cambridge.

Trumpington Meadows and Hobson’s Park are nature reserves, providing pockets of tranquility with a network of walking trails open to the public.

Evaluation

Specific Landscape Sensitivities

In addition to the generic landscape sensitivities for this landscape character type, the following sensitivities are specific to this character area:

- Green corridor including Hobson's Park which contributes to the setting of Cambridge
- Scattered blocks of deciduous woodland and shelterbelts providing visual enclosure
- Historic parkland at Sawston Hall

Specific Landscape Guidelines

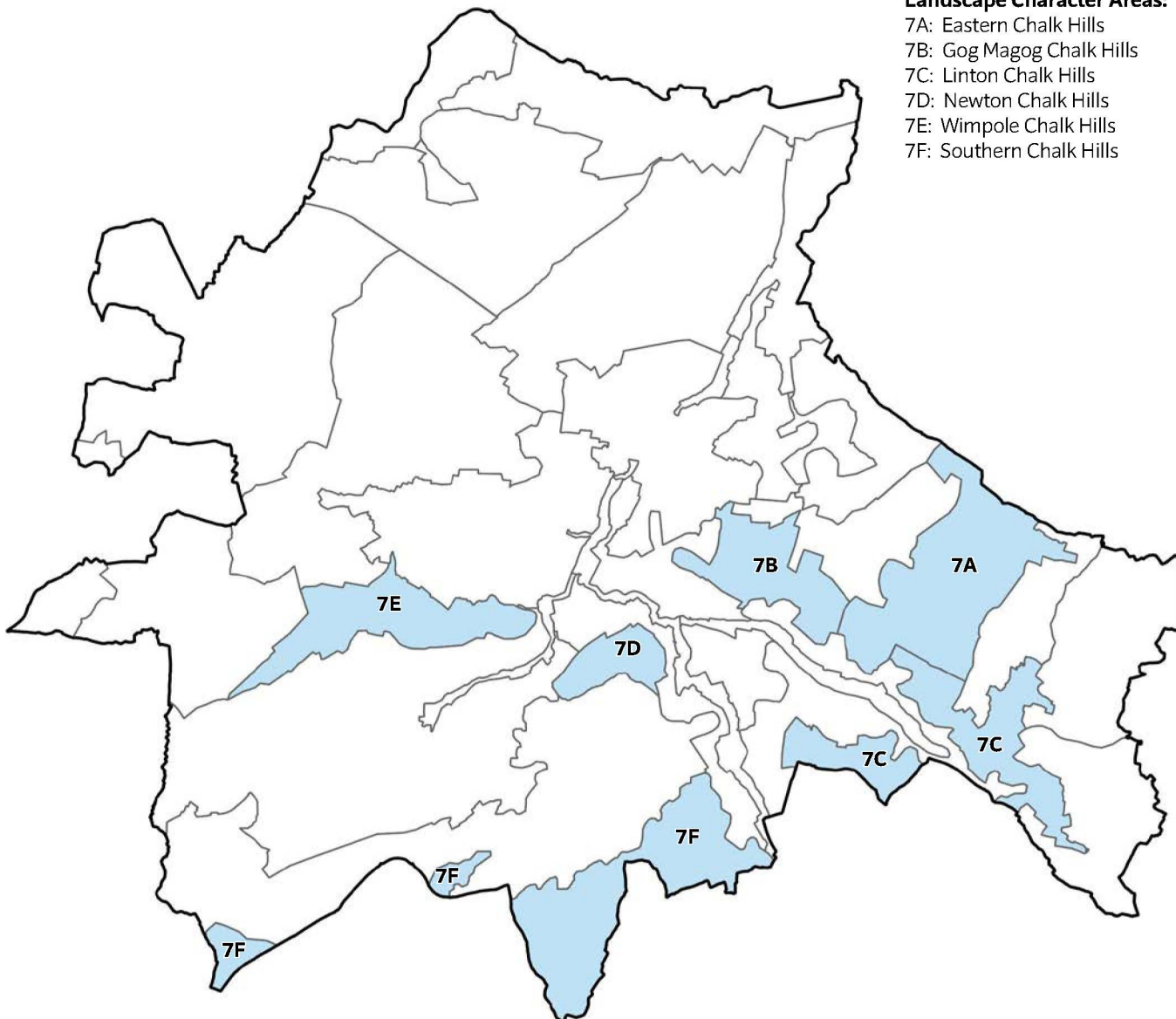
In addition to the generic landscape guidelines for this landscape character type, the following guidelines are specific to this character area:

- Ensure development enhances existing landscape features, creates links between villages and recreational assets and is in keeping with the rural character
- Conserve and manage woodland to maintain a visually enclosed character and separation
- Conserve parkland and enhance the specific features that give character and its context within the wider landscape in areas where it has been fragmented

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER TYPE 7: CHALK HILLS

Landscape Character Areas:

- 7A: Eastern Chalk Hills
- 7B: Gog Magog Chalk Hills
- 7C: Linton Chalk Hills
- 7D: Newton Chalk Hills
- 7E: Wimpole Chalk Hills
- 7F: Southern Chalk Hills



LANDSCAPE CHARACTER TYPE 7: CHALK HILLS

The Chalk Hills Landscape Character Type (LCT) forms an arc of prominent, elevated hills across the central and southern part of the Study Area. Chalk hills and scarps form distinctive rising landform beyond the Fen Edge Chalklands to the southeast of Cambridge, south of the Lowland Chalklands along the southern boundary of the District and north of the Lowland Farmlands in the west of the Study Area. There is also a small outlier across the Newton Hills to the south of Cambridge.

Description

Key Characteristics

- Locally prominent, elevated chalk hills with localised steep-sided slopes and incised by dry valleys that create a rounded, rolling landform
- Free-draining landscape with dry valleys that contain small, seasonal watercourses
- A predominantly arable landscape with some permanent pasture and woodland on steeper slopes
- Tree cover comprises scattered woodland across the rising landform and concentrated around historic parkland or estates
- Various historic features including ancient routes, earthworks and hill forts
- A generally unpopulated landscape, interspersed with large farms, granges, halls and cottages
- A simple and tranquil landscape with long distance panoramic views

Physical Influences

The Chalk Hills LCT forms the most elevated landform across the Study Area. It is part of a larger chalk band that extends to the northeast and southwest of Greater Cambridge. Within the Study Area, the Chalk Hills often rise dramatically from the lower lying Fen Edge landscapes and Lowland Farmlands and Chalklands. The landform rises through relatively steep slopes to form locally distinctive hills, slopes and ridgelines with high points of c.146m AOD in the south of the Study Area.

The LCT is defined by the underlying bands of Upper Cretaceous Chalk, which forms part of the East Anglian Chalk ridge that extends across the south of England. This is overlain with deposits of alluvial silt, sand gravel and till on the higher landform.

The overlying soils vary in respect of the underlying geology and terrain. They are predominantly free draining, lime rich and often loamy, which gives rise to fertile soils that support the dominant arable land use, with woodland and grassland habitats.

This is a free draining landscape with frequent dry valleys, some of which contain small, seasonal watercourses that are often not visually obvious.

Biodiversity

This is predominantly an arable landscape, with permanent pasture and woodland on steeper slopes. Ancient semi-natural beech, lime and sycamore woods are often situated on summits and slopes of the hills and form prominent and characteristic features in the open landscape.

Fragments of remnant chalk grassland is found through the Chalk Hills, including along road verges, in chalk pits and along sections of ancient linear dykes, Roman roads and disused railway lines.

The landscape is characterised by a medium to large scale, regular field pattern that is defined by hedgerows in places. Smaller scale, tighter field patterns occur around the dispersed villages, hamlets and country estates. These are well defined by hedge and tree boundaries.

There are a number of designated ecological sites, particularly within the east and west of the Chalk Hills. These include Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) along linear Roman features, at former pits/quarries and designated significant areas of chalk grassland. There are also a small number of, often linear County Wildlife Sites within the Chalk Hills landscape.

Priority habitats found across the Chalk Hills are primarily deciduous woodland and lowland calcareous grassland. Lowland mixed woodland is a predominant habitat type of the upland chalk landscapes in the Study Area.

Historic Landscape Character

The Chalk Hills are dominated by late enclosure of former arable fields and common grazing. There is evidence of other enclosures that appear to represent early piecemeal enclosure of common fields.

Historic features such as tracks and hill forts occur throughout this LCT. The Icknield Way passes through parts of the Chalk Hills and was historically an important highway. In the Iron Age it was controlled by Wandlebury hill fort in the north of this LCT. In Anglo-Saxon times it was controlled by the distinctive linear dykes that span the chalkland from the fen edge east of Cambridge to the wooded edge of the higher chalklands to the south/southeast of the Study Area.

