

Crockleford Heath & Environs Character Appraisal Plan

**Client:**

Tendring District Council &
Colchester City Council

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PLACE SERVICES



Tendring
District Council



Colchester
City Council

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Orientation

How to use this document

The Character Appraisal is intended to provide baseline information to inform the sustainable conservation and future management of the settlement of Crockleford Heath. This document provides an understanding of the history of the settlement and what makes it important. The overall understanding of landscape and heritage helps inform the future conservation of its character, management and development.

The table (opposite) outlines what is contained within this report:

ORIENTATION AND GETTING TO KNOW CROCKLEFORD HEATH & ENVIRONS

INTRODUCTION Section 1

This outlines the scope of this appraisal, why it has been compiled, and what baseline information about the settlement exists.

A MORE DETAILED UNDERSTANDING

UNDERSTANDING Section 2

This section provides an understanding of Crockleford Heath, presenting the results of a site analysis and research. This details the historic development of the area as well as other facets relating to the landscape and built development of the area.

LANDSCAPE & HERITAGE Section 3

This section provides an understanding of what makes the site important, why and to whom. It is directly linked to the historic development and the understanding of the different facets of the landscape of Crockleford Heath and its environs. This will also provide judgements and professional opinion of the heritage significance and landscape value of the Hamlet and its rural surroundings.

CREATING A POSITIVE FUTURE

CHARACTER OF CROCKLEFORD Section 4

This chapter identifies the character type and areas, key characteristics, landscape condition, forces for change, vision and opportunities within the settlement and its setting. This will identify where there is opportunity to improve and enhance the character of the settlement whilst addressing any issues identified that the settlement faces.

AREA OF SPECIAL CHARACTER Section 5

This chapter provides an overarching vision framework, special qualities and conservation objectives for the conservation and enhancement of character within Crockleford Heath & Environs, in line with its established significance and value.

Executive Summary

Crockleford Heath is a small hamlet which lies to the north-east of City of Colchester in Essex, within the administrative boundaries of Tendring District Council and Ardleigh Parish Council. This Character Appraisal Plan has been prepared by Place Services on behalf of Tendring District Council and Colchester City Council, and in partnership with a number of stakeholders involved in the management and understanding of the site and its surroundings. The Character Appraisal has been prepared in response to the need for a robust evidence base to help underpin the planning policies within the Draft Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community Development Plan Document (DPD).

The Character Appraisal covers the Hamlet of the Crockleford Heath as a whole and its surrounding environs and reflects the need to fully understand the character, significance, value and special qualities of the rural settlement prior to prescribing planning policies and identifying specific development and management guidelines. The Character Appraisal Plan also recognises that Crockleford Heath & Environs is a special place both in terms of the historic and natural environment, it also has considerable recreational and amenity value. However, the Character Appraisal has also found that the value of the hamlet is currently affected by a range of influences, including the presence of nearby roads, housing development, infrastructure and generally suffers from fragmented management responsibility and contains remnant [historic] landscape features.

Many of the issues affecting the character, significance and value of the Hamlet can be resolved through a variety of opportunities that are available to the multiple organisations and stakeholders involved in the long-term planning, management and growth of the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community. The identification of key characteristics, landscape quality (condition), forces for change and landscape opportunities has resulted in the formulation of a vision, identification of its special qualities and a brief set of conservation objectives, which will help guide the immediate and future management of Crockleford Heath & Environs through the delivery of associated aims and objectives of the Draft Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community DPD.

A deeper understanding of the context, history and character of place and an appraisal of an area's key characteristics and attributes is integral to the successful planning and management of the sustainable growth of communities and is key to ensuring that the distinctive character and special qualities of Crockleford Heath and its environs continue to deliver a positive sense of place and help to foster a sense of belonging, inclusion and social cohesion within the community. It is also important to recognise the role that character has in managing and guiding change and how character can be used to ensure that change or development integrates into their wider surroundings and relates well to the identified significance, value and special qualities of Crockleford Heath & Environs.

A paved path leads through a lush green landscape. The path is flanked by dense green bushes and tall grasses. In the background, there are large, leafy trees. The sky is visible through the canopy of the trees.

Chapter 1 INTRODUCTION

1 Introduction and Background

1.1 Introduction

Tendring District Council and Colchester City Council have appointed Place Services to prepare a Character Appraisal Plan pertaining to the settlement of Crockleford Heath. The document is provided as baseline information for applicants, developers, planners and the local community to consider when designing, planning and managing new development in the settlement and environs of Crockleford Heath.

This report provides an appraisal of the historic development and landscape character of Crockleford Heath and the immediate surrounding area (see **Figure 1** and **Figure 2**), as well as the significance of designated and non-designated heritage assets and the contribution that these, along with their setting, makes to the character of the Crockleford. The understanding of the historic and landscape characteristics of the hamlet can be used to assess the susceptibility and sensitivity of the area to new development, highlighting key areas of importance, special qualities and characteristics of significance.

This appraisal will consider how different areas within Crockleford Heath came to be developed, including their building styles, forms, materials, scale, density, roads, footpaths, streetscapes, open spaces, views, landscape features, landmarks, and topography. These qualities can be used to assess the key characteristics of each

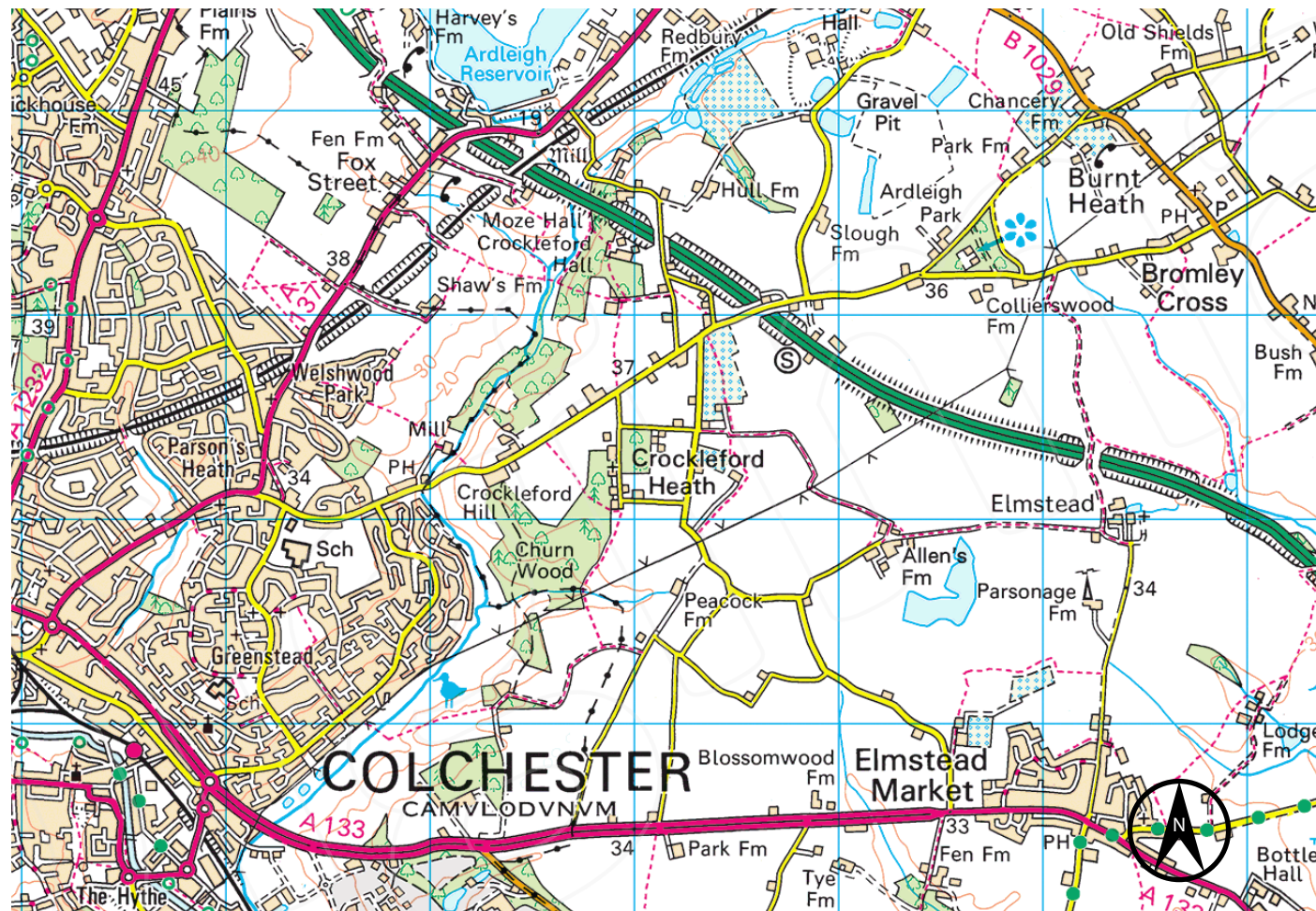


Figure 1: Location of Crockleford Heath
Ordnance Survey Scale: 1:40,000

area, highlighting potential impacts future developments may have upon the significance of heritage assets and the qualities and characteristics of Crockleford Heath. This appraisal is based on information derived from documentary research and analysis of the individual lanes, features and spaces that define Crockleford Heath and its environs.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published by the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (MHCLG) and last updated in July 2021. At its core is the principle of sustainable development and three overarching objectives, one of which is an environmental objective, which sets out “...to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment...” (Paragraph 8). The NPPF highlights [among others] that area-based character assessments can be used to help ensure that land is used efficiently while also creating beautiful and sustainable places (Paragraph 125).

It also emphasises that planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, should seek to establish or maintain a strong sense of place through the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials and are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping (Paragraph 130).

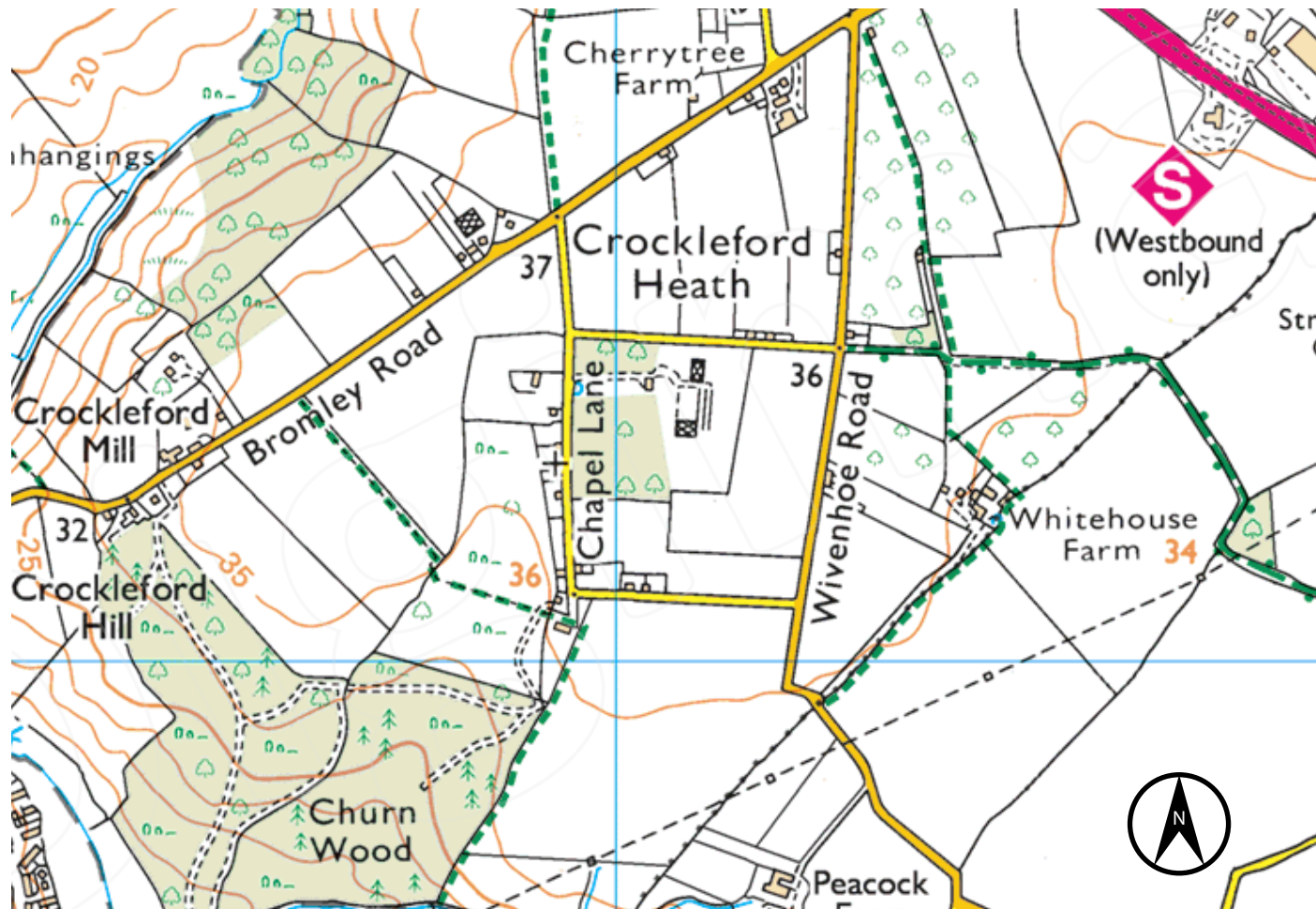


Figure 2: Location of Crockleford Heath
Ordnance Survey Scale: 1:10,000

1.2 Authorship and circumstances of the Character Appraisal

This Character Appraisal Plan has been prepared by Place Services on behalf of Tendring District Council and Colchester City Council, in order to provide robust evidence base to support the preparation of the Draft Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community Development Plan Document (DPD). Place Services have considerable experience undertaking Historic Character Appraisals, Landscape Character Assessments, Landscape Sensitivity Studies, Management Plans, as well as other landscape- and heritage-related Supplementary Planning Documents / Guidance for a wide range of natural and heritage assets in and outside of Essex.

This document will be used to form a baseline understanding of the character of Crockleford and Crockleford Heath, it includes a character appraisal of Crockleford Heath and its immediate context, its heritage significance and landscape value, classifications and its special qualities. The document reflects the need to fully understand the significance and value of the Crockleford Heath and its immediate surroundings prior to prescribing policies and identifying specific management proposals. The document should serve as a departure point to support any future applications within the study area.

1.2.1 Planning Context

The Crockleford & Environs Character Appraisal Plan has been prepared in response to the need for a robust evidence base describing the character of Crockleford Heath and its immediate surroundings to underpin the policies within the Draft Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community Development Plan Document (DPD). Whilst it will form part of the evidence base of the Draft DPD this is not only the sole purpose of the report.

The Tendring District Local Plan 2013-2033 and Beyond and the Colchester Borough Local Plan 2013-2033 recognise that a key element of the spatial growth strategy for North Essex is the development of a new sustainable garden community. The Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community will be a planned new settlement that responds directly to the regional, local and individual site context and opportunities to create development underpinned by a series of interrelated principles which are based on the Town and Country Planning Association (TCPA) Garden City Principles, adapted for the specific North Essex context as set out in the North Essex Garden Communities Charter. The Garden Community will deliver between 2,200 and 2,500 homes, 7 hectares of employment land and provision for Gypsies and Travellers within the Plan period (as part of an expected overall total of between 7,000 and 9,000 homes and 25 hectares of employment land to be delivered beyond 2033).

A review of the character of Crockleford Heath & Environs was deemed necessary as part of this process for the following reasons:

- The Draft Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community DPD has identified the land and property comprising the rural community of Crockleford Heath as an 'Area of Special Character'. In determining any proposals for development, the Council(s) will give special regard to the character of Crockleford Heath and its setting.
- There had not been a landscape appraisal of the District for approx. 21 years.
- The NPPF sets out that planning policies should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by [inter alia] recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and the opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of a place and to assess the significance of heritage assets and the contribution they make to their environment.
- To investigate potential locations for growth and to help set the vision and priorities for land management.
- Discover and respect what is important to the local

rural community of Crockleford Heath and the immediate surroundings.

- The Draft DPD also requires [among others] that proposals for the Garden Community should be based on comprehensive assessments of the surrounding environment and that celebrate natural and historic environments and systems.

The Council(s) thus face a need to ensure that the Garden Community will be holistically and comprehensively planned with a distinct identity that responds directly to its context and character. To minimise adverse landscape and heritage effects of development a robust process of character appraisal and assessment was considered appropriate.

1.3 Scope and Purpose

Place Services were commissioned in 2022 to prepare a Character Appraisal Plan for Crockleford Heath and environs (as shown in **Figure 1**), covering the hamlet of Crockleford and Crockleford Heath. The hamlet lies in the administrative boundaries of Essex County Council (ECC), Tendring District Council (TDC) and Ardleigh Parish Council (APC). Both ECC and TDC have existing published Landscape Character Assessments dating back to 2003 and 2001 respectively. Ardleigh Parish Council prepared a Village Design Statement in 2011. It is envisaged that the

suite of documents should provide a unified approach to understanding the character of the settlement and immediate surroundings.

This document has been produced to support the spatial strategy and design policies in the Draft Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community Development Plan Document (DPD). It should be read in conjunction with the Draft DPD and alongside the Tendring District Local Plan 2013-2033 and Beyond and the Colchester Borough Local Plan 2013-2033. Reference has also been made any relevant and / or supplementary documents in the following chapters and appendices of this Appraisal. This Character Appraisal supports the design and character policies progressed within the Draft DPD and can be used to consider landscape and historic character when considering any type of change within the environs of Crockleford Heath.

The intention of this document is to empower stakeholders, applicants, developers, members, planners and the local community with the knowledge and understanding of the of the key qualities and characteristics that define the hamlet of Crockleford Heath. This is particularly important when making design considerations and changes specific to the hamlet and to help avoid some of the common pitfalls associated with new development. The information and guidance within this document is not exhaustive, and we encourage open-dialogue with design teams when undertaking further studies should they wish to develop

schemes within the environs of Crockleford Heath.

It is hoped that this guiding document will become a useful ‘building block’ in helping to aid the planning, design and management of future development and change in Crockleford Heath and its environs. A User Guide is provided in **Figure 3** and further guidance included within the appendices.

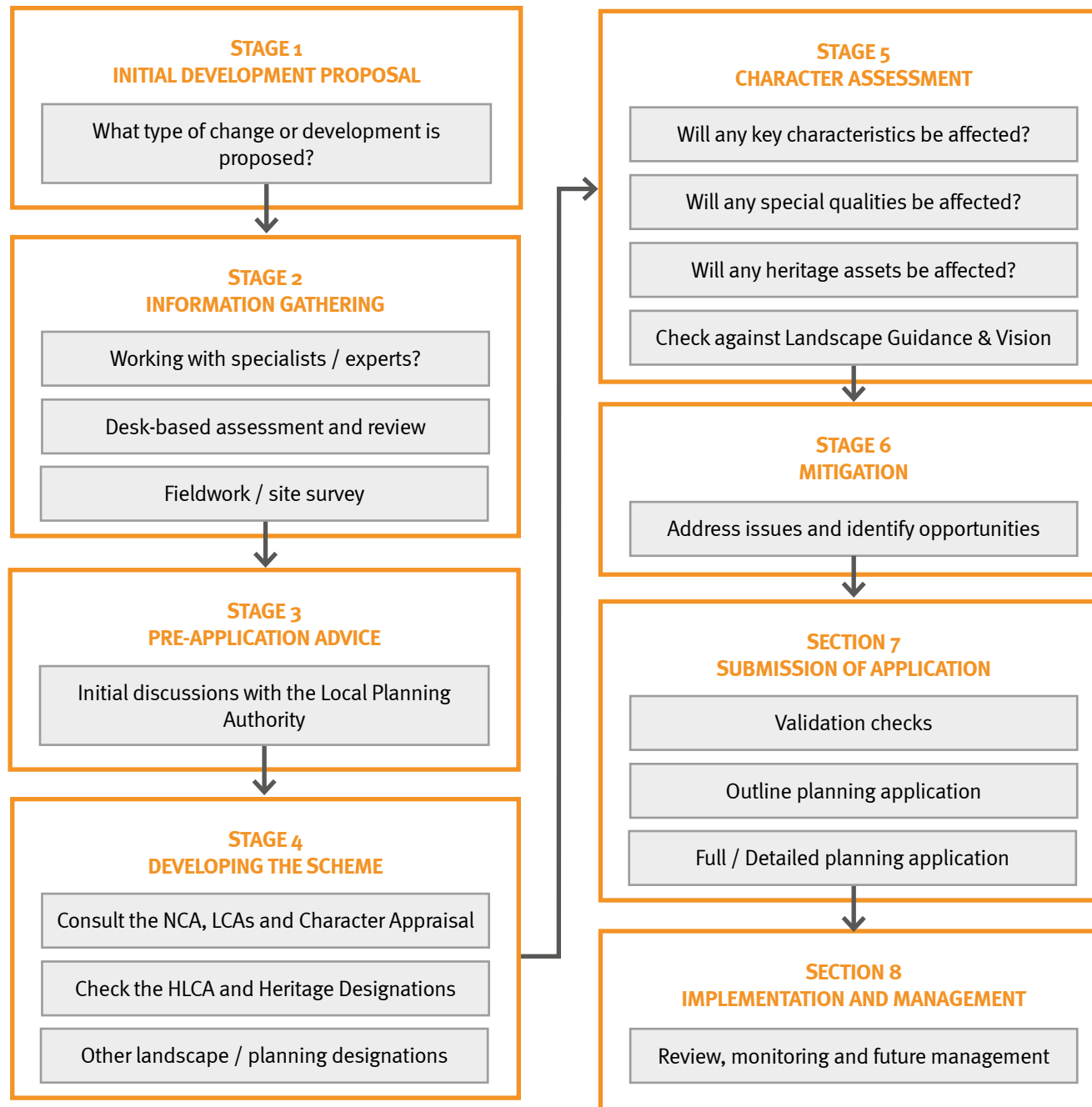


Figure 3: Character development process / guidance

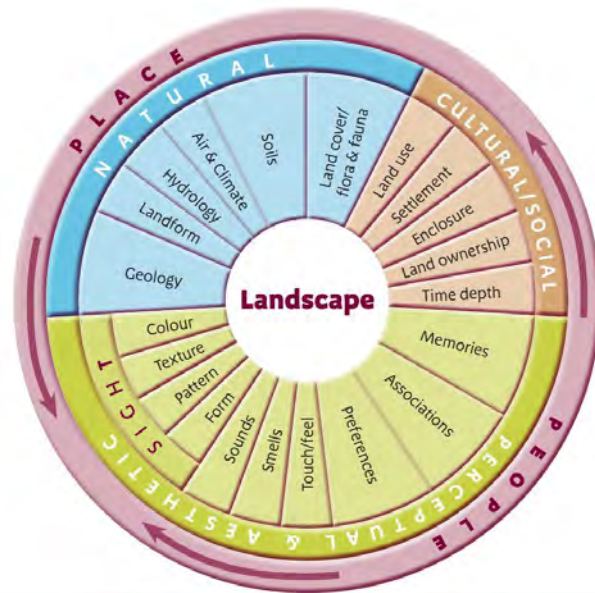


Figure 4: What is Landscape? (Christine Tudor & Natural England, 2014)

1.4 What is the Role of Character

Landscape character is described as the:

“...distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements in the landscape that makes one landscape different from another, rather than better or worse” (Tudor, C. & Natural England, 2014).

Landscape character assessment is the process of identifying, describing and understanding, how the wide range of variables across natural, historic and built landscapes can together contribute to place and the sense of place. It is a key task of the planning process to assess the likely effects of proposed changes, including potential impacts on the character of places. This appraisal seeks to identify and explain the combination of elements, features and other factors (characteristics) that inform, or create character across the public and private realms that make these landscapes distinctive or special (see **Figure 3**).

The landscape is often described as a reflection of the relationship between people and place, and the part that it plays in forming the setting of our everyday lives. Figure 3 below illustrates how the different natural, cultural / social, perceptual and aesthetic factors and attributes of a landscape come together to produce character. The

process of Landscape Character Assessment is described in ‘An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment’ (2014) as jointly prepared by Christine Tudor and Natural England. The generic characteristics of a particular landscape (i.e., the combinations of geology, topography, drainage patterns, vegetation, historical land use, and settlement pattern) can be broadly described for a Landscape Character Type (LCT). The unique distinctive and / or special features can be drawn out from the LCT to inform description of discrete geographical areas described as Landscape Character Areas (LCAs) which have their individual character and identity consistent with their wider context.

The historic character of a place is described as:

“...far more than its spatial patterning of material elements. It is also a cultural expression, of human responses through time to that area and its changing contexts and opportunities” (Historic England, 2021).

The contribution of the historic environment is also recognised by the National Design Guide (NDG) published by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) and MHCLG and last updated in January 2021. This planning practice guidance sets out a desire for introducing well-designed places that are beautiful, healthy, greener, enduring and successful

and how they can be achieved in practice. It outlines and illustrates a number of priorities and good design principles for well-designed places which recognise that well-designed places are not only “...based on a sound understanding of the features of the site and the surrounding context, using baseline studies as a starting point for design” but should also be “...responsive to local history, culture and heritage” (Paragraph 40).

An understanding of the context, history and character of place and an appraisal of an area’s key characteristics is integral to the successful planning and management of the sustainable growth of communities and is key to ensuring that the characteristics and qualities continue to deliver a positive sense of place and help to foster a sense of belonging, inclusion and social cohesion within the community. It is important to recognise the role that character has in managing and guiding change and how character can be used to ensure that change or development integrates into their surroundings and relates well to place and sense of place.

1.5 Methodology and Structure of the Appraisal

The Character Appraisal has been carried out in accordance with the methodology as endorsed within ‘An approach to Landscape Character Assessment’ (2014) written by Christine Tudor and Natural England, which integrates and

is informed by the principles of the European Landscape Convention (ELC). The ELC was introduced in the United Kingdom in March 2007 and contains eighteen Articles which collectively seek to promote landscape protection, management and planning and sets out for organising European cooperation on landscape issues.

Reference has been made to ‘Landscape Character Assessment: Guidance for England and Scotland’ (2002) prepared by Scottish Natural Heritage and the Countryside Agency, the ‘Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment’ Third Edition (2013) (GLVIA3) by the Landscape Institute (LI) and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA) and the LI’s Technical Guidance Note 02/21 ‘Assessing landscape value outside national designations’ which reflects best practice.

We have also made reference to ‘The Setting of Heritage Assets’ (2017) Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 (Second Edition) and ‘Statements of Heritage Significance: Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets’ (2019) Historic England Advice Note 12 published by Historic England. The guiding principles of ‘Conservation Area Appraisal, Designation and Management’ (2011) Historic England Advice Note 1 (Second Edition) have also been adhered to (where practicable).

1.5.1 Areas of Special Character

It is recognised that some Local Planning Authorities may choose to rely on additional forms of local designation outside of the more rigorous criteria for statutory Conservation Area designations to help manage the local historic environment. These areas generally take the form of ‘Areas of Special Character’ (or ‘Areas of Special Local Character’) and are considered to be a local designation that recognises the distinct character of an area and identifies the particular features and attributes that both Tendring District Council and Colchester City Council wish to conserve and enhance but where a Conservation Area designation may not be justified.

The designation of an Area of Special Character is used to:

“...identify areas based upon their architectural or townscape merits, they may also deal with other elements of the historic environment such as locally important landscapes or archaeology” (Historic England, 2021).

Where Areas of Special Character designations are made they do not impose additional statutory controls and do not involve the removal of permitted development rights for householders. Whilst an increasing demand for housing has made these areas susceptible to change, they are not

considered to be immune from such pressures insofar that the purpose of the local designation is to ensure that any development is sympathetic to the valued landscape characteristics and features and reflects the significance of the historic environment.

1.5.2 Process of Appraisal

The process for undertaking the appraisal has broadly involved the following stages:

- Baseline data / collection of mapped information
- Desk-based classification of the local landscape into local landscape character type and local landscape character areas (including overview site visit).
- Field survey to refine boundaries, identify key landscape / historic characteristics, special qualities, collecting aesthetic / perceptual information, take photographs and understand the forces for change.
- Stakeholder guided walking tour to further identify landscape and historic features, special qualities, sights / views, perceptions and associations.
- Online engagement with local community to present initial findings and opportunity to discuss perceptions, memories and associations, identify any unknown landscape or historic features and characteristics.
- Draft and final report.

Commentary on associations and memories from local residents and other key stakeholders has been anonymised and is included in **Appendix A**.

1.6 Acknowledgements

We would like to thank the project lead(s) at Tendring District Council for the Character Appraisal for their support throughout the production of this appraisal. Special thanks also to the Colchester City Council team.

We are particularly grateful for the local expertise and knowledge from local residents. We would like to thank them and all the local stakeholders who took part in the Guided Walk, including the Crockleford and Elmstead Action Group for their attendance and contribution to the appraisal.

Thanks also to the other organisations and individuals connected to Crockleford who provided comments and gave their time and insight, including Ardleigh Parish Council and representatives of the Essex Garden's Trust.

1.7 Deposition

Digital copies of the final Character Appraisal will be provided to all the individuals and organisations in the stakeholder group.



Chapter 2

UNDERSTANDING CROCKLEFORD HEATH

2 Understanding Crockleford Heath

2.1 Introduction

Crockleford Heath lies to the east of the market town of Colchester to the north-east of Essex and within the administrative boundary of Tendring District Council and Ardleigh Parish Council. It is situated approximately 3 km south-west of Ardleigh and 4 km east and north-east of Colchester, separated from the settlement of Parsons Heath by Salary Brook and a stretch of arable fields and woodland including Churn Wood. Crockleford Heath is part of a wider landscape comprised of historic former heaths, including Boxted, Ardleigh, Crockleford and Elmstead, where the soil is a 'fertile loam' and historically has been regarded as "good turnip land". The hamlet is formed by a grid pattern of lanes, including Chapel Lane to the west and south, Green Lane to the north and Wivenhoe Road to the east. The settlement is made of dispersed farmsteads and cottages which line the roads, set back behind green verges, and planted front gardens.¹

¹ A History of the County of Essex. United Kingdom: Constable, 1903, p.11

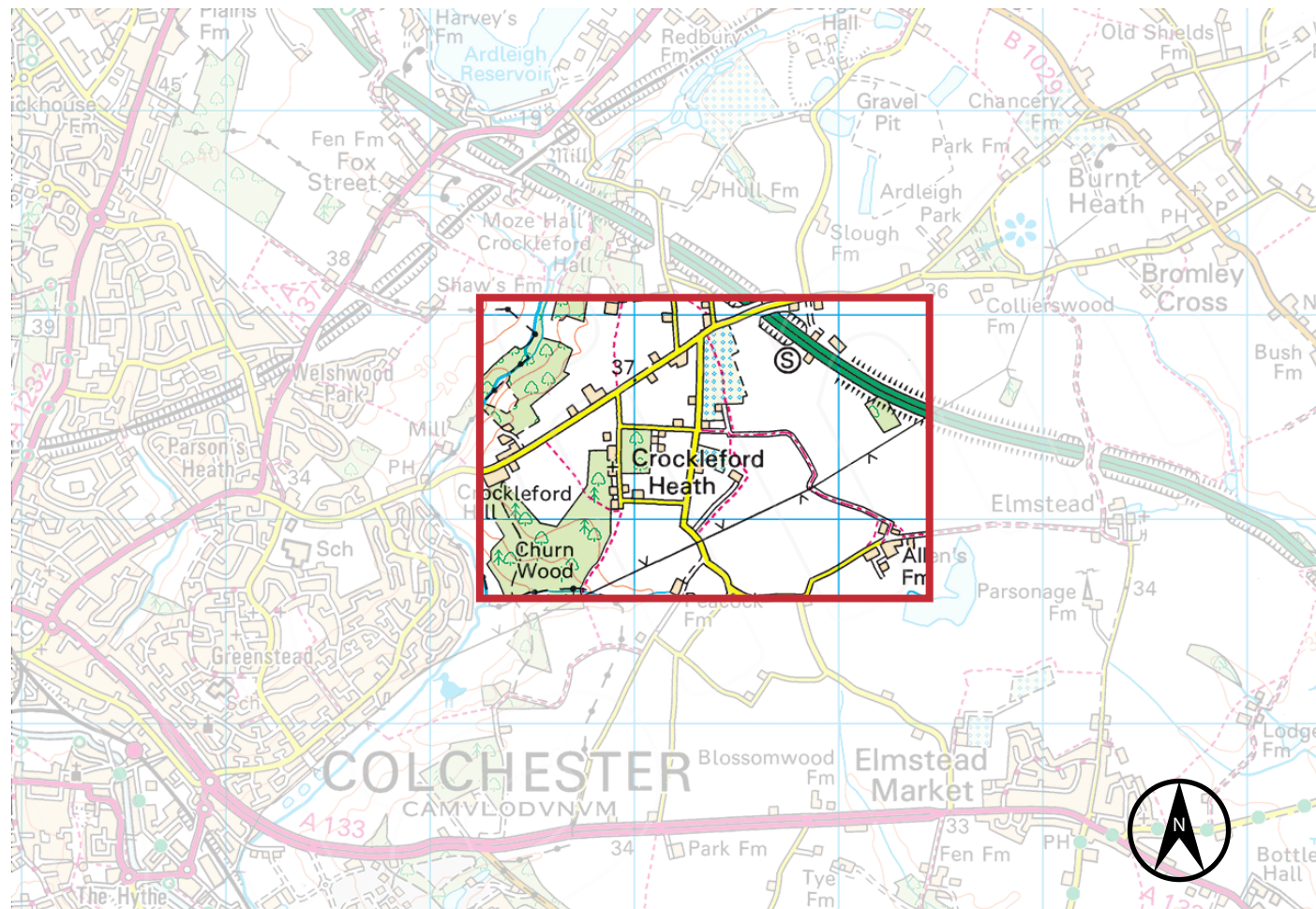


Figure 5: Study Area of Character Appraisal Plan
Ordnance Survey Scale: 1:40,000

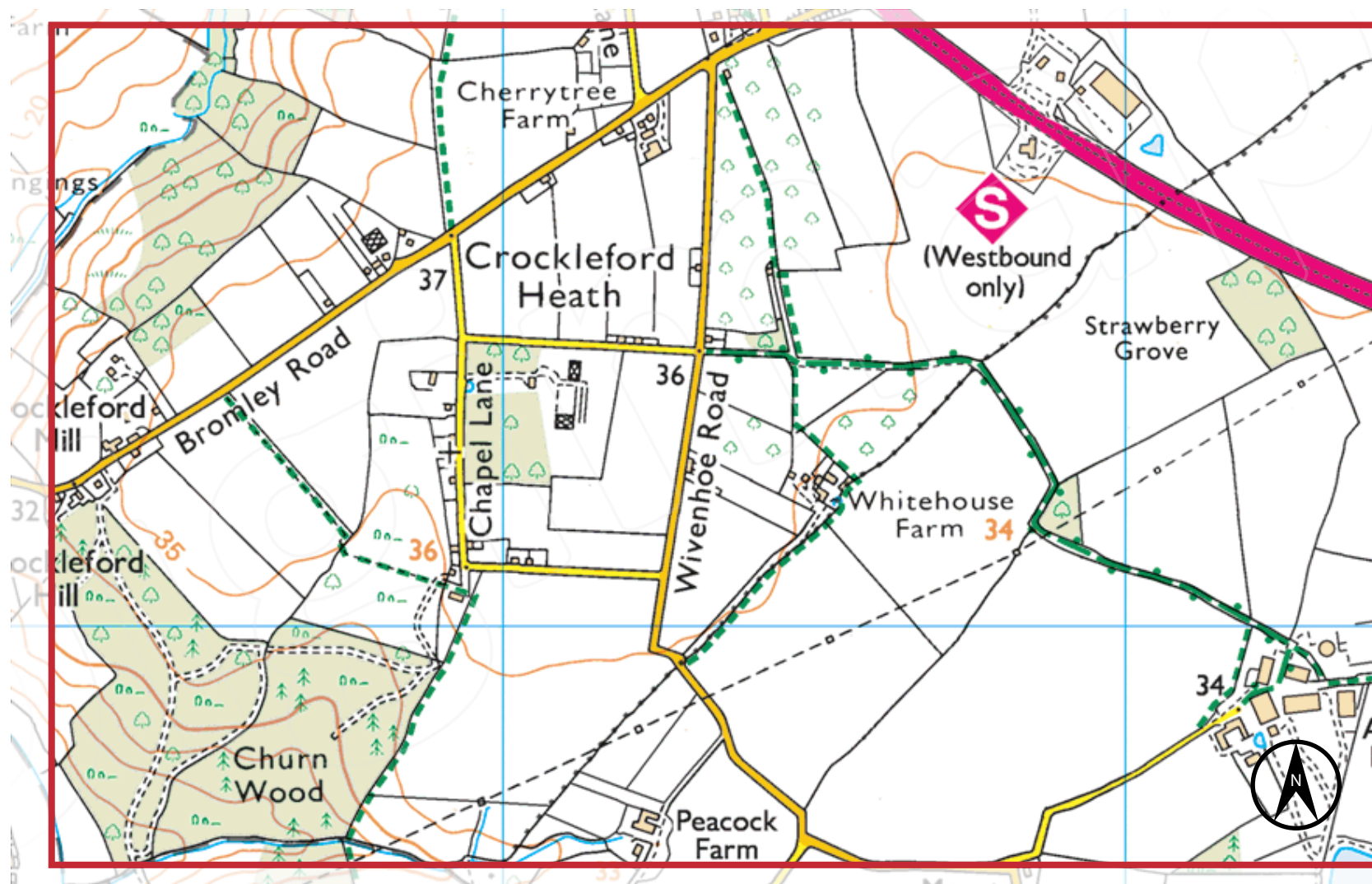


Figure 6: Study Area of Character Appraisal Plan
Ordnance Survey Scale: 1:10,000

The centre of the hamlet forms a square, within which are the remains of a historic plantation in the north-east and arable fields. The hamlet has a strong, distinctive character, based on its landscape setting, form and vernacular architecture and materials, which includes [among others]: ‘handmade’ brickwork; traditional limewash render; sawn weather-boarding; plain clay tiles; clay, stone or concrete sett paving; gravel; hedgerows; brick walls with copings; and vertically boarded fences & gates (stained). This chapter provides a broad description of the formative influences that have contributed to variations in the landscape of Crockleford Heath and its immediate surroundings.

