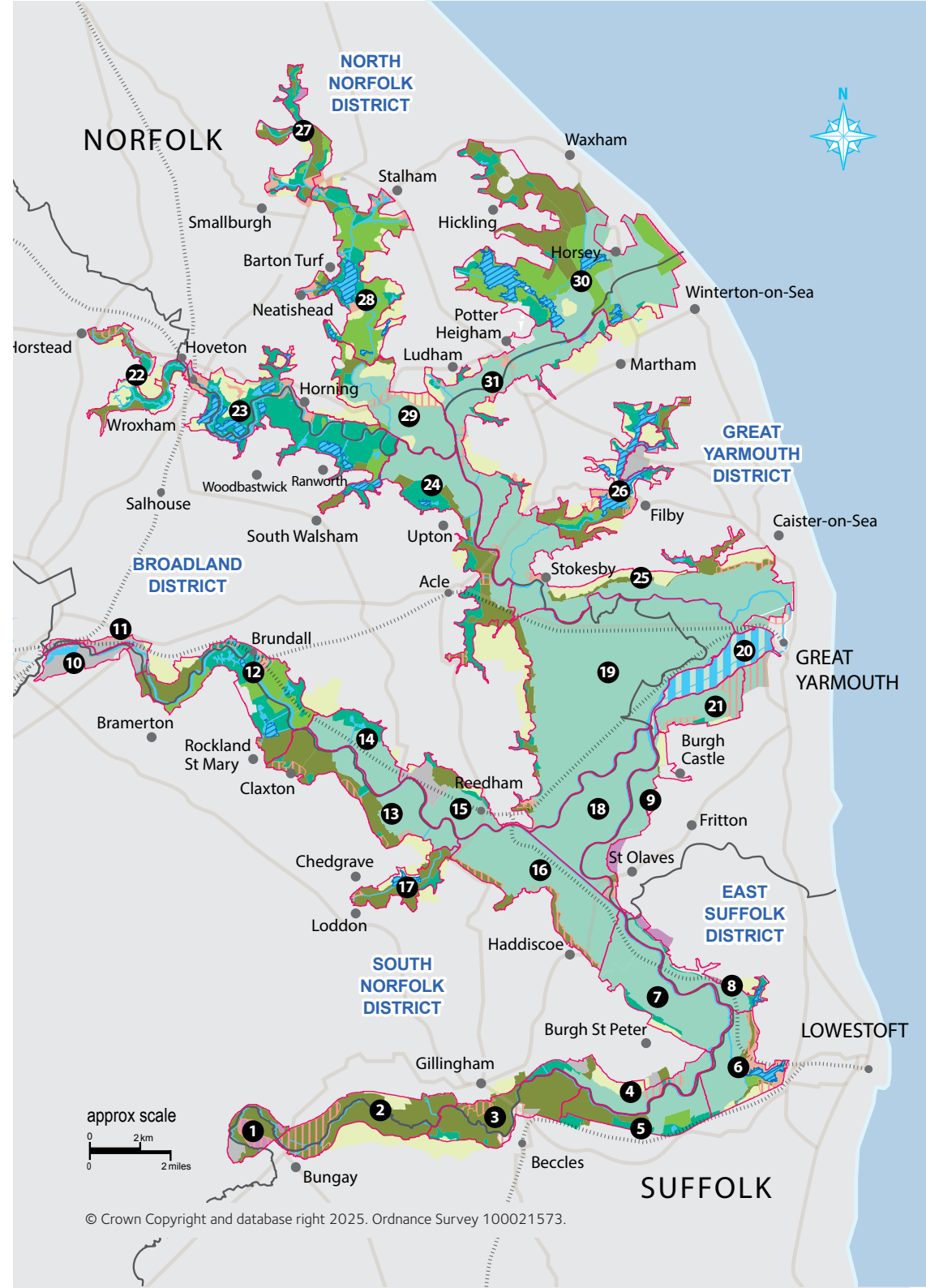


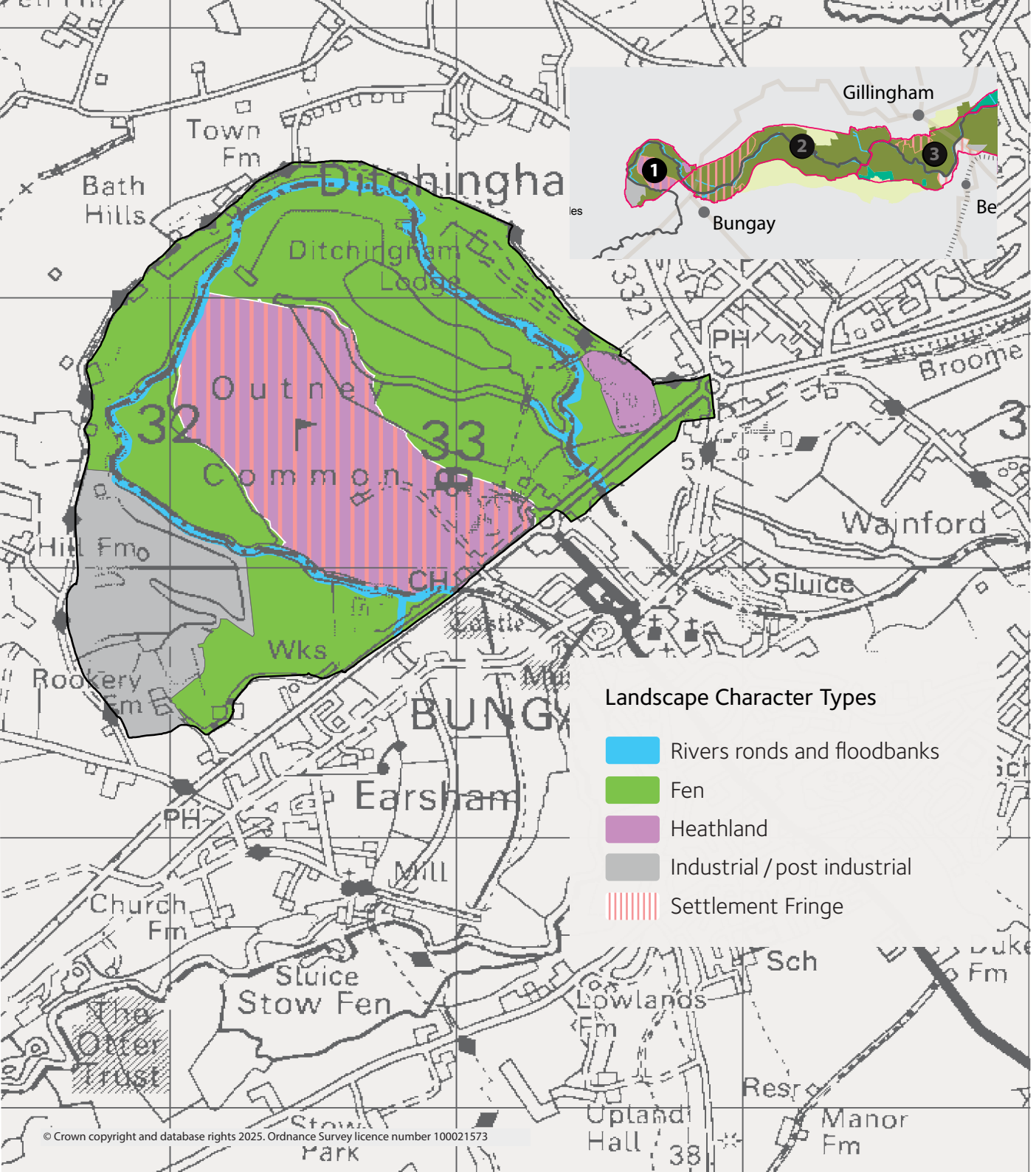
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1. Waveney - Outney Common and Bath Hills Area

Sir Henry Rider Haggard (1856 –1925) best known as the author of King Solomon’s Mines resided at Ditchingham House for 35 years, the estate of which included much of the Bath Hills area. His memorial window in Ditchingham Church also includes a panel of his favourite view of the Common.

Why is this area special?

The Hards and the Lows

Bungay is sited in the neck of a loop of the river Waveney. The interior of the loop, around 400 acres, is known as Bungay or Outney Common. The Common is privately owned (collectively Bungay Outney Common Owners) and managed by ‘Reeves’ elected by the owners. The common is separated from the town by the A143, built along the line of the former railway. The common contains a large deposit of sands and gravel recorded by the Ordnance Survey as ‘The Hards’ since at least the 1880s. The ground cover here has characteristically heathland attributes of acid grassland, gorse, bramble, stunted oaks, pines and birch and as such is relatively unusual in the Broads area. The lower lying river valley areas either side of ‘The Hards’ are known as ‘The Lows’. That to the north contains the remnants of a watercourse mapped as ‘Old River’. Both areas are used for seasonal grazing. To the west there are large areas of open water which are the remnant features of sand and gravel extraction in the area. Today much of the entire area provides a significant recreational resource for the people of Bungay.

Topography and Skyline

The area forms part of upper Waveney valley floodplain and valley sides and occupies relatively higher ground than much of the Broads Area. The common itself ranges between 3 and 12m OD while the steep valley sides reach 30m OD to the north. Much of the area is surrounded by wooded, undeveloped skylines (ridges overlooking the valley floor) and rising landform to the north, east and west although where the common meets with the A143 interface and the town of Bungay built development (which including the large warehousing of Clays printing



▲ Old flooded gravel workings now provide areas for model boating and fishing. Image by Ian Robertson - geograph.org.uk



▲ In views from the common southwards the large buildings associated with Clays printing works form the skyline. The A 143 lies in the foreground. Combined these form a distinct boundary between the common and settlement. Image by Evelyn Simak - Geograph.org.uk



works) and highway infrastructure is prominent in some views.

Wooded skylines are largely uninterrupted by development or built structures and this undeveloped character is very important to the setting of the character area, not least due to the visual prominence of the ridge which creates them and which encircles the majority of the character area. Much of the woodland on the valley sides and ridgelines has been classified by Natural England as Ancient Woodland.

The setting of character area is influenced by the landscape beyond the Broads as intermittent views are available of the more elevated parts lying in both East Suffolk and South Norfolk District Council areas.

Geology and soils

This is an area of River Terrace Deposits of sands and gravels along with other sands, silty clay and smaller areas of peat. Sand Crag Group provides the “bedrock” for this area.

Enclosure, scale and pattern

The area is defined by a broad valley floor, the width of which exceeds 1.2 km at points. However significantly, there is a pronounced sense of enclosure which is created by valley side topography which encircles the character area. These valley sides fall mainly outside the character area, with the lower half of the slopes and woodlands falling within the area. Topography ranges from around 5m OD in the valley floor/bottom of the ridge to 30m OD to the ridge top.