There are a small number of designated historic sites across the Chalk Hills. Particularly notable are the Anglo-Saxon linear earthworks and the hill fort at Wandlebury. Wimpole Hall is a Grade I registered park and garden on the western edge of the Chalk Hills, which also contains scheduled earthworks of a medieval settlement.

Settlement Form and Built Character

This is generally a sparsely settled landscape, forming the transition between the upland villages along the wooded ridgeline with the Wooded Chalklands and the villages along the springline in the Lowland Chalklands.

Settlement predominantly comprises scattered large farms, granges, halls and cottages with occasional small villages and hamlets at the edge of the LCT. Farms and larger properties are often encompassed by woodland copses and shelter belts.

Traditional building materials used within the Chalk Hills include flint, clunch and pale brick.

Access to the Landscape

Whilst the Chalk Hills are transected by a number of major roads, there are very few links from them into the rural landscape. The A1198 and A603 cut through the Wimpole Chalk Hills, linking north to Huntingdon, northeast to Cambridge and south to Royston. The M11 passes through the edge of the Newton and Southern Chalk Hills and there are several A-road links through the eastern Chalk Hills landscape areas. These routes provide easy access for commuters and has influenced settlement particularly to the south of Cambridge.

Between these main routes there are a limited number of minor roads, which predominantly provide connections between village settlements, with discrete access tracks off to local farms.

There are clusters of Public Rights of Way (PROW), often associated with settlement areas and historic features such as the Roman Roads and Dykes. These include the historically important Ickniel Way and Harcamlow Way through Wimpole Park and along Fleam Dyke.

Recreation contributes to the character of parts of the Chalk Hills, particularly evident in the north of the LCT at Wimpole Park and at Wandlebury to the south of Cambridge. Southern parts of the Chalk Hills are less accessible, with more limited connectivity.

Evaluation

Key Landscape Features

- Locally prominent, elevated chalk hills with steep sided slopes in places that contrast with the low-lying landform across much of the Greater Cambridge area
- Scattered woodlands including ancient woodland, historic parkland and estate planting
- Sparsely populated, rural landscape with scattered farmsteads, granges, halls and cottages

Forces for Change

- Intensive arable agriculture has resulted in field expansion and removal of key habitats including hedgerows. Changes in agri-environmental schemes and agricultural subsidies could result in further fragmentation of ecological networks and conversion/expansion of farmsteads
- Intensification of agriculture could result in removal of woodland or change to woodland patterns that would be prominent in the upland landscape and reduce the sense of tranquillity
- Increased size of farms and particularly introduction of large farm buildings that would stand out in the large scale, often open, upland landscape
- Pressures for development across Greater Cambridge, which would alter the dispersed, rural settlement character of the Chalk Hills, and would also likely impact on views from the elevated Chalk Hills across the surrounding LCTs
- Climate change could reduce the groundwater levels and cause unpredictable periods of drought and flood that would alter the flow of the chalk streams and species composition of the Chalk Hills
- Development of land for wind turbines and solar power may alter the rural character

Condition

The landscape of the Chalk Hills has been altered by relatively recent changes in agriculture, with some scattered pasture remaining between swathes of large arable fields. The farmed landscape is punctuated by scattered blocks of woodland that break up the skyline of the ridges of the upland landscape. The rural qualities and particularly the historic settlement pattern is largely intact. The overall condition of the landscape is perceived to be **good**.

Strength of Character

The Chalk Hills is a relatively simple, uninterrupted and tranquil landscape with distinctive, long distance and often wide views across the lower lying landform of Greater Cambridge. There is some localised intrusion from major transport routes and expansion of settlement in adjoining LCTs that interrupt views in places. Overall, it is judged that the Chalk Hills LCT has a **strong** character.

Key Landscape Sensitivities

- Distinctive, elevated landscape that forms locally prominent hills and ridges that contrast with the surrounding, low lying landscape that is characteristic of Greater Cambridge
- Open, long distance, panoramic views across Greater Cambridge and beyond from this upland landscape
- Scattered woodland including ancient woodland on summits and slopes
- Network of historic routes and earthworks that contribute to the area's sense of place
- Wooded and undeveloped ridgelines are visually sensitive
- Tranquil, often remote rural landscape away from major roadways

Landscape Guidelines

The overall management objective for the Chalk Hills LCT is to **conserve** the tranquil, generally uninterrupted character of the rural landscape. This will include management and enhancement of features including woodlands, pasture and historic features associated with parklands and vernacular of villages. There is also opportunity for **enhancement** of chalk grasslands and creation of new woodland areas.