2.2 Planning Policy Background

2.2.1 National Planning Policy Framework

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published by the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (MHCLG) and last updated in July 2021. The NPPF sets out the national planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied.

Some of the key messages from the NPPF which are of relevance to this Character Appraisal of Crockleford Heath and its context include:

- Conserving and enhancing the natural environment by protecting and enhancing “valued landscapes” and sites of biodiversity or geological value / soils. Recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits of natural capital and other ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland;
- Taking opportunities to minimise impacts on and provide net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures;
- Recognising that heritage assets are an “irreplaceable resource” and that they should be conserved and enhanced in a manner commensurate to their “significance”. Accounting for the desirability of making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness and exploring the opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of a place; and
- Considering the effects of climate change and support the transition to a low carbon economy. Plan for climate change, ensuring that risks are appropriately managed through suitable adaptation measures, including through the planning of well-designed green infrastructure.

2.2.2 Improving Access to Greenspace: A New Review for 2020

This report sets out the importance of greenspace as being increasingly being recognised as an important asset for supporting health and wellbeing. The report also highlights how ‘natural capital’ can help local authorities address local issues, help improve health and wellbeing, manage health and social care costs, reduce health inequalities, improve social cohesion and take positive action to address climate change. This report also makes the case that we must not lose sight of our growing population’s need for greenspace.

2.2.3 A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment

A Green Future was published in 2018 by the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (DEFRA) and sets out the Government’s actions to help the natural world regain and retain good health. The 25 Year Environment Plan aims to deliver cleaner air and water in our cities and rural landscapes, protect threatened species and provide richer wildlife habitats. The plan sets out a number of goals and also identifies six key areas for action which includes [but not limited to] “recovering of nature and enhancing the beauty of landscapes” and “connecting people with the environment to improve health and wellbeing”.

2.2.4 Legislation

The Environment Act (2021)

The Environment Act was first introduced as the 'Environment Bill' to the House of Commons in January 2020 and will be one of the key vehicles for delivering the vision and goals as set out in the 25 Year Environment Plan. The legislation completed its passage through parliament in 2021 and received Royal Assent in November 2021. The Environment Act introduces a new framework for setting long-term, legally binding targets for environmental improvement. It contains a number of measures including [but not limited to]: environmental governance; waste and resource efficiency (e.g., production, deposit return schemes, waste management & litter and waste crime enforcement); air quality and environmental recall; water (management plans, drought plans, storm overflows, regulations of water and sewerage undertakers, abstraction, water quality & land drainage); nature and biodiversity (Biodiversity net gain, local nature recover strategies, conservation, habitats regulations & the use of forest risk commodities); and conservation covenants and enforcement.

The Countryside and Rights of Way Act (2000)

The Countryside and Rights of Way (CRoW) Act (2000) (as amended) is an Act of UK Parliament normally gives a public right of access to land mapped as 'open country' or registered common land. These areas are known as 'open access land'. Public rights of way are typically listed and

described in Definitive Maps and Statements (legal records of public rights of way) usually held at a local authority's office or library.

Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006)

The Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act makes provision in connection with wildlife, Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), National Parks and the Broads, amends the law relating to public rights of way, makes provision as to the Inland Waterways Amenity Advisory Council and provides for flexible administrative arrangements in connection with functions relating to the environment and rural affairs. Section 40 of the NERC Act states that every public body, including local authorities, must in exercising its functions, have regard to the purpose of conserving biodiversity. Conserving biodiversity includes restoring or enhancing a species population or habitat.

The Occupiers Liability Act (1957 and 1984)

The Occupiers Liability Act amends the law of England and Wales as to the liability of the occupiers of premises for injury suffered by persons other than their guests. The occupier of a premises owes a duty to another (not being a visitor) in respect of any known danger associated with a risk or if they have reasonable grounds to believe the danger exists. The occupier owes a duty if they know or believe that another is in the vicinity or danger or may come into the vicinity of danger, and the risk is one against which they may reasonably be expected to offer protection against. Any duty owed by virtue may be discharged

by taking steps to give warning of the danger or by discouraging persons from incurring the risk.

The Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981)

The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 is an Act of UK Parliament which gives protection to native species, enhances the protection of SSSIs and builds upon the rights of way rules in the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949. Birds, their nests and eggs are protected from injury and certain methods of killing and injuring are prohibited. Animals listed on Schedule 5 and their places of shelter and protection are protected from being killed injured or taken. Wild plants listed in Schedule 8 are protected from being uprooted and sold. The act contains measures for preventing the establishment of non-native species listed in Schedule 9 which may be detrimental to native wildlife.

Historic Buildings and Ancient Monuments Act (1953)

The Historic Buildings and Ancient Monuments Act makes provision for the compilation of a register of gardens and other land (including parks and gardens, and battlefields. Historic parks and gardens are a fragile and finite resource and owing to their fragility can be easily damaged or destroyed. Historic England state that "such places are an important, distinctive resource, and a much cherished part of our inheritance and we have a duty to care for them".

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act (1990)

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act provides specific protection for buildings and areas of special architectural or historic interest.

2.2.5 Local Policy

The Tendring District Local Plan 2013-2033 and Beyond is comprised of two parts, including: the Tendring District Local Plan 2013-2033 and Beyond: North Essex Authorities' Shared Strategic Section 1 (2021), which shares identical cross-boundary policies and allocations with both Colchester City Council and Braintree District Council; and the Tendring District Local Plan 2013-2033 and Beyond: Section 2 (2022), which contains the Tendring specific policies and allocations.

The landscape and heritage policies and guidance considered of relevance to the Crockleford & Environs Character Appraisal Plan are summarised below:

Tendring District Local Plan 2013-2033 and Beyond: North Essex Authorities' Shared Strategic Section 1 (2021)

Policy SP 3: Spatial Strategy for North Essex states [among others] that future growth will be planned to ensure existing settlements maintain their distinctive character and role, to avoid coalescence between them and to conserve their setting and set out for the conservation and enhancement of the natural environment.

Policy SP 7: Place Shaping Principles requires that all new development must meet high standards of urban and architectural design. Development frameworks, masterplans, design codes, and other design guidance documents will be prepared in consultation with stakeholders where they are needed to support this objective. It also requires that new development should reflect the following place shaping principles and should [among others]: respond positively to local character and context to preserve and enhance the quality of existing places and their environs; and protect and enhance assets of historical or natural value.

Policy SP 8: Development & Delivery of a New Garden Community in North Essex states that the Tendring / Colchester Borders, a new garden community which will deliver between 2,200 and 2,500 homes, 7 hectares of employment land and provision for Gypsies and Travellers within the Plan period (as part of an expected overall total of between 7,000 and 9,000 homes and 25 hectares of employment land to be delivered beyond 2033). It also sets out a desire for the creation of distinctive environments which are based on comprehensive assessments of the surrounding environment and that celebrate natural and historic environments and systems, utilise a multi-functional green-grid to create significant networks of new green infrastructure including a new country park at the garden community, provide a high degree of connectivity to existing corridors and networks and enhance biodiversity.

Policy SP 9: Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community sets out that the Development Plan Document (DPD) required for the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community by Policy SP8 will define the boundary of the new community and the amount of development it will contain. The Draft DPD and any planning application will address the following principles and requirements in the design, development and delivery of the new garden community: place-making and design quality; housing; employment and jobs; transportation; community infrastructure (including multi-functional green infrastructure) and other requirements (e.g., landscape buffers, conservation and enhancement the significance of heritage assets, protection and / or enhancement of biodiversity assets & sustainable long-term governance and stewardship, etc).

Tendring District Local Plan 2013-2033 and Beyond: Section 2 (2022)

Policy SPL 1: Managing Growth sets out the settlement hierarchy for Tendring District and defines Ardleigh as a 'Smaller Rural Settlement'.

Policy SPL 2: Settlement Development Boundaries states that the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community will be the subject a separate Development Plan Document (DPD) containing its own policies designed to guide the location of development as identified in the Local Plan.

Policy SPL 3: Sustainable Design requires that Design. All new development (including changes of use) should make a positive contribution to the quality of the local environment and protect or enhance local character. It also sets out [inter alia] that: new buildings, alterations and structures are well designed and maintain or enhance local character and distinctiveness; the development relates well to its site and surroundings particularly in relation to its siting, height, scale, massing, form, design and materials; the development respects or enhances local landscape character, views, skylines, landmarks, existing street patterns, open spaces and other locally important features; the design and layout of the development maintains or enhances important existing site features of landscape, ecological, heritage or amenity value; and boundary treatments and hard and soft landscaping are designed as an integral part of the development reflecting the function and character of the development and its surroundings. The Council will encourage the use of locally distinctive materials and / or locally occurring and characteristic hedge species.

Policy HP 3: Green Infrastructure states that Green Infrastructure will be used as a way of adapting to, and mitigating the effects of, climate change, through the management and enhancement of existing spaces and habitats and the creation of new spaces and habitats, helping to provide shade during higher temperatures, flood mitigation and benefits to biodiversity, along with increased access. New Green Infrastructure should

incorporate semi-natural habitats and provide net gains in biodiversity wherever possible. The long-term management of assets should include biodiversity recording/monitoring to verify / ensure the ecological integrity of GI networks.

Policy PPL 3: The Rural Landscape states that the Council will protect the rural landscape and refuse planning permission for any proposed development which would cause overriding harm to its character or appearance, including to [among others]: estuaries and rivers; skylines and prominent views including ridge-tops and plateau edges; traditional buildings and settlement settings; native hedgerows, trees and woodlands; protected lanes, other rural lanes, bridleways and footpaths; and designated and non-designated heritage assets and historic landscapes.

Policy PPL 7: Archaeology states that any new development which would affect, or might affect, designated or non-designated archaeological remains will only be considered where accompanied by an appropriate desk-based assessment. Where identified as necessary within that desk-based assessment, a written scheme of investigation including excavation, recording or protection and deposition of archaeological records in a public archive will be required to be submitted to, and approved by, the Local Planning Authority. It also states [among others] that proposals for new development affecting a heritage asset of archaeological importance or its setting will only be permitted where it will protect or where appropriate enhance the significance of the asset.

Policy PPL 9: Listed Buildings stipulates that proposals for new development affecting a listed building or its setting will only be permitted where they will protect its special architectural or historic interest, its character, appearance and fabric. Where a proposal will cause harm to a listed building, the relevant paragraphs of the NPPF should be applied dependent on the level of harm caused.

2.2.6 Neighbourhood Policy

The Ardsleigh Neighbourhood Plan 2020 - 2033 (2022) was published on the 13th December 2022. Some changes were made having undergone a 6-week period of informal (Regulation 14 Pre-Submission) consultation between the 8th August 2022 and 23rd September 2022. The policies considered of relevance to the Character Appraisal of Crockleford Heath and its surroundings, include [but not limited to]:

Ardsleigh Neighbourhood Plan 2020 - 2033 (2022)

Policy EP: Natural, Built & Historic Character states [among others] that the design of development must pay due regard to the contents of the Village Design Statement, including by way of its: siting; layout; form and scale; architectural style; materials; relationship to surrounding development; impact on built / landscape features; landscaping and boundary treatments; accessibility; and biodiversity efforts. It also sets out desire for no urbanising

effects on rural lanes or streets, no net loss of good quality green landscape features, incorporate opportunities for local biodiversity and wildlife, no permanent loss of best and most versatile agricultural land and development affecting a Listed Building or its setting should preserve or enhance its significance.

Policy LGP: Local Green Spaces suggests that development will be supported on or adjacent to a Local Green Space provided it is compatible with the established character and use of the space; and preserves or enhances the special community values and / or local significance of the space.

2.3 Landscape Character Context

2.3.1 National Landscape Character

Natural England has previously produced a framework of 159 countrywide landscape profiles for England, resulting in the National Character Areas (NCAs). Crockleford Heath is identified as being located within NCA 111: Northern Thames Basin, which is described as extending from Hertfordshire in the west to the Essex coast in the east. This character area is formed of rising land to the north of the Thames Estuary. The Northern Thames Basin is an area rich in geodiversity, archaeology and history and diverse landscapes ranging from the wooded Hertfordshire plateaux and river valleys to the open landscape and

predominantly arable area of the Essex heathlands, with areas of urbanisation mixed in throughout. Tranquil areas can still be found in parts of Essex in areas that have a more dispersed settlement pattern broken up by arable land and semi-natural habitats.

The NCA profile document summarises the key features and characteristics of the character area. The area is described as [inter alia] having a varied landform with a wide plateau divided by river valleys. Characteristic of the area is a layer of thick clay which produces heavy, acidic soils, resulting in retention of considerable area of ancient woodland. Parts of Essex are heavily wooded, while other areas within are more open in character. The field pattern is very varied across the basin reflecting historical activity and informal patterns of 18th-century (or earlier) enclosure which reflects the medieval colonisation of the heaths. It is noted that this medieval pattern of small villages and dispersed farming settlement remains central to the character of parts of Essex. The Northern Thames Basin also has a rich archaeology, including sites related to Roman occupation with the Roman capital at Colchester and links to London.

The landform is varied containing the Essex wooded hills and ridges which rise above the London Clay lowlands to an altitude of approximately 100 m AOD, while landform of the Essex heathlands is relatively flat with only minor undulations, but does note however, that some of the river valleys can be steep sided.

The NCA has a mixture of priority habitats with the most abundant of which being woodlands and coastal and flood plain grazing marshes. The pattern of woodlands is varied across the NCA with some areas having considerable ancient semi-natural woodland, while other areas have a more open character, small clusters of secondary and ancient woodland also exist along shallow valleys in the Essex heathlands area. Apple orchards are a feature of the Essex heathlands.

The NCA includes a number of Statements of Environmental Opportunity (SEO), the relevant landscape opportunities for the Northern Thames Basin include:

- SEO 1: Manage rivers and river valleys to protect and improve water quality and help to alleviate flooding in the downstream urban areas, while also helping to improve aquifer recharge and provide a sufficient store of water to meet future need, especially with predicted climatic changes. Conserve the riparian landscapes and habitats, for their recreational and educational amenity for their internationally significant ecological value.
- SEO 2: Manage the agricultural landscape and diverse range of soils which allow the Northern Thames Basin to be a major food provider, using methods and crops that retain and improve soil quality, water availability and biodiversity.
- SEO 3: Protect and appropriately manage the historic

environment for its contribution to local character and sense of identity and as a framework for habitat restoration and sustainable development, ensuring high design standards (particularly in the London Green Belt) which respect the open and built character of the Thames Basin. Enhance and increase access between rural and urban areas through good green infrastructure links to allow local communities recreational, health and wellbeing benefits.

- SEO 4: Manage and expand the significant areas of broadleaf woodland and wood pasture, and increase tree cover within urban areas, for the green infrastructure links and important habitats that they provide, for the sense of tranquillity they bring, their ability to screen urban influences and their role in reducing heat island effect and sequestering and storing carbon.

As such, it is considered that the key landscape opportunities for Crockleford Heath and its immediate surrounding area include [but not limited to]:

- The respect of the rural countryside, much assisted by significant areas of woodland cover to provide a strong sense of tranquillity and aid in the retention of a clear distinction and separation between settlements.
- Protecting the overall agricultural diversity of the wider countryside with areas of arable, intensive horticulture and pasture, encouraging sustainable management to protect agricultural soils and enhance farmland

biodiversity.

- Protection of the underlying dispersed medieval settlement pattern characteristic of much of the NCA with attractive hamlets and villages with their distinctive vernacular.
- Protection and appropriate management of the rich heritage and archaeology of the area, including buried archaeology and prehistoric settlements (especially found on the Essex heathlands).
- Manage and reinforce the distinctive and varied hedgerow pattern with medieval enclosures contributing to the enclosed and wooded character of the Essex wooded hills and ridges and river valleys elsewhere. Replacement of lost hedgerows to reinforce field pattern in the Essex heathlands.
- Management and opportunities for expansion of areas of wood pasture that was once a dominant feature of the NCA, which would provide an interlinking fabric between the wooded and open commons and areas of ancient woodland and royal hunting forests in the Essex wooded hills and ridges and the Essex heathlands. Re-linking the remaining fragments of wood pasture where possible and creation of new areas where this can contribute to enhancing recreational opportunities and biodiversity.
- Management, restoration and re-linking of remnant lowland heathland found on areas capped by glacial sands and gravels, notably within the Essex heathlands and Essex wooded hills and ridges sub-areas, through localised restoration of agricultural

land, conversion of conifer plantations and the sympathetic management of recreation facilities, in particular golf courses.

- Management, restoration and opportunities for expansion of the river valleys of the NCA including wet grassland, valley woodlands, flood plain woodlands, non-coastal grazing marsh, fens, rush pasture, swamp and valley mires which, with their high-water tables are important sites for over-wintering wildfowl, adding significantly to biodiversity and landscape character.
- Taking opportunities for expansion of woodland cover to conserve and re-link areas of ancient woodland, bringing enhanced landscape structure to the open landscapes, and providing new woodland as a recreational resource close to settlements. This will provide a means of creating a clear division between expanding settlements, building on proposals for Community Forests of the area.

2.3.3 County Landscape Character

The Essex Landscape Character Assessment was produced in 2003 by Chris Blandford Associates on behalf of Essex County Council and Southend-on-Sea Borough Council. The assessment identifies Crockleford Heath and Environs as lying within Landscape Character Type (LCT) E: London Clay Landscapes and Landscape Character Area (LCA) E3: Tendring Plain.

The LCT landscape is found in south Essex and around Colchester and the Tendring Plain. Its key characteristics

include [inter alia]: mainly gently undulating or flat landform; heavy clay soils and lighter sandy / loamy soils where sand and gravel deposits overly clay; regular and straight hedged field boundaries as a result of both ancient, planned landscapes and late enclosure of former heathlands; pasture and arable farmland; and a mostly enclosed nature of the landscape.

The LCA is described a low, relatively flat plateau with extensive arable land use on loamy, sandy and clay soils. Typically the fields are large and regular, with the exception of a few localised clusters of woodlands / copses, they are very widely dispersed. As a result the area has a generally open character and there are frequent wide views in which the small settlements, scattered hedgerow trees, occasional lines of poplars punctuate the low horizons. Small river / stream valleys are common as they cut through the broad plateau and have a contrasting enclosed character and more intimate scale. Pylons, high masts and major roads visually interrupt the landscape in parts.

The key characteristics of the Tendring Plain includes [among others]: large flat farmland plateau, dissected by occasional small narrow valleys; arable land dominates, but with some pasture and orchards; widely dispersed blocks of woodland / small copses; and former heathland character near to Colchester.

Possible opportunities for the Tendring Plain include potential to absorb change with new landscape

frameworks of woodland planting and hedgerows which are appropriate to the character and restoration of heathland.

2.3.4 District Landscape Character

The Tendring District Landscape Character Assessment was prepared by Land Use Consultants in 2001 on behalf of Tendring District Council. The assessment identifies Crockleford Heath and the immediate surrounding area as lying within the Agricultural Heartland of LCT 7: Heathland Plateaux and LCA 7A: Bromley Heaths.

The Heathland Plateaux is described as a large scale, flat plateau which is generally above 25m AOD and covers a large part of the western half of the Tendring District. The extent of the LCT is defined by glacial loams and gravels that create acidic soils giving them a healthy character. The soils and vegetation are influenced by these soils and sandy deposits which have resulted in the remnant heathland communities of the area. It was also noted at the time of the assessment that greenhouses, orchards, copses and shelterbelts as being features of the productive landscape today and remnant heaths are now only identifiable by hedgerow vegetation and place names.

The Bromley Heaths LCA is described as an elevated plateau that extends from Colchester to Wix in the east and Thorington in the south. The large scale, open plateau is dominated by large scale, geometric fields indicative

of late enclosure that provide a strong pattern in views. These productive arable fields are divided by low, gappy hedgerows with occasional hedgerow-trees (typically oaks) which stand out as features in the open arable 'prairies'. The colour and texture of the cultivated landscape is noted as changing with the seasons. Apple orchards flourish in the sandy soils around Ardleigh and are sheltered by belts of poplar and leylandii. Horticulture is noted as being a prominent feature. Many of the former heaths have been converted to smallholdings or appear as areas of regenerated woodland that form the backdrop to the arable landscape.

The sandy nature of the soil is very apparent in the hedgerows and roadside verges which often contain gorse and bracken. Some of these roadside verges form important grassland habitats with flora indicative of the acidic soils and the assessment notes that those at Crockleford Heath are identified as Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation.

The present-day settlement pattern and road infrastructure is based on the medieval system of farms and villages. It is described as a low density, rural settlement pattern of scattered farms and halls, hamlets, villages and small market towns. The farmsteads are often large and form visible clusters of agricultural buildings in the open landscape. The hamlets and villages are traditionally focussed on a village green, heath or common, though many of these have been infilled by inter-war and post-war

smallholdings or more recent housing. A network of narrow lanes connects the scattered farms and villages, many of these routes are ancient, were previously grazed and have important roadside trees or verges.

The LCA is described as an exposed and windswept plateau where the sky dominates in any view. As a result of this, the landscape character is greatly affected by the state of the sky, communication towers, pylons and other vertical structures that stand out as prominent elements. The area has strong field patterns, distinctive settlement character and supports areas of heathland, ancient woodland and apple orchards. However, the loss of landscape features such as heaths and commons, unimproved pastures, village greens, hedgerows and ancient woodlands as a result of agricultural intensification, development and Dutch elm disease means that the landscape character of this area can appear eroded.

The plateau landscape is described as being visually sensitive as a result of its open and rural character and long views. The remaining heaths, greens, ancient woodlands, hedgerow-trees, historic lanes and unimproved grasslands / roadside verges are the features that are deemed most sensitive to change. The overarching landscape strategy is to conserve the rural character and historic elements of the landscape and to enhance woodland cover, hedgerow and heathland character. The LCA management strategy for conserving and enhancing character includes the following guidance, including [inter alia]:

- Consider opportunities for the restoration of heathland and acid grassland on former heathland areas.
- Conserve shelter belts of native species such as oaks and poplar.
- Enhance the wooded character of the landscape by promoting the creation of new woodlands or extending existing ancient woodlands. Woodland creation should include natural regeneration or use of species typical of the area including oak, sweet chestnut, ash, hazel and birch.
- Conserve all ancient woodland sites and promote appropriate management through natural regeneration, control of non-native species and reintroduction of traditional forms of management.
- Maintain the historic lanes with the ancient oaks and unimproved roadside verges. Resist road improvements or widening which would threaten the rural character and biodiversity interest.
- Conserve the historic dispersed settlement pattern of hamlets and scattered farmsteads, and the identity of individual settlements.
- Opportunities exist for creation of some innovative landscapes and architecture provided they fit with the scale of the landscape, utilise local materials and planting species, and maintain the scattered rural settlement pattern.
- Conserve views to important landmarks such as manorial halls and church towers, and conserve the setting of these features.

Landscape character rarely stops at administrative boundaries but instead continues seamlessly into surrounding districts, boroughs and city. The appraisal therefore sits alongside the Landscape Character Assessments of Colchester City Council.

2.3.5 Essex Green Infrastructure Strategy

In 2020, the Essex Green Infrastructure Strategy was prepared on behalf of the Essex Green Infrastructure Partnership (Steering Group & Partners), consisting of the following functions and organisations [inter alia]: the Green Infrastructure Strategy Partnership; the Suffolk Coast & Heaths AONB; the Environmental Agency; Green Arc; the Forestry Commission; Hertfordshire County Council; Natural England; the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds; the Rural Community Council of Essex; Sustrans; Thames Chase Trust; The Tree Council; University of East Anglia; University of Essex; the Woodlands Trust; and Essex County Council.

The Essex Green Infrastructure Strategy also includes a 'Vision' which states that:

"We will protect, develop and enhance a high quality connected green infrastructure network that extends from our city and town centres, and urban areas to the countryside and coast and which is self-sustaining and is designed for people and wildlife".

In order to deliver the Vision, the Strategy sets out seven objectives, including:

- **“Protect** – Protect existing green infrastructure, especially designated sites;
- **Improve** – Improve existing green infrastructure so it is better functioning for people and wildlife;
- **Create** – Create more high-quality multi-functional green infrastructure, especially in areas of deficiency;
- **Connectivity** – Improve the connectivity of green infrastructure for people and wildlife;
- **Inclusivity** – Increase the use and inclusivity of green infrastructure across all user groups, social groups and abilities;
- **Health** – Provide green infrastructure facilities to promote health and wellbeing; and
- **Sustainability** – Working with partners to build and secure funding, effective governance and stewardship for new and existing green infrastructure to ensure their long-term sustainability.”

Crockleford Heath is identified on the Green Essex Story Map as part of the Tendring & Colchester Borders Garden Community. Under the Strategy ‘Delivery – Action Plan’ it sets out for the need to create green infrastructure in new developments such as Garden Communities, with best practice guidance on its design and management for multiple benefits.

The Strategy also refers to the Accessible Natural Green Space Standards, also referred to as ANGSt. Whilst the guidance acknowledges Crockleford Heath as lying in an area which meets at least two of the four ANGSt benchmarks for green infrastructure proximity. There is strong evidence that green infrastructure provision could be increased in Crockleford Heath, especially where major housing development is planned. This also presents an opportunity to identify and address any green infrastructure deficiencies, improve connectivity, accessibility and enhancements in order to provide multiple green infrastructure functions and benefits.

2.3.6 Essex Green Infrastructure Standards

The Essex Green Infrastructure Standards: Technical Guidance were prepared in collaboration with a number of stakeholders and partners as a result of the ‘Making Better Planning for Better Placemaking’ and ‘Place Keeping workshops’ held between September and November 2020, including [but not limited to]: Building with Nature; the Environment Agency; Essex County Council; the Essex Planning Officer Association (representatives from Local Authorities); the Essex Wildlife Trust; Natural England; Tree Council; and the Wilderness Foundation.

As a result of the ‘Making Better Planning for Better Placemaking’ and ‘Place-Keeping’ workshops, the Technical Guidance has identified the following Principles and Standards:

- **“Mainstreaming and Integration** – The Placemaking and Place-keeping policies in Local Plans recognise GI as a key delivery mechanism. GI functions and associated benefits are recognised and valued in key strategic documents and policies, beyond those with an environmental scope.
- **Evidence-Led** – The planning, design and delivery of GI is evidence-led using natural capital and ecosystem service assessments, and GI GIS mapping to ensure appropriate placebased GI interventions are being implemented and enhanced.
- **Multifunctionality** – GI interventions are designed, planned and delivered to enhance multifunctionality and deliver multiple benefits to people and biodiversity in both rural and urban areas.
- **Early Engagement** – There is early collaboration and engagement with all relevant stakeholders, partners and communities to support the delivery of effective and connected GI.
- **Managing Different Expectations** – Differing views need to be identified early and managed effectively and in a transparent manner to secure both short- and long-term outcomes.
- **Health, Wellbeing and Social Equity** – GI is designed to meet different people’s needs (including physical and mental health), providing accessibility to GI, green spaces and local amenities, while ensuring GI is inclusive to all.
- **Connectivity** – GI interventions are designed, planned and delivered and connected across multiple scales;

from the wider landscape scale network to more local and neighbourhood scales including green corridors habitat and nature recovery networks to enhance connectivity for people, wildlife and habitats.

- **Strong Policy Wording and Commitment** – Policy for GI is strongly worded with a commitment to positive action(s) as reflected in statutory plans and industry / local guidance and supported by incentives and clear guidance about what success looks like.
- **Stewardship** – The long-term management and stewardship plans are identified at the early stage with the necessary funding and monitoring components in place.”

The Technical Guidance also provides information on the steps to take towards meeting the Principles and Standards, summary guidance and checklist to self assess on how to deliver the Principles and how to measure progress and delivery, including the use of qualitative and quantitative indicators to benchmark GI provision.

2.3.7 Ardleigh Village Design Statement

The Ardleigh Village Design Statement was updated in January 2022 by a Steering Group, on behalf of Ardleigh Parish Council. The overarching purpose of the Village Design Statement is to encourage all new development, whether it is located in the centre of the village or in the outlying areas, to be well designed and in keeping with the character of Ardleigh Parish.

The Village Design Statement describes Crockleford Heath’s field boundaries as shown on OS mapping hint that this area was once a cluster of smallholdings. It also states that there appear to be examples of houses from each general historic period. The by-roads, where there are a few houses located behind well-established hedges and trees, appear relatively quiet, whilst Bromley Road conversely is busy. Although the old roads from Crockleford to Ardleigh (Spring Valley Lane and Bromley Road) are still intact, the cutting of the A120 Trunk Road runs beneath them like a boundary mark. This is partly because the land immediately beyond the A120 looks different, being relatively more open. The area has much in common, visually, with other outer-village areas of Ardleigh.

The Village Design Statement includes general guidance for development affecting the Hamlets and Lanes across the Parish, including [inter alia]:

- “All development should respect the countryside setting;
- Development should enhance the specific defined character of an area. In rural lanes development should be set back from the carriageway and partly screened, to preserve the character of the lane;
- Any new building that is allowed should be in keeping with its local surroundings, particularly where the roads are of an open nature;
- Lanes should be preserved, particularly the protected lanes;

- Hedges and trees should be carefully preserved and/or replaced with indigenous species. Hedges and verges should be well-maintained;
- Any extensions or alterations should be in keeping with its neighbours. Consideration should be given to the overall building when one part of a semi-detached house is extended;
- Development should take account of the fact that excess speed and volume of traffic is detrimental to the character of the parish. Any developer must take account of increased road activity;
- Rural views should be retained by placing utilities underground and resisting applications for telecommunications masts; and
- Road signage, whilst important, should be kept to a minimum.”