▲ The river Waveney forms a large loop around the Common and is flanked by steep valley sides to the north- west and east. Image by Linda Bailey - geograph.org.uk



◀ Bath Hills

Bath Hills is a sheltered and south facing area of steep valley side. The name references the site of a cold bath established in the early eighteenth century by an entrepreneurial apothecary and which also featured ‘Gardens, fruits, shady walks, and all Decorations of a Rural Innocence’. The bathhouse itself, which disappeared sometime in the later nineteenth century, was sited about 100m to the east of the present house known as Ditchingham Bath House, former home of the writer Lillias Rider Haggard (Skipper and Williamson, (1993) p.84). There was formerly a bridge crossing linking the interior of the common to this point.

Image by Linda Bailey - geograph.org.uk



▲ Views from Outney Common northwards to the valley side known as Bath Hills. There is a mosaic of different habitats on the common. Keith Evans – geograph.org.uk

Within the character area, a more subtle sense of enclosure is created by the undulating landform on which 'The Hards' and associated heathy riverside common are located, to the south and west of the course of the Waveney. There are contrasts in openness, enclosure and scale created by the combination of pastoral areas, wooded valley sides, large areas of open water created by former quarries and by the predominantly open valley floor and floodplain. A sense of movement and reflectivity is created by the River Waveney which follows a meandering course through the valley floor and creates a broad loop around the slightly elevated common land at 'The Hards'. Seasonally the area can take on a different character as water levels in the river can rise to flood parts of the valley. Rich and contrasting mosaic landscape patterns exist

in this area as a result of the range of land cover, land use, habitats and topography.

Main features of land cover and use

The land cover comprises of open heathland with associated heathland vegetation cover (gorse, bramble etc); the more tamed heathland of the golf course; riverside grazing meadows; large areas of open water (broads) which are former quarries; and both pastoral and wooded valley sides. Leisure developments have also become established.

There is sharp contrast between differing land uses. These comprise light grazing and habitat management; a range of leisure activities – golf, caravan site, camping, canoeing cycling, fishing; the wooded and settled Bath Hills area; and an active aggregate transfer station.

However, the common has a long history of mixed uses. Earliest records are predominantly related to grazing rights or 'goings on' which were attached to particular properties. (In 1708 this allowed 145 people right to commonage there). From at least the mid eighteenth century, the Common and its immediate surrounds has also been used for various formal leisure activities. For around 200 years it was the location of an annual horse-racing meeting. Settlement in the area is limited to leisure/holiday developments in the form of a caravan/camps site, a golf course and a few farm houses to the very west of the area. The eight acre Outney Meadow caravan and camping site is located along the A143 boundary.

The area is partially fenced for grazing but provides permissive access tracks to the public. Much of 'The Hards' is occupied by an 18-hole golf course established in 1889, the clubhouse and parking for which are located along the A143 boundary. The golf course is unenclosed and grades into a less tamed area of heathland. The long distance footpath the Angles Way follows the route of the river on the north bank.

Aggregate extraction is a long established feature of this area. The Earsham Gravels business was established in 1949 while the 1880's O.S. map marks a gravel pit near the entrance to the common (now used for fishing). At the main Bath Hills Road a site is run by Earsham Gravels Ltd. The quarry site still acts as a processing plant with material brought by conveyor from other local sites. Worked out quarry areas now form a series of large water

filled bodies which are now used for private fishing and model boat sailing. Another former quarry exists near the site of Ditchingham Water Mill.

Helping to keep it special

Care needs to be taken when landscape change occurs, to ensure that those positive characteristics that contribute to an area's unique sense of place are conserved and enhanced. What follows are examples of local issues and opportunities.

Natural Heritage – A significant proportion of the area is used as a golf course. The nature and management of this type of development can impact on habitats naturally associated with heathland conditions. The stunted oaks on the Common are landscape features worthy of sympathetic management.

The Jubilee Poplars to the north of the site were planted to mark the Queen's Silver Jubilee in 1977.

Landscape – Visual impacts of built development and infrastructure around Bungay allied to the leisure/holiday developments within the area tend to detract from the perceived naturalness of the area. Mitigation against these impacts should be sought when opportunities arise.

Over time there will be continued pressures to change/adapt the existing leisure and recreational facilities which may have the potential to compound the adverse landscape impacts. Any future proposals will therefore



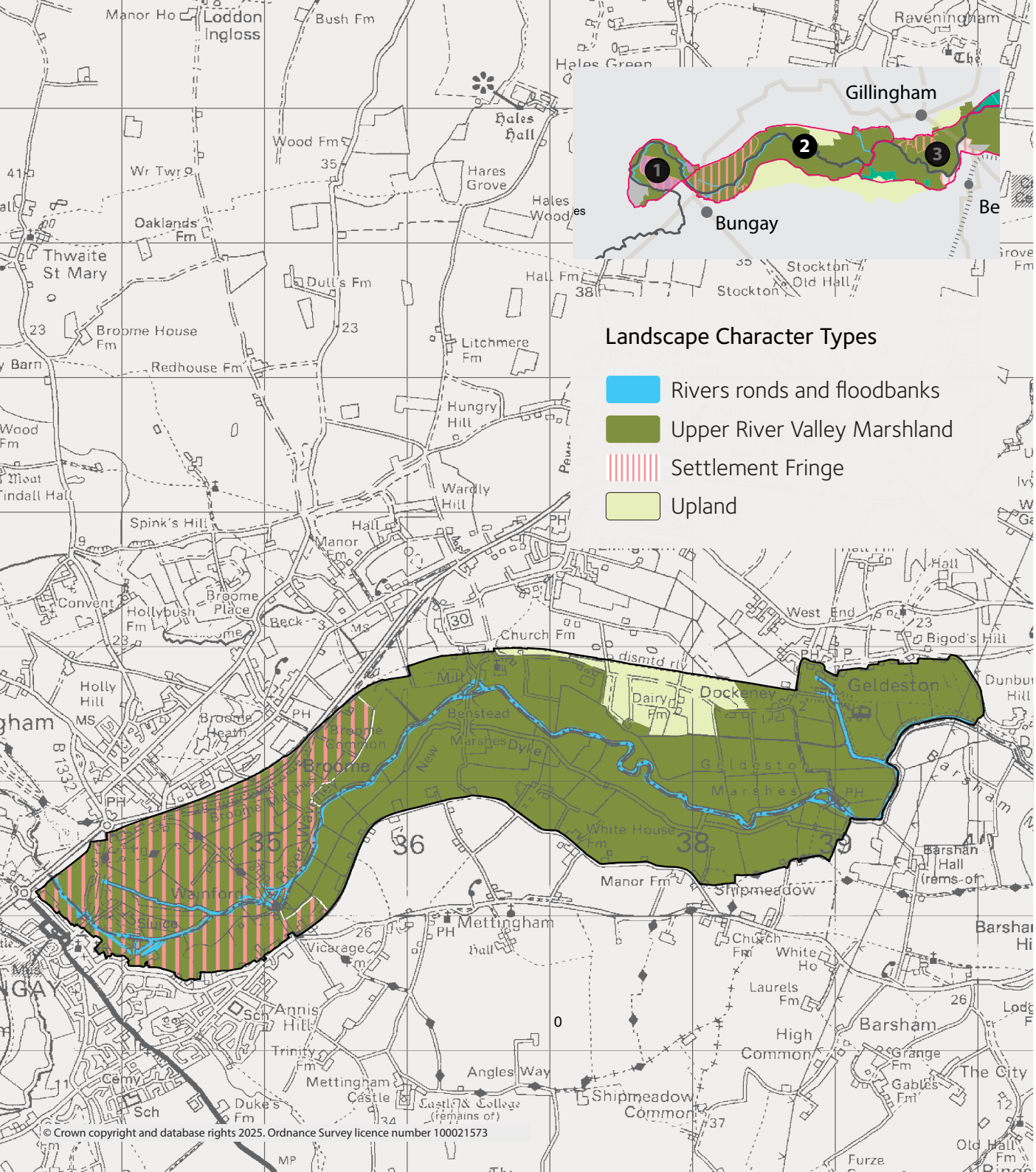
▲ *Much of the area of the Common is accessible. Part of it is used as a golf course which results in manicured grassed areas and modelling of the landscape to create challenges for the golfer. Car parking and clubhouse facilities have also been provided. Image by Evelyn Simak - Geograph.org.uk*

need to consider what effects they will have on the landscape character of the area and mitigation will need to be sought for existing and new adverse effects.

The well wooded ridge lines which enclose the area to the north east and west provide uninterrupted skylines to the area. This characteristic should be conserved. In part, settlement and industrial buildings form the skyline in views to the south. Opportunities should be sought to improve the landscape buffer between these areas.

Recreational development which was created from or will evolve as a result of past minerals extraction and processing will need to be sensitively designed to reflect the positive landscape characteristics of the area.

Water based recreation is important and popular in this character area, due to the existence of Waveney canoe access agreements which permit canoeing upstream of Ellingham Sluice to Diss. Development to support such activities should be low key to allow for the continued quiet enjoyment of this section of the river.



2. Waveney - East of A143 Bungay/Ditchingham to Shipmeadow/Geldeston

All along the valley are remnants of the former industrial significance of this area which during the 18th and 19th century brought about navigation improvements in the construction of 3 locks at Geldeston, Ellingham and Wainford.

Why is this area special?

The overall calm, tranquil, isolated pastoral landscape of today belies its more industrial past. This section of the Waveney was an area of watermills with sites at Ditchingham, Geldeston, Bungay, Wainford, and Ellingham. The sites of those now lost are often still apparent by the by-pass loops created in the river. The latter three all produced flour for export to America during the American War of Independence 1775-1783.

The area was also very important for malting and brewing apparent by the large, now converted, buildings at Ditchingham and at Wainford. There were also two vast malting complexes at Geldeston demolished during the 20th century which go some way to explain the rather odd settlement form remaining.



▲ *Small groupings of trees within the Waveney Valley provide a localised sense of enclosure and add to the patterns a texture of the landscape.*

Topography and Skyline

The valley floor levels range from 3 metres OD at Bungay/Ditchingham to 0 OD at Geldeston. The valley sides to the south rise up to about 30 metres OD and are quite pronounced in part, particularly to the south between Wainford and Benstead. On the north they rise up more gradually to about 20 metres OD.

The valley is relatively narrow at around 700 metres in the west to 1.2 km to the east. This feature allied to the nature of the topography means that views are available of the landscape that form the northern skyline which lies well outside the Broads area. Visibility of settlement (in South Norfolk District) is largely curtailed by intermittent woodland blocks. However, views of valley side's farmsteads with their associated infrastructure can be prominent in certain views. To the south, skylines are defined by a relatively prominent, well-defined and essentially undeveloped ridgeline within East Suffolk District.