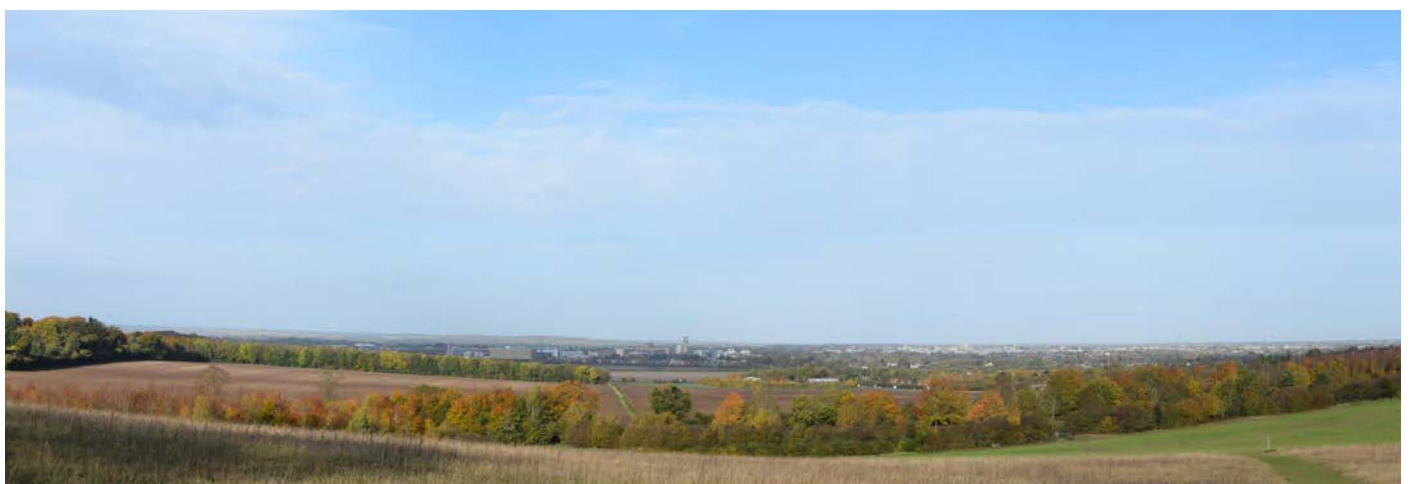
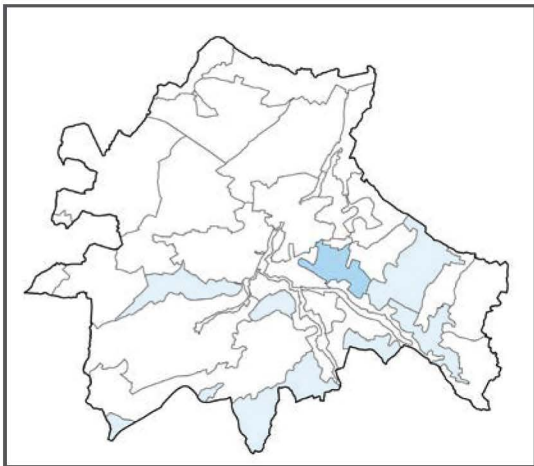
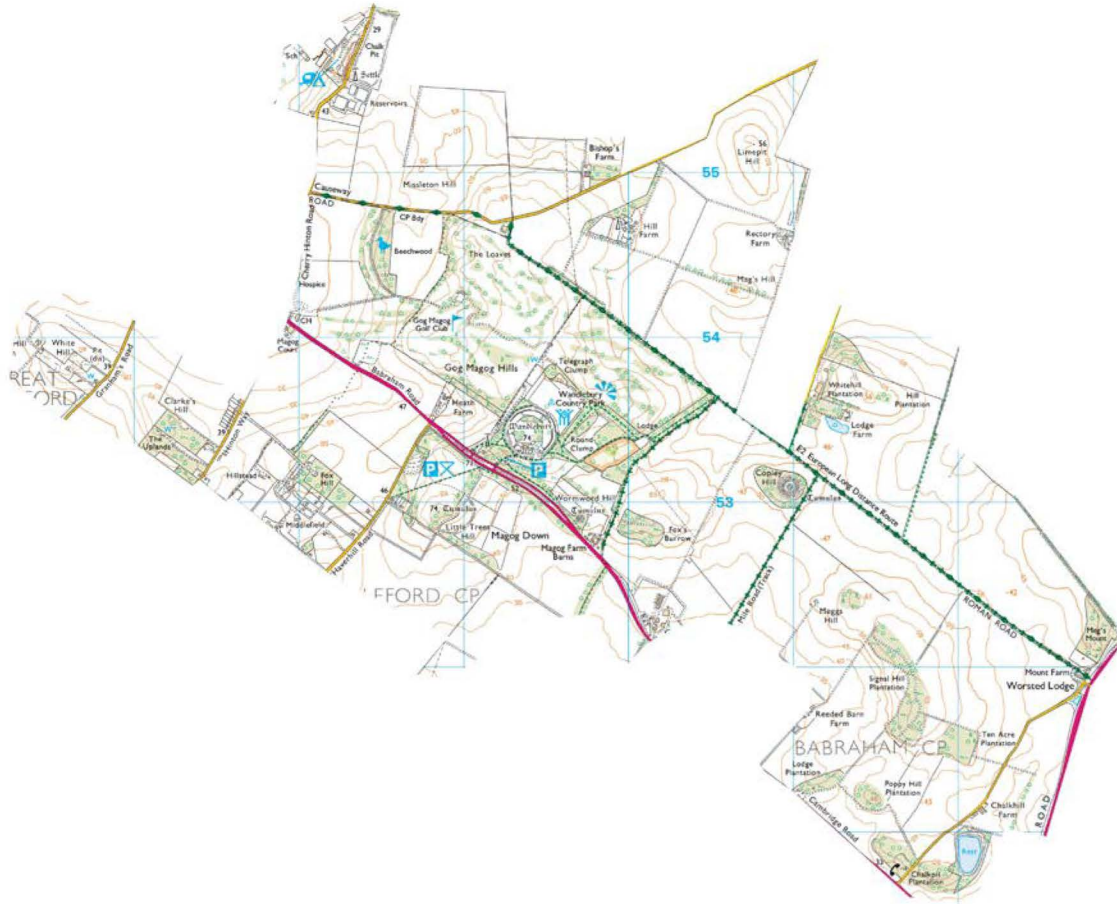
Guidance for Landscape Management