2.4 Physical Description

2.4.1 Geology and Physical Geography

The landscape interest and subtle variations in character areas across Crockleford Heath & Environs are undoubtedly linked to the underlying geology and physical geography of place. The deposits of glacial loams, gravels and sands across the area have influenced the soils and vegetation which have been exploited for agriculture since the earliest prehistoric agrarian communities. The landscape today consists of a number of remnant heathland hamlets and villages and retains its market garden characteristics and horticultural qualities.

The Soilscales Classification has been identified as 'Soilscale 8'. This indicates the presence of slightly acidic loamy and clayey soils with impeded drainage of Tendring (0582e) association. These have developed over the superficial deposits of Kesgrave sands and gravels and Cover Sands of the Low-level Kesgrave terraces, which were formed between 2.588 million and 12 thousand years ago during the Quaternary period. The Kesgrave Catchment Subgroup is predominantly characterised by quartz and quartzite from the Triassic, Carboniferous and Devonian periods and the Cover Sands are periglacial aeolian blanket of deposits of lowland areas comprising fine- to very fine-grained sands.

The bedrock beneath the dominant superficial deposits comprises the largely unconsolidated Eocene strata of Harwich Formation and London Clay Formation, which together form the Thames Group (see **Figure 7**). This sedimentary bedrock was formed between 34 and 56 million years ago during the Eocene (early and middle Ypresian) period. With a deepening of the sea during this period a sandy clay called the Harwich Formation was laid down in the Tendring area forming the base of the Thames Group. The Harwich Formation contains layers of volcanic ash, which are bluish grey, silty clays when fresh but often weather to a paler yellow-brown. The top of the Thames Group is formed by the London Clay Formation which is mainly comprised of slightly calcareous clay, silt and sand, but also contains fossilised plants, wood and nodules of calcium phosphate (cement stones) in layers, which also contain fossil bones of mammals, birds, sharks and other animals.

2.4.2 Landform and Hydrology

The topography of Crockleford Heath & Environs has been directly influenced by the permanence of the underlying geology, soils and climatic changes over time. The landform, hydrology and drainage pattern is illustrated in Figures 7-9 respectively. The hamlet is generally a flat plateau which is consistent with the wider Tendring district but is noted as including some of the highest parts of the district at approximately 40m+ AOD (refer to **Figure 8**). The landform around Crockleford Heath & Environs gradually

reduces to around 30m AOD to the east and south-east where it continues as flatter and gently undulating plainland which is more characteristic across the district.

The landform to the west, south-west and north-west of the hamlet is defined by the striking level changes and sloping topography of the Salary Brook, which extends in a broadly northeast-to-southwest direction from Ardleigh Reservoir (north) to the River Colne (south). The height of the ground ranges from approximately 40m AOD to the west of the hamlet reducing to around 10m AOD to the west and south-west along the Brook. Though the localised topography of Crockleford Heath varies little, the southern portion is gently sloping and therefore generally more open with prominent and longer views out towards the countryside, while the west and south-west of the hamlet feels more undulating and enclosed, with a 'ghyll woodland-like' quality.

Crockleford Heath lies approximately 900m east of a river known as Salary Brook, which is designated as a Main River (see **Figure 9**) and regulated by the Environment Agency (EA), who are responsible for the management, maintenance, improvement and / or construction work carried out on main rivers to manage flood risk. The main drainage features within the study area include several private (garden) ponds and a comprehensive ditch network along the lanes. It is noted that there are several areas of localised poor drainage which is likely due to cessation of management (i.e., vegetation clearances, excavation, etc).

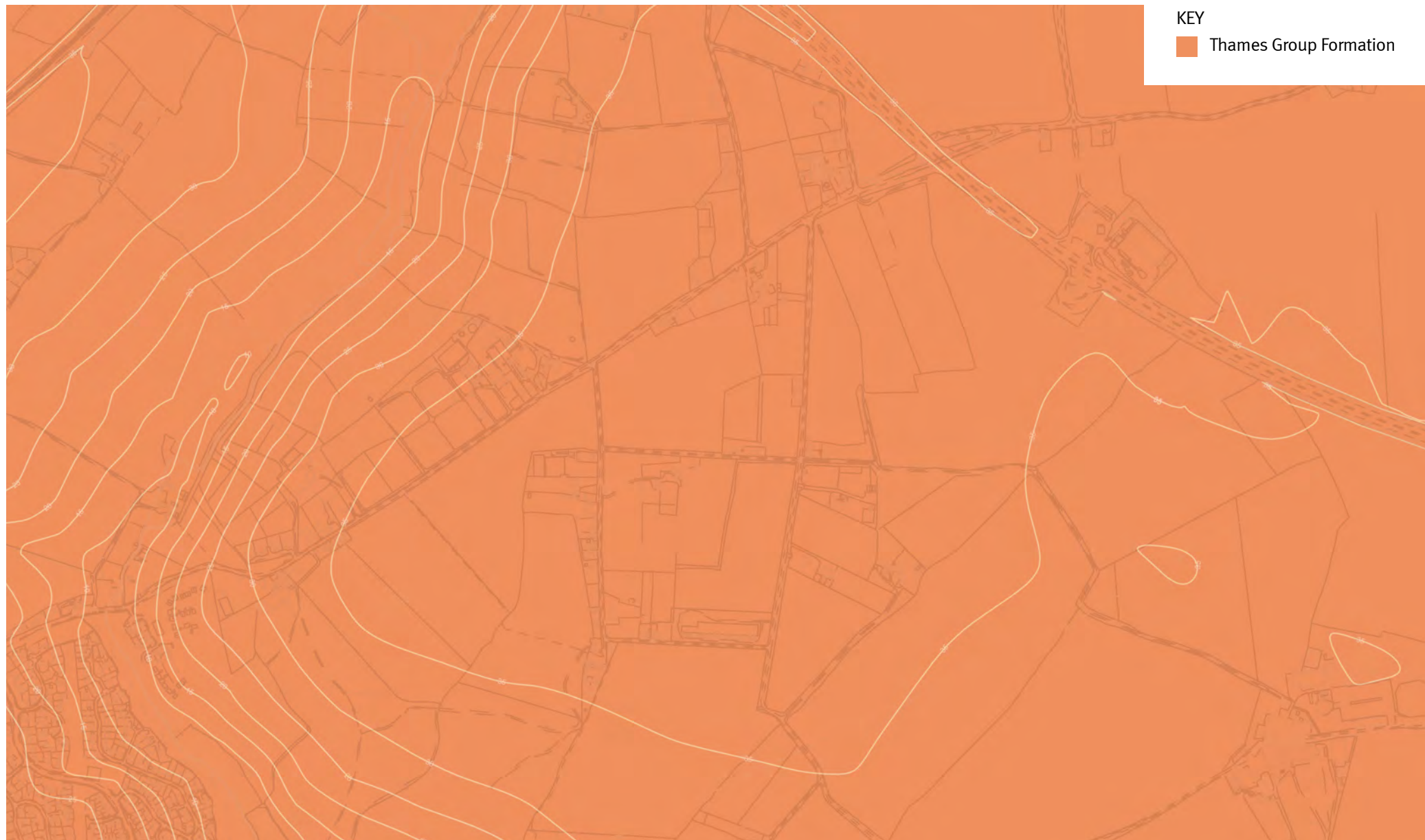


Figure 7: Bedrock Formation
Ordnance Survey Scale: 1:10,000

The EA's 'Long Term Flood Risk' Map and Essex County Council Flood Mapping indicates that the majority of Crockleford Heath & Environs as having a very low risk of flooding from rivers, the sea, or reservoirs. However, there are pockets of localised surface water flooding along Chapel Lane, the junction of Wivenhoe Road and Green Lane and the junction of Wivenhoe Road and Bromley Road. There is an area of clearing and horse paddocks to the north of Glebelands Stud and Whitehouse Farm which is prone to surface water flooding with low, medium and high risk to flooding, meaning that each year this area has a chance of flooding greater than 3.3% (high risk), but typically between 0.1 and 1% (low risk) and 1 and 3.3% (medium risk). There are several areas across the study area (i.e., private gardens & land) which also have a low risk of surface water flooding between 0.1 and 1%.

2.4.3 Air and Climate

The twin crises of climate heating and mass biodiversity loss are the most serious issues of our time (UK Landscape Architects Declare, 2022). We are undoubtedly in a climate crisis and climate change is increasingly being acknowledged as a key component of landscape change. The latest headline findings (August 2022) from the UK Climate Projections have observed and reviewed several indicators consistent with the expected effects of a warming climate. The general climate observations and projections in the UK for the 21st century include:

- All areas of the UK are projected to be warmer, with emphasis on warming in summer than winter;
- Hot summers are expected to become more common;
- The temperature of hot summer days shows increases of 3.8°C to 6.8°C;
- Hot spells exceeding 30°C for two or more consecutive days will be largely confined to the south-east;
- Rainfall patterns will continue to vary in the future;
- Future increases in the intensity of heavy summer rainfall events;
- Future climate change to bring about a change in the seasonality of extremes;
- Significant increases in hourly precipitation;
- A decrease in soil moisture during summers, consistent with the reduction in summer rainfall.

The effects of climate change are likely to result in unpredictable weather conditions, including more intense rainfall events, which would in turn result in more frequent surface water flooding events along local watercourses, including the Salary Brook (west) and its tributaries, the Ardleigh Reservoir (north) and the River Colne (south). It is noted that heavier rainfall would also likely destabilise watercourse slopes and banks as a key contributor of increased soil erosion and pollution, and negatively affecting the water quality of watercourses.

Climate change also has the potential to bring wetter summers and a greater frequency of rainfall events, which would result in increased flooding due to limitations of

infrastructure (i.e., drainage ditches unable to cope with surface water flooding). The result would mean that ground water would sit on the surface and / or cannot properly discharge into more permeable ground. The risk of sewer systems being affected by rainfall events is also increased, where these systems are unable to handle large volumes of water, which results in overloading and flooding. Furthermore, surface water flooding from sewer systems can often pick up pollutants, rubbish / debris and heavy metals which are then channelled into the wider water network and contaminating them.

The National Trust Climate Hazards Mapping (please refer to **Figure 10**) identifies the current risk presented across the UK from overheating and humidity, based on data collected from a 1981-2010 baseline period as having a 'low-to-medium' hazard likelihood. The risk of overheating and humidity, based on data projected for a 2060-2080 future period is noted as having a 'high' hazard likelihood. Decreased soil moisture during hotter summers is also likely to result in extended periods of drought, which may alter or change the suitability of current agricultural yields and methods of cultivation, particularly across the free-draining soils as noted within the Tendring district.

The impacts of climate change are also likely to compound the risk of Invasive Non-Native Species (INNS), including insect pests, introduction of new predators, fungus and pathogens. There are currently 1,377 invasive non-native plant species within the UK, but only approximately 8% of

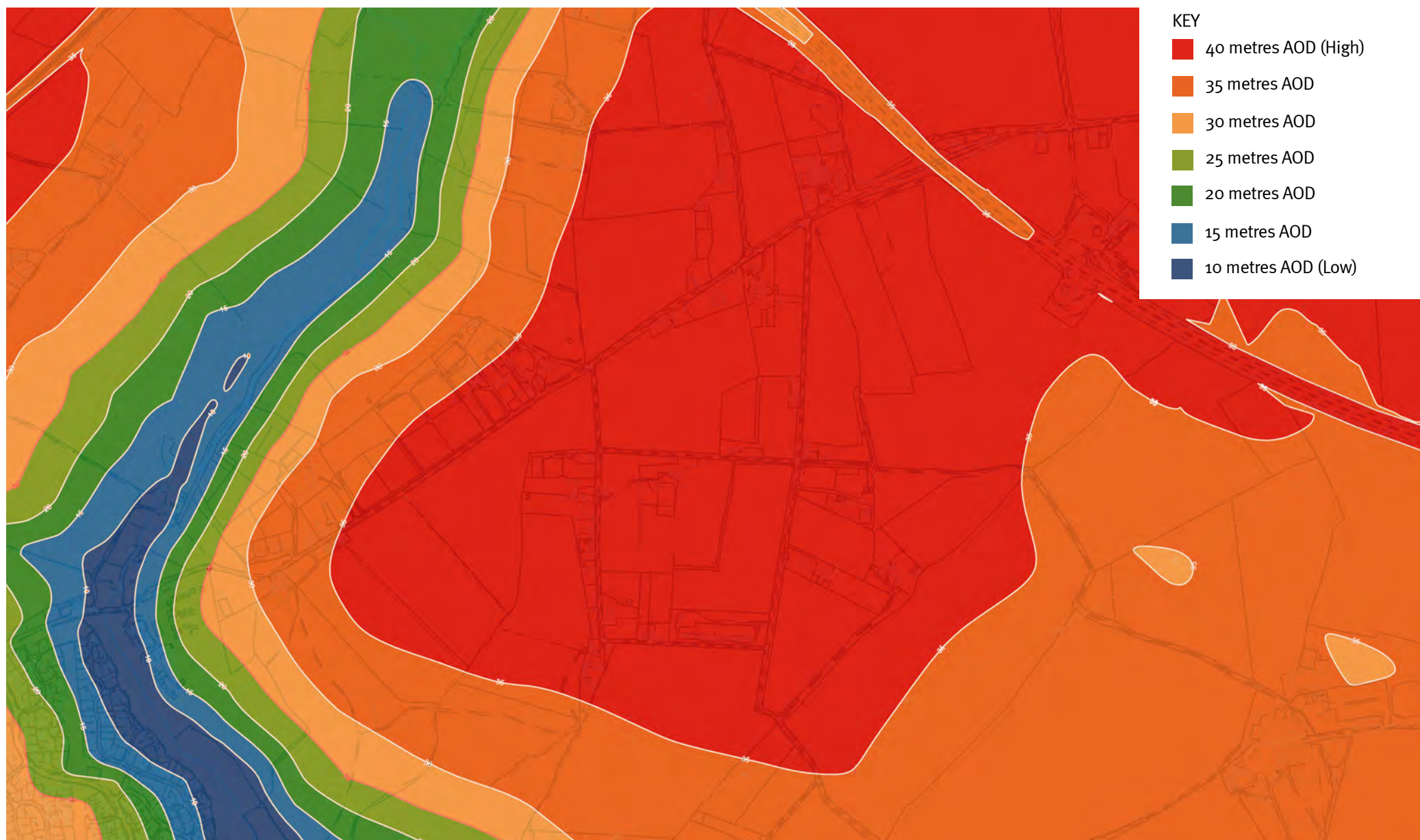


Figure 8: Topography
Ordnance Survey Scale: 1:10,000



Figure 9: Hydrology
Ordnance Survey Scale: 1:10,000

these are considered invasive. For example, Ash dieback is a fungus (*Hymenoscyphus fraxineus*) which is a highly destructive disease of ash trees (*Fraxinus* sp), Acute Oak Decline which poses a threat to Oak trees (*Quercus* sp), Oak Processionary Moth (OPM), Pine Processionary Moth (PPM) and Dutch Elm disease caused by two related fungi (*Ophiostoma novo-ulmi* and *Ophiostoma ulmi*) which affects species of Elm (*Ulmus* sp). All of these species have potential to cause devastation to our landscapes.

At the most recent UN Climate Change Conference (COP27), the UK Government continues its legacy of COP26 with a series of announcements on energy transition, climate financing and forest and nature. The proposals that may affect the UK landscape, include green tech innovation, a drive for net-zero, forests and climate partnerships and funding to develop solar parks and energy storage innovation.

2.4.4 Soils & Agricultural Land Quality

As noted above, the Soilscape Classification has been identified as 'Soilscape 8'. This indicates the presence of slightly acidic loamy and clayey soils with impeded drainage of Tendring (0582e) association. The agricultural land cover and vegetation influenced by these soils and clayey deposits has resulted in the remnant heathland communities of the area that are present today. It was also observed at the time of the appraisal that greenhouses,

former orchards, woodland blocks and shelterbelts as being prominent features of the productive landscape of Crockleford Heath as it is today and that the remnant heathland is now only identifiable by hedgerow vegetation and place names.

The Regional Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) and Provisional ALC Maps (refer to **Figure 11**) provides a method for assessing the quality of farmland, which indicates a tripartite of agricultural soil qualities including Grade 1: Excellent Quality Agricultural Land to the east of the hamlet, which indicates the presence of a wide variety of agricultural and horticultural crops that can be grown in this area (i.e., tree fruit / orchards such as apples and pears, soft fruit species such as raspberries and blackberries, salad crops and winter harvested vegetables) and with higher yields and less variability than lower quality land.

The western portion of the study area has been identified as Grade 3: Good to Moderate Quality Agricultural Land, which suggests that this part of Crockleford Heath & Environs has moderate limitations which affect the choice of crops that can be grown and factors which affect, timing(s), methods of cultivation and yield size. Grade 3 land can also be sub-divided into Subgrade 3a: Good Quality Agricultural Land and Subgrade 3b: Moderate Quality Agricultural Land (subject to further soil testing surveys / land classification). It is noted that the soils here intercept with the river valleys culminating in earthy peat and fertile soils prevail which support areas of former

heathland, ancient woodland (Churn Wood) and several arable fields (also commonly referred to as 'prairies') to the west.

To the north and north-eastern edge of the Crockleford Heath, there is a finger of Grade 2: Very Good Quality Agricultural Land which extends southwards between the Grade 1 and Grade 3 agricultural land that generally coincides with areas of the Kesgrave Sands giving rise to areas of fertile horticultural land. The landscape characteristics of this southward creeping portion is predominantly defined by relic tree fruit / orchards, including apples, pears and cherries which flourish in the sandy soils along the eastern edge of the hamlet and are sheltered by belts of hedgerow and hedgerow-trees of Oak, Poplar, Elm (albeit widespread Dutch Elm Disease) and faster-growing Leylandii. Horticulture is noted as being a prominent feature of this market garden area.

2.4.5 Biodiversity & Wildlife Interest

Ecological Statutory Designations

There are no statutory designations within Crockleford Heath & Environs, though the MAGIC Map (DEFRA) identifies two separate Local Nature Reserves (LNR) at Welsh Wood (west) and Salary Brook (south-west) as being located with 1km of the study area and two Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) at Ardleigh Gravel Pit (north-east) and Bullock Wood (north-west) which are noted as being

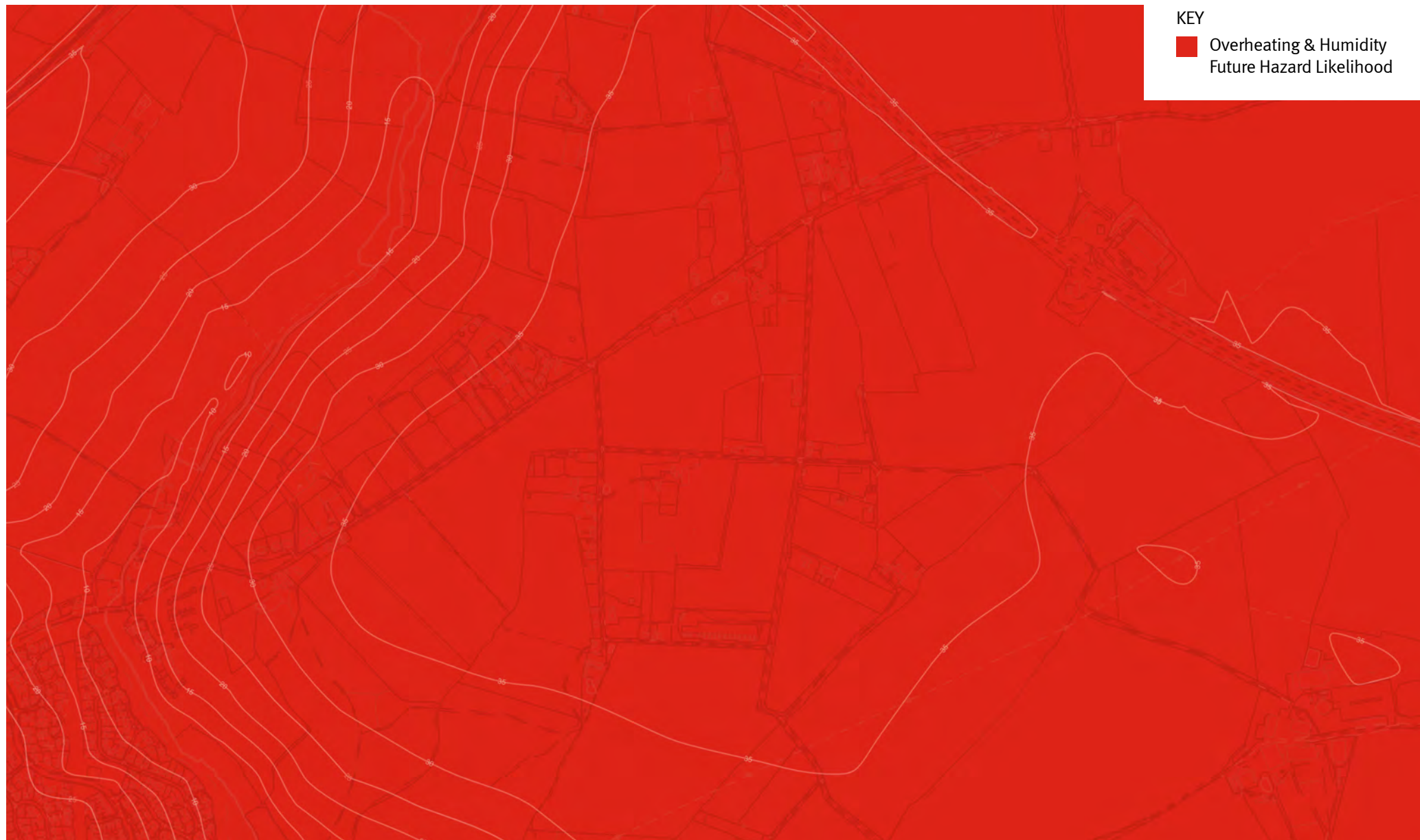


Figure 10: Climate and Humidity Future (Source: National Trust)
Ordnance Survey Scale: 1:10,000

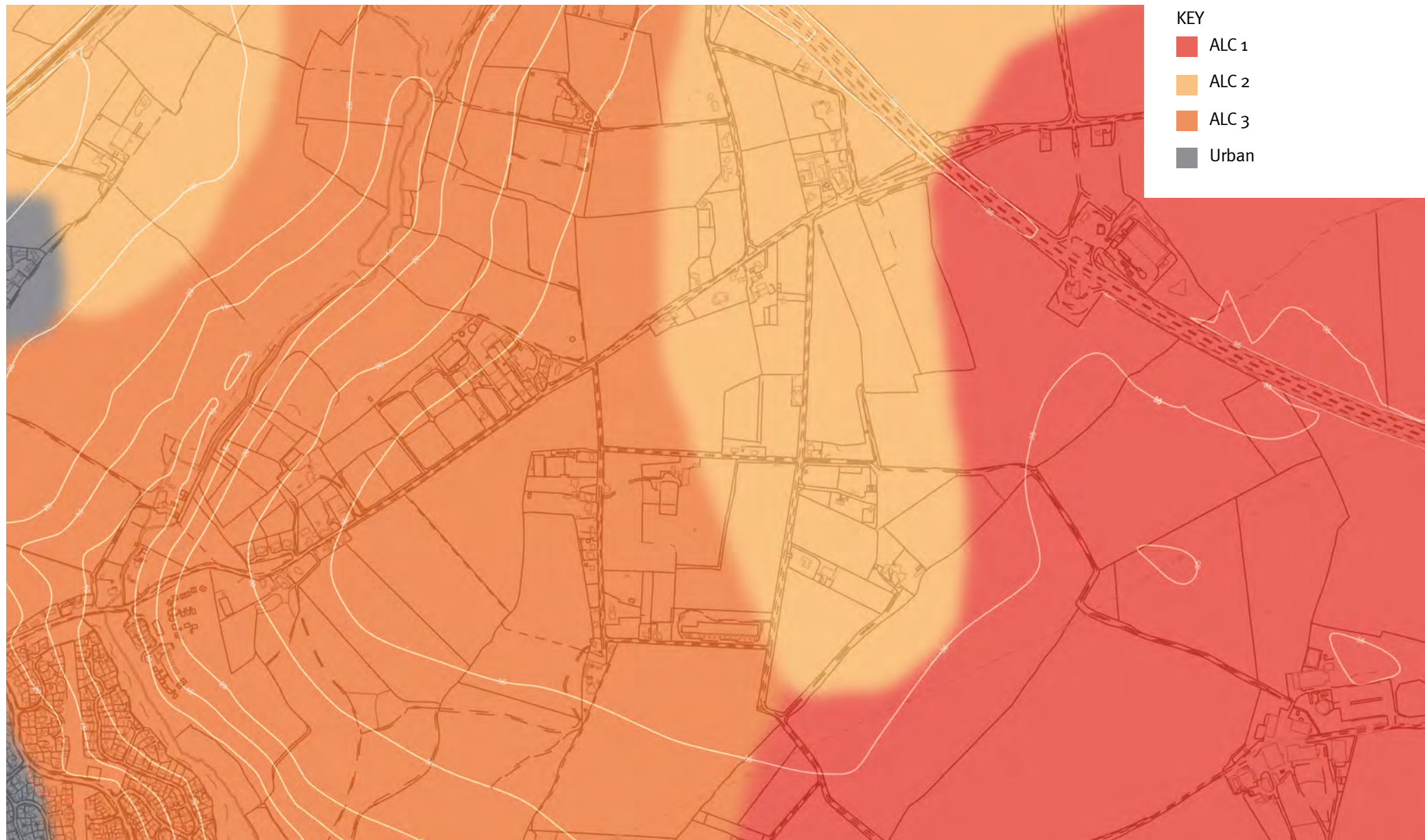


Figure 11: Agricultural Land Classification
Ordnance Survey Scale: 1:10,000

situated within 1km of the hamlet settlement. In addition, the study area also lies within a number of Impact Risk Zones associated with the nearby SSSI sites, all of which are related to planning applications and developments. It is noted that for new residential development in this area, consideration must be paid to the emerging Essex Coast Recreational disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (Essex Coast RAMS).

Ecological Non-statutory Designations

There are three non-statutory designations within the study area including, Churn Wood (Te5), Wall's Wood (Te6), and Chapel Lane Verge (Te7) which are designated as Local Wildlife Sites (LoWS) (see **Figure 12**). A further 8no. LoWS are located within 1km of Crockleford Heath & Environs, including [but not limited to]:

- Welsh Wood (Co143)
- Thousand Acres (Co152)
- Churn Wood Meadow (Te4)
- Home Wood (Co150)
- Money Wood (Te20)
- St Andrew's Greenstead (Co138)
- Magdalen Wood (Co132)
- Wivenhoe Park (Co148)

Churn Wood (Te5) LoWS is of mixed structure (broadleaved and coniferous) with canopy species including [but not limited to]: Pedunculate Oak (*Quercus robur*); Sessile Oak (*Quercus petraea*); Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*); Hazel

(*Corylus avellana*) and Sweet Chestnut (*Castanea sativa*), with a variety of other planted trees such as Birch (*Betula pendula*), Sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*), Beech (*Fagus sylvatica*), Wild Cherry (*Prunus avium*) and Elm (*Ulmus procera*). Scot's Pine (*Pinus sylvestris*) and other conifers (e.g., Spruce, etc) also occur in this Ancient Woodland. The ground flora was noticeably variable and reflective of local site conditions and contains [but not limited to] Bluebell (*Hyacinthoides non-scripta*), Dog's Mercury (*Mercurialis perennis*), Climbing Corydalis (*Ceratocarpus claviculata*) and Bracken (*Pteridium aquilinum*). The woodland appears to be mostly consistent with the National Vegetation Classification (NVC) W16 (*Quercus* spp. – *Betula* spp. – *Deschampsia flexuosa*) woodland, though it is noted that Bracken-dominated stands may be difficult to separate from W16.

Wall's Wood (Te6) LoWS is dominated by Pedunculate Oak (*Quercus robur*) standards with coppiced Sweet Chestnut (*Castanea sativa*) and Hazel (*Corylus avellana*) form majority of this old coppice with standards wood. The canopy also includes a mix of Sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*), Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*), Field Maple (*Acer campestre*), Honeysuckle (*Lonicera periclymenum*) and Silver Birch (*Betula pendula*). Alder (*Alnus glutinosa*) and Willow (*Salix* spp.) also dominates closer to the stream. The majority of ground cover comprises Bluebell (*Hyacinthoides non-scripta*), Yellow Archangel (*Lamium galeobdolon*) and Dog's Mercury (*Mercurialis perennis*), with Wood Sorrel (*Oxalis acetosella*), Moschatel (*Adoxa*

moschatellina) and Wood Anemone (*Anemone nemorosa*). The streamline flora is formed by Nettle (*Urtica dioica*) with Lesser Celandine (*Ranunculus ficaria*), Yellow Iris (*Iris pseudacorus*), Water Mint (*Mentha aquatica*) and Soft-rush (*Juncus effusus*).

Chapel Lane Verge (Te7) LoWS is a roadside verge with notable plant population located to the north-east of Churn Wood. This roadside verge has been designated for its population of Polypody (*Polypodium vulgare*), a fern which is listed on the Essex Red Data List. Chapel Lane comprises part of a much larger Essex County Council network of Special Roadside Verges however, a number have lost their botanical interest. Other species present include Cock's-foot (*Dactylis glomerata*), False Oat-grass (*Arrhenatherum elatius*), Dog's Violet (*Viola* spp.) and Wood Sage (*Teucrium scorodonia*).

Priority Habitats within the study area include Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland which covers Churn Wood LoWS, Wall's Wood LoWS, as well as some blocks to the east of Chapel Lane and east of Wivenhoe Road, smaller patches can also be found along the Public Right of Way (PRoW) heading towards, and south of, Allens Farm (refer to **Figure 13**). These features are also identified as Broadleaved, Felled and Mainly Mixed Broadleaved Woodland as shown on the National Forest Inventory.

Churn Wood LoWS is also recorded on the Ancient Woodland Inventory as Ancient and Semi-Natural



Figure 12: Local Wildlife Sites & Special Roadside Verges
Ordnance Survey Scale: 1:10,000



Figure 13: Priority Habitats (MAGIC)
Ordnance Survey Scale: 1:10,000

woodland but also contains Ancient Replanted Woodland to the south. The northern portion of Wall's Wood LoWS is also shown on the Inventory as Ancient and Semi-Natural Woodland.

Ecological input into the 'evidence base' of the emerging draft plan for the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community is publicly accessible and to date, includes an Environmental Audit Review: Ecology and Nature Conservation report which was produced in 2021 and updated in February 2022 by Tim Moya Associates on behalf of Colchester City Council. The report contains a number of recommendations for consideration of ecological aspects of potential development and opportunities for ecological enhancement, including [but not limited to]:

- Retain and safeguard important habitats and areas;
- Buffer sensitive habitats, such as Ancient Woodland and wetland, from any proposed development using strips of undeveloped land between the relevant habitats and proposed development sites or areas;
- Retain wide green corridors;
- Retain mature trees within any proposed development, preferably within wider areas of semi-natural habitat or green corridors;
- Enhance retained habitats by appropriate positive management;
- Create new areas of habitat, such as woodland, scrub, grassland and wetland, including ponds, targeted

especially adjacent to or between retained existing areas of habitat in order to expand and link them, thus making them more resilient; and

- Retain and enhance (through habitat creation and management) habitat links to the wider landscape.

Traditional Orchards

Apple and cherry orchards are a common feature within the Crockleford Heath & Environs area. The prominent orchards are concentrated to the eastern edge of the hamlet, but other individual farm and / or domestic orchards dominate within the wider Tendring district. In most instances, the trees are set within arable fields, the ground flora and grasslands below the trees is less intensely managed than surrounding areas of market farming and more intensive agricultural farming. The historic remnant orchards provide a particularly attractive feature. Here, the old orchard trees with their gnarled bark, scattered in pastures, are in themselves an attractive feature of the area. The historic orchards create an active, ecologically-diverse landscape with an almost 'gardenesque' quality, that responds directly to the market garden character of the Tendring Plain and Bromley Heaths.

Orchards often provide a mosaic habitat, they contain elements of woodland, pasture, meadow grassland and bordered by hedgerows, with patchy areas of scrub. These vegetation types add to the plant diversity and create a diverse network of habitats to support a vast range of species. Orchards also increase habitat connectivity in

fragmented landscapes. It is noted that habitat loss and fragmentation are two of the main threats to much of our wildlife. Many fruit varieties have historical associations with a particular place, have been bred or discovered in an area and named after a place or person, or popularly grown in a certain area. The current decline in traditional orchards however, is threatening many of these varieties and much of the diversity and heritage could be lost.

2.5 Cultural Influences

2.5.1 Historic Environment Designations

The only designated heritage assets within the settlement and its wider environs include Listed Buildings (see **Figure 17**). Full designation descriptions are found in the Appendices of this document.

Listed Buildings

There are two designated heritage assets (refer to **Figures 14 & 15**) located within the settlement, which are both Grade II listed buildings, they are:

- Lamberts, GII Listed (List Entry Number: 1112084)
This is an eighteenth-century timber framed cottage with later alterations
- Ivy Cottage, GII Listed (List Entry Number: 1322646)
This is a likely nineteenth-century timber framed cottage and is the former gatehouse to Churn Wood.



Figures 14 & 15: Gll Lamberts (above) & Ivy Cottage (below)

Non-designated Heritage Assets

Within the settlement boundary, the mid-nineteenth century Methodist Chapel (see **Figure 16**) is considered to be a non-designated heritage asset, in line with Historic England's Advice Note 7, due to its architectural / artistic interest, landmark status and its historic interest. It is a simple but attractive building constructed in red brick with white brick detailing and decorative bargeboarding. Its sash windows are topped with flat headed arches. There is a small porch on the main front, reflective of its former use as a Chapel. Although the Chapel was converted to residential use at the turn of the twenty-first century, it retained its historic form and character, and is still discernible as the historic Chapel building which served the small community here.

Historic Environment Records (HER)

As part of this appraisal the HER has also been consulted, to provide insight into the archaeological significance of the historic environment within the study area and its wider setting. The HER data (refer to **Figure 18**) is depicted on the mapping and monuments are discussed within the historic overview in the following section.