Geology and soils

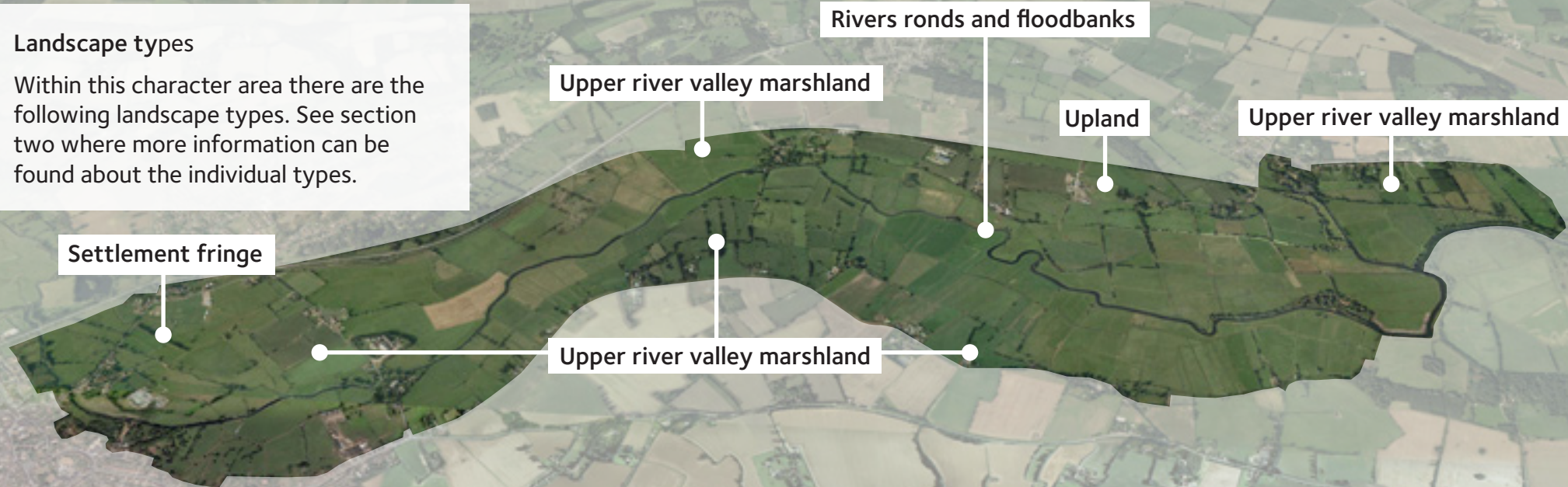
The valley floor largely comprises of peat soils



▲ *The skyline to the north lies within South Norfolk district council area. Much of it is formed by woodland but farmsteads and grain silos are prominent in some views. Image by Evelyn Simak - geograph.org.uk*

overlying Breydon formation silty clay deposits. The valley sides to the north contain sand and gravel deposits.

Landscape types
Within this character area there are the following landscape types. See section two where more information can be found about the individual types.



Enclosure, scale and pattern

There are only a few vehicular/pedestrian crossing points within the area. Differences in drainage patterns between the north and south of the river can be found although all are planned and regular. The dyke networks create a series of small marshland parcels.

There is no tradition of drainage mills on this part of the Waveney and it is likely the land was always gravity drained. South of the river there is a good survival of the dole pattern of subdivision, i.e. the land is divided into long parallel strips by dykes perpendicular to the river. North of the river the pattern is more rectilinear with some boundary loss apparent. These differences are more apparent on a map than on the ground. Similarly, the area appears rather small-scale on a map when in fact the openness within the valley, allows a visual connection across the river, making it seem rather larger when viewed on the ground.

However as result of the relatively narrow



valley floor and the profiles of the valley sides, a distinct sense of enclosure is created in relation to the wider landscape. Localised enclosure is created intermittently by poplar and willow trees on the dyke and river banks.

Within this lightly wooded pastoral landscape movement and light is introduced by the presence of water within the dykes and the snaking, non-navigable river. This sense is heightened at weirs and mill races present in the area and seasonally as the marshes in this area are prone to regular flooding.

Main features of land cover and use

The marshland is predominantly down to grass which is used for grazing during the summer months. There are however, pockets of arable land within the area, notably on the northern valley side where the area rises up from the marshland. There is relatively little tree cover other than linear rows of poplars and willow and some mature trees around the settlement at Geldeston.

◀ *During the winter period some of the marshland area can flood extensively. The arable land to the foreground lies on the southern valley side. The visual connection between valley bottom, side and ridge line means the rising land, makes a significant contribution to the setting of this character area. The arable land to the foreground although lying within the Broads executive boundary exhibits different landscape characteristics to the marshland below. Image by Evelyn Simak - geograph.org.uk*



▲ *Buildings and structures in the landscape give an indication of the significance of the area's importance for malting and flour milling. Photo by Ashley Dace - geograph.org.uk*

The landscape is only lightly settled, with small hamlets associated with the minor rural road network. Settlement pattern is largely one of valley edge farmsteads arranged in a linear pattern between the town of Bungay and Geldeston. The farmsteads on the northern side of the valleys are located on relatively elevated land (about 5 metres OD) along Geldeston Road. In addition to farmsteads there are a series of tall grain silos which feature, prominently in some northward views. On the southern side of the river the farmsteads, some of which form part of active farms, are aligned with Low Road and Beccles Road on the eastern edge of Bungay. A series of large imposing modern barns are located here. They dominate the local landscape and prevent views across the marshland, but provide a sense of a working landscape.

The vernacular valley settlements of Geldeston, Bungay and Ellingham Mill are recognised through Conservation Area designations. Many of these settlements have an important

functional relationship to the valley e.g. settlements which grew up with and around water mills and at river crossing points.

To the western end of this area settlement is a little different in character to the remainder of the area but too small in itself to be dealt with separately. It is in this area where there are localised areas of intrusion associated with the eastern edge of Bungay and the A143. Much of this area located as it is between the settlements of Bungay and Ditchingham/Broome is of the Settlement Fringe type. It also differs because settlement extends into the floodplain here along the crossing routes. Although still some grazing land, there are small pockets of arable and other uses such as sports grounds, industrial complexes, hedged areas along with overhead lines.

Highway infrastructure is largely confined to the valley sides and to the bridge crossings such as at Ellingham Mill and Wainford which form part of the rural road network. On the outer edges of the area the Angles Way runs through the eastern and western most parts of the area and a national cycle route runs along the northern side of the valley. Water based recreation is popular in this character area due to the existence of canoe access agreements. Geldeston has become a small hub for camping, leisure and canoing. The River Waveney Trust has launched a Canoe Access and Biodiversity Project which covers the River Waveney, from Scole, Diss downstream to Geldeston Locks.



▲ Needs caption

▼ Needs caption

Why is this area special?

Care needs to be taken when landscape change occurs, to ensure that those positive characteristics that contribute to an area's unique sense of place are conserved and enhanced. What follows are examples of local issues and opportunities. Landscape – open areas which abut Bungay, Ditchingham and Geldeston are all subjected to pressures from different settlement fringe type development which potentially can erode the traditional pastoral landscape of the marshland. The incremental impacts of even small scale developments or activities can ultimately have cumulative adverse effects on the local landscape character. Care needs to be taken in relation to the siting of new structures and the type of materials used to ensure the positive landscape characteristics are not eroded further. The extension of farm development



within the grazing marsh environment and the increased scale of farm buildings can bring about a loss of grazing marsh habitat whilst also having the potential to impact on the visual amenity and landscape character of the area. Farm expansion both within the marshland and valley side landscape should therefore be sensitively designed to conserve and enhance

the positive landscape characteristics of the area and where effects are likely to be adverse, alternative solutions and/or mitigation should be considered.

New large scale development within the valley floor or on the valley side associated with the sites of maltings and grain storage need careful assessment of the potential effects on the local landscape character and adverse landscape effects mitigated.

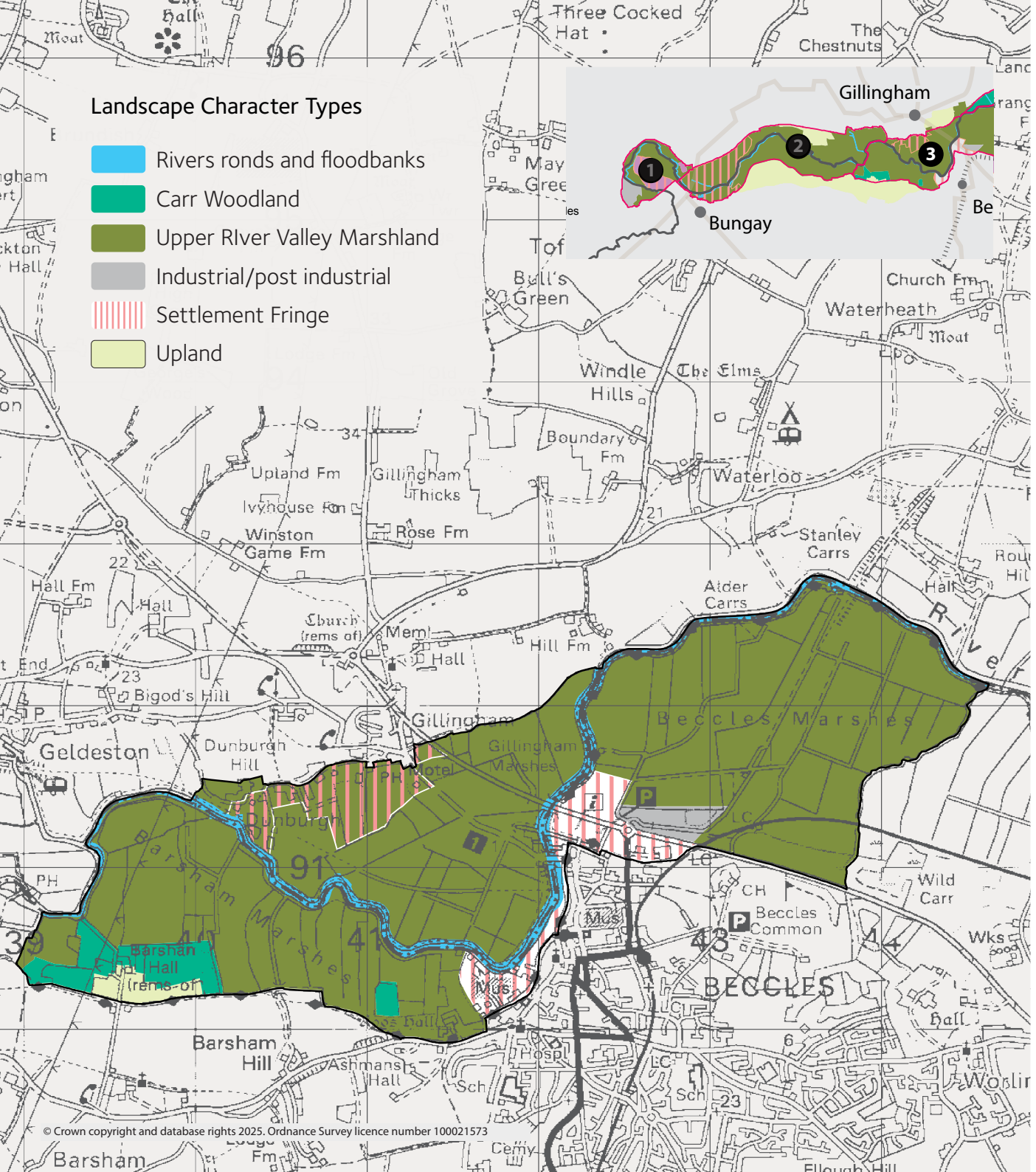
The valley sides, the ridgelines of which lie in the main beyond the Broads area, form prominent skylines to this character area and are relatively undeveloped. Care needs to be taken in relation to development proposals within these areas which form the landscape setting to the Broads.