- Conserve and enhance areas of ancient woodland as important landscape, historical and nature conservation sites
- Enhance landscape character by planting new beech hangers and woodlands on carefully sites hill-tops/ridges and scarps to form focal points and reinforce the chalklands landscape
- Conserve and restore important areas of unimproved grassland as important landscape, historical and nature conservation sites
- Conserve the tranquil and largely uninterrupted rural character
- Manage the agricultural landscape and soils both for production and opportunities to improve biodiversity
- Conserve and enhance existing hedgerows and consider opportunities for re-planting hedgerows where these have been lost/become fragmented
- Protect the sites and features of archaeological and historic interest
- Encourage opportunities to expand and link woodland, hedgerows, grassland and other semi-natural habitats to benefit biodiversity whilst managing the open character of the landscape

Guidance for Integrating Development into the Landscape

- Maintain the distinctive settlement pattern of the area and its local context
- Ensure any extensions to springline villages are located along the bottom of steeper slopes and along lanes
- Maintain the linear, or rectilinear form of the settlements
- Ensure density and pattern of new developments reflect that of existing villages and hamlets
- Avoid backland and cul-de-sac developments where possible
- Ensure buildings are arranged in continuous frontages within village cores and are arranged in loose knit patterns facing the street on more peripheral sites
- Ensure new developments are integrated with sufficient space for garden and street tree planting where applicable
- Enhance village gateways and, where appropriate, appropriate planting on village approaches
- Take opportunities to create new village greens and/or wildlife areas within new developments
- Ensure new developments integrate/connect with existing Public Rights of Way (PROW) within development layout
- Ensure new developments reflect the form, scale and proportions of the existing vernacular buildings and pick up on traditional local building styles, height, materials, colours and textures
- Enclose boundaries facing the street in village cores by low, or high, flint walls with brick detailing, simple decorative railings, picket fencing or hedging
- Retain hedges along roads
- Enclose boundaries facing the street on village peripheries with hedge and tree planting
- Avoid the use of standardised and intrusive urban materials, street furniture, lighting and signage as part of traffic calming measures wherever appropriate
- Ensure new agricultural buildings, such as large storage sheds, are sited and designed to reduce their apparent mass, minimising their impact on the wider landscape by the appropriate use of texture, colour and planting
- Protect prominent hills and ridges and their skylines by avoiding locating tall structures including masts and wind turbines in visually prominent locations, and by using topography and the landscape's woodlands to reduce the visual impact

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA 7B: GOG MAGOG CHALK HILLS



7B: GOG MAGOG CHALK HILLS LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA

The Gog Magog Chalk Hills Landscape Character Area (LCA) is a series of accessible hills southeast of Cambridge that contribute to the setting of the city. It is characterised by expansive views towards the city and a strong sense of time depth.