Figure 16: Former Crockleford Heath Primitive Methodist Chapel (Photograph from Alan Went, taken in the 1970s by his father)



KEY (List UID)

1. GII Listed: 1112080, 1112081, 1112079, 1322644
2. GII Listed: 1112084
3. GII Listed: 1322646
4. GII Listed: 1337185

Figure 17: Historic Environment Designations
Ordnance Survey Scale: 1:10,000

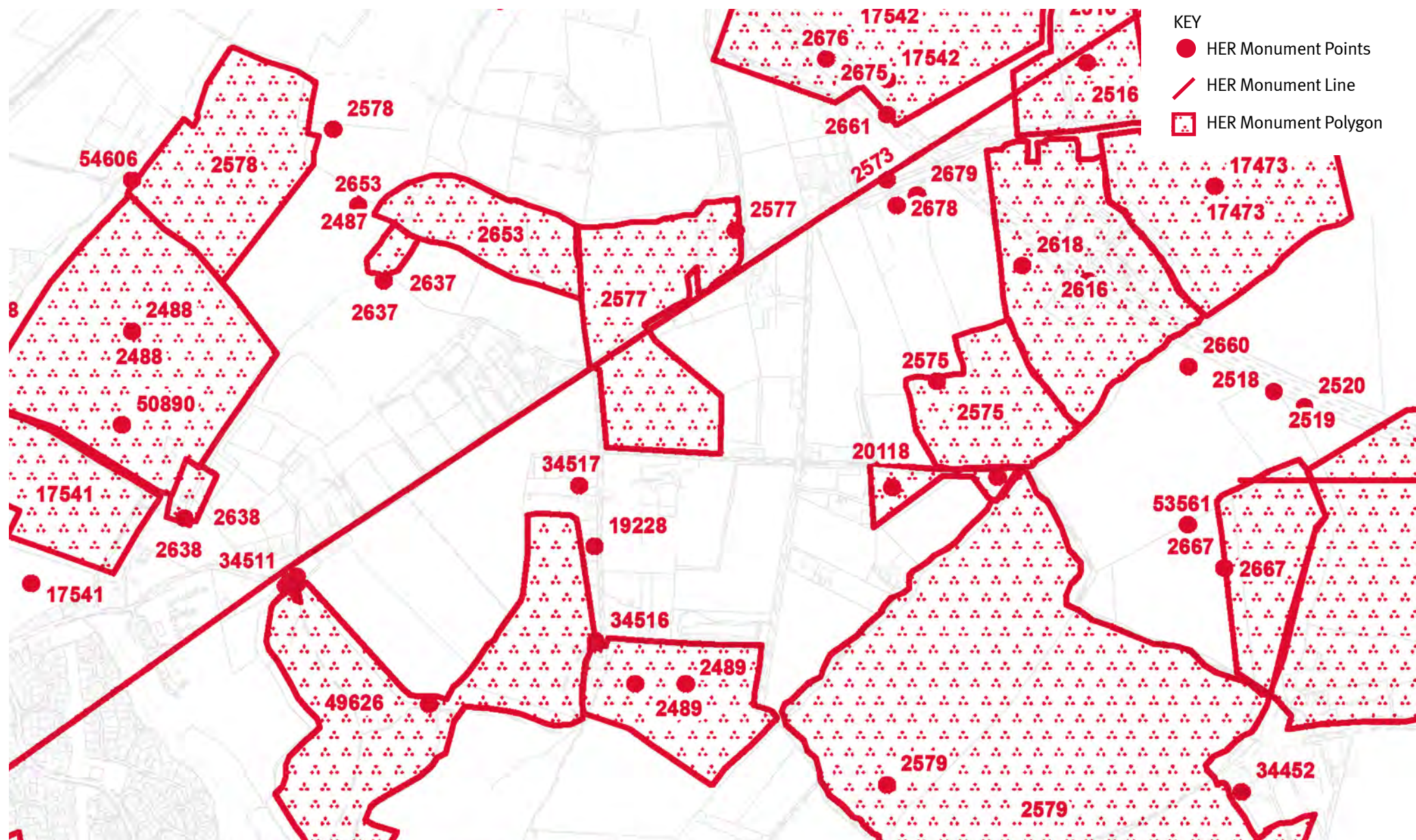


Figure 18: Historic Environment Records
Ordnance Survey Scale: 1:10,000

2.5.2 Historic Overview

This section includes an overview historical timeline, highlighting key periods and events in the history of Crockleford Heath.

Pre-history

Little is known of prehistoric settlement and activity in this area. Within the field to the south of the study area, a Neolithic brown flint axe was found (EHER 2329), providing evidence of prehistoric activity. However, the wider landscape, particularly within the Ardleigh area, is known to contain extensive prehistoric settlement and burial evidence dating from the Neolithic period onwards.

Roman

Bromley Road, to the north of Crockleford Heath, follows the postulated Roman Road from Colchester heading northeast through Ardleigh, connecting the Roman city of Colchester (Camulodunum) with Mistley.

Medieval

The medieval landscape of Crockleford Heath and its wider setting comprised a swathe of heathland, scattered ancient woodland, and dispersed farmsteads (such as Allen's Farmhouse to the southeast of the settlement, dating to 1584).

Some remains of the historic medieval landscape are discernible in Crockleford Heath today, notably in Churn Wood (see **Figure 19**). This is an Ancient and Semi-natural woodland of probable medieval origin, located to the west of Crockleford Heath (EHER 49626). The wood is privately owned, however, there is potential for some historic trees to survive within this stretch of woodland.

The large band of heathland to the east of Colchester would also have provided an important landscape during the medieval period and forms an important part of Crockleford Heaths' history and development throughout this period. Originally, heaths were considered 'waste' land in medieval times, however, this terminology did not hold the same connotations as it does today. Heaths played a vital role in supporting local communities and livestock and were an 'essential complement to the arable fields' which surrounded them.² Historically the soil was too dry and impoverished for arable cultivation, so heaths were managed mainly as pasture with some woodland products. Typically, heaths formed the focal points for settlements, as can be seen by the development of Crockleford Heath. Depending on the use of the heath, the distinction between woodland and heathland was often hard to discern.

² Historic Landscape Characterisation: Essex and John Hunter, The Essex Landscape: A Study of its Form and History (1999) p78

Post-Medieval

In 1740, William Mannock (Lord of the Manor of Martells Halls in Ardleigh) granted 30 acres of Crockleford Heath to "4 or 5 persons who [had] enclosed the said land, which enclosures they [had] enjoyed for 5 or 6 years". Historic records show that freeholders pulled down the enclosures, particularly Mr. Allen of Ardleigh, who was Surveyor of the Highways and a tenant of a person who had rights of Common on the heath. The heath was described by this record as being very poor and used by all manner of persons, which suggests there was little pressure or competition for the use of the land here at this time.³ The objections to the enclosures only arose when a Mr. Laugar refused to pay the poor Rate in respect of those lands.⁴

In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries the landscape was still dominated by a dispersed settlement pattern, with large heaths and scattered farmsteads set within irregular fields, and pockets of ancient woodland. At this time, Crockleford Heath still formed part of the string of heaths which surrounded Colchester, used as dry pasture for common grazing by the local community. Paragraph 2.72 (below) depicts the 1777 Chapman and Andre Map, the earliest map to show the settlement in great detail, along with analysis of the area at this time.

³ Hunter, *ibid.* p163

⁴ ERO D/DU 40/166

Further farmsteads and cottages were established during the second half of the eighteenth century into the early nineteenth century, including the Hill Farm complex to the northwest of Crockleford Heath (comprising a group of grade II listed ancillary buildings). Lamberts cottage (grade II listed) was constructed within the settlement of Crockleford Heath in the eighteenth century. These buildings are evidence of the continuation of the dispersed settlement pattern of Crockleford Heath. Ivy Cottage (grade II listed) was likely built around the time of the enclosure of the Heath in the early 1800s, at the edge of Churn Wood. Although some ancient enclosure had occurred in the wider area surrounding the heath, Parliamentary Enclosure of the nineteenth century resulted in the enclosure of the heaths here; the extent of these former heaths is fossilised in the pattern of roads. Crockleford Heath was enclosed in 1830.⁵ The Tithe Apportionment of 1839 provides evidence of the former heath through the field names surrounding the settlement of Crockleford Heath, for example, the field just to the south of the settlement being named ‘Heath seven acres’, which was used for arable planting.

⁵ Ardleigh Enclosure Award and Map, November 1830, ERO D/DU 1398/17



Figure 19: Photograph of view towards Ancient Churn Wood

Another key historic building was constructed within Crockleford Heath during the mid-1800s: The Primitive Methodist Chapel. The arrival of the Chapel (EHER 19228) is an indication of the small population of labourers within the settlement at this time, with membership around 21 at the time of opening. The land was purchased by James Ringe, a labourer, for six pounds in Oct 1858, for the construction of the Chapel, which was first opened on June 26th 1859. The Chapel was later merged with Methodist churches in 1932.⁶

Further development through the nineteenth century included a row of cottages to the south of the settlement along Chapel Lane, close to Ivy Cottage, and a row of three cottages along the northern side of Green Lane. These appear on the Ordnance Survey Map of 1898, shown in **Figure 24**.

Modern

The settlement of Crockleford Heath saw very few alterations throughout the early 1900s. The local community was mainly made of three large families at this time; these were the Cook, Went and Faircloth families. The large Went and Cook family were recorded on the 1901 census, comprising Hannah Cook, George Went, their thirteen children, and Hannah's niece Minnie.⁷ The Francis Frith's Memories collection also indicates that the "Cook family and the Faircloths were the backbone of the village.

⁶ Alan Went, A Brief History of Crockleford Methodist Chapel, 2020

⁷ https://www.myprimitivemethodists.org.uk/content/chapels/essex-2/a-g-essex-2/crockleford_heath_primitive_methodist_chapel

Granny Cook lived in the house next door to Ivy Cottage [the grade II listed cottage at the southwestern end of the settlement]... Kathleen Cook, had fond memories of her upbringing at Ivy Cottage until she passed away aged 102".⁸

During the Second World War, a Heavy Anti-Aircraft gun site was located to the north of Whitehouse Farm, named in contemporary records as "C5 Colchester: Crockleford Heath". There is documentation for equipment and manning at the site at various dates, and an aerial photograph taken in May 1946 shows four square enclosures in a semi-circle facing south, located on the south side of a track at Crockleford Heath (EHER 20118). Around 250 yards to the west of the anti-aircraft gun site, the parch marks of c. 9 huts can be seen. The area is now gravelled and a small meadow.

By the time of the 1966 Ordnance Survey Map, further dispersed cottages have been developed along Chapel Lane and Wivenhoe Road. Further plantations were also established by 1966.

The Chapel remained a strong focal point of the settlement until the 1960s, renowned for the small string orchestra and strong traditions that it upheld, notably its continued use of the Methodist Hymn Book.⁹ The Chapel closed in 1997, after which, it was sold and converted to residential use.

⁸ <https://www.francisfrith.com/crockleford-heath/memories>

⁹ https://www.curiousfox.com/vill100/Essex11113_1.html

Some small scale development (see **Figure 20**) has occurred within the study area throughout the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries however, the dispersed, loose-knit settlement pattern has been retained. Wider development has occurred within its setting, for example along Bromley Road.



Figure 20: Photograph of twenty-first century development along Green Lane (within the footprint of historic building)

2.7.2 Map Regression

The first map to show the historic landscape of Essex in great detail is the Chapman and Andre Map of Essex 1777 (refer to **Figure 21**). This excerpt shows the extent of Crockleford Heath at this time. The heath covers the settlement, extending to the north beyond what is now Bromley Road (and was formerly the Roman Road) and west beyond the route which once bisected the heath, crossing from its northwest corner, picking up with what is now Wivenhoe Road to the south.

The valley formed by Salary Brook to the west is shown, as well as the ancient Churn Wood. There was a gap between the woodland and heath, likely comprising arable fields. The heath is punctuated by scattered farmsteads and cottages, and likely shows the Lamberts cottage depicted on the western side of the heath. There are two routes which are marked across the heath, the northern route following Bromley Road and another which bisects the heath north to south.

Crockleford House is located on the boundary of the heath to the south and appears to be located on or close to the site of Whitehouse Farm. It is named in the Tithe Apportionment as being a homestead.



Figure 21: Chapman and Andre Map of Essex 1777
Historic Map Scale: NTS



Figure 22: Tithe Map of Ardleigh 1839
Historic Map Scale: NTS

The next map to depict the area in detail is the 1839 Tithe Map of Ardleigh (see **Figure 22**). This map shows substantial changes to the historic landscape illustrating the changes brought about by the enclosure of the heath.

The extent of the former heath has been generally retained by the new road layout and plot boundaries, visible on the Tithe Map. The boundary was formed to the west by Chapel Lane and rear of plots along Chapel Lane, to the south by Chapel Lane and to the east by Wivenhoe Road and the fields to the south of the footpath which leads off Green Lane (not shown on the excerpt of the Ardleigh Map).

Some further buildings have been developed within the area by this time, including Ivy Cottage and the cottages surrounding it, as well as dispersed homesteads along Chapel Lane's southern extent and Green Lane.

The introduction of plantations, which connect the ancient Churn Wood and the settlement, extending into the hamlet of Crockleford Heath, are also apparent at this time.

The first edition Ordnance Survey Map 1881 (refer to

Figure 23) shows very little changes occurred in the late nineteenth century. The Methodist Chapel appears on the west side of Chapel Lane, and some of the buildings to the south of the area, along the southern extent of Chapel Lane, appear to have been demolished. The second edition Ordnance Survey Map 1898 (refer to



Figure 23: Ordnance Survey Map 1881
Historic Ordnance Survey Scale: NTS

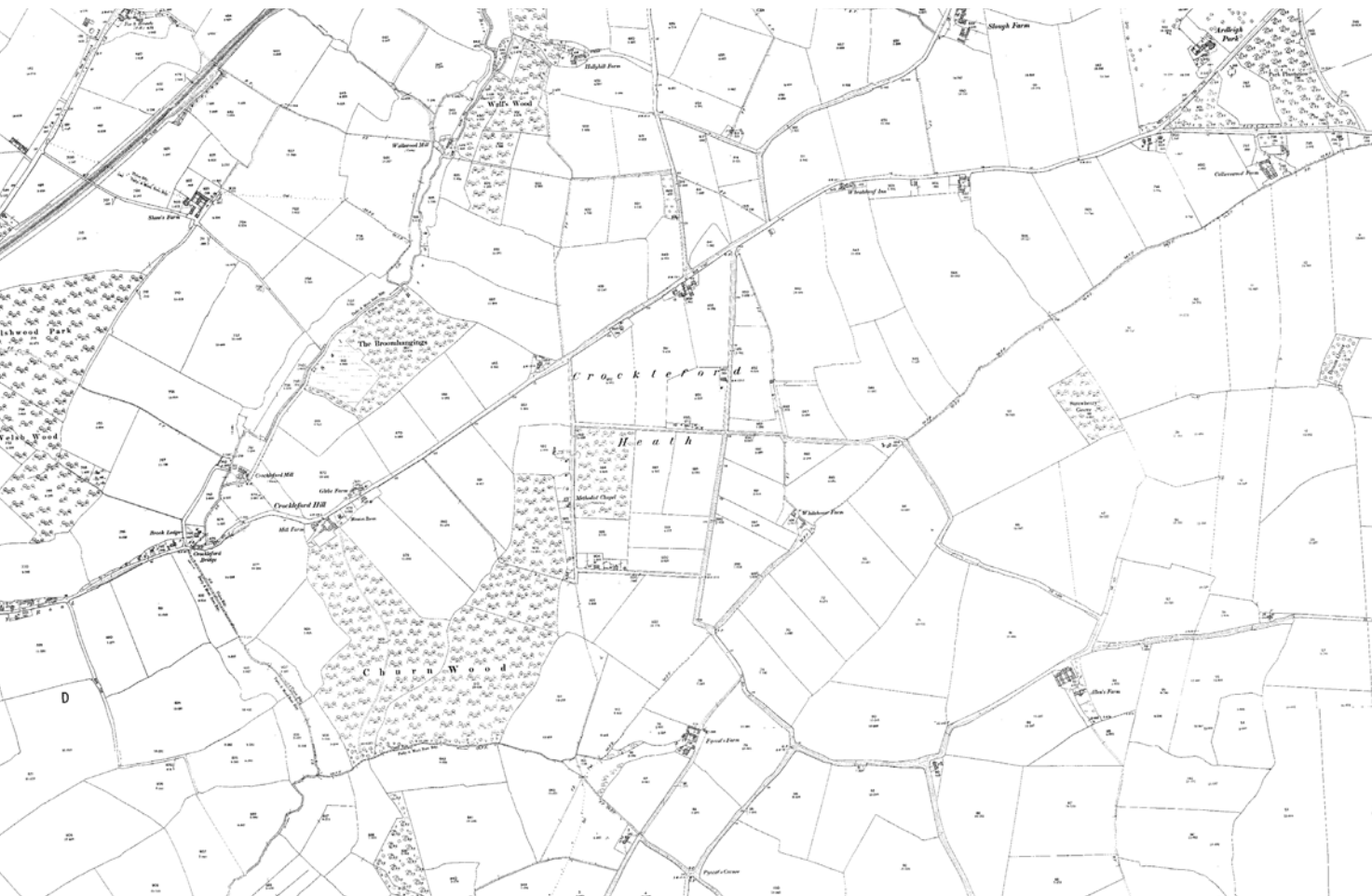


Figure 24: Ordnance Survey Map 1898
Historic Ordnance Survey Scale: NTS

Figure 24) shows that no changes occurred during the late nineteenth century. Within the setting of the settlement, a small group of buildings at the end of the footpath leading from Green Lane were demolished by this time.

The third edition Ordnance Survey Map 1923 (illustrated

on **Figure 25**) shows that an L-shaped building was constructed in the south-western portion of the settlement, on the north side of Chapel Lane. The pair of cottages opposite the termination of Green Lane were also constructed by this time.

The 1958 Ordnance Survey map (not shown) highlights some small-scale development within the plots of larger homesteads, for example around the Ivy House cottage to the north and on the corner of Chapel Lane to its northeast. Plantations and orchard were also established during the mid-1900s, the main one being a large, L-shaped portion of the central portion of land within the settlement, extending to the north and northeast beyond Green Lane and flanking Wivenhoe Road.

There were some small changes within the setting of the settlement by this time as well; the footpath leading from Ivy Cottage also appears to have been altered, flanking the woodland boundary before crossing the field. Further ribbon development along Bromley Road has also occurred by this time.

The introduction of the garden to the south west corner of the settlement was taken from the field named Heath seven acres, which was used for arable planting, appears to have occurred throughout the second half of the twentieth century, as it appears on aerial mapping dating to the year 2000.



Figure 25: Ordnance Survey Map 1923
Historic Ordnance Survey Scale: NTS

2.7.4 Building Phasing

This map (refer to **Figure 27**) shows the historic phasing of development within Crockleford Heath identifiable on historic mapping and aerial imagery of the settlement (unidentifiable buildings have been left uncoloured). This phasing demonstrates that the earliest buildings within the historic landscape are the scattered farmsteads that surround Crockleford Heath, and the cottages which begin to develop within it from the eighteenth century onwards, most substantially following the enclosure of the heath.

2.7.5 Modern Land Use and Development

Approximately 80% of the study area is managed as arable farmland, market gardening or woodland, which means that Crockleford & Environs area is a fundamentally rural environment. The built-up areas of the Crockleford Heath equate to less than 3% of the study area (including the garden curtilage of dwellings). The residential properties contained within the hamlet are read as part of the strong rural landscape and wooded context. The degree to which the landscape of the study area is seen as unspoilt or remote is therefore influenced by the loose-knit clustering and pattern of buildings, infrastructure and the presence (or absence) of other forms of development.

Agricultural Development

Scattered farmsteads, agricultural buildings, halls and individual residential properties form the majority of development in the rural countryside of Crockleford Heath & Environs. The locations of these buildings reflects the inherent landscape history of place and are essential to the landscape character of the study area and / or provide interest or act as local landmarks. The present-day settlement pattern is largely rooted in a medieval system of farms and villages, with more modern farm development still being accepted as part of the rural character of the surrounding area.

The farmsteads are noticeably large and generally formed by clusters of agricultural buildings, some of which are listed or set within the open landscape and provide visual or historic interest and a sense of place. Across the study area, the use of red brick, black clapboard (weatherboarding) and red clay roof tiles is prevalent as part of the local vernacular of agricultural outbuildings.

The main farms within the study area contain an array of modern and historic outbuildings, barns, sheds, cart lodges and / or greenhouses. While some of these buildings have a peri-urban character, they also contribute to the productiveness of the landscape and are often accepted as being integral to the diversification of farming and horticulture. Some of the larger outbuildings are highly visible but have become part of the agricultural landscape and therefore not overly intrusive. That being said, there

are a few instances where the scale and / or siting of these buildings has an adverse impact on the setting of adjacent buildings, the local landscape and / or the visual amenity of the study area.

Very little urbanisation has taken place within the study area but with more noticeable development occurring to the north-east of Colchester. As a result, the rural settlement pattern of farms, halls and hamlets, all of which are centred on a network of historic narrow and ancient lanes, remains largely intact and therefore retain a distinctive dispersed quality.



Figure 26: Photograph looking east from Mount Pleasant



Figure 27: Building Phasing (drawn from historic mapping sources)
Ordnance Survey Scale: 1:10,000

As a rural area, the presence or prominence of Colchester also plays a key role in determining the degree to which the study area is perceived, in addition to the fringe impacts of the road network (e.g., Bromley Road to the north). The distribution of farm buildings, halls and residential properties within the hamlet and surrounding area has a strong influence on the sense of remoteness and tranquillity across the study area.

Potential / Existing Development sites

The Tendring District Local Plan 2013-2033 and Beyond: North Essex Authorities' Shared Strategic Section 1 (2021) identifies Crockleford Heath & Environs as forming part of the Tendring & Colchester Borders Garden Community. The Local Plan (Para 8.6) states that the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community will be a planned new settlement that responds directly to the regional, local and individual site context and opportunities to create development underpinned by a series of interrelated principles which are based on the Town and Country Planning Association (TCPA) Garden City Principles, adapted for the specific North Essex context as set out in the North Essex Garden Communities Charter.

The new garden community will deliver between 2,200 and 2,500 homes and approximately 7 hectares of employment land and provision for Gypsies and Travellers within the Plan period (as part of an expected overall total of between 7,000 and 9,000 homes and 25 hectares of employment land to be delivered beyond 2033). All new development

should reflect place shaping principles and respond positively to local character and context to enhance the quality of existing places and their environs.

The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) (October 2022) identifies several sites nearby including [but not limited to]:

- 17/00859/OUT was an Outline application which sought planning permission for the erection of up to 145 dwellings, the removal of prefabricated livery stables and the provision of public open space, landscaping and sustainable drainage systems and vehicular access point from Bromley Road. The site is located to the south of Bromley Road at the eastern settlement edge of Colchester and approximately 5.6km from the city centre. Existing residential development exists at Longridge which extends down the opposite side of the valley towards the Salary Brook to the western boundaries of the site.

The original proposal was submitted in Outline and was refused by Tendring District Council. The application was later appealed (Appeal Ref: APP/P1560/W/17/3185776) under Section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and allowed at appeal by the Planning Inspectorate. A subsequent Reserved Matters application (LPA Ref. 19/01392/DETAIL) was submitted in September 2019 for details of appearance, landscaping, layout and scale; and

discharge of conditions 3 (landscape specification), 5 (levels), and 6 (lighting) and was approved in May 2020.

- SP7 refers to the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community for 7,000-9,000 homes as indicated in the Local Plan on an area that crosses the Tendring / Colchester administrative boundaries. The proposals are to be the subject of a specific Development Plan Document which will provide more detailed parameters and requirements for the development.
- RSC5 regards land north of Meadow Close and west of Holly Way in the village of Elmstead Market. The estimated dwelling yield suggest 72 dwellings on the basis of 80% of the site being developed at a density of 20 dwellings per hectare. This site lies outside the settlement boundary of the Local Plan but had been allocated in an earlier revision of the document and was met with strong local objection. The land in question is subject of an on-going objection at publication stage.
- 18/01884/FUL was a Full Application seeking planning permission for the erection of 41 residential dwellings, open space, allotments, parking, access and landscaping. This site is located on land to the west of Church Road in the village of Elmstead Market and was granted approval in May 2020. Several Non-Material Amendments (NMAs) and Discharge of Condition

applications have been submitted since the original granted planning permission.

- 18/01307/DETAIL is a Reserved Matters application for 32 dwellings, land for a community facility and associated parking and infrastructure. The site lies on land to the east of Tye Road in Elmstead and was granted planning permission in August 2019.
- RSC6 relates to Land to the north of Colchester Road and east of Tye Road. The estimated dwelling capacity suggest 30 dwellings on the basis of 80% of the site being developed at a density of 20 dwellings per hectare. Whilst this land has not been submitted as part of the call for sites process, development exists to the north and east so this would form a logical extension to the adjacent development. The Council considers that due to the recent grant of planning permission for land to the north and east and hard boundaries formed by the highway to the west and south, it may be the case that this land would be suitable for residential development to “fill-in” this corner of Elmstead Market. There are also concerns about disproportionate levels of growth being allowed in the village.

Other notable development

- 21/02164/FUL is regarding a Full Planning application for the proposed construction of 14 dwellings, new

access, landscaping and associated works. The site is located on land to the south-west of Crockleford Grange on Bromley Road in Ardleigh. Planning permission was refused in November 2022 and at the time of writing (according to the Council’s Public Access System) an appeal has been lodged.

The Ardleigh Neighbourhood Plan

The Ardleigh Neighbourhood Plan 2020 – 2033 (December 2022) states that it does not allocate any housing sites in Ardleigh or set any minimum housing figures for the Parish. The adopted housing strategy is such that Ardleigh could deliver zero additional homes over the plan period and the District would still meet or exceed its minimum housing requirements. Notwithstanding this, the Neighbourhood Plan adopts a positive and proactive approach to the delivery of new housing in line with the national objective to significantly boost the housing land supply. Ardleigh Parish Council is also supportive of Tendring District Council’s ambition to exceed minimum housing requirements. But note critically that this must be balanced against other important planning considerations, including the capacity of infrastructure / facilities and the retention of Ardleigh’s built / landscape character and rural identity.

Roads and Transportation

The presence of the road infrastructure does not exert of strong influence over the character of the study area. The main strategic roads are located to the north and north-

east of Crockleford Heath & Environs and as a whole, there are very few sections of major modern roads. The low-key nature of the road network is integral to the wider perception of the pervasive rural character of the study area. Notwithstanding, the more overriding elements include:

- The A120 trunk road located to the north-east of the study area and generally follows the course of the Roman established road of Stane Street from Puckeridge in Hertfordshire (east) to its terminus at Colchester in Essex (west).
- Bromley Road is situated to the north of Crockleford Heath and follows a broadly south-west to north-east direction from Colchester (west) to Manningtree (east). There is some anecdotal evidence to suggest that Lidar mapping has revealed a branch of this road as extending all the way to Harwich in Essex.
- Wivenhoe Road is located to the east of Crockleford Heath and is a rural lane that connects Bromley Road (north) to Tye Road (south-east) and the A133 / Colchester Road which lies to the west of village of Elmstead Market.
- Chapel Lane is a broadly L-shaped rural lane that travels a short distance and connects Bromley Road (north) to Wivenhoe Road (south-east). It includes generous grassed and wildflower verges which are designated as both a Local Wildlife Site (LoWS) and Special Roadside Verge.

- Green Lane lies to the north of the hamlet and is a short rural lane connecting Chapel Lane (east) to Wivenhoe Road (west).

In addition to the extensive PRoW network, the pathways also serve as key connectors from Crockleford Heath to Colchester and vice versa. It is noted that the footpath connection along Bromley Road terminates at Crockleford Hill near to the Listed Buildings at Hill Farm. This means that pedestrians and cyclists using Bromley Road would need to negotiate with traffic whilst walking along this busy road. Similarly, Wivenhoe Road is a relatively narrow rural lane which lacks any formal footpath and whilst there are alternative ‘off-road’ routes which serve Crockleford to Elmstead Market, it is noted that this road is used by cyclists and walkers.

Infrastructure

While there are some elements of modern infrastructure within the landscape of Crockleford Heath & Environs, overall these features are reasonably well-dispersed across the study area. Overall, the rural landscape is not considered to be heavily cluttered with intrusive items. In some cases, the larger infrastructure items can be absorbed by the existing landscape fabric of the surroundings. Elsewhere, ancillary items such as fencing, safety barriers and / or signage may result in a sense of visual intrusion. The infrastructure items considered within the study area include [inter alia]:

- The pylon / overhead power lines extending in a broadly south-west to north-east direction across the southern portion of the study area.
- Ardleigh Solar Farm is located approx. 2km to the north-east of the study area on land at Chancery Farm and lies to the east of the Grade II Listed Ardleigh Park.
- The Lawford Grid 132/33kV Grid Substation lies beyond to the north-east of Ardleigh Solar Farm to the south of Little Bromley Road / Ardleigh Road.
- Ardleigh Reservoir lies approx. 1.7km to the north of Crockleford Heath beyond the study area. The Reservoir is well-screened due to existing woodland and intervening vegetation.

It is noted that an EIA Scoping Report has been published on the National Infrastructure Planning website (Dated: 07/11/2022) which sets out proposals for a new 400kV electricity reinforcement between the existing substation at Norwich Main in Bramford to the existing substation at Tilbury in Essex as part of the East Anglia Green Energy Enablement (GREEN). The project will include [among others]: the installation of approximately 180km of 400kV overhead lines, approx. 500-550no. 50m (height) steel lattice pylons; 10km of 400kV underground cables (largely located through the Dedham Vale AONB); and a new 400kV substation and associated works. The proposed substation would be fenced, contain high voltage electrical equipment, such as circuit breakers and shunt reactors, support structures, control buildings, a permanent access road and parking areas.



Figure 27: Photograph of the A120 Trunk Road

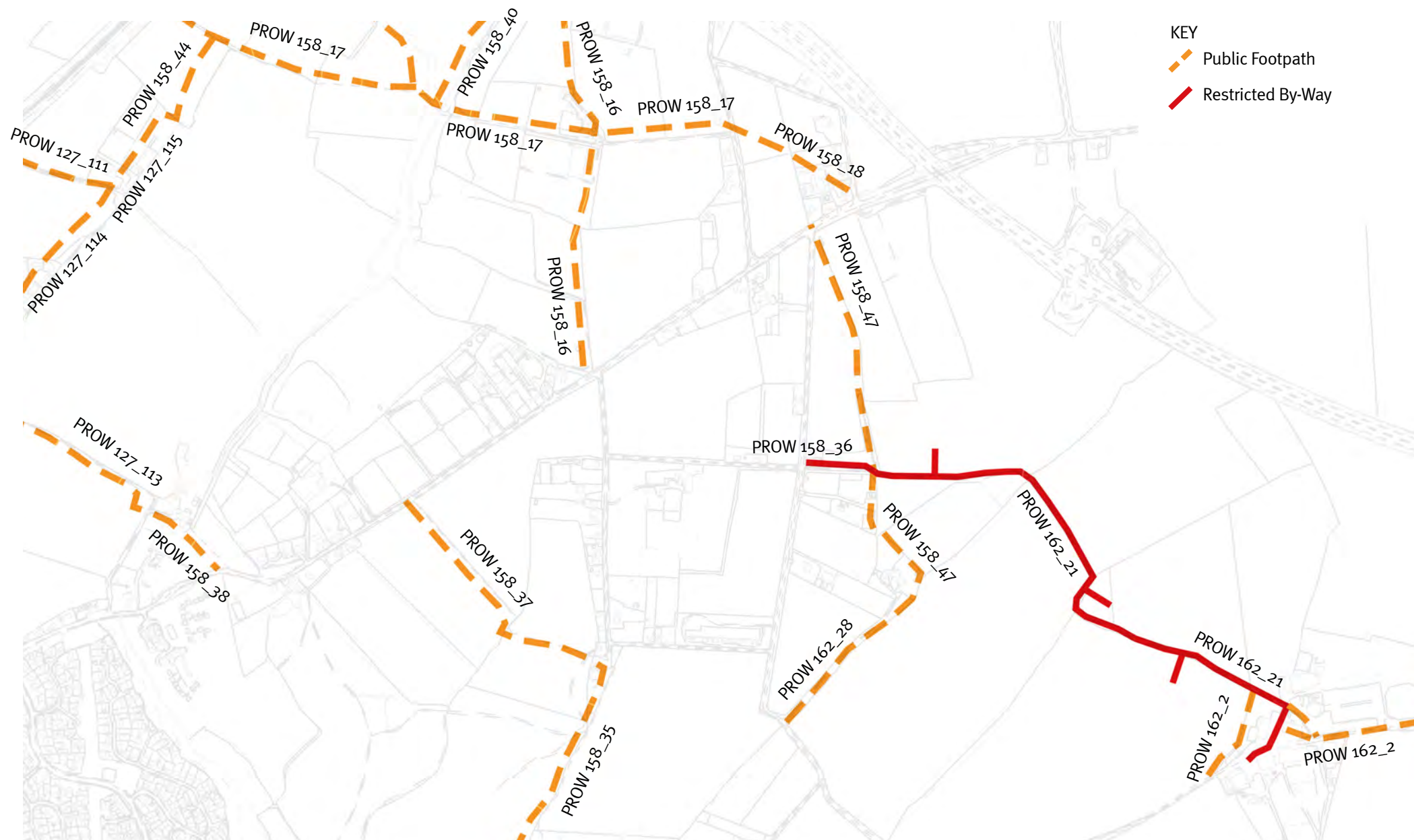


Figure 28: PROW Network (Source: Essex County Council)
Ordnance Survey Scale: 1:10,000



Figure 29: Promoted Routes and Long Distance Walks
Ordnance Survey Scale: 1:10,000

2.7.6 Access and Recreation

The study area is well-connected to the Colchester and offers an extensive network of Public Rights of Way (PROW) to the rural countryside (refer to **Figure 28**). These routes clearly link with the narrow and ancient lanes thereby allowing even greater access throughout the wider district. The study area includes a broad mix of surfaced and unsurfaced footpaths and restricted by-ways which, for the most part, appear to be maintained with gate infrastructure, stiles, fencing and signage. Though as evidenced from the fieldwork / site visits, there are areas of noticeable degradation including, potholes, littering / flytipping, blocking-up of the PROW network, limited vegetation clearance and structural damage to a wooden footbridge. The routes appear to be well-used by a range of people, including walkers and dog walkers, bird watchers, cyclists, joggers and evidence of horse riders.