▲ *Ditchingham maltings prior to conversion to housing. The dismantled Beccles to Bungay Railway line which skirts the north of this character area passed through the complex. Image by Alison Yardy.*

◀ *Development on the marshland with its associated infrastructure, can have a significant effect on the local character of an area. Image by Keith Evans - geograph.org.uk*

Water based recreation is important and popular in this character area. Development to support such activities should be low key to allow for the continued quiet enjoyment of this section of the river, and designed to avoid visual intrusion.



3. Waveney - Barsham, Gillingham and Beccles Marshes

This character area was the location of a significant archaeological find during the excavation of a new dyke to provide material for building a new section of flood bank. Subsequent archaeological investigations revealed three rows of vertical timber posts running perpendicular to the river and almost parallel to the intended line of the dyke.

It was thought to be constructed in a single phase in 75 BC using predominantly oak timbers sourced from managed woodland. Analysis of the posts and the method of hard-carving suggest that they originate from the late Iron Age. This date was later confirmed by carbon testing. The structure is thought to have been some form of causeway leading out into marshy land or water, though it is not known whether it would have functioned as a river crossing or a ritual site.

Why is this area special?

This character area straddles the market town of Beccles on the steeply rising river "cliff" on the south bank of the River Waveney. This character area is different to those that lie adjacent in that it has been subject to greater and more wide ranging land use pressures. This in the main relates directly to its proximity to Beccles and Gillingham and the local topography and landform which have been better able to accommodate road, rail and foot valley crossing points.



◀ *The Dam at Gillingham – the original road that crossed the river valley at the narrowest point. This and the presence of the A146 diminish the sense of tranquility in this area.*



▲ *A view of the Marshland from the old railway line that ran between Beccles and Haddiscoe.*

The area is bisected by two roads, the A143 and the road known as the Dam which formed the original highway between Beccles and Gillingham.

The River Waveney is navigable upstream to Geldeston. It has a sinuous nature as it flows in an east-west along the valley in this area offering contrasting landscapes ranging from open valley marshland with intermittent vegetation to steep, wooded valley sides, as can be found at Dunburgh, and historic settlements such as Beccles. The flood banks

are more obvious in views in this area with the recent enhancements undertaken as part of the flood alleviation scheme sometimes removing the bankside vegetation. Once providing an important transport route for produce from the Waveney valley, the river is now one of the less busy areas in the Broads. Today Beccles is a focal point in the area for boating activities and businesses which cater for the leisure user.

The area is more accessible than some other areas in the Broads which has in addition to the navigable river, a network of public footpath

routes. The Angles Way follows an east west direction through the valley and other public rights of way follow the river bank downstream from Geldeston Lock. In addition there is a network of permissive circular routes on the Beccles Marshes.

Away from the proximity of the settlements of Beccles and Gillingham where there is a greater level of infrastructure with the associated traffic noise and more domestic or recreational uses of the grazing marsh, the area exhibits a sense of remoteness and tranquility.

Topography and skyline

A level river valley floodplain situated at between -1 and 0 OD with the valley floor varying from approximately 1-1.3 km in width. The topographical data indicates this character area to be slightly lower-lying than those to either side. This is likely in part to be a result of surface wastage resulting from drainage over a long period. This area appears to be the most westerly extent of drainage pumps indicated on the 1883 Ordnance Survey map.

The skylines to the western edge of the southern river slope and north of the area are formed by the valley ridgelines rising to approximately 25-30 metres and 25 metres

OD respectively. The majority of the skyline lies outside the Broads area and can comprise small woodland blocks, arable land and occasional small scale settlement edge development. The settlement edge at Beccles forms part of the horizon in views southwards. In the most part, other than the high voltage pylons to the west of the area running from Dunburgh Hill to Barsham, skylines are mostly uninterrupted and undeveloped and make a positive contribution to the setting of the Broads area.

Geology and soils

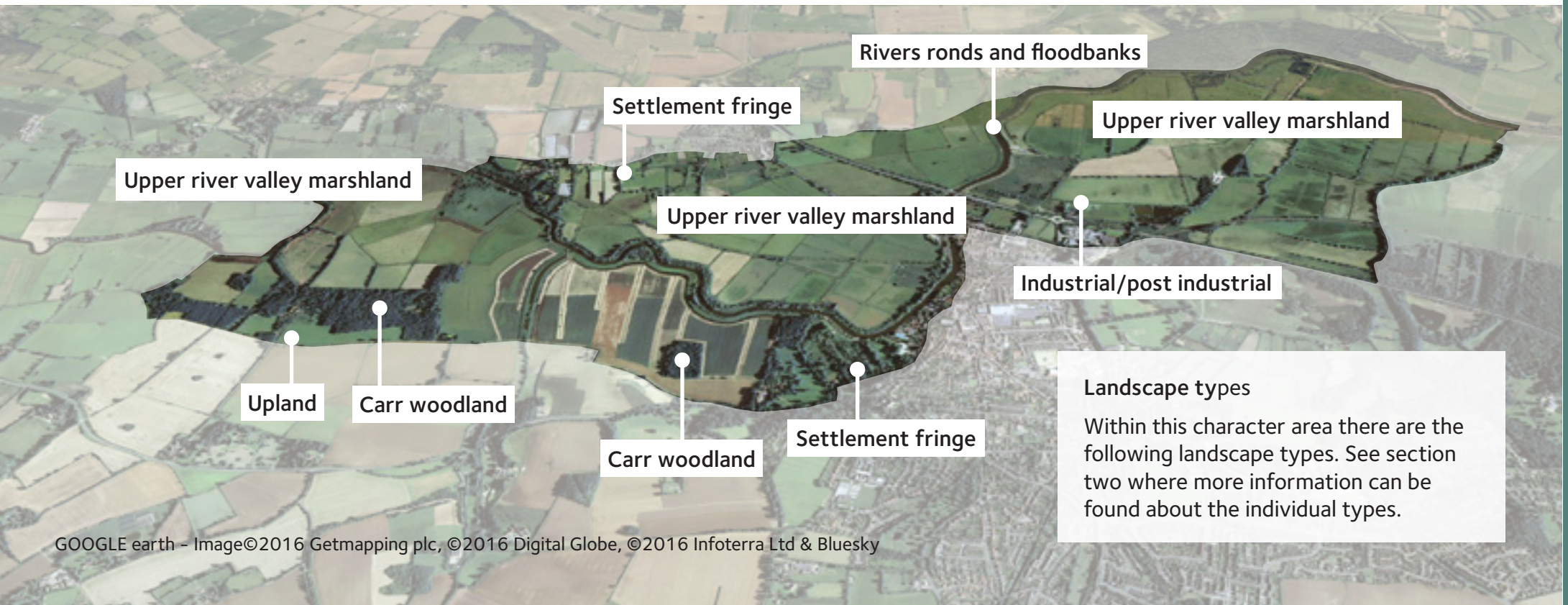
The drift geology and soil maps indicate Breydon formation peat other than immediately adjacent to the river which is silty clay. However much of

the floodplain is surrounded by areas of sandy deposits.

Enclosure, scale and pattern

The drainage pattern here has been significantly altered with a high proportion of boundary loss and is now a mixture of large and small enclosures. Immediately surrounding the settlements of Beccles and Gillingham the landscape is defined by small scale field patterns, while elsewhere fields are medium scale having been heavily influenced by drainage patterns and the loss of field boundaries to 20th century agriculture.

Woodland blocks, a feature of the southern edge



of the valley floor, and field boundaries, create a sense of enclosure particularly along the edges of the River Waveney, as does the distinctive south facing river 'cliff'.

There are extremely subtle changes in landform across the valley floor, although more distinct variation is introduced by the flood banks alongside the Waveney.

Patterns and textures within the landscape are made more complex than adjacent character areas, through the range of land use within the area. The sense of movement in the landscape is heightened by traffic crossing the river valleys.

Main features of land cover and use

The area is broadly divided into three distinct marshland areas these being Barsham, Gillingham and Beccles Marshes. Land cover is a mix of arable, pasture and settlement fringe development.

Barsham Marshes – The floodplain south of the river becomes larger in scale when compared to the adjacent LCA 2 with the dyke pattern very mixed. There are two embanked areas – one is a U-shaped enclosure which appears to be an area of washland and a widened dyke.

The eastern half of the marshes have a few relict dole pattern dykes but these have been greatly reduced in number in recent years. The area is mainly down to arable. Towards the south of the floodplain the area becomes more sandy and a series of sand pits are shown on the 1880's O.S. map and there is some coniferous plantation as well as mature carr woodland along with settlement in the form of two high status 16th century sites. Across the parish boundary with Beccles the marshes give way to more ornamental gardens. The rising land which forms the valley side to the south is also in arable cultivation with the landscape characteristics being more in keeping with land lying further to

the south.

Infrastructure in the form of high voltage electricity cables with their associated pylons can be found to the west of the area.

Gillingham Marshes – The field enclosures formed by dykes are rather smaller than Beccles and Barsham marshes with a number of marshes subdivided as a result of infrastructure construction. This includes the now dismantled railway line, the road called The Dam (lined with pollarded willows) and the A146. Again, much of the low voltage electricity cabling which previously impacted on the valley has now been removed. Settlement fringe type development is present on the outer edges of Gillingham with smallholding, horse keeping, garage blocks, car boot land and the introduction of conifer and privet hedges. Unlike the south of the river much of the remaining land is used as grazing marsh.

Beccles Marshes – Beccles Fen or Great Fen was originally around 1400 acres of fen with areas of grazing when conditions allowed and where the poor of Beccles were allowed to cut turves. It was comprehensively drained by steam engine in the 1840's and previously covered in a vast number of rectilinear enclosures created as part of the same scheme. These disappeared sometime between the 1940's and 1980's and

◀ *Much of Barsham marshes is under arable cultivation although some blocks of woodland can be found. Image by Evelyn Simak – geograph.org.uk*





the area partly converted to arable use although much is still used as grazing marsh. The roundish feature which can still be picked out on a map is the 'island' of Oxholmes.