Description

Key Characteristics

- Locally prominent chalk hills with distinctive panoramic views over Cambridge
- Ecologically diverse landscape with deciduous woodland, lowland calcareous grassland, good quality semi improved grassland, orchard and mosaic habitats
- Green corridor which links chalkland sites to the Fens, and contributes to the setting of Cambridge
- Accessible landscape with a network of Public Rights of Way (PROW) and recreational land uses including Wandlebury Country Park, local nature reserves and a golf course
- Strong sense of time depth due to Wandlebury Hill Fort, circular earthworks and a straight Roman road

The Gog Magog Hills LCA are a series of low, rounded, chalk hills to the southeast of Cambridge that contribute to the setting of the city. They rise from c. 25m AOD at the edge of the Fen Edge Chalklands and Lowland Farmlands to high points of c. 75m AOD. Hydrological features are limited within the chalk landscape.

The majority of land is used for arable crop production. Fields are generally rectilinear and regular, divided by low, straight hedges. Deciduous woodland on hill tops is a distinctive feature, with beech, lime and sycamore dominant species. The wooded summit of Wandlebury is a memorable feature which contributes to the character of the landscape and enriches the setting of Cambridge. Local Wildlife Sites at Cherry Hinton Chalk Pits and Beechwoods, as well as a County Wildlife Site at Wandlebury Country Park are indicative of the ecologically diverse landscape which includes scattered deciduous woodland, a relatively large area of lowland calcareous grassland, and pockets of good quality semi improved grassland, orchard and mosaic habitats. There are elevated panoramic views towards Cambridge, in which the southern edge of Cambridge is strongly apparent, and long distance views towards Ely from Wandlebury Country Park. These views give this LCA a strong connection with the city of Cambridge and a strong sense of place. On lower ground views towards wooded horizons are visually enclosed, or framed by rolling landform and deciduous woodland.

Settlement is limited to scattered farms and very occasional small linear settlements along roads, because of the shortage of water on the chalk. In the north, the landform and woodland at the sunken Cherry Hinton Chalk Pits provides a sense of enclosure and separation from the urban edge of Cambridge which contrasts with the panoramic views from the hills. It also provides a connection via a green corridor between the Gog Magog Hills and a sequence of open green spaces including Coldham's Common east of Cambridge. Occasionally masts, telegraph poles, and the wind turbines in 7A: Eastern Chalk Hills break the horizon.

Tranquillity is locally eroded by the A11 which forms the southern boundary, and the busy A1307 which is a key route into Cambridge. Elsewhere the minor road network is generally contained to a small number of straight roads at right angles to the A1307 providing connections between this road and settlements in the Lowland Farmlands and Lowland Chalklands.

This is an open, elevated landscape with a strong sense of time-depth due to distinctive circular and linear features including the Iron-Age hill fort at Wandlebury, the straight Roman road to Cambridge which runs along the ridge, and a number of circular bowl barrows which form a distinctive pattern in the landscape. This is an accessible landscape in which recreation is an important land use. The E2 European Long Distance Route passes along the Roman Road, providing connections with the local Public Rights of Way (PROW) network. Local Nature Reserves at Cherry Hinton Chalk Pits and Beechwoods have trails which are open to the public, as are Wandlebury Country Park and a picnic site to the west of Wandlebury.

Evaluation

Specific Landscape Sensitivities

In addition to the generic landscape sensitivities for this landscape character type, the following sensitivities are specific to this character area:

- Ecologically diverse landscape with deciduous woodland, lowland calcareous grassland, good quality semi improved grassland, orchard and mosaic habitats
- Green corridor which links chalkland sites to the Fens, and contributes to the setting of Cambridge
- Pressure on landscape for recreational use

Specific Landscape Guidelines

In addition to the generic landscape guidelines for this landscape character type, the following guidelines are specific to this character area:

- Conserve areas of deciduous woodland, lowland calcareous grassland, good quality semi improved grassland, orchard and mosaic habitats
- Ensure development enhances existing landscape features and is in keeping with the open, rural character