The lanes (i.e., Chapel Lane, Green Lane and Wivenhoe Road) which serve Crockleford Heath are used heavily by the local community for walking / dog walking, exercise and cycling. It was noted at the time of the survey, that the gateway treatment of footpaths was relatively poor, particularly where they terminate at busy roads (i.e., Bromley Road) and with the lanes.

The PROW network also forms the framework for several promoted routes and long-distance walks that exist within the study area (refer to **Figure 29**) and wider district including [but not limited to]:

- The Colchester Orbital
- Elmstead Market Walk
- Camuplodunum
- West Tendingr Marathon

The Sustrans National Cycleway Network does not pass through the study area, with the closest route (National Cycle Network Route 51) located approximately 3km south-west of Crockleford Heath in Colchester and a link-route passing through Elmstead Market.

In addition to the extensive PROW network, the pathways alongside roadways also serve as key connectors from Crockleford Heath to the City of Colchester and vice versa. It is noted that the footpath connection along Bromley Road terminates by Crockleford Hill (near to the congregation of Listed Buildings at Hill Farm). This means that pedestrians and cyclists using Bromley Road would need to negotiate with traffic whilst walking along this busy road. Similarly, Wivenhoe Road is a relatively narrow rural lane which lacks any formal pathways and whilst there are alternative 'off-road' routes forming part of the PROW network which connect Crockleford to Elmstead Market, it is noted that this road is relatively well-used by cyclists and ramblers.



Figure 30: Photograph looking west from Public Footpath (PROW 158_35)



Figures 31: Photograph showing wooden stile leading to Churn Wood (PROW 158_37)

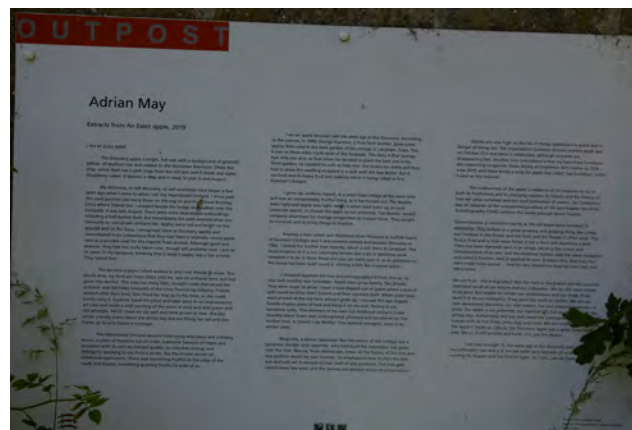
2.6 Cultural Associations

2.6.1 Art and Literature

Despite the rich cultural influences and scenic qualities of Crockleford Heath and its immediate surroundings, the study area is generally not known to be associated with any major historical works of literature or art.

Whilst limited historical artistic references have been identified within the study area, there are more recent examples of active arts community projects that utilise the local landscape as a source of inspiration. This is best demonstrated by the work being carried out by OutPost; an artist-led project organisation funded by Essex County Council which was initiated in 2019, as a means of taking art directly out into the landscape and aimed at drawing more attention to the little-known corners of the county.

An example of the work being produced by OutPost was identified on-site, whereby an interpretive signage board was found located within the north-eastern extent of the study area. The board was affixed to an outpost structure and showcases an extract of 'Nature and Tradition: An Essex Apple' by author Adrian May. This artistic work makes a positive contribution to the area, providing a place to appreciate the historic horticultural landscape and sense of place. It also connects more widely with the interpretive cultural narrative that exists across Tendring and Essex.



Figures 32 & 33: Photograph showing interpretation board by OutPost and an extract from 'An Essex Apple'

2.7 Perceptual Qualities

The way in which we perceive the landscape is informed not only through the visual experience, but also through the landscape's associations with people and events, or through its sounds, smells, colours, textures and feel of the landscape medium. The memories and cultural associations made with the landscape relate to an individual's own experiences and history, while some associations can exist at a local or national level. It has been recognised within this study how people view, value and enjoy the local landscape and the perception of Crockleford Heath and its relationship with the peripheries of Crockleford.

2.7.1 Memories and Associations

Our memories, senses and associations are all personal to us and together give the landscape of Crockleford Heath & Environs its sense of place. For example, the Bromley Messenger (Credit: Hugh Frostick) published an article in 2013 about 'Memories of the Blitz around the Bromleys' which recounted the memories of Frank Faircloth who once lived in Crockleford.

"Although Frank Faircloth was a Clacton and then Crockleford lad at the time of the war, his interesting experiences certainly involve the Bromley villages.

He was the youngest of four boys, his older

brothers being of service age when war came. He lived with his parents and grandfather until evacuation began from their home in Clacton; Frank was sent to Gloucestershire where he had a happy time with kind foster parents. After a few months a farmer had offered his parents an old, disused cottage in Green Lane, Crockleford near where his grandfather, Alfred Cook, was staying owing to maternal family connections. Frank could then come back to Essex. Two of his brothers, Ernest and Reg, had joined the Light Anti-Aircraft Battery known as "Clacton's Own"; they had been posted to protect the Pylons, manning the gun near Pellens Corner. Meanwhile their oldest brother, Leonard, had joined the Air Force Police and also happened to be posted to the Pylons! And so, from being scattered all ways, the family found themselves all clustered around Great Bromley.

Frank has many memories of those times. One striking memory was looking along Green Lane one evening to see a light in the sky over Great Bromley. It was a parachute mine (he does not know why they had lights on them) and when that exploded, the huge flash behind clearly illuminated the tower of Great Bromley church, a vision that persists in his mind.

He remembers taking the school bus to Manningtree which went down Carringtons Rd (they collected Geoff "Curly" Hurst from Bluegates). One day as the bus went up towards Little Bromley Church, he remembers seeing a string of 3 or more bombs landing across the fields, presumably aimed at the radar pylons

but falling off target.

As an aside, Frank says he remembers a girl getting on the bus at the Little Bromley war memorial; she was called Kate but he can't remember her surname - does anyone know who this would be?

Frank says he often preferred to be outside rather than in the shelter at home as it was all rather exciting for a boy and there was no point worrying about the danger. One day he went off for a cycle ride round the lanes and on his return found he had missed seeing an American fighter plane from Boxted Airfield crash landing in the orchard right next to the house!

Just up the road there was a heavy AA gun emplacement - Frank says you certainly knew when they were firing! It was like someone was bashing up on your floorboards with a sledgehammer and the plates would jump up and down on the table!

Frank's father John (aka Jack) was an air-raid warden in Crockleford, and whilst he was very particular about the local lights being blacked out, he did not seem too worried about the lights coming from the fields between Hall Road and Elmstead Hall. Frank knew nothing of it at the time, but his father must have known it was a decoy site, used to attract attention away from Colchester Railway Station. In such installations there were metal strips laid out to shine like rails and men would move objects with lights around the field, or light fires as if it were a bombed target. Possibly one unfortunate result of this deception was Elmstead Hall being damaged by fire; Frank saw

the parachute incendiary bombs drop there and the stacks catching light.”

A guided ‘walk and talk’ was held on the 21st July. The stakeholder group met at the entrance of the footpath on Bromley Road and followed a route through Crockleford Heath & Environs. Additional content was provided to Ardleigh Parish Council for an Information Drop-In Session at the Village Hall, on the 24th August.

An online workshop was held online on the 21st September, which aimed to provide a platform to share the findings of the character appraisal to date and to facilitate discussions between stakeholders and residents to share their views and input into the development of the final report. Invitations were sent widely to stakeholders and residents, and posters were shared for circulation. 14no. attendees joined the event in total, including representatives from the local Parish Council and Colchester Borough Council, a representative from Essex Gardens Trust, and residents including a local archivist, long-term residents, and members of the CEAG.

Following the online engagement, short questionnaire questions were circulated with all attendees, who were also encouraged to pass them on to those who may want to get in touch.

The details of the guided walk and talk, online workshop and questionnaire responses can be found in **Appendix A**.

2.7.2 Tranquility and Dark Skies

Perceptual qualities are of particular importance to the character of the study area. The mapping demonstrates that a large portion of Crockleford Heath & Environs has noticeably darker skies, even in despite of the brighter skies emitted from a multitude of light sources to the south-west from Colchester (see **Figure 33**). Although the study area remains well-used by local residents and visitors, it is at times a markedly quiet and rural landscape, with a range of dwellings which reflect time depth and a strong sense of tranquillity, this gives the study area a feeling of peace and sense of place. For the most part, the landscape has seen little change. This means that the study area generally lacks intrusive development (other than noted above) and retains vast dark night skies. The residential properties are distinctive, with intricate gardens which are well-embedded into the wooded landscape framework.

The extent of light pollution not only limits our views of starry skies but also disrupts wildlife’s natural patterns. The dark landscapes and dark skies of Crockleford Heath & Environs are a defining characteristic of its rural character and quality. The Campaign for Prevention of Rural England (CPRE) have mapped England’s light pollution and dark skies at a national scale and that more should be done to ensure that communities are lit in a responsible way, with local authorities considering how they can improve their approach to light sources, ensuring that new developments

are lit appropriately and that areas of existing dark skies are protected.

The wider Tendring district includes a number of areas where the pollution from light sources is relatively low, with good opportunities for residents and visitors to enjoy the dark night skies that cannot be experienced in urban towns and cities. At the local scale, individual light sources within the study area include residential lights, limited commercial lighting and farm security / flood lighting. Further consideration of the positioning of lighting can limit or reduce the light pollution emitted by such features.



Figure 34: Dark Skies Map (Source: CPRE)
Ordnance Survey Scale: 1:10,000

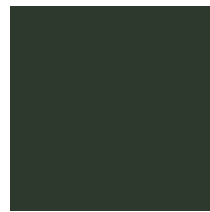
2.7.3 Colour and Texture

The colour and texture of the cultivated and horticultural landscape of Crockleford Heath & Environs is noted within the published landscape character assessments as changing with the seasons. The variations that can be found within the study area mean that dramatic changes in background colour are relatively short-lived and the perception of this experience is accentuated by changing light conditions and vegetation types.

The dense-wooded backcloth is at times seen as a dark silhouette against the sky, the darkness of colour is of particular importance to the character of the study area as it emphasises the naturalised form and nuance of the landscape. The palette of the wooded ridge and mature tree-lined field boundaries means that colours are often more associated with the ground and its cultivation, as opposed to the fluctuating skyscape. The colour green dominates across the study area and is considered a defining characteristic of the rural landscape.

The hue (colour) of the landscape can also fluctuate with distance, with some colours in views appearing lighter from afar and greens shifting to blueish and purpleish hues when seen from a distance. The natural greens of the woodland and yellows of the productive arable 'prairie' fields also vary with seasonality and land management and form the backdrop to the market garden landscape.

Landscape Hue



NCS S 8010-G10Y



NCS S 6530-G50Y



NCS S 1020-Y



NCS S 1050-G50Y



NCS S 5540-G40Y



NCS S 4050-G50Y

Anticipated Winter Palette



NCS S 7005-Y20R



NCS S 6010-G90Y



NCS S 8505-R20B



NCS S 6020-Y20R

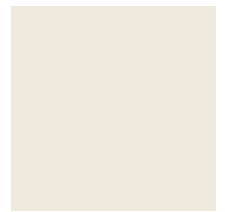


NCS S 7020-Y



NCS S 8010-Y10R

Landscape Tonality



NCS S 0603-Y20R



NCS S 4502-G



NCS S 7502-G



Chapter 3

LANDSCAPE & HISTORIC APPRAISAL

3 Landscape & Historic Appraisal

3.1 Historic Character Appraisal

3.1.1 General Character

The settlement of Crockleford Heath has retained its historic rural character and dispersed settlement pattern.

3.1.2 Spatial Analysis

The settlement follows a dispersed, linear development pattern. It is formed by a grid of streets, which are characteristically straight and narrow, likely established at the time of the enclosure of the heath in the early nineteenth century. They traverse the former extent of the heath, which gives them their distinctive pattern. The main route through the area is the larger Wivenhoe Road to the east. Chapel Lane forms a secondary route, in an L-shape which connects Bromley Road to the north with Wivenhoe Road to the southeast. Bisecting the settlement is Green Lane, a narrow track with mounded grass verges and hedgerows. This is a very quiet route through the area, providing access to a small number of cottages.

Plots within the settlement are dispersed, with pockets of nineteenth and twentieth century development along Chapel Lane to the west, at the bend of Chapel Lane around Ivy Cottage, and with some more dispersed buildings along the north of Chapel Lane. A late twentieth-century homestead with ancillary buildings is located to



Figure 35: Photograph of road sign (Chapel Lane)



Figure 36: View towards gardens south of Ivy Cottage



Figure 37: View down Green Lane, shaded by trees and lined with grass verges

the south side of Green Lane, with a small single storey late-nineteenth century cottage to the north of Green Lane as well with some outbuildings surrounding it. Plot sizes vary, although are typically fairly large, with buildings are set back within their plots behind front gardens and with substantial gardens to the rear also.

3.1.3 Open Spaces, Gardens and Trees

The open spaces and green character make a vital contribution to the unique, verdant character of Crockleford Heath. A significant portion of land within the settlement is devoted to green and open spaces, including private gardens, fields and plantations, meadows, grassed verges, and hedgerows. These contribute to the historic, rural character of the settlement as well as its tranquillity.

Although the space is green, with plenty of open space, it is important to note that plots are frequently bounded by high hedgerows and mature trees, which contribute to a sense of enclosure and seclusion rather than openness. Views stretch along the straight roads and lanes; however, they are limited across the area more widely due to the density of planting. Views into the settlement from the fields within its setting are characteristically more open.

Mature trees line the streets and are scattered throughout the area, particularly within historic hedgerows. The tree canopies provide shade coverage over the lanes and roads, further contributing to a sense of enclosure and seclusion.

These historic trees make an important contribution to our understanding of the historic development of the area and its setting, particularly those which are within Churns Wood and associated with the plantations established across the area in the nineteenth century.

Private gardens also make an important contribution and are a positive feature of Crockleford Heath. The majority of the front garden plots have been retained, and are well planted with trees, shrubs, and bordered by hedges. They act as a screen from the lanes towards buildings, with domestic plots appearing nestled within woodland. The gardens surrounding Ivy Cottage make a particularly notable positive contribution to the area. They are well maintained, with flower and shrub planting as well as a pond, which together complement the historic cottage and form an important part of its setting. The twentieth century garden stretching to the south of Ivy Cottage and its neighbouring buildings forms the boundary of the settlement. This also makes a positive contribution due to its landscaping, comprising a large pond with a bridge over, flower and shrub planting, and specimen trees. It is situated between Churn Wood and the arable fields beyond. This space likely once served as a buffer between the woodland and heath, with a soft transition between the two, meaning that its use as a garden with planting is a positive contribution to the historic character of the space.



Figure 38: Buildings considered to make a positive contribution to historic character
Ordnance Survey Scale: 1:10,000

3.1.4 Historic Architecture & Locally Important Buildings

Although sparsely developed, there are a number of historic buildings across the settlement which have retained some original features and contribute to the historic, rural character of Crockleford Heath (illustrated on **Figure 38**). The criteria used to identify positive buildings has been drawn from the Historic England's Advice Note 1 (Table 1, page 21). Historic development is typically of a modest scale, due to many of their original use as labourers' cottages, with some single storey cottages and with no buildings beyond two storeys in height.

Buildings are typically constructed in red brick with painted render. Historic roofing, where it survives, varies from red pantiles over cottages, to the thatch of Lamberts and Ivy Cottage, and natural slate over the Chapel. Decorative bargeboarding is a feature which can be seen on some of the buildings throughout the settlement and contributes to the quality historic architectural character. A sample of the historic buildings, showcasing their character and appearance is shown on the following pages.

The majority of historic buildings, however, have over time lost their original doors and windows, and many have had substantial alterations and extensions, which somewhat detract from their historic character. This is particularly the case for semi-detached cottages along Chapel Lane

and Wivenhoe Road, within the settlement boundary and its immediate setting, which have seen their footprints considerably expanded from their original core.

As part of this appraisal, those buildings which make a positive contribution to the character of the area are depicted on the map opposite. Of these, The Methodist Chapel is considered to be locally important, making a particularly notable contribution due to its landmark quality, architectural detailing, and historic interest as a former building of community value.



Figure 39: Ivy Cottage, thatched and weatherboarded on main facade



Figure 41: Outbuilding of The Cottage on Green Lane, red brick with timber doors and windows



Figure 43: Shrub Cottage on Chapel Lane, much altered, rendered with plain and pan tile roofing



Figure 40: The Cottage on Green Lane, rendered with pan tile roofing and timber windows



Figure 42: Lamberts, Chapel Lane, thatched and rendered with timber casement windows



Figure 44: Churnwood Cottage on Chapel Lane, with a gambrel roof and decorative bargeboarding

3.2 Heritage Significance

Crockleford Heath draws its significance from many different facets and attributes of the historic, natural and built environment. The following section outlines why the settlement is considered to be of special importance.

3.2.1 Significance

The key significance of Crockleford Heath is derived from its unique character as a small hamlet of dispersed cottages and farmsteads. Its pattern of development is also significant, as the extent of the former historic heath is fossilised in the road layout. The majority of buildings in the area date from the nineteenth – twentieth century, although Lamberts is an important example of an earlier building within the settlement. The low density of small scale, residential development and the strong verdant character contribute to the historic significance of the settlement.

There are a number of designated and non-designated heritage assets within the area which are of significance. These are the Grade II listed Lamberts, Grade II listed Ivy Cottage, and the former Methodist Chapel.

Lamberts draws its significance from its historic interest as one of the earliest domestic buildings to be established within the area, dating from at least the eighteenth century.



Figure 45: Aerial view of Lamberts (Source: Rightmove5)

It is also of architectural and artistic interest, due to its retention of historic fabric and its resulting character. Lamberts is a single storey timber framed and plastered dwelling, in a rectangular planform with later extensions to the north and rear. It has small paned casement windows, and a partially thatched roof. Its setting makes a positive contribution to its character, the house located centrally within a large garden, with fortuitous views into the surrounding arable landscape and bordering trees and woodland.

Ivy Cottage also draws its significance from its historic, architectural and artistic interest. The cottage was likely built around the time of the enclosure of the heath, in the early nineteenth century; it is believed to have been established as a former gatehouse to Church Wood. This origin, and its location at the border between the woodland and the hamlet, contributes to its historic interest. The cottage also has retained its historic character through the retention of historic fabric and architectural detailing, which



Figure 46: Ivy Cottage (source: Fine and Country)

contribute to its significance. It is one storey in height, with a partially thatched hipped roof. It is plastered, punctuated with small paned horizontal slide sash windows. The garden and features within it make a positive contribution to the building, particularly the small landscaped gardens and the metal railings and gateposts which lead into the woodland.



Figure 47: Gated entrance to Churn Wood

The Methodist Chapel is of historic significance, due to its former use and connection with the local community of Crockleford Heath through the memories of its use as a chapel throughout the twentieth century. It has also retained its historic character through the architectural

form and detailing of the building, which contributes to its significance.

The historic landscape of Crockleford Heath draws its significance from its unique evolution from heath to hamlet; Essex's heaths are fairly scarce, with many having been eradicated during nineteenth century enclosure and the 'improvement' of the landscape. The ability to recognise the former heath within the pattern of roads and field boundaries today contributes to our understanding of the settlement, and its historic significance.

It is anticipated that many of the hedgerows will be categorised as important under the Hedgerow Regulations 1997, and the historic trees within the area and its setting are also of significance, as positive contributors to the character and appearance of the area.



Figure 48: Substantial planted verges and hedgerow, Wivenhoe Road



Figure 49: View north-west towards Hill Farm complex

3.2.2 Contribution Made by the Setting

The setting of the area currently makes a positive contribution to the settlement of Crockleford Heath. Its immediate setting is formed by agricultural fields to the north and south, Churns Wood to the west, with meadows and a historic farmstead to the east. These contribute to the sense of isolation and tranquillity of Crockleford Heath and strengthen our appreciation of the scale of the hamlet and its development as a small settlement comprising mainly of cottages.

More widely, the pattern of dispersed development is still legible through the high number of farmsteads isolated within the setting of the hamlet, including Whitehouse Farm, the Hill Farm complex (containing a number of Grade II Listed ancillary buildings), Peacock's Farm (known as Pyecat's Farm on historic mapping) and the Grade II Listed Allen's Farm. These farm complexes are of historic significance within this agricultural landscape. Some fortuitous views between these farmsteads exist, although are limited by the density of trees and hedgerow planting. Where they do exist, they contribute to the significance of the relationship they share as part of this historic agrarian landscape, of which, the small hamlet is part of.

The ancient woodland, later tree plantations and hedgerows also make a positive contribution to the setting of the area. They are tangible remnants of the historic landscape, and Churn's Wood as well as hedgerows likely

retains a number of historic and possibly veteran trees which would contribute to its significance. They contribute to the verdant character of Crockleford Heath, creating the sense that it is nestled within the woodland, and creating a dense green backdrop within views throughout the area.

Historic maps show that much of the wider area was already parcelled prior to the mid-nineteenth century Enclosure Acts, and some of the fields within the setting of Crockleford Heath could have medieval if not much earlier, late pre-historic or Roman origins (EHER 2577). These make a contrast with the boundaries within the settlement and demonstrate its unique development over the post medieval period.

A small meadow to the east of the area also contains a number of twentieth century built features and an interpretation board which are of interest. The structures, including a water tank, are associated with the former orchards. They are currently overgrown and in poor condition. They are constructed in concrete and corrugated iron, with timber doors, the central structure sunken into the ground. They indicate wider agricultural activity within the area. The northernmost building, a small outpost, has an interpretive board on its side, showcasing an extract of 'Extracts from An Essex Apple' by Adrian May. This makes a positive contribution to the area, providing a place to appreciate the historic landscape and connecting more widely with the interpretive cultural scheme, extending across Essex.



Figure 50: View towards the southern extent of Chapel Lane across arable fields, demonstrating the rural, dispersed nature of development here, against a backdrop of greenery



Figure 51: Sunken water tank to the north east of Wivenhoe Road, located beside the Outpost

3.2.3 Archaeological Potential

There are archaeological sites and objects within the study area from all periods of history. Although the study area has not been the subject of any systematic archaeological investigation (with the exception of the study of aerial photographs), which makes it difficult to assess the significance of the archaeology of the study area, because records are currently sporadic and the result of chance discoveries.

Based on baseline evidence from the surrounding areas, and the topographic setting of the study area, there is considered to be high potential for encountering previously unknown important archaeological remains in this area, which has not been the subject of any previous systematic investigation. For example, the military buildings to the northeast of the study area likely indicate that further investigation into the military archaeology of the area can reveal further details of the use of the area at this time.

This appraisal has also been informed by the published report: 'Land to east of Colchester Cultural Audit'.

3.3 Landscape Character Appraisal

3.3.1 Rural Character

Crockleford Heath & Environs has a strong mixture of Ancient and semi-natural woodland, loose-knit, dispersed and linear settlement pattern of development, former heathland and orchards, and ancient [medieval] agricultural fields used for livestock, horticultural crops and smallholdings. It is a widely accessible landscape by foot and car, which is a result of the grid formation of narrow green lanes which connect to the busier roads and its numerous linkages to the Public Right of Way (PRoW) network. The dispersed settlement pattern and connectivity also contributes to the informal and quiet character of the area, which in turn evokes a strong sense of rurality and escape from adjacent peri-urban ‘fringe’ areas to the eastern edge of Colchester City. Despite man’s influence on the landscape, the area also has a strong sense of remoteness and tranquillity and as a result it has a distinct rural identity with relatively dark skies. That being said, there are some detracting elements within the landscape such as pylons and busy roads along Bromley Road and the A120 Trunk Road which influence the perceptual qualities and some views into and within the rural Hamlet and surrounding areas.

3.3.2 Woodland

The NPPF places great emphasis on the fact that trees make an important contribution to the character and quality of urban environments, and can also help mitigate and adapt to climate change. It also sets out that planning policies and decisions should ensure that new streets are tree-lined and take opportunities to incorporate trees elsewhere in developments (e.g., community orchards), and ensuring that appropriate measures are in place to secure the long-term maintenance of newly-planted trees, and that existing trees are retained wherever possible.

Owing to the plateau composition of the district there is an interesting pattern of vegetation and habitats, which is a direct result of agricultural and horticultural influences over many decades. The woodland cover within the study area includes a diverse mix of large woodland blocks, ancient woodland, plantation, former orchard and small copses or farm woodlands. Both Churn Wood and Wall’s Wood are designated ancient woodlands and occupy much of the steeper valley sides of the Salary Brook. Despite some parts of Churn Wood having been replanted in the C20th, this woodland and along the Brook is one of the more substantial areas of woodland to the east of Colchester.

There are several broadleaved and mixed farm woodlands located to the east of Churn Wood at Chapel Grove and Nursery (east of Chapel Lane) and at Whitehouse Farm

to the (east of Wivenhoe Road). These woodlands reflect the desires of former landowners to create structured and agricultural landscapes.

It is also noted that some areas of orchard have been absorbed, primarily by changes to agricultural practices, but also general dereliction and a lapse in horticultural management. Alongside the former historic orchards, these areas also included a connected network of trees and hedgerow-trees planted along the field boundaries. Where these landscape features remain, they also provide important habitats and a distinctive type of landscape that appear as the backdrop to the patchwork of relic orchards.

The distribution of woodlands is a key aspect of the landscape character of Crockleford forming an integral part of the framework of the landscape. The areas of ancient woodland generally provide a stronger sense of a semi-natural setting with rich ground flora and often a good selection of ancient or veteran trees. Occasionally, the wooded areas form the boundaries of lanes and roads where together with hedgerows and hedgerow-trees creates an inherently intimate condition. The nature of the different types of woodland also influences the intrinsic character of the woodlands themselves. The ancient woodlands provide a different experience to the former orchard landscapes which are more relic in character whereas the intact woodlands have a sense of stature and have a functional role in providing shelter and shade.



Figure 52: Gateways and Gaps
Ordnance Survey Scale: 1:10,000

3.3.3 Gateways and Gaps

The gateways (refer to **Figure 52**) to Crockleford Heath & Environs can be classified into four initial gateways from Springvalley Lane to the north, Bromley Road to the north-west and west and from Wivenhoe Road to the south-east of Crockleford Heath. These gateways generally convey a sense of arrival into the where development is either sporadic or to one side of the road (i.e., farm buildings and / or dwellings). The only exception to this would be the approach from Bromley Road (west) which features a more peri-urban 'fringe' influences from nearby Bellway development to the south of Bromley Road and a small row of dwellings built on land to the north of Bromley Road. The gateway along Bromley Road (north-west) is relatively poor due the lack of sense of arrival but is noted as containing generous verges.

The main gateways have been identified where there is a distinct sense of arrival into the rural hamlet of Crockleford Heath, this is often reinforced by a road junction onto a characteristic narrow lane featuring grassed verges and mature trees and hedgerow vegetation with loose-knit ribbon development occurring on one side of the lane only. The initial gateways and main gateways are mapped on Figure 56.

The appraisal has also identified a number of landscape gaps or breaks (i.e., absence of development) which

reinforce the sense of separation between Crockleford Heath and the City of Colchester and therefore the sense of remoteness and tranquillity afforded to these areas, the buffer zones upto Ancient woodlands and other natural features, reflecting the spatial extent of the historic heathland and which illustrates the horticultural and ancient [medieval] farmland that exists or has existed within the rural settlement.

3.3.4 Green Lanes and Verges

A key characteristic of Crockleford is its green lanes which feature soft verges or ditches either side of the lane, often at a similar width to the road and with notable wildflower and / or naturalised grassland. The verges are backed by plot boundaries by hedgerows, low brick walls or ironmongery, elsewhere they are proceeded by trees, hedgerow-trees and woodland.

These can be found along Chapel Lane which runs in an L-shaped direction from Bromley Road to the north and Wivenhoe Road to the south-east, along Green Lane which extends from Chapel Lane to the west and Wivenhoe Road to the east and along the linear section of Wivenhoe Road which connects up to Bromley Road to the north and southwards just past the junction of Chapel Lane.

The lanes to the north of Crockleford Heath located along Springvalley Lane and Jubilee Lane are noted as sharing

similar characteristics and features to that of Chapel Lane and Green Lane. Jubilee Lane also features a width restriction of approx. 1.9m meaning that it is unsuitable for heavy goods vehicles and even some larger cars.

Some of the roadside verges are notably narrow at approximately 1 metre in width but others are wider in places. The verdant nature of the lanes, which includes mature trees and understory vegetation evoke strong sensations of seclusion and intimacy when travelling along these routes, especially on-foot and / or cycling where people are moving at a slower pace. The informal nature of the lanes is also one of their key qualities, they feature no kerb upstands, little to no street markings and no street lighting, all of which helps create an even stronger tranquil character.

As stated in previous chapters, Chapel Lane Verge is also designated as a LoWS and forms part of a network of Special Roadside Verges, which are noted for their botanical interest.

3.3.5 Key Views

Views are often described as the process of 'looking in and out'. The looking in and out of places and landscapes but views also concern the intervisibility and relationships that exist within and between landscapes and the role that these landscapes have in providing a setting or context.

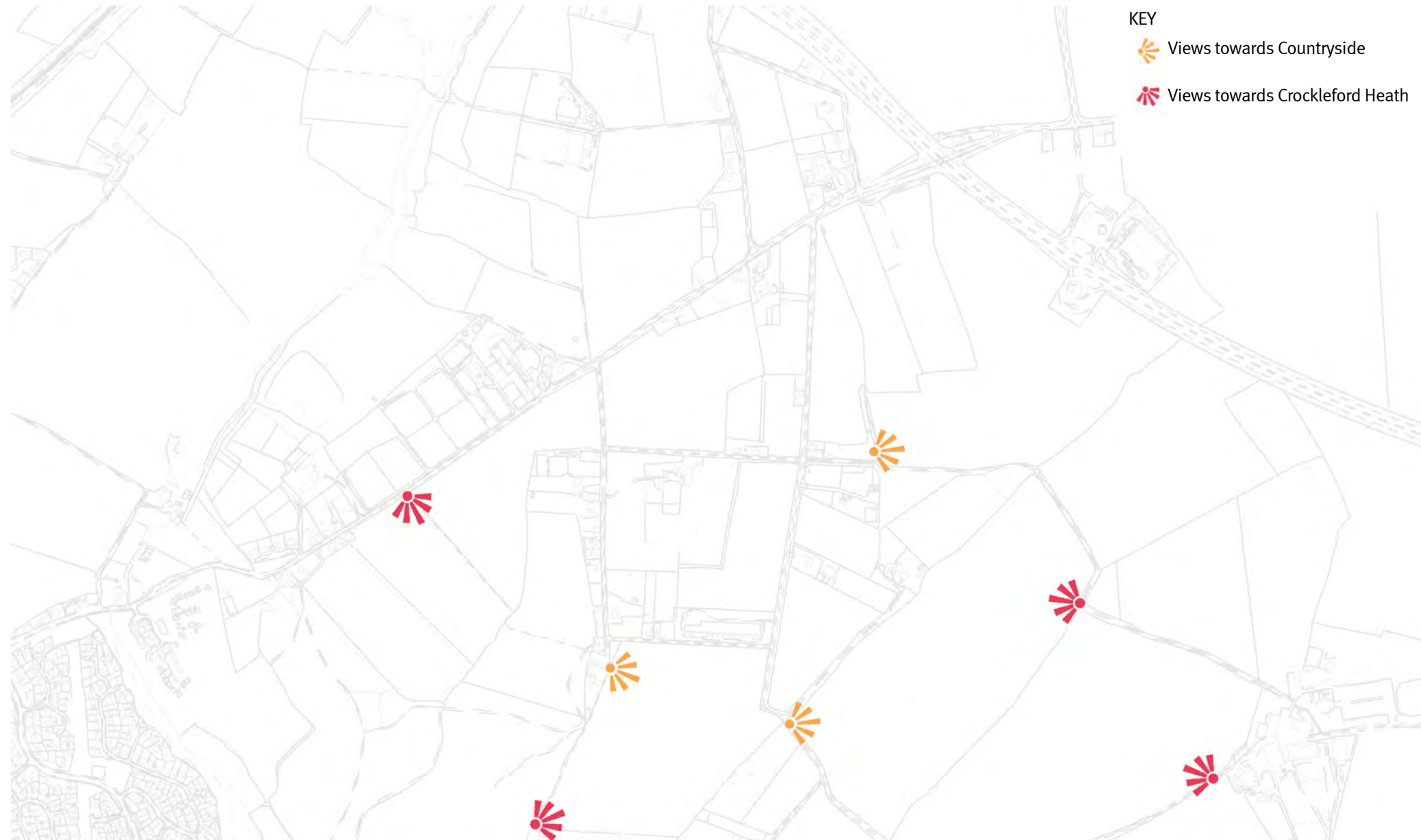


Figure 53: Key Views
Ordnance Survey Scale: 1:10,000



Figure 54: This view is taken from the Public Right of Way (PROW 158_37) that connects Bromley Road to the Colchester Orbital Walk and is looking southwards. This view illustrates the panoramic views across the open countryside towards the densely wooded backdrop of Crockleford Heath. It is these characteristics that reinforce the perceived separation between Crockleford Heath & Environs and the City of Colchester.



Figure 55: This view is taken from Wivenhoe Road and is a reciprocal view looking back westwards to Churn Wood. The view illustrates the patchwork of arable fields, semi-natural woodland, ancient woodland and residential dwellings and rural landscape which encompasses Crockleford Heath. The woodland provides a dense backcloth to the Hamlet and despite its openness, there is a perceived sense of containment and tranquility.