Infrastructure in the form of a dismantled railway line is only really obvious at the river's edge where the remnant abridge abutments. However the Beccles/Lowestoft line bisects the most south eastern corner of the area. Low voltage cables cross the marshes in a north south direction, though some of these have been removed. Other areas are related to settlement fringe activities and include allotments, fishing areas, sailing club base. There are also small areas of woodland. A Superstore has been built on the part severed by the A146. Recent development around Gillingham roundabout, within South Norfolk district has expanded the sense of urbanisation.

Settlement in the area is primarily contained within the market town of Beccles which is located on the valley side to the south of the river with a long frontage onto the river and Gillingham and Dunburgh situated to the north. Otherwise settlement consists of isolated valley



◀ ▲ *Proximity to settlement creates pressures on the landscape for use other than traditional agriculture. Image by Alison Yardy*



▲ *The western arm of moorings off the River Waveney have brought about land use changes within the grazing marsh environment. Image by Graham Horn - geograph.org.uk*

edge farmsteads & manorial sites and small residential development to the west of Beccles Old Bridge.

Helping to keep it special

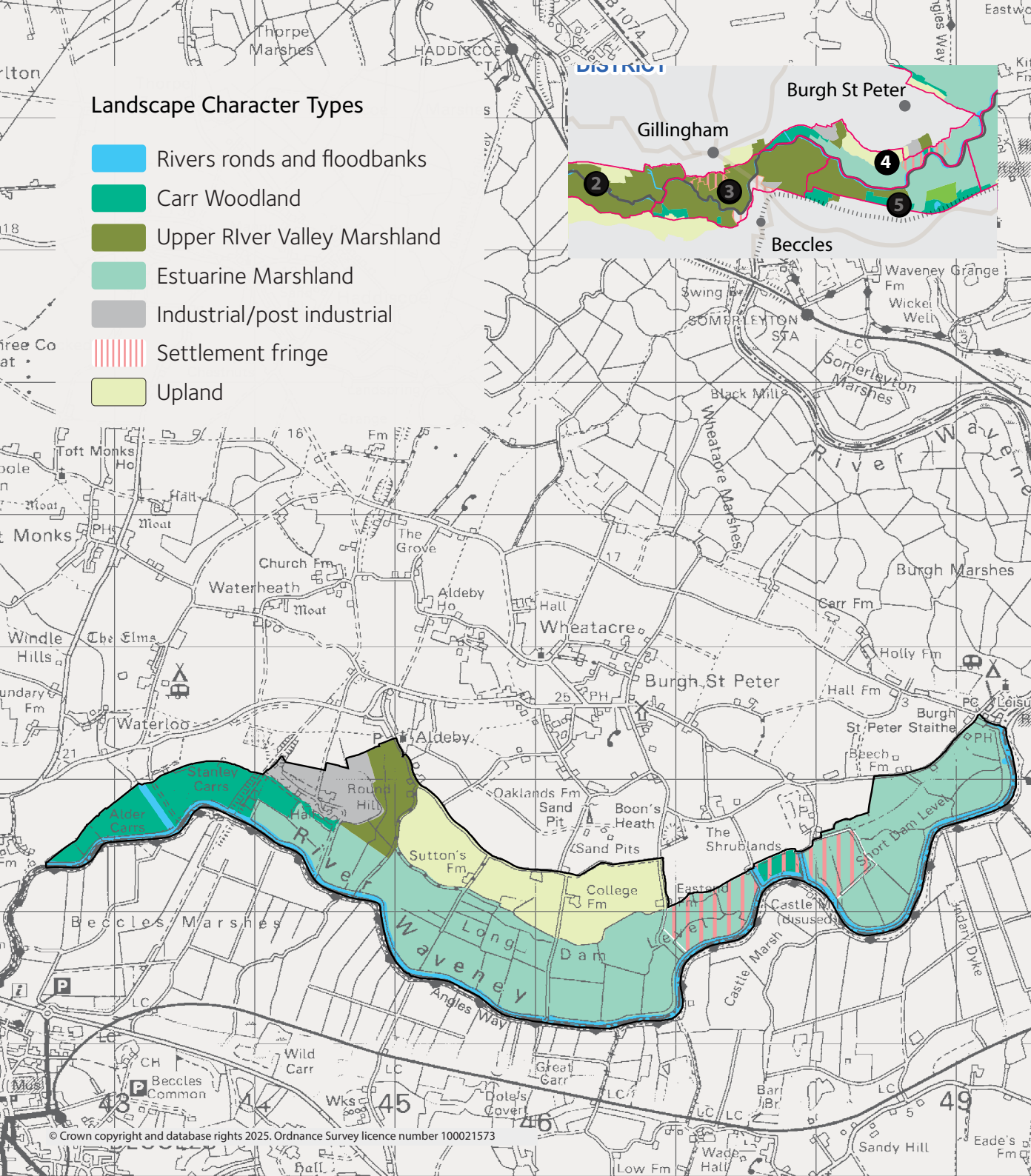
Care needs to be taken when landscape change occurs, to ensure that those positive characteristics that contribute to an area's

unique sense of place are conserved and enhanced. What follows are examples of local issues and opportunities.

Landscape – open areas which abut Bungay, Ditchingham and Geldeston are all subjected to pressures from different settlement fringe type development which potentially can erode the traditional pastoral landscape of the marshland. The incremental impacts of even small scale developments or activities can ultimately have cumulative adverse effects on the local landscape character. Care needs to be taken in relation to the siting of new structures and the type of materials used to ensure the positive landscape characteristics are not eroded further.

The extension of farm development within the grazing marsh environment and the increased scale of farm buildings or farm diversification can bring about a loss of grazing marsh habitat whilst also having the potential to impact on the visual amenity and landscape character of the area. Farm expansion both within the marshland and valley side landscape should therefore be sensitively designed to conserve and enhance the positive landscape characteristics of the area and where effects are likely to be adverse, alternative solutions and/or mitigation should be considered.

The valley sides, the ridgelines of which lie in the main beyond the Broads area, form prominent skylines to this character area and are relatively undeveloped. Care needs to be taken in relation to development proposals within these areas which form the landscape setting to the Broads.



Landscape Character Types

- Rivers ronds and floodbanks
- Carr Woodland
- Upper River Valley Marshland
- Estuarine Marshland
- Industrial/post industrial
- Settlement fringe
- Upland

4. Waveney - Aldeby to Burgh St Peter

Located in this area are Stanley and Alder Carrs, heavily designated areas of semi-mature Alder Carr woodland, with some areas of open fen. Part of its special interest is that it acts as a washland - lying adjacent to the river and regularly flooding with partially saline water – which produces different plant communities in those areas most affected by the salinity. It is also of interest for its insect and bird communities.

Why is this area special?

This character area consists of a long, narrow band of grazing marsh and blocks of heavily designated alder carr woodland (lying to the western edge) on the northern floodplain of the River Waveney. There is a strong visual connection with the character area to the south of the river which include extensive areas of carr woodland which terminate views southwards at lower levels creating something of a corridor feel along the valley. Despite the occasional distant views of ‘Gulliver’, the Lowestoft wind turbine, and gravel extraction/waste operation noise, this area with the slow flowing, meandering river feels remote and tranquil. There is limited public access to this side of the river other than by river with some public moorings available at the western end of the area.

The northern valley edge contains a number of 17th and 18th century dairy farmsteads where the grazing marshes are predominantly still a working, productive landscape. Away from the valley floor the valley sides rise up to



▲ *The northern valley slope forms the skyline in views northwards across the area. Land use on this valley edge includes arable, quarrying and waste disposal. Image by Keith Evans - geograph.org.uk*

areas where sand and gravels can be found. These resources have been exploited over many years. The sandy nature of the soil also supports different plant types and habitats to that found on the valley floor.

There is a strong sense of time depth where

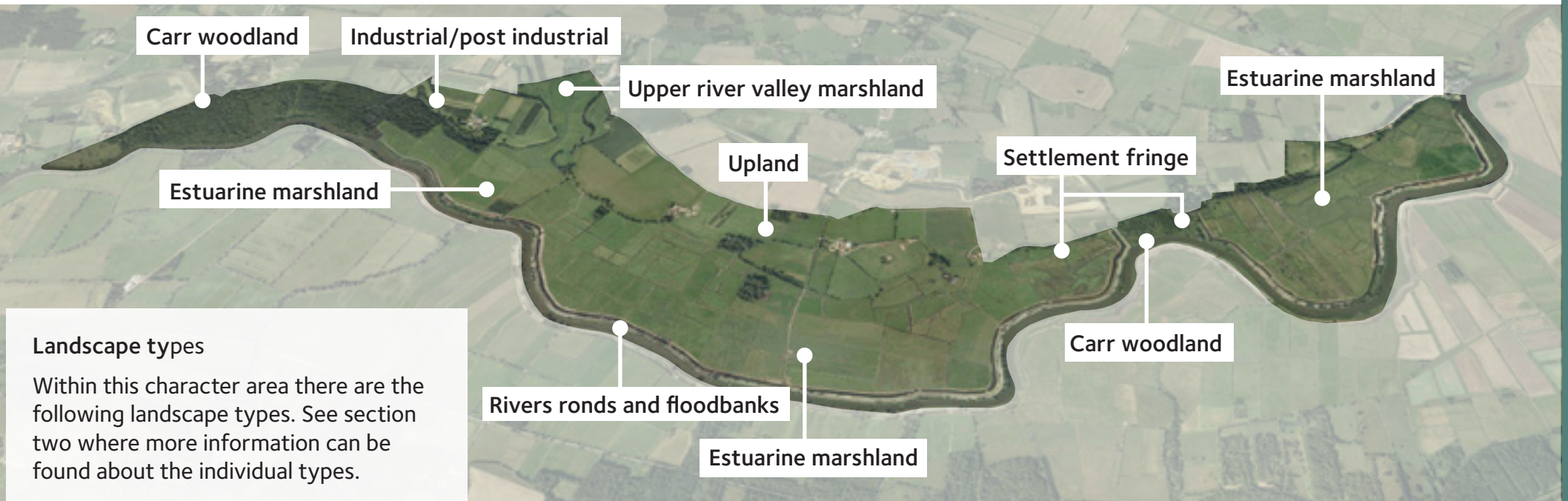
areas of rectilinear grazing marsh and dyke patterns are still visible. Mapped evidence suggests that carr woodlands such as Stanley Carr, Alder Carr and Seven Mile Carr were grazed in the 19th century and have retained a series of drainage dykes but these were abandoned in the 20th century and have since regenerated to woodland.

Aldeby brickworks was located immediately north of the site and excavations in the valley side here are clearly apparent. The brickworks was connected to the river by the long dyke mapped as Carpenter's Dyke (formerly Wherry Dyke) which forms the parish boundary with Gillingham. Alder Carrs is on the Gillingham side and Stanley Carrs on Aldeby side.

Topography and skyline

The narrow valley floor of the northern floodplain of the Waveney ranges between -1m and 1m OD. The overall valley width ranges from approximately 1.2 km to a wider valley floor in the east in excess of 1.8 km. The river meanders across the full width of the valley. Within the northern valley floor the floodplain ranges in width from 300-400m to its eastern and western extremities, to 900m in the central part.