Figure 56: This view is taken from the Public Right of Way (PROW 158_35) which forms part of the Colchester Orbital Walk and Camuplodunum and is looking eastwards. This view illustrates the mid-distanced panoramic views that exist across open countryside and to the wooded framework beyond. Pylons and overhead lines are a highly prominent feature above the woodland but do not assert dominance over other valued characteristics and features. For example, the perceived sense of isolation and tranquility is reinforced by the openness, scale and verdant character.



Figure 57: This view is also taken from the Public Right of Way (PROW 158_35) noted as forming part of the Colchester Orbital Walk and Camuplodunum and is looking in a south-eastern direction. The view illustrates the mid-distanced panoramic views that exist across the gently undulating countryside. The arable field is lined with dense woodland with pylons and overhead lines located above in the open skyline. There is a gap in the vegetation located to the south in views which follows the PROW and promoted routes.



Figure 58: This view is taken from the Public Right of Way (PROW 162_28) which connects from Wivenhoe Road to the south and the wider PROW network towards Bromley Road to the north. The view is looking eastwards to Allen's Farm and shows the flat topography of the Tendring Plain and illustrates the extensive physical gap that exists between Crockleford and Allen's Farm which would have historically formed part of the edge of the heathland and medieval farmland. Electricity pylons and overhead lines are prominent in views of the vast open skyline.



Figure 59: This view is taken from the junction of Public Rights of Way (PROW 158_36 & PROW 158_47) and is looking in an eastern and north-eastern direction towards the A120 Trunk Road. This view illustrates the wide-panoramic views across the open countryside from Crockleford Heath & Environs and demonstrates that the wooded boundaries provide a sense of enclosure and seclusion from nearby infrastructure. It is noted however, that the traffic noise and lighting from the busy road can at times disrupt the sense of rurality and tranquillity of this otherwise secluded landscape.

Views are also integral in defining and creating a sense of place and the unique character of an area, connecting places where people live and / or work with the wider environment and providing opportunities to appreciate the visual resource and its special qualities. They also help to understand and define the relationship between built-up areas and the wider countryside and provide a sense of arrival and gateways. The appraisal has therefore identified a number of representative views in the landscape that can help to articulate the special character of the hamlet and the relationship with its wider surroundings.

The landscape provides an important setting to the rural hamlet of Crockleford Heath and its immediate surroundings. A key characteristic of Crockleford Heath & Environs are the views which open onto the open countryside from within and around the rural hamlet, the PRoW network and along its green lanes. The distinct flat topography of the Tendring Plain and Bromley Heaths allows for wide-panoramic vistas across large-scale, geometric fields indicative of late enclosure that provide a strong pattern in views. The mid- and long-distance views are often framed by a densely wooded backcloth and vast skyline above which contributes to a relatively high scenic quality. The small number of urbanising features such as the electricity pylons and overhead lines are relatively well-integrated into the landscape. The farmsteads (e.g., Allen's Farm) are often large and form visible clusters of agricultural buildings in the open landscape.

Open gaps have also been identified between the residential buildings and other built form which allow for distinctive views to the Ancient and semi-natural woodland and open countryside, again reinforcing the special qualities. The landscape of Crockleford can be generally described as being visually sensitive as a result of its open and rural character and the culmination of mid- and long-distance views. Managing these views is therefore a key consideration and care should be taken to ensure that, where possible, new development does not truncate views out onto the countryside and wooded vistas.

3.3.6 Community and Social Cohesion

There is a strong sense of community and social cohesion within the rural hamlet, with the majority of residents being very satisfied with living here, citing that the Parish's rural characteristics as being a key factor (Ardleigh Neighbourhood Plan: Community Engagement Report, 2021).

It is also clear that there is a real concern among residents, whether the Parish needed more housing development and the Engagement Report appears to suggest that if development does take place, it should be restricted to the settlement area. The engagement website for the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community (TCBGC) also highlights several opportunities for community enhancements, such as establishing a country park across

the Salary Brook, Home Wood, The Strip, Thousand Acres and Churn Wood (Community Engagement Report, 2021 and Archived Engagement Activity - TCBGC).

The built environment and layout of Crockleford also has a significant impact on its character and the sense of cohesion within the local community. Many residents use the lanes and road for daily walking, dog walking, cycling, jogging, taking children to school, running errands and for health and wellbeing. During these walks, an activity much encouraged by government and health authorities alike, individuals often meet with their neighbours, friendly strangers and create new personal relationships. Research also suggests that areas where people feel safe and comfortable to walk are conducive to positive perceptions of social cohesion and therefore maintaining the characteristics and qualities of the lanes and key thoroughfares in Crockleford is vital.

3.4 Landscape Value

3.4.1 Introduction

This section of the Character Appraisal considers the landscape in detail with regard to its particular value. From the national, county and district-wide character assessments and the Crockleford Heath & Environs Character Appraisal, it was made apparent that the rural Hamlet and its surroundings as containing a number of special qualities and characteristics.

As highlighted in previous chapters, the NPPF sets out that planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by [inter alia]:

- “Conserving and enhancing the natural environment by protecting and enhancing “valued landscapes” and sites of biodiversity or geological value / soils; and
- Recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits of natural capital and other ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland”.

The NPPF also stresses the importance of planning policy and decisions and their need to take into account the likely effects on the living conditions, natural environment, and potential sensitivity of areas. In doing so, these

considerations seek to identify and protect tranquil areas which have remained relatively undisturbed by noise and are prized for their recreational and amenity value, as well as limiting the impact of light pollution on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes and to nature conservation.

The Tendring District Local Plan also recognises how strategic and local green infrastructure can make a vital contribution to quality of place, biodiversity gains, alleviating the recreational pressure, and health outcomes, if properly integrated into the design and delivery of new development. It also sets out a desire that new development should reflect a number of place shaping principles, including [but not limited to] the need to respond more positively to local character and context to reflect and enhance the quality of existing places and their environs and protecting and enhancing assets of historical or natural value.

Whilst the national and local planning policies do not specifically interpret the term ‘landscape quality’ (or ‘qualities’). It should be acknowledged that this may vary from place to place due, in part, to the extent to which people engage with the landscape types and areas, such as those highlighted within this appraisal and is also likely to be influenced upon by where people choose to live and their personal engagement with the landscape at any given moment in time.

The Landscape Institute’s ‘Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment’ Third Edition (GLVIA3) draws on an ample set of factors (Box 5.1, GLVIA3) that have been generally accepted in recent years for assessing landscape value. The range of factors that are used in the identification of valued landscapes, including landscape quality (condition), scenic quality, rarity, representativeness conservation interests, recreation value, perceptual aspects and associations.

On this basis and using interpretations of the NPPF where it specifically makes reference to “valued landscapes” (Para 174a, NPPF), it has been established that for a landscape to be considered as ‘valued’ in landscape planning terms, it should comprise a landscape with demonstrable physical attributes or special characteristics that take that landscape out of the ordinary.

To assess the landscape value of Crockleford Heath & Environs as a whole, we have also drawn upon more recent guidance from the Landscape Institute in the form of Technical Guidance Note (TGN 02/21) ‘Assessing landscape value outside of national designations’ which was published in 2021. TGN 02/21 states that “... landscape value can be assessed as an evaluation stage of a landscape character assessment”. This echoes Natural England’s 2014 guidance which states that “...landscape character assessment can be used to identify special qualities and inform judgements” (Tudor, 2014).

Table 1 of TGN 02/21 sets out a comprehensive range of factors that could be considered to define the value of a landscape and to inform the designation process. The factors are intended to be consistent with the factors set out in existing guidance but are not deemed to be an exhaustive list. This includes considerations under the categories of natural heritage, cultural heritage, landscape condition, associations, distinctiveness, recreational, perceptual (scenic), perceptual (wilderness and tranquillity) and functional.

During the site visits, we used observations and professional judgement to identify any indicators of valued landscape characteristics and features, as well as identifying any detracting features. It should be noted that the TGN 02/21 also states that “landscape value, and the way in which landscapes are valued by people, is a dynamic process, and can change over time. Any value assessment will be a snapshot in time”.

3.4.2 Evaluation of Landscape Value

The Landscape Character Areas (LCAs) identified as part of County-level and District-wide landscape character assessments and the individual Local Landscape Character Areas (LLCAs) identified and classified within this Character Appraisal encompass all the factors listed in Box 5.1 (GLVIA3) and Table 1 (TGN 02/21) and are therefore represented across these diverse scales as signifiers of

quality in many of the character areas. Following on from the Character Appraisal, it was considered beneficial to draw together a set of special qualities that relate to the local spectrum of landscapes within Crockleford Heath & Environs. These are identified at the end of the process and were considered at least in part within the Local Landscape Character Areas of Character Appraisal

TGN 02/21 explains that the landscape profession’s understanding of landscape value is still developing, particularly in light of biodiversity and climate emergencies and outfall of the Covid-19 pandemic. Because people today value various aspects of the landscape, it is clear that landscape value and quality is more than about beauty and aesthetics, and inevitably many of the important factors come into play. As such, considerations of valued landscapes will certainly involve a degree of subjectivity and professional opinion and it helps if there is agreement on the physical attributes and special qualities that may be seen as important.

The NPPF draws attention to the fact that neighbourhood planning groups can play an important role in identifying the special qualities of landscapes. As part of the discussion on Crockleford Heath & Environs, the list of ‘Special Characteristics & Qualities’ of the area were reviewed and put forward as part of the consultation and engagement processes that form part of the production of this Character Appraisal.

On the basis of a generally helpful, albeit modest number of consultation responses received from local residents, Crockleford and Elmstead Action Group, Ardleigh Parish Council, Essex Garden’s Trust, Tendring District Council, Colchester City Council, Prior + Partners, Gillespies, Lichfields (on behalf of Latimer) and Optimised Environments (on behalf of Latimer), the list provided is not intended to be a fixed list as the criteria for appraisals and other assessments needs to be appropriate to each process.

Appendix B of the Character Appraisal comprises a Landscape Value Appraisal which identifies the degree to which the special qualities and characteristics of Crockleford Heath & Environs and how they have been judged to relate to the individual Local Landscape Character Areas. Visual mapping was produced to illustrate how the LLCAs may be seen in combination to reflect areas of higher landscape value based on fluctuations to the range of key value factors and the way in which different people perceive the landscape.

3.4.3 Ecosystem Services

The varying components of the landscape characteristics and attributes of Crockleford Heath and its environs have been mapped and drawn (e.g., Dark Skies Map, Agricultural Land Quality, Building Phasing, etc) and their spread across the study area can be used to define the distributed areas of higher value. This also raises a crucial point from

the pervasive interest of the area, the subtle variations in rural landscape character and the general lack of intrusion from negative features, culminates in the landscape(s) of the Crockleford Heath & Environs as having aspects of value.

In line with national planning policy, by recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and the wider benefits of natural capital and other ecosystem services, and then considering how developments can respond to, and are sympathetic with, the local character and history of the study area, there is scope for the planning and development process to allow and / or encourage development that is sensitive to its surroundings. The layered landscape history of changing land uses within Crockleford Heath and its environs has provided some positive and negative precedents of how development can be integrated within existing settlements and how development can be absorbed over time. This is often by virtue of the strength of character and the integrity of the landscape and / or the long-term conservation, management and planning of landscapes.

The acceptability of development proposals depends on a number of factors, including [but not limited to]: an understanding of the relationship between the natural, built and historic environment, the layout, form and scale of proposals, an understanding of the context, history and cultural characteristics, integration of natural features and green infrastructure, and enhancements made to achieve

biodiversity net gains and climate change mitigation and resilience. The National Design Guide emphasises that “well-designed places and buildings come about when there is a clearly expressed ‘story’ for the design concept and how it has evolved into a design proposal”.

From the Character Appraisal work conducted, it is evident that Crockleford Heath & Environs contains a substantial stock of natural capital that will provide flows of environmental ‘ecosystem’ services over time. This is demonstrated in conventional terms by the extent of open and varied rural countryside, geology of clay underlying deposits of sands, gravels and cover sands and sandy, loamy and clayey soils denoting the best and most versatile agricultural land, Ancient and semi-natural woodland, historic orchards and ‘prairies’, Local Wildlife Sites (LoWS), Special Roadside Verges, connected network of hedgerows and tree belts, ditch network and extensive public access. The proximity of this resource to the City of Colchester, Elmstead Market, Ardleigh and Wivenhoe strengthens and adds to the value and significance of these assets.

Understanding nature as an asset which provides a flow of ecosystem services and benefits can provide us with a robust framework to manage the landscape to ensure that it continues to deliver on society’s needs. It also assists in providing a sense of balance to obvious economic resources, such as soils, freshwaters, land, atmosphere and minerals. The range of potential impacts can include

both direct or indirect effects on the assorted services and benefits, including clean air and water, the sustainable use of natural assets or the supply of natural raw materials but also the potential for proposals to have wider systemic effects across society, which are considered to be no less significant. The benefits of Crockleford Heath & Environs as a landscape resource for people to interact with is equally rich and diverse. This study has also illustrated that there has been interest in the physical landscape since the earliest agrarian communities, historic and modern agricultural practices, horticultural land uses, historic heathland community and settlement, and the cultural associations of events, public art, colour and texture of the landscape and the perceptual value of scenic views.

The coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic has encouraged people to interact with nature and to confront the impacts of climate variability (climate change) and mass biodiversity loss, which are the most serious issues of our time. With a continued rising public awareness and understanding of these issues, there has been a deeper appreciation of the landscape and the complex and diverse ways that it is thought about and used. The landscape is vulnerable and yet there are several benefits that landscapes provide as a resilient defence against change. Quality, design and management are some of the key factors in people’s perceptions of landscape and may impact on the extent to which social benefits are realised.

A landscape photograph showing a vast green field in the foreground, a line of trees in the middle ground, and a clear blue sky with scattered white clouds. A small utility tower is visible on the horizon to the right.

Chapter 4

CHARACTER OF CROCKLEFORD HEATH & ENVIRONS

4.1 Characterisation & Classification

The local classification has been undertaken at a scale of 1:10,000 which is typical of a local scale classification in line with best practice guidance. This appraisal forms part of a hierarchal framework, including the National Character Areas, the Essex Landscape Character Types / Areas, and the Tendring Landscape Character Types / Areas, but has been classified at a localised scale and maps drawn to reflect more acutely how the character varies across Crockleford Heath & Environs. The main descriptive information and mapping has been presented at this particular geographic scale.

Integral to the process of the character appraisal and therefore in classifying and describing the landscape is to distinguish the differences between Local Landscape Character Types (LLCTs) and Local Landscape Character Areas (LLCAs). LLCTs can be described as generic in nature and relatively uniform in character, whereas LLCAs are the unique areas that share generic characteristics with the LLCT but have their own identity and sense of place.

One LLCT was identified for the study area and within this, an additional four LLCAs were classified. These are mapped in the subsequent pages below and listed in the following table:

Table 1: Local Landscape Character Types / Areas

Local Landscape Character Type (LLCT)	Local Landscape Character Area (LLCA)
1. Crockleford Heath & Environs	1. Crockleford Heath
	2. Crockleford Plateau Ridge
	3. Crockleford Orchard Fields
	4. Crockleford Farmlands

4.1.1 Note on Mapped Boundaries

Certainly, there will be some overlap between the character of one area and another. Whilst the drawn boundaries may suggest that there is a sudden change from one character area to another however, in reality the landscape and / or historic environment of an area rarely changes this abruptly and as such the boundary lines represent more of a transition from one character area to the next.

Boundaries have also been informed from historic mapping of the area, particularly where the historic character of the Crockleford Heath and its wider Environs are still legible in the landscape and contribute to our appreciation of the settlement. For example, the extent of LLCA 4: Crockleford Farmlands follows the historic heath, which appears to have extended up to the edge of Allen's Farm to the east, as shown on the Chapman and Andre Map 1777.

KEY

LLCT Boundary



Figure 60: LLCT 1: Crockleford & Environs
Ordnance Survey Scale: 1:10,000

4.2 Crockleford Heath & Environs

- **LLCA 3:** Crockleford Orchard Fields (Environs)
- **LLCA 4:** Crockleford Farmlands (Environs)

4.2.1 Description

This LLCT is defined by the flat and gently undulating rural Hamlet of Crockleford Heath which lies to the north-east of the City of Colchester and to the east and south-east of the Salary Brook river corridor, and to the south-west of the A120 Trunk Road and is somewhat disjointed by Bromley Road to the north. This is a landscape comprised of Ancient and semi-natural woodland, a loose-knit, dispersed and linear settlement pattern, ancient and medieval agricultural fields and former heathland and orchards. The predominant geology of clay and sands underlying deposits of sands and gravels and cover sands denotes a localised area of productive sandy, loamy and clayey soils resulting in a trifecta of ‘Excellent’, ‘Very Good’ and ‘Good to Moderate’ agricultural quality which has been exploited for agriculture since the earliest prehistoric communities, heathland communities and modern day farming and as such retains its rural market garden identity and horticultural qualities.

There are four Local Landscape Character Areas associated with the Crockleford Heath & Environs Local Landscape Character Type, including:

- **LLCA 1:** Crockleford Heath (the ‘Heart of Crockleford’)
- **LLCA 2:** Crockleford Plateau Ridge (Environs)

4.3 Crockleford Heath

4.3.1 Location and Context

Crockleford Heath is the rural hamlet that lies at the Heart of the Crockleford Heath & Environs LLCT to the north-east of the City of Colchester. The boundary along the southern edge of the LLCA roughly follows Chapel Lane which marks the transition to the arable fields across the Tendring Plain and Broley Heaths (LLCA 4: Crockleford Farmlands). The western boundary is formed by the edge of the Ancient Woodland an LoWS at Churn Wood and the garden curtilages of properties to the north-west of Chapel Lane. The northern boundary is partially defined by Bromley Road and the curtilages of properties and smallholdings to the north-east of the LLCA. The western and northern boundaries form the transition to the Crockleford Plateau Ridge (LLCA 2), where the landscape becomes more peri-rural to the north and west and more peri-urban 'fringe' when heading south-east along Bromley Road due to presence of rural businesses and housing development. The eastern boundary of the LLCA is defined by Wivenhoe Road and marks the transition to the Crockleford Orchard Fields (LLCA 3) beyond.



Figure 62: LLCA 1: Crockleford Heath
Ordnance Survey Scale: 1:10,000



Figure 63: LLCA 1: Crockleford Heath
Ordnance Survey Scale: NTS

4.3.2 Overview

This area focusses on the rural Hamlet of Crockleford Heath, with intact dispersed and loose-kit, ribbon development forming the settlement pattern which is further reinforced by the grid network of historic lanes along Chapel Lane, Green Lane and Wivenhoe Road and the small-to-medium scale farmland, pasture and smallholdings that lie in between. The LLCA contains a

large portion of the Local Wildlife Site (LoWS) and Ancient Woodland at Churn Wood to the south-east and contains the main congregation of residential properties, including the Grade II Listed Ivy Cottage and Lamberts and the converted Methodist Chapel (Non-designated Heritage Asset). It is a flat rural landscape with a strong wooded character with striking visual corridors along the lanes and mid- and long-distance views out to the open countryside. This LLCA has a strong rural community identity and forms the transition to the arable farmland to the south and south-east and the peri-rural landscape to the north and north-west.

4.3.3 Key Characteristics

- Mostly, flat and gently undulating rural area of dispersed, loose-knit settlement pattern located along historic rural lanes, including Chapel Lane and Green Lane.
- Underlying sand and loamy soils give rise to good agricultural land with a network of mature hedgerows and hedgerow-trees creating a relatively strong landscape structure, with fields of varying sizes and regular field pattern.
- The numerous woodland (including Ancient woodland), trees and mature hedgerows and hedgerow-trees provide a sense of place and integral to the important wooded character to an otherwise open farmed landscape and provide historic and biodiversity interest, carbon sequestration and the

regulation of temperatures.

- Coppicing of woodland offers opportunities for timber provision and a potential source of local fuel and building materials.
- Productive agricultural land (arable and pasture) with occasional small copses as a result of moderately free draining, loamy and clayey soils over sand and gravel and cover sands.
- Semi-natural habitats, including deciduous woodland (shown on Priority Habitat Inventory and National Forest Inventory), grassland and wildflower, some designated as Local Wildlife Sites (LoWS) at Churn Wood and the LoWS and Special Roadside Verges along Chapel Lane, support a range of important flora, insects and breeding birds. They allow soil stabilisation / retention, have a higher soil carbon content than cultivated habitats and provide nutrient filtration, enhancing water quality.
- A strong historic landscape pattern of ancient rectilinear fields with hedgerows, hedgerow-trees, and historic lanes.
- Gardens provide a source of verdancy to the streetscape, and help to define public and private space. Such greenery raises the quality of the environment, and provides further enclosure to the rural lanes. Low front fencing and / or open front boundaries contribute greatly to the setting in these residential areas.
- Ditches along historic lanes provide time depth to the landscape and flood mitigation.

- A strong local built vernacular including medieval timber frame buildings and post medieval buildings rendered in plaster and lime wash, red brick, pan tile roofing and decorative bargeboarding provides a sense of place and accords with a distinctive architectural colour palette.
- A relatively high scenic quality as a result of the expansive areas of woodland, historic buildings and backdrop provided by Churn Wood.
- Noticeable perceptual influences such as busier roads along Bromley Road.
- Grade II Lamberts is an eighteenth-century timber framed cottage with later alterations
- Grade II Ivy Cottage is a nineteenth-century timber framed cottage and is the former gatehouse to Churn Wood.
- The mid-nineteenth century Methodist Chapel is considered to be a non-designated heritage asset due to its architectural / artistic interest, landmark status and its historic interest. Its retained historic form and character is still discernible today as the historic Chapel building which once served the small rural community here, which provides time depth to the landscape.
- The extensive network of public rights of way and promoted walks / trails contributes to people's physical health and mental well-being.
- Contrasts between the enclosed character around woodlands and historic lanes and open views across the countryside of the Tendring Plain and Bromley

Heaths to the south provides visual interest and a sense of place.

- The dispersed settlement provides a sense of rural tranquillity and experience of dark skies.

4.3.4 Landscape Condition

This area has an excellent quality and condition. The built environment within the historic Hamlet is of high quality, intact and unspoilt. The surrounding landscape is characterised by Ancient and semi-natural woodland, arable fields and pasture, well-managed hedgerows and hedgerow-trees, historic lanes and public footpaths.

4.3.5 Forces for Change

- Climate change leading to increasing periods of drought and increased temperatures resulting in a change in water levels and / or an increase in the frequency and severity of seasonal flooding and additional changes to LoWS and Special Roadside Verges, ditch network, hedgerow vegetation and existing habitats.
- Climate change resulting in changes in woodland and tree species composition. This could also result in wind damage due to increases in severe gales (Ancient woodland could be particularly susceptible to storm damage), drought and an increase in pests and diseases, such as ash dieback, oak processionary

moth, Dutch elm disease and acute oak decline.

- An on-going decline in woodland management, including traditional techniques such as coppicing, resulting in a loss of species diversity and varied age structure.
- Maturing trees and woodlands in gardens and private land, which are vulnerable to pathogens and limit the ability of woodland to regenerate.
- Replanting of deciduous woodlands with conifers, resulting in a loss of biodiversity, and visual change in the woodland composition.
- Changes in agricultural practices resulting in the loss of pasture and associated hedgerows. Changes in farming and smallholdings as a result of climate change and changing markets, changing the landscape pattern and altering the contrasts between the wooded and agricultural character of the landscape.
- The loss of generous-sized and verdant gardens can result in a weakening of character along the lanes and can be particularly detrimental visually.
- Development pressure for housing could dilute the historic dispersed and loose-knit settlement pattern and reduce the sense of rural tranquillity and dark skies.

- Increasing traffic on rural roads and lanes leading to demands for road upgrades and associated infrastructure, disregarding important landscape characteristics and reducing tranquillity and dark skies and the rural character of lanes and Special Roadside Verges.
- Visitor pressure currently appears to be high, with evidence of well-worn pathways and intermittent ground erosion predominantly at the main gateways and along the Public Right of Way network and promoted walks and trails.
- Pressure for renewable energy infrastructure and connections, including pylons, both within the LLCA and in adjacent landscapes, reducing the rural character and interrupting mid- and long-distance views to the wider countryside.

4.3.7 Landscape Opportunities

These opportunities highlight characteristics that should form part of the consideration for any future development proposals for the area:

- Maintain the human-scale of the landscape and features that contribute to this human scale including dispersed, loose-knit settlement pattern, generous plot sizes, woodland, hedgerows, hedgerow-trees and historic field patterns.
- Conserve and enhance the network of hedgerows, hedgerow trees and woodlands through active planting and management. Take opportunities to plant new woodlands and trees to compensate for the historic loss of elm (by focussing on hedgerows and lanes) and opportunities to reinstate historic field boundaries that have been lost over time.
- Manage Ancient and semi-natural woodland to ensure a diverse species and age structure by thinning, coppicing and replanting, as necessary. As climatic conditions change, plant suitable species and manage the woodlands to improve structure, health and diversity of habitat.
- Conserve the characteristics and qualities of narrow rural lanes, ensuring new roads, lanes or 'upgrades' take into account their rural context (e.g., resist widening) and avoid over-engineered features and / or the introduction of lighting into dark areas. Maintain the trees and species-rich grasslands on road verges.
- Maintain constant water levels (monitoring water abstraction, especially as periods of drought increase).
- Retain and enhance the ditch network within Crockleford Heath by minimising water pollution from agriculture and residential development both within the LLCA and outside, through sensitive land management practices, including restoration of Special Roadside Verges, ditches and swales to minimise run off.
- In order to reflect the amenity spaces and gardens within the LLCA, gardens should be of an acceptable and workable minimum size that accommodates most household activities and is at the same time adequate to offer visual delight, receive sunshine and encourage generous plant growth.
- Encourage development to incorporate low decorative railings or low walls on boundaries for front gardens. Higher walls and fences may be allowed if they are in character with nearby boundary treatments or are along the rear or side boundaries of gardens.
- Maintain the compact and intact nature of the Hamlet and the rich character produced by local vernacular styles and building materials, including timber frame buildings and post-medieval buildings rendered in plaster and lime wash, red brick, pan tile roofing and decorative bargeboarding. Ensure new built development respects and responds to the rural vernacular and distinctive architectural colour palette.
- Conserve the sense of tranquillity and relatively dark skies compared to other parts of the Hamlet

-
- by minimising lighting and designing any necessary lighting to minimise light spill or glare.
 - Maintain the high scenic quality and enclosed character, which is a result of the relatively flat topography, expansive areas of woodland, network of hedgerows and historic buildings, including the backdrop provided by Churn Wood. Respect its sense of remoteness, tranquillity and experience of dark skies.
 - Improve the diversity and connectivity of habitats, particularly those recognised by designation at Churn Wood and Chapel Lane.
 - Monitor potential changes in flora and increase in pests and diseases as a result of climate change, including spread of invasive plants and animals.
 - Take opportunities to retain pasture and former heath (aiming to convert arable land to permanent pasture, heath and / or create grassland margins) and manage to maintain and increase biodiversity.
 - Consider additional planting to screen Bromley Road to the north of the LLCA and reduce the intrusion of movement and noise from traffic.
 - Retain and where possible enhance the mid- and long-distance views across the Tendring Plain and Bromley Heaths, which form a strong open character to the wooded Hamlet.
 - Protect and enhance the connections and access to the open countryside, by increasing interpretation and taking opportunities for heritage trails and walks where appropriate to link communities with their local heritage and landscape.
 - Limit the amount and scale development in rural areas, protecting the existing settlement pattern of dispersed, loose-knit and ribbon pattern of development, and the separation afforded to the Hamlet.
 - Consider any expansion of the peri-rural and peri-urban fringe uses carefully, ensuring new development is in keeping with the local vernacular, and does not disrupt the dispersed, loose-knit settlement pattern.
 - Retain the characteristic contrast between areas of enclosed character and open views across the countryside of the Tendring Plain and Bromley Heaths to the south of the LLCA.

4.4 Crockleford Plateau Ridge

4.4.1 Location and Context

The Crockleford Plateau Ridge is located to the north, west and north-west of the Hamlet of Crockleford Heath and is more commonly referred to as 'Crockleford'. This LLCA forms part of the wider environs and is located at the north-eastern edge of the conurbation of Colchester. The northern, western and north-western boundaries are formed by the Salary Brook river corridor and the boundary continues along the southern edge of the A120 Trunk Road to the north-east of the LLCT. The boundary along the south-eastern edge of the LLCA is largely formed by the Salary Brook river corridor however, the important ecological links and ghyll woodland character has been somewhat severed by recent housing development to the south of Bromley Road. The remainder of this boundary and the southern boundary is formed by the Ancient woodland and LoWS at Churn Wood. The eastern and south-eastern boundaries form the transition to the rural and tranquil edges of Crockleford Heath (LLCA 1) to the south and east and to the Crockleford Orchard Fields (LLCA 3) to the north-east of Crockleford Heath.



Figure 64: LLCA 2: Crockleford Plateau Ridge
Ordnance Survey Scale: 1:10,000



Figure 65: LLCA 2: Crockleford Ridge Plateau
Ordnance Survey Scale: NTS

4.4.2 Overview

This area forms a broad swathe of farmland, pasture, residential properties, rural businesses and horse paddocks to the north-western fringes of the Tendring Plain and Bromley Heaths LCAs and to the north-eastern suburbs of the City of Colchester. It is a flat predominantly peri-rural landscape with more open views to the wider countryside and the woodland ghyll edge of the Salary Brook river

corridor which forms an expansive backdrop to the LLCA to the north, west and north-west. Bromley Road, which is of Roman origin, effectively dissects Crockleford Heath from 'Crockleford' by dividing the LLCA into two broad parcels which contain arable fields to the south and the majority of remaining land uses to the north and north-west. The LLCA includes a number of local businesses including Blenheim Plant and Garden Centre, Colchester Cat Rescue, Crockleford Stud and other business which serve as amenities for local residents and visitors to the surrounding area. The LLCA also contains the Grade II Listed Barn, Cow Byre, Cartlodes and Stables at Hill Farm. Crockleford Plateau Ridge has a peri-rural character which is influenced by Bromley Road, paddocks and businesses which reduces the sense of tranquillity and other perceptual qualities. The character of the LLCA does markedly transition to that of peri-urban fringe to the south-west owing to recent housing development and the edges of Colchester.

4.4.3 Key Characteristics

- A high plateau ridge, characterised by an underlying geology of sands and gravels, gently dropping in elevation to the north-west and south-west towards the Salary Brook river corridor.
- Cover sands, clays and loamy soils overlying the sands and gravels, gives rise to excellent and good quality agricultural land (arable and pasture) with a network of mature hedgerows and hedgerow-trees creating a good landscape structure, with fields of varying sizes

and regular field pattern.

- Predominant peri-rural and open character, as a result of regular- large sized arable fields bounded by hedgerows and trees (some lost due to Dutch Elm disease). The landscape provides a rural setting to Crockleford Heath as well as a rural backdrop to the Salary Brook river corridor.
- A relatively moderate scenic quality as a result of the expansive backcloth of Ancient woodland and LoWS at Wall's Wood.
- Semi-natural habitats, including deciduous woodland and grassland, some designated as Local Wildlife Sites (LoWS) at Wall's Wood (part of Salary Brook river corridor) support important flora, insects and breeding birds. They also provide nutrient filtration and enhancing water quality.
- A good historic landscape pattern of rectilinear fields with hedgerows and rural roads and lanes.
- Ditches along historic lanes provide time depth to the landscape and assist with flooding mitigation.
- A strong local built vernacular including medieval timber frame buildings and post medieval buildings rendered in plaster and lime wash, red brick plinths and facing walls, red rolled and pan tile roofing and iron clad roofing and decorative bargeboarding which provides a sense of place and accords with a distinctive architectural colour palette.
- Noticeable peri-rural influences along Bromley Road, including horse paddocks and other local businesses which reduces the perceptual qualities

- Noticeable presence of housing development to the south-east of the LLCA along Bromley Road results in a peri-urban 'fringe' character which reduces the rural characteristics and perceptual qualities.
- Grade II Listed Barn and linked Cow Byre includes a mid-C18th timber framed barn, weatherboarding and iron clad roof and a linked C19th barn with red brick end bays and open bays to south with red pan tiled roof.
- Grade II Listed Cow Byre and Hayloft is an C18th oak framed timber barn with brick plinths and red plain tiled roof.
- Grade II Listed Cartlodge features an early C19th timber framed cartlodge with weatherboarding and hipped clay pan tile roof.
- Grade II Listed Stable / Cartlodge is an C19th partially timber framed stable with weatherboarding and a red rolled tile gabled roof.
- The extensive network of public rights of way and promoted walks / trails contributes to people's physical health and mental well-being.
- Contrasts between the enclosed character of lanes, hedgerows and hedgerow-trees versus the panoramic and framed views to the open countryside from Bromley Road and PRoW network which provides visual interest and a sense of place.
- Noticeable presence of Bromley Road results in intrusion to the PRoW network and promoted walks / trails and reduces the perceptual qualities due to increased noise and disturbance from traffic.

4.4.4 Landscape Condition

Overall, the quality and condition of the Crockleford Plateau Ridge is moderate and could benefit from management. Gateways to the south-east and north-west (Bromley Road) are poorly defined. The only exception being north (Springvalley Lane) where the dispersed settlement pattern and landscape qualities create a good sense of arrival to the LLCA and LLCT. The boundary between the settlement edge (south-east) and the surrounding countryside is fragmented due to recent expansion. Some residential buildings are standardised in design, limiting the architectural and visual interest of the area. Rural businesses are often visually prominent due to the use of signage and varying boundary treatments, as well as a range of structures and buildings which creates a perception of irregularity and poor legibility.

4.5.5 Forces for Change

- Climate change leading to increasing periods of drought and increased temperatures resulting in a change in water levels and / or an increase in the frequency and severity of seasonal flooding.
- Climate change resulting in changes in woodland and tree species composition. This could also result in wind damage due to increases in severe gales (Ancient woodland could be particularly susceptible to storm damage), drought and an increase in pests

and diseases, such as ash dieback, oak processionary moth, Dutch elm disease and acute oak decline.