The valley sides gently rise up to a crest of around 15- 20 metres OD on both the north and southern side of the river. Overall the skylines are relatively undeveloped, albeit with some views of quarrying activities which have altered the valley sides.





▲ *Much of the area is still traditionally grazed. Image by Evelyn Simak – geograph.org.uk*

Geology and soils

The drift Geology map indicates Breydon formation peat underlying Stanley and Alder Carrs and continuing eastwards along the upland edge of the floodplain until near the south of College Farm. The Long and Short Dam Levels are otherwise Breydon Formation Silty Clay with small areas of peat. The valley sides are predominantly sand and gravel deposits.

Enclosure, scale and pattern

Enclosure is created by a fragmented dyke pattern which is a mixture of small scale rectilinear and curvilinear enclosures dykes and

blocks of carr woodland on the north west fringes. This carr woodland terminates views along the valley floor to the west giving the area a relatively enclosed corridor feel in that direction. A sense of enclosure provided by the northern valley sides. To a lesser degree, enclosure is also provided by the flood banks alongside the Waveney.

The southern valley sides are largely masked by carr woodlands in the adjacent character area. Containment is also provided by the wooded ridge line around North Cove to the south, beyond the adjacent Broads landscape character area (LCA 5).

This is a landscape of relatively muted colour palette and low levels of variation in light and shade, although contrast is provided by riverside vegetation of reed and willows and by the highly reflective nature of the surface of the water, and

▼ *Stanley and Alder Carrs are a significant landscape feature in this area. Image by Adrian S. Pye – geograph.org.uk*

the sense of movement created by the River Waveney.

Main features of land cover and use

The valley floor comprises grazing marshes with two main areas of carr woodland. The valley side comprises of arable, some grazing and pig rearing. Quarrying activities and the waste site lie on the boundary of the area. Hedgerow vegetation along the rural road network within the character area help masks views of these.

The carr woodland on the north side of this stretch of the Waveney is located in the places where the river comes closest to the upland. It is managed for shooting and conservation in part. There is a further area of riverside carr woodland – Seven Mile Carr – between the Short and Long Dam Levels. This seems to have been partly grazed in the 19th Century and later abandoned. Both areas have minor tributaries entering from the north. The settlement in the area comprises of a series of isolated valley side farmsteads.



Helping to keep it special

Care needs to be taken when landscape change occurs, to ensure that those positive characteristics that contribute to an area's unique sense of place are conserved and enhanced. What follows are examples of local issues and opportunities.

Landscape – Overall this landscape has a remote and tranquil feel. Adjacent industrial activities in the form of gravel extraction and waste disposal (both external to the Broads area) does have some adverse effect on these characteristics. Future expansion or changes of use need to be carefully considered so as to

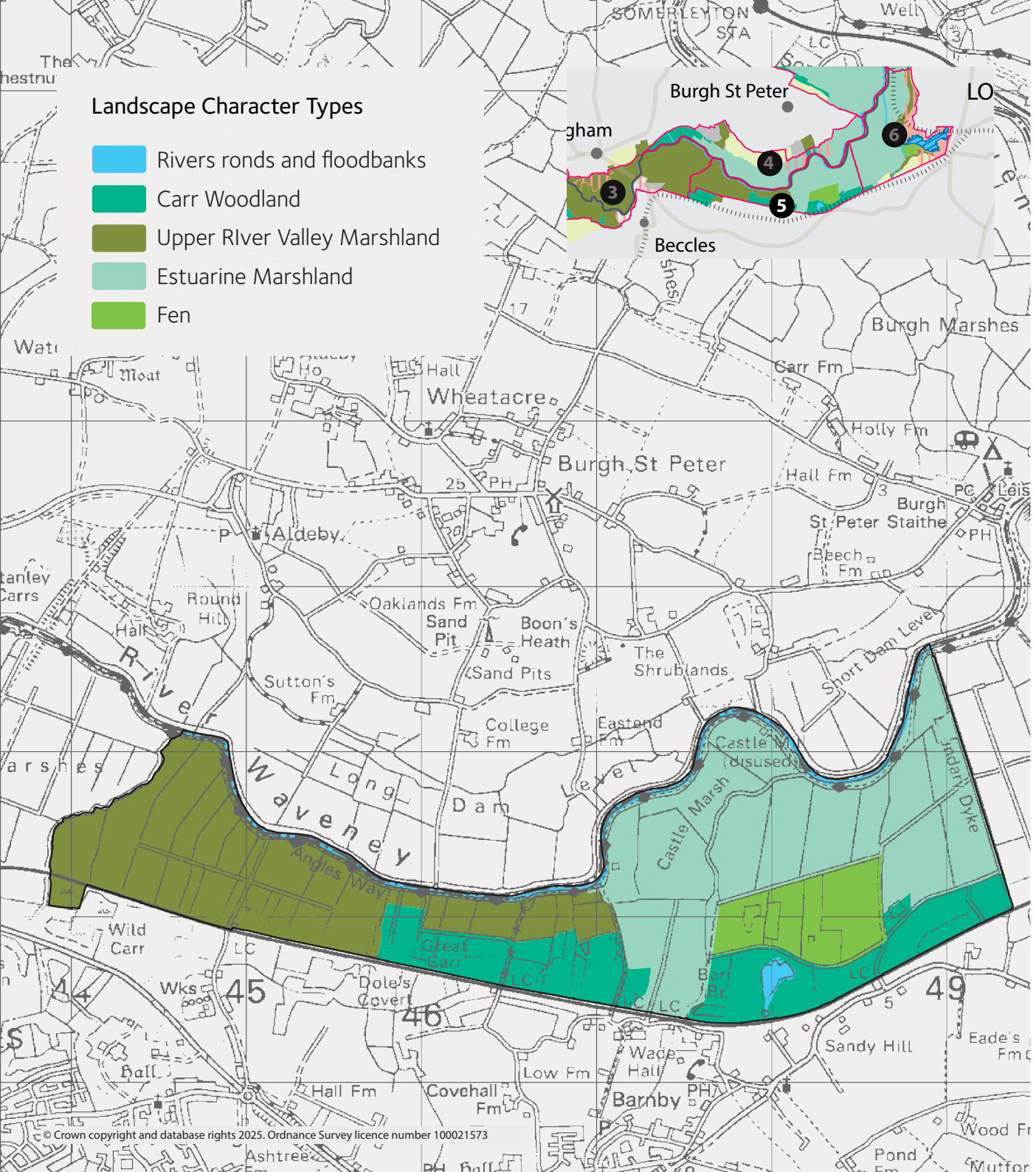
ensure that the special qualities of the Broads are not impacted upon.

The skylines formed by the valley sides on both the north and southern side of the valley are relatively undeveloped which contribute in a positive way to the character of the area.



▲ Image by Adrian S. Pye - geograph.org.uk

◀ There are few tracks to the marshes and little public access. The sandy soils of the valley slope differ to those of the marshes which can be silty clays. Carr woodland on the southern valley slope helps filter views of settlement beyond. Image Evelyn Simak - Geograph.org.uk



5. Waveney - Worlingham Wall to Boundary Dyke, Barnby

Why is this area special?

The area is predominantly pastoral, with blocks of carr woodland within which small broads can be found, a somewhat unusual feature for the Waveney. Despite the occasional distant views of 'Gulliver', the Lowestoft wind turbine, train and waste operation noise from across the valley, this area with the slow flowing, meandering river feels remote and tranquil. The river bank to the south of the river provides the reed and tree lined route for the Angles Way long distance footpath. At the western end of this area is the Worlingham Wall, a natural watercourse that forms the parish boundary between Beccles and Worlingham. The medieval 'wall' is embanked on both sides as part of the drainage schemes of each parish's marshes and is today a willow lined sinuous feature crossing the landscape. It is to the east of the Wall, within the Worlingham marshes where a concentration of the dole pattern of subdivision survives. This quiet stretch of river is popular with fishermen.

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Topography and skyline

The level valley floor of the southern floodplain of Waveney is marginally higher ground (lying at 0 OD) than the land to the west of Worlingham Dyke. The overall valley width ranges from approximately 1.2 km to a wider valley floor in the east in excess of 1.8 km. The river meanders across the full width of the valley.

The valley sides gently rise up to a crest of around 15 - 20 metres OD on both the north and southern side of the river. Carr woodlands on the southern valley side are a prominent skyline feature in many views to the south, in the main foiling views to settlements such as Barnby within East Suffolk District and beyond.

To the north, views are more open as there is less woodland vegetation towards these "upland" areas lying within South Norfolk

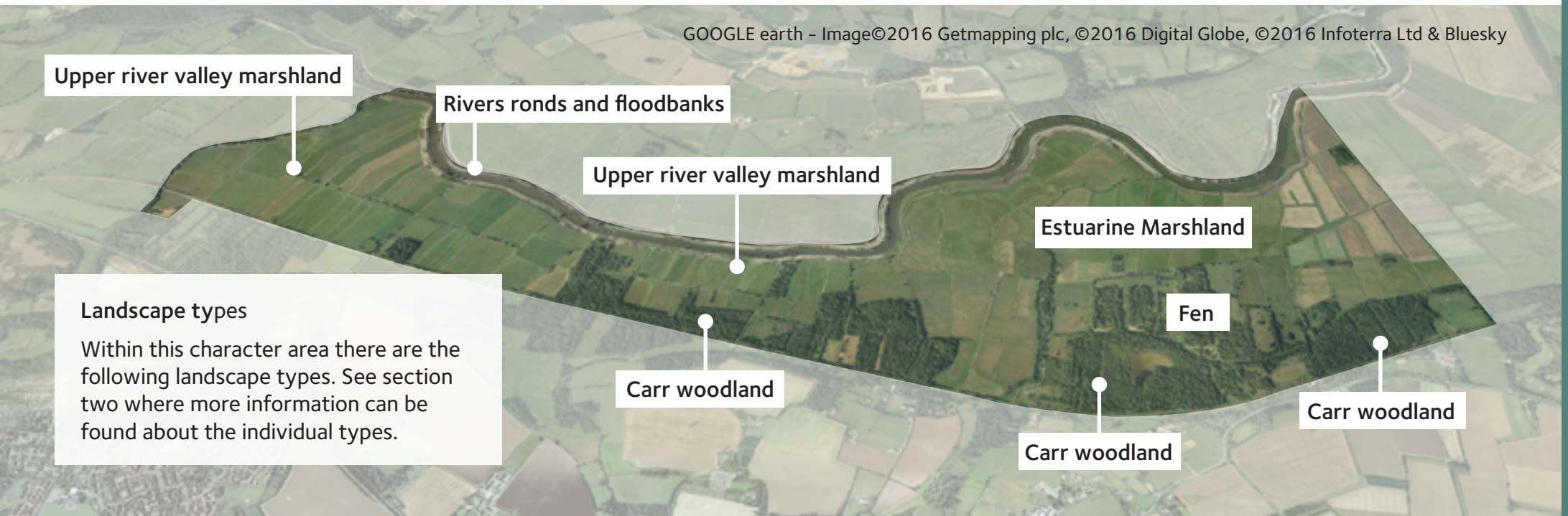
District. The skylines are of arable fields some grazing and quarrying activities. There are occasional glimpses of property, views of which are filtered by intervening vegetation. The gravel and waste disposal operations within the adjacent area (LCA 4) are sometimes visible. In views eastwards, low voltage lines can be seen on the horizon. However, overall the skylines are relatively undeveloped which helps to promote the sense of tranquillity and remoteness in this area.