- Maturing trees and woodlands in gardens and private land, which are vulnerable to pathogens and limit the ability of woodland to regenerate.
- Impact of horsiculture, including subdivision of fields to form paddocks.
- Changes in agricultural practices resulting in the loss of pasture and associated hedgerows.
- Development pressure for housing could dilute the historic dispersed and loose-knit settlement pattern and reduce the sense of rural tranquillity and dark skies.
- Impact of commuter traffic on Bromley Road.
- Increasing traffic on rural lanes leading to demands for road upgrades and associated infrastructure, disregarding important landscape characteristics and reducing tranquillity and dark skies.
- Pressure for peri-urban and urban fringe related activities and further recreational pressures.
- Past housing development has resulted in severance to ecological links and landscape character. Visual and perceptual links to the medieval Hamlet have almost entirely disappeared and there has been a steady decline in the condition due to expansion pressures.

4.4.7 Landscape Opportunities

These opportunities highlight characteristics that should form part of the consideration for any future development proposals for the area:

- Manage Ancient and semi-natural woodland to ensure a diverse species and age structure by thinning, coppicing and replanting, as necessary. As climatic conditions change, plant suitable species and manage the woodlands to improve structure, health and diversity of habitat.
- Conserve and enhance the network of hedgerows, hedgerow trees and woodlands through active planting and management. Take opportunities to plant new woodlands and trees to compensate for the historic loss of elm and where feasible conserve the historic field boundaries.
- Strengthen the rural setting of the settlement and enhancements on gateways to create a sense of arrival and feeling of entering a Hamlet. Soften the currently harsh urban edges with planting and features typical of the surrounding rural landscape.
- Conserve the characteristics and qualities of narrow rural lanes, ensuring new roads, lanes or 'upgrades' take into account their rural context and avoid over-engineered features.
- Maintain the trees and species-rich grasslands on road verges.
- Maintain the rich character produced by local vernacular styles and building materials, including medieval timber frame buildings and post-medieval buildings rendered in plaster and lime wash, red brick walls and plinths, red rolled and pan tile roofing and iron clad roofing. Ensure new built development respects and responds to the rural vernacular and distinctive architectural colour palette.
- Conserve the sense of tranquillity and relatively dark skies by minimising lighting and designing any necessary lighting to minimise light spill or glare.
- Maintain the scenic quality, which is a result of the relatively flat topography, expansive areas of woodland, network of hedgerows and historic buildings, including the backdrop provided by Wall's Wood.
- Monitor potential changes in flora and increase in pests and diseases as a result of climate change, including spread of invasive plants and animals.
- Consider additional planting to screen the south of Bromley Road and reduce the intrusion of movement and noise from traffic onto Crockleford Heath.
- Protect and enhance the connections to the open countryside, by increasing interpretation and taking opportunities for heritage trails and walks where appropriate to link communities with their local heritage and landscape.
- Respect the settlement pattern of dispersed, loose-knit and ribbon pattern of development and the separation afforded to the Hamlet.
- Consider any expansion of the peri-rural and peri-urban fringe uses very carefully, ensuring new development is in keeping with the local vernacular, and does not disrupt the dispersed, loose-knit settlement pattern.

4.5 Crockleford Orchard Fields

4.5.1 Location and Context

The Crockleford Orchard Fields form part of the wider environs and are located to the east of the rural Hamlet of Crockleford Heath. The boundary along the south-eastern edge of the LLCA broadly follows the PRow network and field boundaries associated with Allen's Farm and marks the transition to the rural arable landscape of Crockleford Farmlands (LLCA 4) and to the north-east it follows the edges of a block of broadleaved woodland. The north-eastern boundary is largely defined by the mature hedgerow and hedgerow-trees to the north and loosely reflects the historic field boundaries that have been lost over time. The western boundary forms the transition to the rural and tranquil edges of Crockleford Heath (LLCA 1). The northern boundary is formed by the edge of the Crockleford Plateau Ridge and the transition to the peri-rural arable landscape beyond.



Figure 66: LLCA 3: Crockleford Orchard Fields
Ordnance Survey Scale: 1:10,000



Figure 67: LLCA 3: Crockleford Orchard Fields
Ordnance Survey Scale: NTS

4.5.2 Overview

This area has an overriding horticultural character influenced by the remnant orchards, woodland and pasture. Historically, the orchards would have predominant been cultivated for apple, but also for cherry, pear and other fruit bearing plant species (e.g., blackcurrants, blackberries, etc). The PRoW network extends from Green Lane (west) where extends in a broadly eastern direction

towards the Grade I Listed Church of St Anne and St Lawrence Elmstead Church and Grade II* Listed Elmstead Hall in Elmstead Market. This area also contains relic inter-war and post-war features, such as the gun placements to the east close to the Restricted By-Way. This LLCA has a strong market garden identity and is characteristically more open with panoramic views across open countryside towards the A120 Trunk Road (east). Esther Lee Stables forms a gypsy & traveller site for 1no. permanent residential pitch.

4.5.3 Key Characteristics

- Flat and gently undulating rural area of productive agricultural land characterised by an underlying geology of sands and gravels which supports prominent broadleaved and deciduous woodland and remnant orchards.
- Cover sands and loamy soils overlying the sands and gravels, give rise to very good quality agricultural land (orchard and pasture) with a network of mature hedgerows and hedgerow-trees creating a relatively strong landscape structure, with fields of varying sizes and regular field pattern.
- Small, rectilinear blocks of deciduous woodland and historic orchards contribute important elements to an otherwise open farmed landscape and provide historic and biodiversity interest.
- A strong historic landscape pattern of ancient rectilinear fields with hedgerows and historic lanes

and roads.

- Settlement pattern of scattered historic farmsteads (Whitehouse Farm), stud farm (Glebelands Stud) and cottages (Rose Cottages & White House) located along minor roads and some featuring long driveways / access roads.
- The extensive network of public rights of way, including Public Footpaths and Restricted By-Way which contributes to people's physical health and mental well-being.
- A strong local built vernacular including post medieval buildings rendered in plaster, red brick finish, pan tiled roof, red rolling roofing tiles, stained timber casement windows which provides a sense of place and accords with a distinctive architectural colour palette.
- Expansive views from more open areas, for example along Restricted By-Way towards Elmstead Market.
- A relatively high scenic quality as a result of the areas of woodland, historic orchards, farmsteads, cottages and backdrop provided by the wooded skyline.
- The colour and texture of the cultivated landscape is noted as changing with the seasons.

4.5.4 Landscape Condition

This area has a good quality and condition but could benefit from horticultural management. The built environment is good quality, generally intact, with few alterations. The surrounding landscape is characterised by

historic orchards, woodland, arable fields (pasture), well-managed hedgerows and hedgerow-trees and Public Rights of Way (Public Footpaths and Restricted By-Way).

4.5.5 Forces of Change

- Climate change leading to increased periods of drought and raised temperatures resulting in a change in water levels and / or an increase in the frequency and severity of seasonal flooding.
- Climate change resulting in changes in woodland and tree species composition. This could also result in wind damage due to increases in severe gales, drought and an increase in pests and diseases.
- Maturing trees and woodlands in gardens and private land, which are vulnerable to pathogens and limit the ability of woodland to regenerate.
- Impact of horsiculture, including subdivision of fields to form paddocks.
- Changes in horticultural practices resulting in the permanent devastation to historic orchards and loss of woodlands, pasture and associated hedgerows.
- Orchards generally, are in decline and may disappear from the landscape.
- Development pressure for housing could dilute the historic dispersed and loose-knit settlement pattern and reduce the sense of rural tranquillity and dark skies.
- Increasing traffic on rural lanes leading to demands for road upgrades and infrastructure, disregarding

important landscape characteristics and features.

- Pressure for peri-urban fringe related activities and further recreational pressures.

4.5.7 Landscape Opportunities

These opportunities highlight characteristics that should form part of the consideration for any future development proposals for the area:

- Conserve the intact rural character of the area as a setting to farmsteads and cottages.
- Manage semi-natural woodland to ensure a diverse species and age structure by thinning, coppicing and replanting, as necessary. As climatic conditions change, plant suitable species and manage the woodlands to improve structure, health and diversity of habitat.
- Conserve and enhance the network of hedgerows, hedgerow trees and woodlands and orchards through active planting and management. Take opportunities to plant new woodlands, orchards and trees to compensate for the historic loss of tree species and where feasible conserve the historic field boundaries.
- Maintain the human scale of the landscape and features that contribute to this human scale including farmsteads, trees and historic field patterns.
- Any new farm buildings necessary to sustain the orchard economy, should be sensitively designed

and sited. Ensure new development is appropriate in scale and character to the landscape context. New buildings should avoid visually prominent locations and development should be well-integrated (e.g., with locally appropriate planting) and maintain the landscape qualities of the character area.

- Conversion of historic barns to residential and home office uses should retain key characteristics.
- Maintain the rich character produced by local vernacular styles and building materials, including historic and post medieval buildings rendered in plaster, red brick finishes, pan tiled roofing, red rolling roofing tiles and stained timber casement windows. Ensure new built development respects and responds to the rural vernacular and distinctive architectural colour palette.
- Conserve the sense of tranquillity and relatively dark skies by minimising lighting and designing any necessary lighting to minimise light spill or glare.
- Maintain the scenic quality, which is a result of the relatively flat topography, historic ‘gardenesque’ orchards, blocks of semi-natural woodland, network of hedgerows and historic buildings, including the backdrop provided trees and woodland.
- Monitor potential changes in flora and increase in pests and diseases as a result of climate change, including spread of invasive plants and animals.
- Consider additional planting to screen the south of Bromley Road and reduce the intrusion of movement

- and noise from traffic onto the LLCA.
- Protect and enhance the connections to the open countryside, by increasing interpretation and taking opportunities for heritage trails and walks where appropriate to link communities with their local heritage and landscape.
- Respect the settlement pattern of dispersed, loose-knit and ribbon pattern of development and the separation afforded to the Hamlet.
- Respect the environmental colour and texture of natural landscape features and the cultivated landscape across the seasons.

4.6 Crockleford Farmlands

4.6.1 Location and Context

The Crockleford Farmlands is situated to the south and south-east of the rural Hamlet of Crockleford Heath. The LLCA forms two distinct sub-areas which form part of the wider environs of Crockleford. The western boundary of sub-area (west) follows the edge of the Ancient wood and LoWS at Churn Wood. The northern boundary forms the transition to the rural and tranquil edges of Crockleford Heath (LLCA 1). The southern and eastern boundaries are formed by the field boundaries of the arable land. There is a small corner to the north-east of sub-area (west) where LLCA 1, 2 and 3 come together.

The north-western boundary of sub-area (east) marks the transition follows the PRoW network and field boundaries associated with Allen's Farm and marks the transition to the horticultural landscape of Crockleford Orchard Fields (LLCA 3). The northern boundaries are influenced by the PRoW network and historic field boundaries and mature hedgerow. The eastern boundaries are defined by the peripheries of the historic heath, which appears to have extended up to the edge of Allen's Farm to the east. The southern boundaries of sub-area (east) are influenced by the presence of Mount Pleasant Cottages to the south and then broadly follows the historic field boundaries and mature hedgerow and hedgerow-trees that define Wivenhoe Road.



Figure 68: LLCA 4: Crockleford Farmlands
Ordnance Survey Scale: 1:10,000



Figure 69: LLCA 4: Crockleford Farmlands
Ordnance Survey Scale: NTS

4.6.2 Overview

This area occupies the gently sloping plateau south of Crockleford Heath, forming an expansive swathe of farmland between the settlements of Colchester and Elmstead Market. The landscape slopes imperceptibly up towards the higher plateau of Crockleford Heath (LLCA 1) and Crockleford Orchard Fields (LLCA 3) with wide panoramic views over the farmlands. The settlement

pattern is typically rural and dispersed with scattered farmsteads at Allen's Farm and cottages at Mount Pleasant. The PRoW network connects from the Grade I Listed Church of St Anne and St Lawrence Elmstead Church and the Grade II* Listed Elmstead Hall in Elmstead Market to the east and traverses in a western direction through Allen's Farm and towards Crockleford Heath to the east and north-east. This LLCA has a strong rural character and is more open in visual terms. The LLCA also forms the transition to the wider plateau of the Tendring Plain and Bromley Heaths LCAs.

4.6.3 Key Characteristics

- Lower lying and gradually sloping plateau of the Crockleford Farmlands with views up towards the wooded Crockleford Orchard Fields and Crockleford Heath.
- The underlying clay geology is overlain by cover sands and loamy soils which results in excellent quality agricultural land with a network of mature hedgerows and hedgerow-trees creating a good landscape structure.
- The farmlands have a strong field pattern comprising a mixture of medium- and large-scale field patterns.
- Well-vegetated roads and drainage ditches form field boundaries and drain into the farmlands to the north.
- The settlement pattern is typically scattered farmsteads and cottages situated along minor roads traversing the area.
- The typical built style is of farmsteads and rural

cottages located close to existing rural roads, typically constructed from red brick, black clapboard weatherboarding and red clay roof tiles, with weatherboarded barns is prevalent as part of the local vernacular of the LLCA.

- This area has a relatively high scenic quality as a result of the gently undulating topography, intact field pattern and hedgerow network, that enables a sense of prospect, the texture provided by trees and hedgerows and the attractive historic farmstead and cottages.
- The landscape character is greatly affected by the state of the sky, pylons and overhead lines and other vertical structures that stand out as prominent elements visually interrupt the landscape in parts.
- The extensive network of public rights of way and promoted walks / trails contributes to people's physical health and mental well-being.
- The colour and texture of the cultivated landscape is noted as changing with the seasons.
- Generally open character and there are frequent wide views in which the scattered hedgerow-trees and woodland punctuate the skyline.
- There are long-distance, panoramic views to the west over the farmlands towards Crockleford Heath.
- Grade II Listed 'Allen's Farmhouse' comprises a house dated back to 1584, timber frame construction and plastered, red plain tiled roof, with left and off-centred red brick chimney stacks.

4.6.4 Landscape Condition

The landscape quality (or condition) is influenced by the condition of its landscape components. Hedgerows and hedgerow-trees forming field boundaries and lining rural roads are typically mature, historic in nature and in relatively good condition which creates a unified pattern and harmonious, high-quality landscape. Farmland is generally well managed and in active use. Long-distance views of the wooded rural Hamlet to the north and north-east and the prospect and views over gradually sloping plateau areas also contribute to the scenic quality of the LLCA.

4.6.5 Forces for Change

- Climate change leading to increasing periods of drought and increased temperatures resulting in a change in water levels and / or an increase in the frequency and severity of seasonal flooding.
- Climate change resulting in changes in woodland and tree species composition. This could also result in wind damage due to increases in severe gales, drought and an increase in pests and diseases, such as ash dieback, oak processionary moth, Dutch elm disease and acute oak decline.
- Maturing trees and woodlands in gardens and private land, which are vulnerable to pathogens and limit the ability of woodland to regenerate.
- Changes in agricultural techniques and practices resulting in the loss of arable land and associated hedgerows.
- Shifts in agriculture as a result of longer drier summers resulting in growth of more drought tolerant planting and increased focus on biomass fuel planting to increase renewable forms of energy production.
- Development pressure for housing could dilute the historic dispersed and settlement pattern and reduce the sense of rural tranquillity and dark skies.
- Impact of commuter traffic on Wivenhoe Road.
- Increasing traffic on rural lanes and roads leading to demands for road upgrades and associated infrastructure, disregarding important landscape characteristics and reducing tranquillity and dark skies.
- Conversion and expansion of farmsteads for residential uses.
- Large-scale agricultural buildings in the open countryside
- Pressure for peri-urban and urban fringe related activities and further recreational pressures.
- Potential increases in the risk of fire during longer drier summers affecting heathland, grassland, trees and woodland.
- Pressure for renewable energy infrastructure and connections, including pylons, both within the

LLCA and in adjacent landscapes, reducing the rural character and interrupting mid- and long-distance views to the wider countryside and / or to Crockleford Heath.

4.6.7 Landscape Opportunities

These opportunities highlight characteristics that should form part of the consideration for any future development proposals for the area:

- Conserve and enhance the network of hedgerows and hedgerow-trees through active planting and management. Take opportunities to plant new tree belts and hedgerows to compensate for the historic loss of elm and where feasible to conserve the historic field boundaries.
- Strengthen the rural setting of the settlement and enhancements on gateways to create a sense of arrival and feeling of entering a Hamlet.
- Conserve the characteristics and qualities of the narrow rural tree-lined roads, ensuring new roads, lanes or 'upgrades' take into account their rural context and avoid over-engineered features (e.g., resist widening).
- Maintain the human scale of the landscape and features that contribute to this human scale including farmsteads, trees and historic field patterns.
- Consider opportunities to create new areas of

- deciduous woodland and semi-natural grassland habitats.
- Monitor potential changes in flora and increase in pests and diseases as a result of climate change, including spread of invasive plants and animals.
- Conserve the historic farmsteads, weatherboarded barns, red brick and black clapboarding and historic buildings that extend east from the historic Hamlet of Crockleford Heath as features of the area. Ensure that any new built development fits with the rural character of the area and draws on local vernacular styles and materials including red brick, timber frame, whitewash, black clapboard, red clay tile roofing and weatherboarding.
- Conserve the sense of tranquillity and relatively dark skies by minimising lighting and designing any necessary lighting to minimise light spill or glare.
- Boundaries are also important when fitting with the rural character of the area.
- Maintain opportunities to experience long-distance views of the wooded rural Hamlet of Crockleford Heath and towards the open countryside of the Tendring Plain and Bromley Heaths LCAs from country lanes and the extensive PRoW network.
- Protect and enhance the connections to the open countryside, by increasing interpretation and taking opportunities for heritage trails and walks where appropriate to link communities with their local heritage and landscape.
- Respect the environmental colour and texture of natural landscape features and the cultivated landscape across the seasons.



Chapter 5

AREA OF SPECIAL CHARACTER

5.1 Crockleford Heath & Environs Area of Special Character

5.1.1 Introduction

Both Tendring District Council and Colchester City Council recognise how an understanding of the context, history and character of place can ensure that positive change strives to conserve, enhance, restore and regenerate the distinctive character and special qualities of Crockleford Heath and continues to foster a sense of belonging, inclusion and social cohesion within the community.

This Character Appraisal Plan will form an important ‘building block’ of the evidence base helping to aid the planning, design and management of future development and change in Crockleford Heath and its immediacy and to inform the policies of the Draft Development Plan Document (DPD) for the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community.

The NPPF emphasises that neighbourhood planning groups can play an important role in identifying the special qualities of each area and explaining how this should be reflected in development. The community engagement as part of the Character Appraisal has only sought to reinforce what is regarded as special about the small rural hamlet and its surroundings.

Crockleford Heath & Environs has a strong rural identity and an indomitable community spirit and sense of cohesion. This reflective and objective appraisal of the local landscape and heritage of Crockleford Heath and its environs should serve as a record of the place and its setting, its valued characteristics and features, what is special about the rural Hamlet and what must be conserved and protected.

The Crockleford Heath & Environs Character Appraisal Plan focusses on the historic former heathland and rural community at Crockleford Heath, but also extends outwards to the arable farmlands, historic orchard fields, Ancient woodland, historic rural lanes and other notable buildings, landmarks and features. The character of the area must be viewed against the wider context and its local aesthetic and perceptual allures and distinctiveness. There is a hierarchical framework of recommendations on how the landscape, natural and historic environment should be treated and could be enhanced which is included within the National Character Areas, the Essex Landscape Character Assessment, the Tendring Landscape Character Assessment, the Ardleigh Village Design Statement, the Essex Green Infrastructure Strategy and Standards and the Crockleford Heath & Environs Character Appraisal.

5.1.2 Defining the Area of Special Character

As highlighted in the above sections of the Character Appraisal Plan, Local Planning Authorities may choose to rely on additional forms of local designation outside of the more rigorous criteria for statutory Conservation Area designations to help manage the local historic environment. These areas generally take the form of ‘Areas of Special Character’ (or ‘Areas of Special Local Character’) and are considered to be a local designation that recognises the distinct character of an area and identifies the valued characteristics and features that both Tendring District Council and Colchester City Council wish to conserve and enhance but where a Conservation Area designation may not be justified.

The boundaries of the Crockleford Area of Special Character do not impose additional statutory controls and do not involve the removal of permitted development rights for householders. Crockleford Heath & Environs will form part of the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community, which will be a planned new settlement that responds directly to the regional, local and individual site context and opportunities to create development underpinned by a series of interrelated principles which are based on the Town and Country Planning Association (TCPA) Garden City Principles, adapted for the specific North Essex context as set out in the North Essex Garden Communities Charter.

Whilst the demand for housing can make such areas susceptible to change, they are not considered to be immune from these pressures insofar that the purpose of the local designation is to ensure that any development is sympathetic to the valued landscape characteristics and features and reflects the significance of the historic environment.

The Appraisal Map (refer to Figure 70) sets out the illustrative boundaries for the Crockleford Heath & Environs Area of Special Character and whilst they do not represent a statutory designation, they are intended ensure development proposals contribute to, and do not materially detract from, the beneficial setting. Alongside historic statutory designations (e.g. Listed Buildings) and non-statutory, they will enable the Draft DPD to effectively manage the impact of development proposals to a range of different landscape characteristics and features, or historic environments.

5.2 Special Qualities to Conserve and Enhance

The Character Appraisal Plan has identified some parts of Crockleford Heath & Environs, whilst not meriting Conservation Area status are nonetheless considered to be of some character and attractiveness. It is hoped that the special qualities will become a useful tool in helping to aid the planning, design and management of future

development and change in Crockleford Heath and its immediate surroundings.

Development proposals should take opportunities to reflect the following special qualities, including:

- Crockleford Heath & Environs comprises an amalgam of varied and distinct landscapes across a modest area. The landscape character areas are all interesting in their own right and collectively form part of the narrative and history of Crockleford.
- Broadly speaking, all of the local character areas have retained the dispersed, loose-knit pattern of development which remains central to the character of Crockleford Heath and its rural surroundings, together with its retained network of historic grid formation of lanes and informal patterns of 18th-century (and earlier) enclosure which reflects the medieval colonisation of the heath and the way in which human land use (and cultivation) has been informed by the complexity of the natural environment.
- The scale of the character areas differs but the immediate scale is also important due to the landscape changes within short (often walkable and accessible) distances providing a spectrum of variations and complexity.
- Across the local character areas, the topography and landscape pattern provides drama and intimacy due to the distinct juxtaposition of woodland, hedgerows and tree-line field boundaries and the expansive flat

plateau. In addition, the gradually undulating plateau, ditch network, historic orchards, rich wildflower verges and narrow rural lanes contribute to the fluctuations within and between each of the local character areas.

- The geology of clay underlying deposits of sands, gravels and cover sands overlain by acidic loamy and clayey soils gives them a healthy character and denotes the best and most versatile agricultural land which have resulted in the remnant heathland communities of the area and provides further diversity to the landscape.
- The colour and texture of the cultivated landscape is noted as changing with the seasons which emphasises the distinctive horticultural character of Crockleford Heath & Environs.
- Although the arable land is intensely cultivated, the landscape framework of field patterns, hedgerows, tree belts, copses and woodland are features of the productive landscape. The remains of the historic medieval are discernible, most notably at Churn Wood and the remnant heaths remain identifiable by hedgerow vegetation.
- Crockleford Heath & Environs is set within an established landscape framework, which is by virtue of the continued protection and conservation of its natural assets and signifying a landscape which is generally in good condition.
- The Crockleford Heath & Environs boundary defines the landscape as a concise collection of areas where the strength of expression of landscape character (i.e.,

-
- sense of place) is contained within its spatial confines.
 - The southern part of Crockleford Heath & Environs lies contiguous with the agricultural heartland of the Bromley Heaths and the backdrop of Ancient woodland and Local Wildlife Site at Churn Wood.
 - To the far west, marks the transition and connections between the Hamlet and its rural surroundings and the historic City of Colchester.
 - The north-western boundary is formed by the expansive backcloth scenery of the Salary Brook river corridor, including the Ancient woodland and Local Wildlife Site at Wall's Wood.
 - The northern boundary contains the interface between the A120 Trunk Road and the historic Springvalley Lane which provides a sense of arrival.
 - To the east, the area is formed by relic orchards and its peripheries demarcated by historic field patterns.
 - The south-eastern part of Crockleford Heath & Environs encompasses the extent of the historic heath, views across the 'prairies' and the connections to Elmstead Market.
 - The LLCAs are comprised of individual parcels of landscape that are considered interesting in their own right however, as a collection Crockleford Heath & Environs is greater than the sum of its parts.
 - Crockleford Heath & Environs contains a strong framework of protected sites, including the Local Wildlife Sites at Churn Wood, Wall's Wood and Chapel Lane Verge (also designated as a Special Roadside Verge), the Ancient woodland at Churn Wood and Wall's Wood, other broadleaved and deciduous woodland as identified on the Priority Habitat Inventory and National Forest Inventory, historic orchards, historic hedgerows and tree belts, arable 'prairies', grassland pasture and the influence of the Salary Brook river corridor.
 - The Ancient woodland and semi-natural parts of the Crockleford Heath & Environs landscape is an integral element of character and this is further enhanced by the presence of wildlife and nature habitats.
 - Crockleford Heath & Environs has been the source of inspiration for OutPost (an artist-led project funded by Essex County Council). The work produced by OutPost showcases an extract of literature titled 'Nature and Tradition: An Essex Apple' by author Adrian May. The artistic work makes a positive contribution to the area, providing a place to appreciate and contemplate the historic horticultural landscape of the area and its sense of place.
 - The landscape of Crockleford Heath & Environs has an association with the Blitz during the Second World War as reported in the Bromley Messenger (Credit: Hugh Frostick) who published an article in 2013 about the 'Memories of the Blitz around the Bromleys'.
 - The landscape of Crockleford Heath & Environs has been greatly influenced by the geological history and cultivation of the land and consequently contains a wide range of accessible geological interest. The settlement includes slightly acidic loamy and clayey soils of Tendring association and high-quality agricultural land. These have developed over the superficial deposits of Kesgrave sands and gravels and Cover Sands of the Low-level Kesgrave terraces. The bedrock beneath comprises unconsolidated Eocene strata of Harwich Formation and London Clay Formation, which together form the Thames Group.
 - Grade II Listed 'Lamberts' is an eighteenth-century timber framed cottage with later alterations.
 - Grade II Listed 'Ivy Cottage' this is a likely nineteenth-century timber framed cottage and is the former gatehouse to Churn Wood.
 - Grade II Listed 'Barn and linked Cow Byre' includes a mid-C18th timer framed barn, weatherboarding and iron clad roof and a linked C19th barn with red brick end bays and open bays to south with red pan tiled roof.
 - Grade II Listed 'Cow Byre and Hayloft' is an C18th oak framed timber barn with brick plinths and red plain tiled roof.
 - Grade II Listed 'Cartlodge' features an early C19th timber framed cartlodge with weatherboarding and hipped clay pan tile roof.
 - Grade II Listed 'Stable / Cartlodge' is an C19th partially timber framed stable with weatherboarding and a red rolled tile gabled roof.
 - Grade II Listed 'Allen's Farmhouse' comprises a house dated back to 1584, timber frame construction and plastered, red plain tiled roof, with left and off-centred red brick chimney stacks.
 - The mid-nineteenth century Methodist Chapel is

considered to be a non-designated heritage asset due to its architectural / artistic interest, landmark status and its historic interest. Its retained historic form and character is still discernible today as the historic Chapel building which once served the small rural community here, which provides time depth to the landscape.

- Crockleford Heath & Environs has a strong sense of rurality and tranquillity as a result of the dispersed and loose-knit settlement pattern. The mid- and long-distance views to a well-wooded backcloth of scenery creates a feeling of remoteness. The little human influence within the landscape gives rise to a distinct rural identity with relatively dark skies.
- Contrasts between the enclosed character of woodlands, rural lanes and roads, Public Rights of Way, hedgerows and tree belts and the expansive and panoramic views to the open countryside and agricultural heartland.
- Crockleford Heath & Environs is a well connected and integrated landscape which is attractive for many forms of countryside recreations. It features an extensive public right of way network, a series of promoted routes and long-distance walks, including [but not limited to]: The Colchester Orbital, Elmstead Market Walk, Camuplodunum and the West Tending Marathon and a historic grid network of rural lanes and country roads.

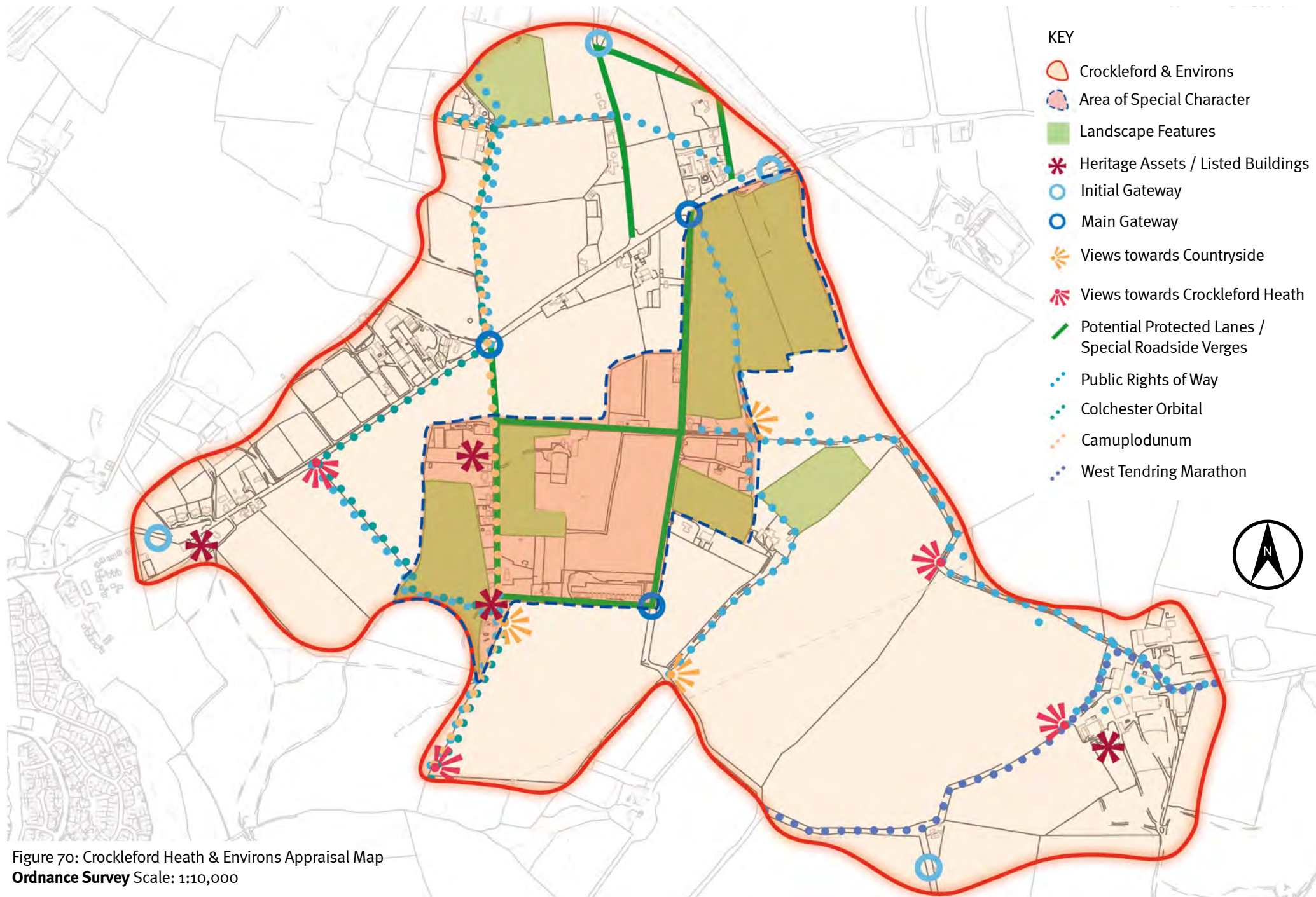
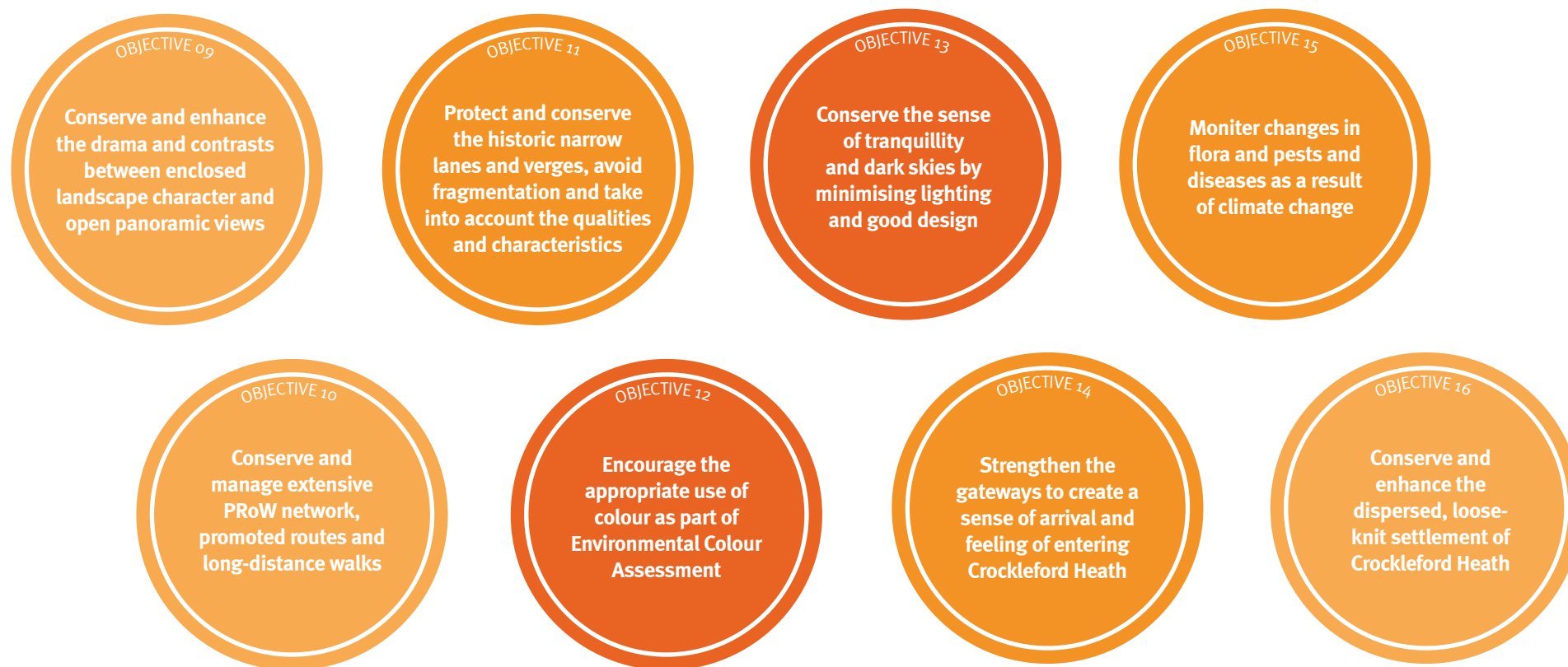


Figure 70: Crockleford Heath & Environs Appraisal Map
Ordnance Survey Scale: 1:10,000

5.2 Conservation Objectives







Chapter 6

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A photograph of a gravel path lined with trees, leading into the distance. The path is covered in fallen leaves and is flanked by lush green grass and large, mature trees with dense foliage. The scene is bathed in warm, golden light, suggesting late afternoon or early morning. The path leads the eye towards a bright horizon in the distance.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Public and Stakeholder Engagement



Appendix A: Public and Stakeholder Engagement

This appendix report contains details of the stakeholder and public engagement that was undertaken as part of the Crockleford Heath & Environs Character Appraisal.