Within this character area there is a good example of the historic landscape feature of what the landscape historian Professor Tom Williamson calls "fossilised doles". These were created when much of the fen areas of the Broads were common land for use by those with common rights. Doling was used to divide the land up between those with common rights to



▲ Carr woodland is a significant feature on the southern edges of the valley side providing a sense of enclosure and filtering views of settlement further south.

ensure a fair distribution of the fen products (peat, reed, sedge, litter, grazing etc.). The separate allocations were marked by dykes or dole stones. These doles took the form of long narrow strips which gradually came to be



► *The River Waveney meanders across the valley floor which is over a kilometre in width creating a reflective quality to the landscape. Much of the area is managed for nature conservation. The range of habitats increases the textural variation and patterns within the landscape.*

regarded as private property and were bought sold and exchanged. This led to consolidation of neighbouring strips and it is this simplified pattern of consolidated strips which survive in places today.

Geology and soils

The drift geology map shows a mixture of predominantly Breydon formation peat along with a narrow band of Breydon formation silty clay alongside the river widening out from Castle Marshes eastwards.

Enclosure, scale and pattern

To the west of the area, the landscape comprises of small scale doles creating textural variation in the marshes. These long wet enclosures continue eastwards although between series of embanked or built up tracks called either Walls or Dams running from the upland to the river (Marsh Lane Worlingham and Wadehall Old Dam) they are covered with numerous short, usually east-west, dykes providing more intricate dyke patterns which are interwoven with blocks of woodland. At North Cove the woodland extends almost to the river.

This and the tree-lined nature of the riverbank



▲ *Grazing marsh and their associated dykes are a significant landscape and historic feature in the area.*

create quite an enclosed feel on this side of the valley. This sense of enclosure alters at Six Mile Corner where the landscape opens out dramatically to the east, the floodplain on the southern side of the river widens, and the Castle Marshes have a more typically estuarine grazing marsh appearance although expansive areas of



▲ *The embankments which cross the area, such as the Worlingham Wall to the west, provide a further sense of enclosure, with flood banks at up to 2m OD.*

reeds closer to the river's edge provide localised enclosure.

The northern valley slopes outside the Executive Area define the visual extents of the character area to the north.



◀ *North Cove staithe with the wood fringed track from the settlement.*

The landscape texture is made all the more varied by the reed lined course of the Waveney allied to the extensive blocks of carr woodland creating local variations in light and shade. The course of the River Waveney provides much reflectivity and really, the only sense of movement in this landscape.

Main features of land cover and use

Land cover is predominantly grazing marsh with a considerable amount of carr woodland to the southern boundary of this area. Much of this woodland is a longstanding feature, appearing on the earliest available maps and each block often with a distinct name – Oak Carr, Great Carr, Wild Carr. Land in this area is managed for shooting and nature conservation and is used for cattle grazing.

This area includes a small broad – Barnby Broad isolated from the river, and surrounded by mature carr woodland and fen to the south of Barnby Marshes. The site of another to the

east is still mapped as ‘Old Broad’. This appears as open water on the 1847 tithe map but had been drained by 1882–3. The two are unusual as the only examples of by-passed broads in the Waveney Valley.

There is also a wet fen area to the south of Barnby marshes also relatively unusual in the Waveney valley. The mix of habitat found in this area is reflected in the SSSI designation. Suffolk Wildlife Trust also operate two reserves in this area ‘North Cove’ and ‘Castle Marshes’

Infrastructure is present in the form of the railway, which opened in 1859 and forms much of the southern boundary of this area, cutting across long dykes (fossilised doles) and overhead electricity lines running along Castle Marshes.

Settlement – This area is largely unsettled with only a few isolated marsh farms at the edge of the floodplain. There are a series of tracks from the upland to the river throughout this area and a number of former mill sites located close to the junction of these tracks with the river. There is a small staithe at North Cove although no associated buildings or features (although possibly the base of a pillbox) and the staithe is in fact more of a beach. The only formal moorings are at Worlingham.

Helping to keep it special

Care needs to be taken when landscape

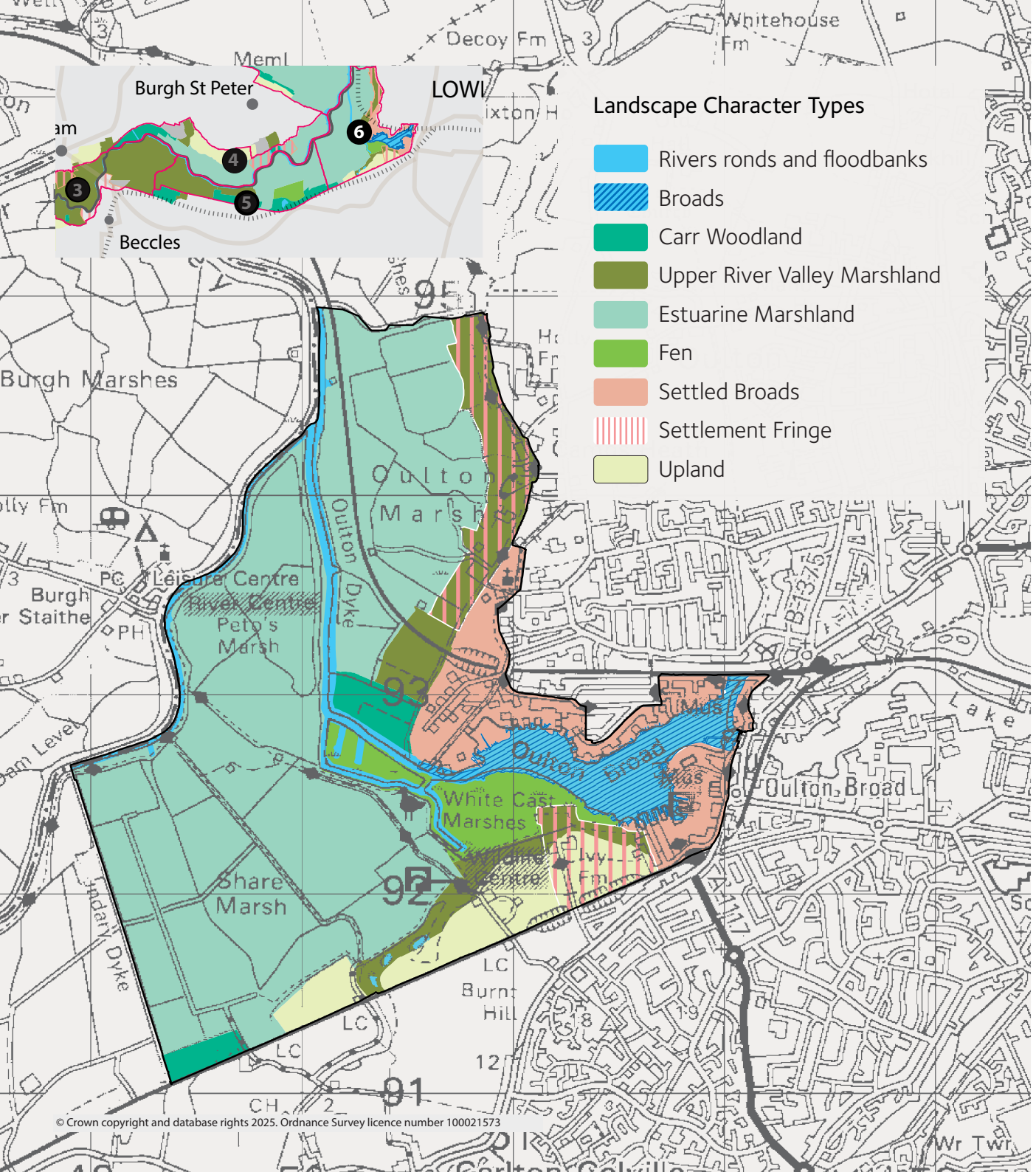
change occurs, to ensure that those positive characteristics that contribute to an area’s unique sense of place are conserved and enhanced. What follows are examples of local issues and opportunities.

Landscape – Overall, the area appears not to have suffered from the same intensity of use and associated landscape effects than the adjacent character areas to the west and east. The naturalness of the area itself feels relatively undisturbed although views of development in Lowestoft and overhead cables are more evident at the eastern end of the area and views of the wind turbine “Gulliver” are more extensive albeit intermittent. It is also slightly affected by noise and activity outside mainly from the Aldeby tip and gravel works.

Opportunities therefore to enhance the landscape through removal of overhead lines should be sought.

▼ *To the eastern end of the area views of Lowestoft impinge on views within the area.*





6. Waveney - Boundary Dyke, Barnby to The Fleet, Oulton

Oulton Broad is the location of one of the few rush weaving industries in the UK. The craft of rush weaving dates back to Anglo-Saxon times and is believed to be East Anglia’s oldest recorded industry.

Why is this area special?

Oulton Broad, lying to the west of Lowestoft, lies at the heart of this character area which comprises of some quite diverse elements – a large, busy broad, nature reserves and significant built development and a real intensity of use which links together the various elements. Mutford Lock, which is the only serviceable lock in the Broads area, allows a connection of the Broad with Lake Lothing and through to the North Sea. The settlement to the north and north-west of Oulton Broad has also been designated a conservation area due to its architectural and heritage significance.

The A1117 passes close to the broad contributing traffic noise and constant movement. It is one of the few broads that can be seen by passing motorists. The combination of all these factors create a noisy, colourful and active place.