The events were undertaken between July and September, and the outcomes fed into the production of the final document. This addendum provides full details of the events and findings of engagement activities, outlining the key findings from each.



Figure A1: Guided 'Walk and Talk' (Dated: 21st July 2022)

A.1 Guided 'Walk and Talk'

The 'walk and talk' was organised to allow for early engagement with key stakeholders. The stakeholders were identified with the guidance of Colchester City Council and Tendring District Council. It included representatives from the Local Parish Council and local residents, particularly those who were representing local interest groups such as the CEAG.

The event was held on the 21st July. The group met at the entrance of the footpath on Bromley Road (shown as an orange marker on the map). The route walked is shown on the map opposite.

Key outputs of the walk were:

- Familiarisation with the areas that were of interest to local stakeholders
- Enhanced understanding of land ownership and historic uses
- Discussion of the role of verges, hedges, and special roadside verges
- Appreciation of the impact of the verges to flooding and water management
- Role of the woodland for local users and its management
- Importance of historic land use and small-scale farming, for example, bird rearing and orchards

Following the walk, attendees from Ardleigh Parish Council kindly offered to promote the project and future engagement projects at their upcoming public drop-in session. Content was provided for the Ardleigh Parish Council Information Drop-In Session, at the Village Hall, on 24th August, from 2pm until 7pm. A poster was provided alongside questionnaire questions to encourage attendees to get in touch with responses.

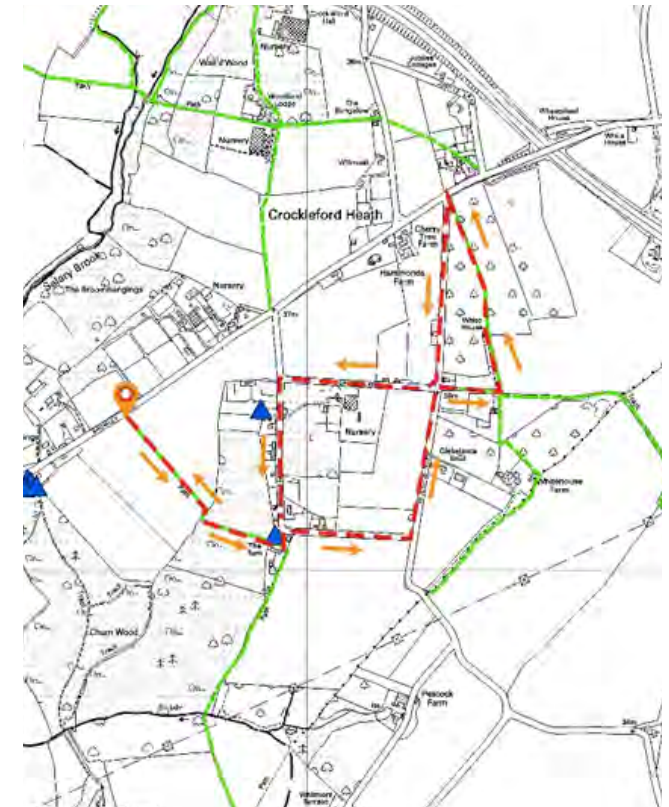


Figure A2: Route of the 'Walk and Talk' event

A.2 Online Engagement Workshop

An online workshop was held online, on the 21st September at 3.30pm. It aimed to provide a platform to share the findings of our team to date, and to facilitate discussion between stakeholders and residents to share their views and input into the development of the final report. Invitations were sent widely to stakeholders and residents, and posters were shared for circulation. 14 attendees joined the event in total, including representatives from the local Parish Council and Colchester City Council, a representative from Essex Gardens Trust, and residents including a local archivist, long-term residents, and members of the CEAG.

A link to the workshop can be found [here](https://youtu.be/3lEB19LZ3ak) (https://youtu.be/3lEB19LZ3ak). Some of the key concerns raised and findings were:

- Boundary of Crockleford vs Crockleford Heath – this was picked up on by many of the attendees, who raised concerns over the perceived boundary of the settlement extent. This was led to further consideration of the boundary, and the creation of a map depicting the environs of the heath to reflect Crockleford more widely, which is reflected within the final report. Terminology was also amended to make a distinction between ‘Crockleford Heath’ and ‘Crockleford’, to reflect local terminology.
- Opportunities – points about the potential to explore

acidic soil maps and the resulting character of these, as well as the potential loss of elm and potential to reinstate more hedgerow trees, as well as the opportunity to offer protection through a localised design guides for the special character area and explore non-designated heritage assets further. The opportunity to ensure natural features, and flora/fauna and wildlife corridors are captured for inclusion in future management plans was also raised.

- Local insight – a long-term local resident shared insight into the history of Crockleford, including the old pub, orchard, chapel and gun site.
- Concern over future development – a key theme of discussion was about the density of future development and position of specific features such as the sewerage plant. Although we were unable to comment on specifics, the concerns were heard and their inclusion within this report should support future work.



Figure A3: Poster advertisement for the Online Workshop

A.3 Questionnaire

Following the online engagement, short questionnaire questions were circulated with all attendees, who were also encouraged to pass them on to those who may want to get in touch. The question prompts were:

1. Whether you have any memories and stories of buildings, homes, or places within Crockleford and Crockleford Heath?
2. Whether you know of any associations that relate to the area, such as through notable people, events, art, writing, music, or folklore associated with the area?
3. If there are specific views, landmarks, spaces, and / or historic features within the area that are important to you?
4. What other senses does the landscape of Crockleford and Crockleford Heath evoke (i.e., senses of hearing, smell, touch, taste)?
5. How does the landscape of Crockleford and Crockleford Heath contribute to your quality of life?

A timescale of two weeks was given for responses. The responses received have been anonymised and included overleaf.

Response A

“During the period 2008-2013 I was living in Ardleigh, close to the reservoir, and working at the University of Essex. Usually I drove to work, but when the weather was fine and the evenings light enough, I would cycle. The route took me along Spring Valley Lane (with a punishing hill- especially when relatively unfit) along Wivenhoe Road and then one of the parallel single track lanes in the heart of Crockleford Heath to connect to the A133 and on to campus.

The floral and fauna along the route, when taken slowly, was wonderful. I saw my first hare and my first red kite in this area whilst making this journey. There is honeysuckle in the hedgerows- which I have not seen elsewhere in the parish, and the memories of those fragrant rides home on warm early summer evenings are something I still treasure. Later in the season, the hedgerows were abundant with sloes and blackberries (which I picked and preserved for hedgerow jelly).

Going back a few years to the early 1990s- I lived in Wivenhoe and once a year would see signs for the Essex Wildlife Trust open weekends at Churn Wood. The first time I attended was soon after the death of my first grandparent (in 1991). I have such clear memories of walking through the field to the woodland with the valley to Greenstead/ Longridge clearly visible on the left (it’s the opposite view to the one you get from

Avon Way- which itself is always worth a second look and ought to be preserved). The feeling of the town being close but inhabiting another world- more special because this space is not usually open to the public. Then entering the woodland with the fragrance and majesty of the bluebells; my favourite wild flowers. Following the paths- surprised at how well managed and ‘well trod’ these seemed to be when the wood is not open to the public- and hearing rustling in the leaves and undergrowth. Stopping and watching a family of mice run round and round in little circles as if playing chase. A reminder of the value of taking time to stop and look closely, of the wonder of nature and of the importance of these memories to sustain and connect us.

I fervently wish for the nature and wonder of Crockleford to be maintained, and would hope that Churn Wood, in particular, might become a haven for people as well as its wildlife in the years to come.”

Response B

"I am not able to be of great assistance having lived in Chapel Lane for five years but being fortunate to adjoin Churn Wood I am very attached to the area and consider that it does require greater protection than is provided by the draft plan for the proposed garden community.

The slides suggest you are familiar with the history of the hamlet, which apart from Lamberts and Ivy Cottage appears to have developed around the Methodist Chapel, in what is now called Chapel Lane. You will also know that a history of the chapel can be found at:



There are other examples of Methodist Chapels in remote locations in Essex because they were out of the sight of the Bishop of London.

I was recently fortunate to be contacted by [REDACTED] who was born and lived in Lamberts as a child and subsequently in the original bungalow where I live. This was constructed on land adjoining Lamberts in the 1930's. I had understood that Lamberts dates from the early 1800's and was originally occupied by a butcher and cattle dealer. [REDACTED] thinks that the property dates from the late 1700's.

[REDACTED] family were involved in construction and establishment of the chapel, and he has a photograph of family members with musical instruments, who played in the chapel, perhaps in the early 1900's. He also confirmed that the original houses on Chapel Lane, except for Lamberts and Ivy Cottage, were probably built by members of the chapel."

Response C

"I was born in Crockleford in 1940. The main places I knew were Wheatsheaf House a former pub and shop my home and Crockleford Mission Room at [REDACTED] the top of Crockleford Hill where we worshipped.

My father worked on Mr Gooch's farm and the names of the farming families in Crockleford have remained unchanged throughout my life. My mother picked fruit on the two fruit growing farms and I would get off the bus to meet her. I especially love the old orchard off Wivenhoe Road where I later picked apples and enjoyed many walks with my dogs. The packaging shed was at Cherry Tree Farm and my aunt worked there. I also picked blackcurrants and cherries in the orchards at Hull Farm and went to their shop to buy fruit.

My favourite views were the ones from the Colchester side as we approached Crockleford either on the road or on the footpath on the edge of Welshwood looking over Spring Valley Woods. I also loved the lanes round the Heath and the views from the bridle path from Crockleford Heath to Elmstead Church as I walked my generations of Scottish Terriers.

I knew the Went family and the chapel and also the gun site where we picked blackberries after the war when just the concrete bases for the site remained.

From there we could look back at my home but now it is hidden by the bridge.

The main events I remember were the Christmas parties at the mission in January, the Mother's Union meetings, the feast in Churn Wood at the end of the war and the little sale we had at The White House now in Jubilee Lane. My mother delivered newspapers in Bromley Road, Crockleford Heath and Spring Valley on her bike and I sometimes helped. We also took out the magazine and the Church Christmas card right up to pre-covid. Crockleford is my home.

[REDACTED] characters were the clergy and a lady called xxxxxxxx from Ardleigh Court who had her faith refined as a Japanese prisoner of war. Several people had nicknames like Spinach Taylor, Partner and Fiddler Bantick. We often met on the Bromley bus into Colchester so most people knew each other before the private cars from the 1970's.

Because of the bus service I went to school in Colchester and later as a nun I got on the bus from Wheatsheaf House to go to Rhodesia!! I can give more details if I have an interview but I hope this is enough to see Crockleford is and has been a wonderful community even if only a hamlet."

Appendix B: Landscape Value Appraisal



Appendix B: Landscape Value Appraisal

At the County-level, the Essex Landscape Character Assessment has assessed the landscape character of Essex and identifies Crockleford Heath & Environs as lying within the Tendring Plain Landscape Character Area (LCA). This area judged as having a moderate settlement condition and moderate hedgerow condition (due to some fragmented hedgerows). At the District-level, the Tendring District Landscape Character Assessment has classified Crockleford Heath and its immediate surroundings as forming part of the Bromley Heaths LCA and judged as having a moderate character as a result of the landscape condition being in decline.

Other assessment work, including the Essex Green Infrastructure Standards and Essex Green Infrastructure Strategy have also identified several Green Infrastructure (GI) Assets (including a number of GI Benefits and GI Functions) and Productive Spaces within the rural Hamlet area. Chapter 3 of the Character Appraisal sets out the general approach to the Landscape Value Appraisal (including Ecosystem Services) for the Hamlet and its rural surroundings. Chapter 5 includes a vision for Crockleford Heath & Environs, describes its special qualities and follows on from the characterisation and classification work in Chapter 4.

Natural England's 'An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment' highlights that the "consensus of opinion, obtained through stakeholder involvement, can highlight the importance of perceptions of landscapes..." (Tudor, 2014). People's perceptions of place turn land into the concept of landscape and as considerations of valued landscapes will certainly involve a degree of subjectivity and differing opinion, it can be helpful to the process if there is general agreement on the physical attributes and special qualities that may be considered important.

The first draft of these qualities was initially discussed with Officers from Tendring District Council and Colchester City Council and then the list was put forward as a key part of the consultation process for the Character Appraisal Plan. On the basis of a generally helpful, albeit modest number of consultations, the list provided is not intended to be a fixed list but should be read as being both tangible (i.e., perceivable in the actual landscape) and malleable (i.e., contains a degree of pliancy or flexibility). This is because the criteria for appraisals and other assessment work needs to be appropriate and proportionate to each process.

This Appendix comprises a Landscape Value Appraisal identifying the degree to which the special qualities of Crockleford Heath & Environs have been judged and relate to the individual Local Landscape Character Areas (LLCAs). The Landscape Value Appraisal utilises a simple five-point scale which is based on judgments of High, High-Medium,

Medium, Medium-Low and Low. The judgements have been applied across the rural Hamlet and its immediate surroundings at the scale of the individual LLCAs.

The mapped information was produced alongside the appraisal of landscape value to illustrate how the LLCAs may be seen to combine and reflect areas of higher landscape value based on their fluctuations to the range of key value factors and the way in which different people can perceive the landscape. The Landscape Value Appraisal and LLCAs are illustrated at Figure B1 at the end of this Appendix.

This Landscape Value Appraisal provides a broad overview of the distribution of the special qualities, key characteristics and sense of place of Crockleford Heath & Environs and therefore represents an overarching view of their relative landscape values. As noted at the beginning of the document, the Character Appraisal will form an important 'building block' of the evidence base for the Draft Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community DPD helping to aid the planning, design and management of future development and change in Crockleford Heath as well as informing planning policy and decisions. As such, further detailed landscape and / or heritage assessment work may well be needed to inform the production of any local design policies, design guides, masterplanning or design codes and to assist with monitoring change.

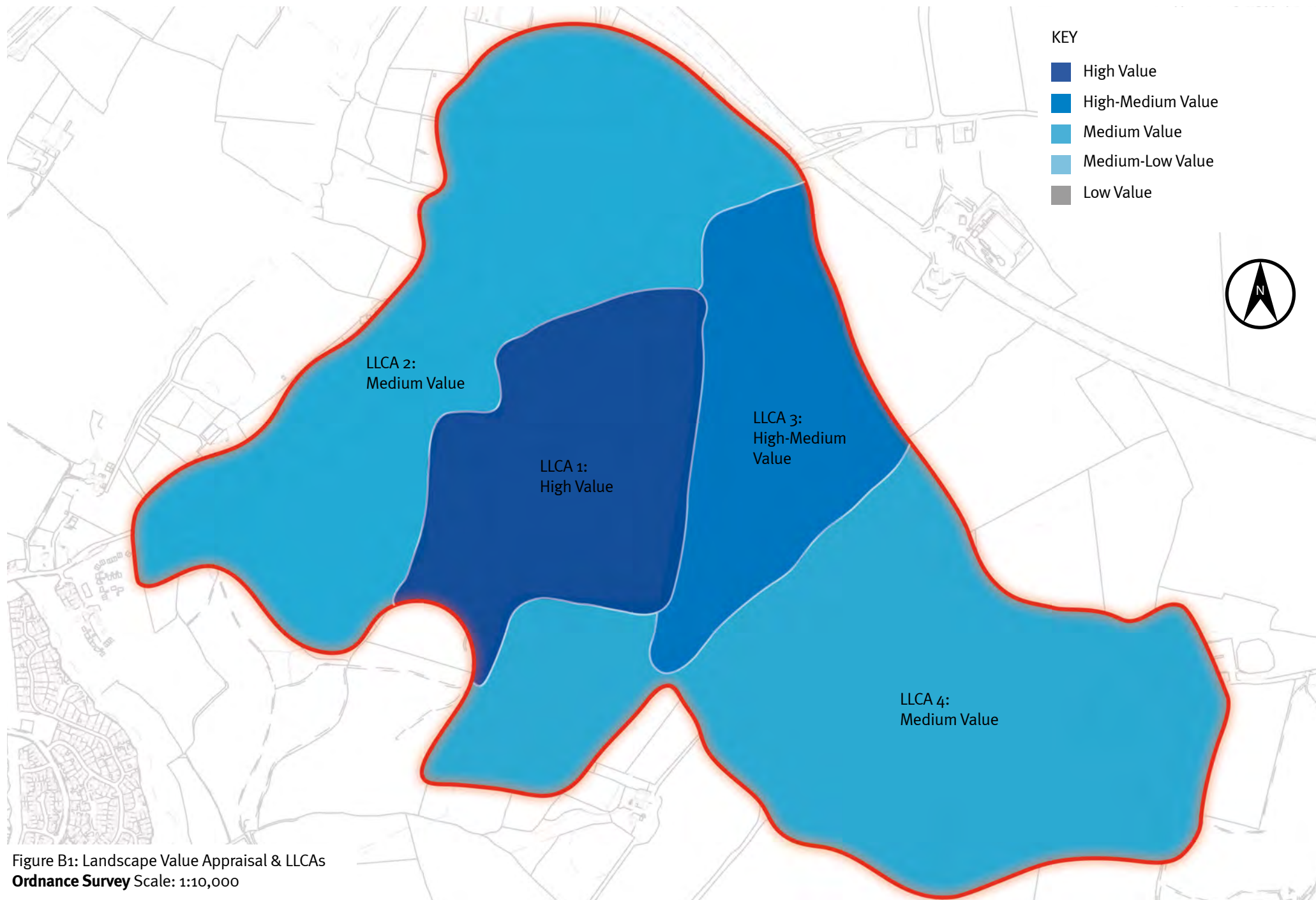


Figure B1: Landscape Value Appraisal & LLCAs
Ordnance Survey Scale: 1:10,000

Appendix C: Essex Design Guide



Appendix C: Essex Design Guide

The Essex Design Guide has over 45 years of leading on the success of design development in Essex. It sets out that design has always been about more than architecture: it's about creating distinctive places where people want to live; and it's about building local communities and making sure that the most essential infrastructure and facilities are in place at the right time of delivery.

The latest edition has sought to comprehensively review and update the Essex Design Guide (EDG) to ensure that guidance remains up-to-date and current through the incorporation of new socio-economic themes that reflect the recent challenges facing Essex and opportunities for successful places. The EDG has been expertly revised to ensure that the content is effective for new online formatting and reflects the latest updates to planning policy, including the NPPF and is informed by previous versions of the Guide.

A series of legible diagrams, images and annotations have been produced and revised with examples of good practice of contemporary design and to reinforce the importance of context appraisal in the delivery of the most appropriate solutions for the design of place.

The following thematic content is interwoven throughout all sections of the EDG, including:

- **Active Design Principles** which provides specific guidance on how to incorporate socially inclusive design in all layouts to activate spaces and environments by prioritising the main user, whilst also encouraging sport, exercise and physical activity to create more successful, well-managed and safer communities.
- **Ageing Populations** where for the first time, the EDG gives specific consideration to the principles for planning and design of new homes and layouts in response to the forecasted increase in number of older people and those impacted by age-related conditions.
- **Health and Wellbeing** which identifies the positive characteristics of an environment that support the achievement of better-quality lifestyles, including how this can be realised through the creation of dynamic urban space. This section also gives consideration to the future of health care provision and how this should be considered in design of new communities.
- **Digital & Smart Technology** which recognises the importance of, and provides solutions for, the successful design integration of digital technology in our lifestyles and daily lives. It does this by asking users to consider how we account for and / or validate the use of space and the delivery of services to include smart technology, utilities, connectivity and flexible design.
- **Garden Communities** was established as an overarching theme to describe the particular nature and requirements of this type of development and to explore the principles that support it. Garden communities are environments designed to promote community inclusion and walkable, sociable and vibrant neighbourhoods.
- **Climate Change** is informed by the outcomes published by the Climate Change Commission which seeks to drive forward a positive change in the approach to the way we plan, deliver and manage our new and existing communities. The EDG includes a series of sections which make reference to climate change either as part of specific interventions or recommended as best practice guidance.

The current version of the EDG features a practical suite of case studies that are reflective of the ever-changing focus of the Guide, with less attention paid to the specific architectural features and a greater focus on how developments should reflect the specific themes of the EDG. Featured case studies are short and succinct using high-quality professional images and links to external websites. The EDG is flexible in nature of the, with regular monitoring to ensure that case studies remain relevant, whilst also providing the opportunity for user-suggested developments to be included and updated. The EDG is available online here: <https://www.essexdesignguide.co.uk/>

Appendix D: Building for a Healthy Life



Appendix D: Building for a Healthy Life

Building for a Healthy Life is the latest edition of, and new name for, Building for Life 12. Building for a Healthy Life (otherwise known as ‘BHL’) is an industry standard Design Code endorsed by government to help people improve the design of new and growing neighbourhoods.

The current edition of BHL updates England’s most widely known and most widely used design tool for creating places that are better for people and nature and will continue to allow a broad range of people to use it easily, including members of the local community, councillors, developers and the local authority. It also allows those stakeholders involved the environment to focus their thoughts, discussions and efforts on the things that matter most when creating good places to live.

The original 12-point structure and underlying principles within Building for Life 12 still lie at the heart of BHL. The new ‘Building for a Healthy Life’s 12 considerations’ aim to capture the areas of design and placemaking that need most attention but are often some of the most overlooked. BHL also relates back to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the National Design Guide (NDG).

The new changes also reflect that BHL has been written in partnership with Homes England, NHS England and NHS Improvement. It sets out to integrate the findings of

the three-year Healthy New Towns Programme led by NHS England and NHS Improvement.

BHL is structured across three headings, of which the 12 considerations have been organised and presented to help those involved in the development process to think about the qualities of successful places and how these can be best applied to the individual characteristics of a site and its wider context.

The three headings are intended to guide considerations across all scales of development, they include:

- Integrated Neighbourhoods
- Distinctive Places
- Streets for all

It is emphasised that BHL should be seen as part of the design process, not a scoring system. It is based on a ‘traffic light’ system, with good practice highlighted by a green light and poor practice highlighted by a red light. Where design elements are considered to fall between then an amber light is attributed to that particular consideration.

The more green lights that are achieved, the better that development will be. One of the main objectives is to reduce / minimise the number of amber lights and to avoid red lights altogether. An amber light cautions that an aspect of a scheme is not fully resolved and a red light suggests that one or more aspects should be reconsidered.



Figure D1: Front cover of ‘Building for a Healthy Life’

Appendix E: Garden City Principles



Appendix E: Garden City Principles

Garden Cities and the ‘Garden City Movement’ was originally established on a series of principles developed the late Sir Ebenezer Howard. Howard founded the Town and Country Planning Association (TCPA), originally known as the Garden City Association in 1899, to help “...take forward his belief that there was a better way of delivering high-quality and equitable environments and the homes, jobs and social connections that people needed” (TCPA, 2021)

The Garden City Principles are considered to be the practical articulation and distillation of the key elements that have made the Garden City model of development so successful, articulated for a 21st century context. Taken together, the principles form an indivisible and interlocking framework for the delivery of high-quality places.

A Garden City is a holistically planned new settlement which enhances the natural environment and offers high-quality affordable housing and locally accessible work in beautiful, healthy and sociable communities.

This TCPA also have a wide collection of guides called the ‘Garden City Standards for the 21st Century: Practical Guides for Creating Successful New Communities’, available here: <https://tcpa.org.uk/collection/garden-city-standards-21st-century/>

The Garden City Principles are also described as an indivisible and interlocking framework for their delivery, and they include:

- Land value capture for the benefit of the community.
- Strong vision, leadership and community engagement.
- Community ownership of land and long-term stewardship of assets.
- Mixed-tenure homes and housing types that are genuinely affordable.
- A wide range of local jobs in the Garden City within easy commuting distance of homes.
- Beautifully and imaginatively designed homes with gardens, combining the best of town and country to create healthy communities, and including opportunities to grow food.
- Development that enhances the natural environment, providing a comprehensive green infrastructure network and net biodiversity gains, and that uses zero-carbon and energy-positive technology to ensure climate resilience.
- Strong cultural, recreational and shopping facilities in walkable, vibrant, sociable neighbourhoods.
- Integrated and accessible transport systems, with walking, cycling and public transport designed to be the most attractive forms of local transport.

Appendix F: Historic Environment Records



Essex Historic Environment Monument List Report

01/02/2023

Number of records: 47

Ref	Site Name	Monument Types	Administration Areas/Description	NGR
Find Spot				
2521	Vicinity of Strawberry Grove, Ardleigh Park	Findspot	ELMSTEAD, TENDRING, ESSEX	TM 0545 2652 (point)
2329	Crockleford Heath	Findspot	ARDLEIGH, TENDRING, ESSEX	TM 04 26 (point)
2487	East of Shaws Farm, Crockleford Heath	Findspot	ARDLEIGH, TENDRING, ESSEX	TM 0345 2698 (point)
2518	Vicinity of Strawberry Grove, Ardleigh Park	Findspot	ELMSTEAD, TENDRING, ESSEX	TM 0527 2658 (point)
2520	Vicinity of Strawberry Grove, Ardleigh Park	Findspot	ELMSTEAD, TENDRING, ESSEX	TM 0533 2655 (point)
2679	East of Crockleford Heath nursery	Findspot	ARDLEIGH, TENDRING, ESSEX	TM 0456 2697 (point)
2617	North west of Strawberry Grove, Crockleford Heath	Findspot	ARDLEIGH, TENDRING, ESSEX	TM 0477 2683 (point)
2618	North west of Strawberry Grove, Crockleford Heath	Findspot	ARDLEIGH, TENDRING, ESSEX	TM 0477 2683 (point)
2660	Vicinity of Strawberry Grove, Ardleigh Park	Findspot	ELMSTEAD, TENDRING, ESSEX	TM 0510 2663 (point)
2678	East of Crockleford Heath nursery	Findspot	ARDLEIGH, TENDRING, ESSEX	TM 0452 2695 (point)
2675	North of Crockleford Heath nursery	Findspot	ARDLEIGH, TENDRING, ESSEX	TM 0438 2724 (point)
2674	North of Crockleford Heath nursery	Findspot	ARDLEIGH, TENDRING, ESSEX	TM 0438 2724 (point)
2519	Vicinity of Strawberry Grove, Ardleigh Park	Findspot	ELMSTEAD, TENDRING, ESSEX	TM 0527 2658 (point)
2661	East of Crockleford Heath nursery	Findspot	ARDLEIGH, TENDRING, ESSEX	TM 0450 2713 (point)
2676	North of Crockleford Heath nursery	Findspot	ARDLEIGH, TENDRING, ESSEX	TM 0438 2724 (point)
2677	East of Crockleford Heath nursery	Findspot	ARDLEIGH, TENDRING, ESSEX	TM 045 270 (point)
2672	North of Crockleford Heath nursery	Findspot	ARDLEIGH, TENDRING, ESSEX	TM 0438 2724 (point)
Listed Building				
34516	Ivy Cottage	Timber Framed House	ARDLEIGH, TENDRING, ESSEX	TM 0392 2608 (point)
34512	Barn and linked cow byre to NW forming S and W sides of the stock yard	Cow House, Timber Framed Barn	ARDLEIGH, TENDRING, ESSEX	TM 0330 2619 (point)
34511	Stable/Cartlodge adjacent to SE of Cow byre/hayloft qv 5/2 Hill Farm	Stable, Cart Shed	ARDLEIGH, TENDRING, ESSEX	TM 0331 2620 (point)

Ref	Site Name	Monument Types	Administration Areas/Description	NGR
34510	Cow byre and hayloft adjacent to SE of cart lodge qv 5/1 Hill Farm	Cow House, Hayloft	ARDLEIGH, TENDRING, ESSEX	TM 0332 2619 (point)
34509	Cartlodge adjacent to road and E of Hill Farmhouse	Cart Shed	ARDLEIGH, TENDRING, ESSEX	TM 0332 2621 (point)
34452	Allens Farmhouse	Timber Framed House	ELMSTEAD, TENDRING, ESSEX	TM 0520 2578 (point)
34517	Lamberts	Timber Framed House	ARDLEIGH, TENDRING, ESSEX	TM 0388 2639 (point)
Monument				
17541	Welsh Wood	Field Boundary, Linear Feature	COLCHESTER, COLCHESTER, ESSEX	Centred TM 028 263 (410m by 354m)
49626	Churn Wood is Ancient and Semi-natural woodland of probable medieval origin	Managed Woodland	ARDLEIGH, TENDRING, ESSEX	Centred TM 0359 2596 (655m by 743m)
20118	WWII HAA Gun Site "C5 Colchester: Crockleford Heath", NE of Colchester	Heavy Anti Aircraft Battery	ARDLEIGH, TENDRING, ESSEX	Centred TM 0461 2637 (297m by 127m)
17542	Hull Farm	Site, Field Boundary, Linear Feature	ARDLEIGH, TENDRING, ESSEX	Centred TM 0451 2734 (710m by 475m)
17473	North of Great Bromley	Bomb Crater, Linear Feature	ARDLEIGH, TENDRING, ESSEX	Centred TM 051 269 (501m by 434m)
19228	Crockleford Heath Methodist Chapel	Methodist Chapel	ARDLEIGH, TENDRING, ESSEX	TM 0391 2627 (point)
2577	Crockleford Heath	Site, Field Boundary, Field System	ARDLEIGH, TENDRING, ESSEX	Centred TM 040 267 (326m by 508m)
2653	West of Crockleford Heath	Circular Enclosure	ARDLEIGH, TENDRING, ESSEX	Centred TM 0367 2688 (444m by 246m)
2638	Former fulling mill	Oil Mill, House, Watermill, Fulling Mill	ARDLEIGH, TENDRING, ESSEX	Centred TM 0311 2638 (101m by 132m)
2637	site of fulling mill	Fulling Mill	ARDLEIGH, TENDRING, ESSEX	Centred TM 035 268 (104m by 114m)
2634	Westwards from Great Bromley	Road	ELMSTEAD, TENDRING, ESSEX, GREAT BROMLEY, TENDRING, ESSEX	Centred TM 0749 2639 (4591m by 14m)
2667	Vicinity of Strawberry Grove, Ardleigh Park	Ring Ditch	ELMSTEAD, TENDRING, ESSEX	Centred TM 0526 2621 (216m by 467m)
2616	North west of Strawberry Grove, Crockleford Heath	Ring Ditch, Pit	ARDLEIGH, TENDRING, ESSEX	Centred TM 0491 2679 (435m by 570m)
2488	Vicinity of Westwood Park	Ditch	ARDLEIGH, TENDRING, ESSEX	Centred TM 029 266 (587m by 595m)
2578	Shaws Farm, Fox Street	Ring Ditch, Site, Rectilinear Enclosure, Pit	ARDLEIGH, TENDRING, ESSEX	Centred TM 031 270 (409m by 468m)
2489	South of Crockleford Heath	Circular Enclosure, Linear Feature	ARDLEIGH, TENDRING, ESSEX	Centred TM 0408 2594 (387m by 293m)

Ref	Site Name	Monument Types	Administration Areas/Description	NGR
2575	North of Whitehouse Farm	Site, Ditch, Linear Feature	ARDLEIGH, TENDRING, ESSEX	Centred TM 047 265 (348m by 300m)
2573	Colchester heading north east through Ardleigh	Road	COLCHESTER, COLCHESTER, ESSEX, ARDLEIGH, TENDRING, ESSEX, LAWFORD, TENDRING, ESSEX	Centred TM 0570 2775 (6234m by 4073m)
2516	West of Ardleigh Park	Field Boundary, Road	ARDLEIGH, TENDRING, ESSEX	Centred TM 0488 2726 (277m by 346m)
2579	South east side of Whitehouse Farm, Crocklesford Heath	Site, Field Boundary, Trackway, Ditch, Curvilinear Enclosure	ELMSTEAD, TENDRING, ESSEX	Centred TM 048 258 (1060m by 1233m)
Portable Antiquities Scheme				
50890	A Portable Antiquities Scheme findspot of Roman date.	Findspot		Not displayed
53561	A Portable Antiquities Scheme findspot of Medieval to Post Medieval date.	Findspot	ELMSTEAD, TENDRING, ESSEX	TM 05 26 (point)
54606	A Portable Antiquities Scheme findspot of Post Medieval date.	Findspot	ARDLEIGH, TENDRING, ESSEX	TM 03 27 (point)