Oulton Broad is a popular seasonal focus for boating and sailing activity, and provides an important physical and visual link between a busy gateway to the Broads and the open countryside within the Executive Area and the wider Waveney Valley. There is a distinctly

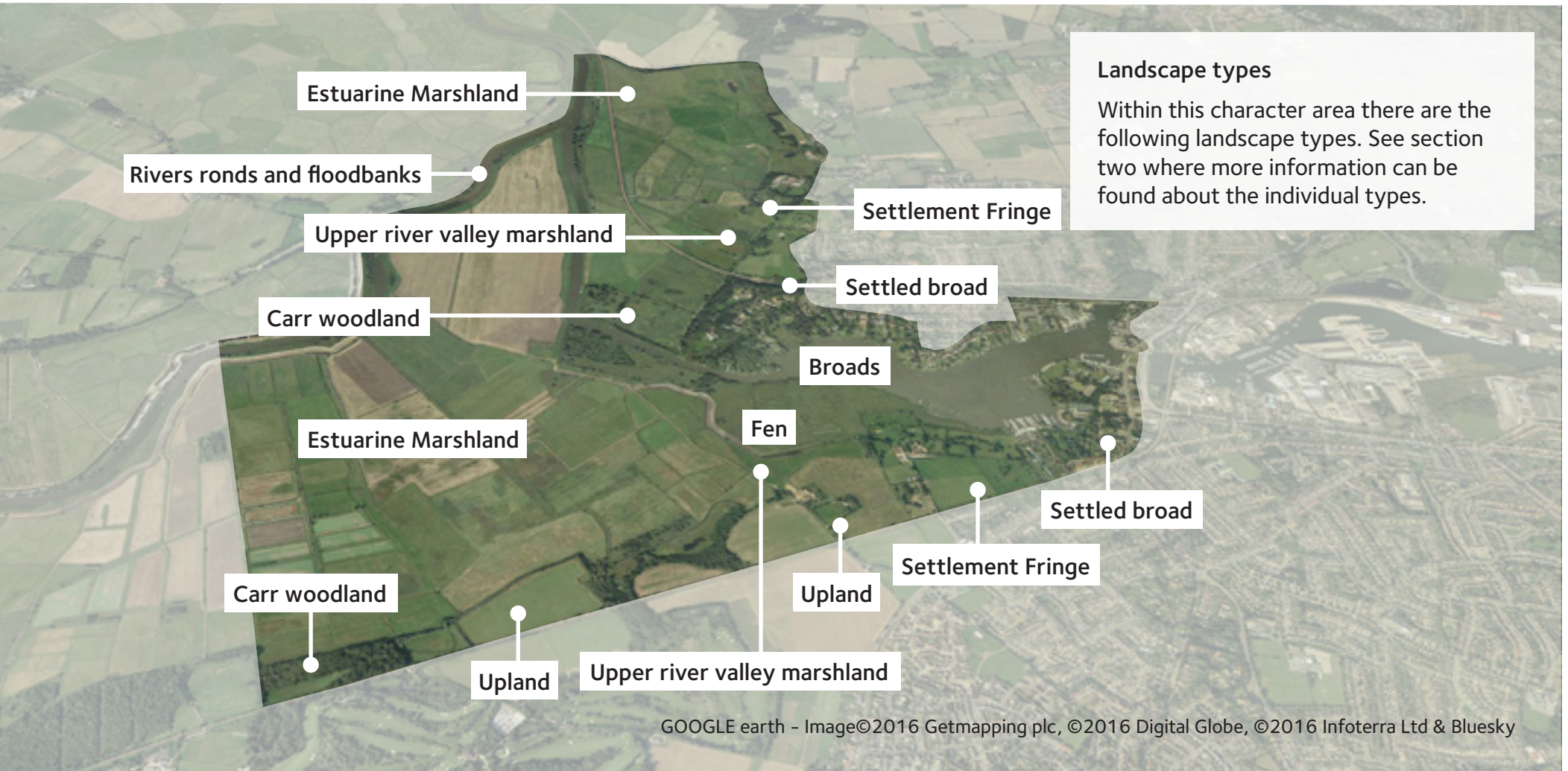
contrasting character between one end of the Broad and the other for this reason.

Nicholas Everitt Park on the eastern edge of the Broad is one of the few public parks from which members of the public can access the Broads. The long distance footpath the Angles Way skirts the area to the north and east and utilises the flood banks on the River Waveney to the south of this area.

The area is the location of two Suffolk Wildlife Trust reserves, Carlton and Oulton marshes. Carlton Marshes has become a popular attraction since the contemporary rebuild of the Visitors Centre, habitat creation and restoration. The site provides breathing space around the urban area.

The marshland areas of Sprats Water and Whitecast marshes are heavily designated

for their nature conservation value. The dyke networks are home to rare plant and insect species such as Britain's biggest spider, the fen raft spider which was released there in 2012 to bolster the precariously low UK population. The marshes provide ideal habitat for wintering wildfowl and breeding waders with large numbers of wigeon, teal and snipe.





◀ *The company Waveney Rush in collaboration with the Environment Agency, the Broads Authority and the Waveney River Trust, are now harvesting English Bullrush once again in the River Waveney for use in their products. Image by Waveney Rush Company.*

Topography and skyline

This part of the Waveney valley floodplain contains some of the lowest lying land in the Waveney Valley. The topographical data indicates that it is between –1m and –2m OD in places. The valley side range from 2m OD at the broad to in excess of 5-7m OD at the top of the ridges on the northern and southern valley sides.

This landscape character area has greatly contrasting skylines. Open, expansive skylines defined by marshland and the Waveney floodplain lie to the west, with the wooded backdrop of Oulton Broad and associated wooded valley side to the east, with much of the south eastern skyline defined by the edge of Lowestoft and docks/industrial development at Lake Lothing and Mutford Lock.

To the south west and south views are contained by rising landform and the wooded edge at Rookery Park Golf Course within East Suffolk District. The wooded, settled skyline north of Oulton Broad marks the visual horizon in the east, together with the urban edge of

Lowestoft. To the west, due to the expanse of Peto's Marsh, there are panoramic views of the wider Waveney valley and, at distance, the areas that lie within South Norfolk District.

Geology and soils

The majority of area is Breydon Formation silty clay with Sprats Marsh, Whitecast Marshes and Jensen's Island situated on peat which continues in a narrow band closest to upland thinning out towards Fleet Dyke. The underlying materials are sands and gravels.

Enclosure, scale and pattern

Much of this area is of a large scale and low lying landscape (particularly Peto's Marsh, Share Marsh and north of Carlton Colville) which opens into a wide valley floor up to 2km in width. The sense of scale is reinforced where dyke boundaries have been removed to intensify arable farming practices. There is greater boundary subdivision at Oulton Marsh partly as a result of land use changing from agriculture to settlement fringe activities.

A greater sense of enclosure is created by the well-defined south facing wooded and settled slopes on the northern edge of the Oulton Broad. These are defined by mature mixed woodlands and ornamental tree species associated with the large Edwardian gardens in this area. This vegetation essentially foils the western edge of Lowestoft. Topography ranges from 2m OD at the Broad to in excess of 5-7m OD at the top of this ridge. Enclosure is provided to the south by hedgerows including within the undulating farmland of adjacent character areas beyond the Broads.

The River Waveney and the Oulton Broad together provide expansive areas of open water which are visible from large parts of the area creating a sense of light, movement and reflectivity, and this is increased by seasonal recreational use of the Broad.

The range of land cover creates a diverse landscape pattern, which is supplemented by a variety of land uses such as farming (arable and grazing), water based leisure and recreation uses and settlement fringe uses such as "horsiculture". The larger marshes which make up the western part of the character area, such as Peto's Marsh, have a simple character and

landscape pattern.

Main features of land cover and use

Land cover in the area consists of expansive areas of grazing marsh, reed beds associated with water courses/bodies, a broad and low density early 20th century settlement north of Oulton Broad (large dwellings in wooded plots and surrounded by valley side woodlands).

Oulton Broad itself has settlement which consists of partly industrial (although now only in very limited areas) along its northern

perimeter including some vast former maltings and some affluent housing. On the south side is Nicholas Everitt Park, a Victorian park with a variety of leisure and amenity uses including holiday chalets and caravan parks.

Peto's Marsh in Carlton Colville and parts of Share Marsh have seen significant habitat restoration and relinking of wetland habitat.

The railway line from Norwich to Lowestoft forms a significant piece of infrastructure as it crosses Oulton marshes running parallel to Oulton Dyke. Some overhead infrastructure

has been removed in the area, benefiting views and the overall sense of remoteness. Mutford Lock provides passage between the North Sea and the Broads, and is a popular alternative to navigating through the port of Great Yarmouth.

Carlton Marshes Nature Reserve - The Carlton Marshes reserve, owned by Suffolk Wildlife Trust comprises around 100 acres of grazing marsh and fen and includes two small areas of heavily designated fen, Sprats Water and Whitecast Marshes. New housing development on the edge of Carlton Colville built on a rise which has a significant visual impact from within the reserve, as do the frequent vehicle movements on the A146 to the south. As well as conservation value, the reserve provides important open space and walking opportunities on the edge of a very extensive built development area.

Oulton Marshes - The marshes are mixed as the dyke pattern is fragmented and is a mixture of small and medium enclosures. The band of peat ground that runs close to the upland is mainly open here rather than grazed or mown – part is reedbed. There has been a considerable amount of subdivision within this peaty band,

◀ *Oulton Broad is a popular destination for boaters and as a result there are increasing pressures for moorings. There is also a significant amount of land in arable cultivation in this area. Over the next few years some of these areas may be reinstated to grazing land with dyke networks.*



much of which is of Settlement Fringe type use. The marshes are cut in two by the railway line between Yarmouth and Lowestoft. To the south of this is an area of partly carr woodland with some coniferous plantation. Official public access only skims the edge of the area although there is a staithe on Oulton Dyke and the area appeared overall well – frequented with dog walkers and fishermen.

Helping to keep it special

Care needs to be taken when landscape change occurs, to ensure that those positive characteristics that contribute to an area's unique sense of place are conserved and enhanced. What follows are examples of local issues and opportunities.

Landscape – The bulk of the settlement lying on the rising land of the valley side to the northern side of Oulton Broad have extensive gardens which being well vegetated, provide a visual foil, filtering views of development and reducing the effect of built development could have on both the character of the area and in views from the Broad. Development proposals within this locality should seek to retain the mature vegetation and enhance with additional planting where possible. Development proposals should also be of a scale and a type so as not to

► *The marshes near Oulton Broad are managed by the Suffolk Wildlife Trust and provide both valuable habitat and a “breathing space” for the adjacent urban areas. Image by Julian Claxton.*

impact on the existing character.

The internal drainage board are undertaking a process of rationalising their pumping requirements which may involve the removal of the need for electricity supplies to the river bank at certain locations. Opportunities should be sought to enhance the landscape through the removal of overhead lines and posts.

Development within Lowestoft forms the skyline in certain views from the character area, and has an adverse effect on certain locations within the character area. Opportunities should be sought to minimise any further cumulative effects.

Settlement fringe land use can have the effect of urbanising the open countryside. Buildings





◀ The steep valley side to the north of Oulton Broad is well vegetated helping to mitigate the urbanising effects of development on the frontage. New developments on the frontage need to be of a scale that they do not form dominant features in the landscape. Image by David Medcalf - geograph.org.uk

▼ The converted industrial buildings to the north of Oulton Broad provide dominant features in the landscape. Image by Adrian S. Pye - geograph.org.uk

▼ Settlement fringe activities are more apparent on the marshes adjacent to Camps Heath. Image by Adrian Cable - geograph.org.uk

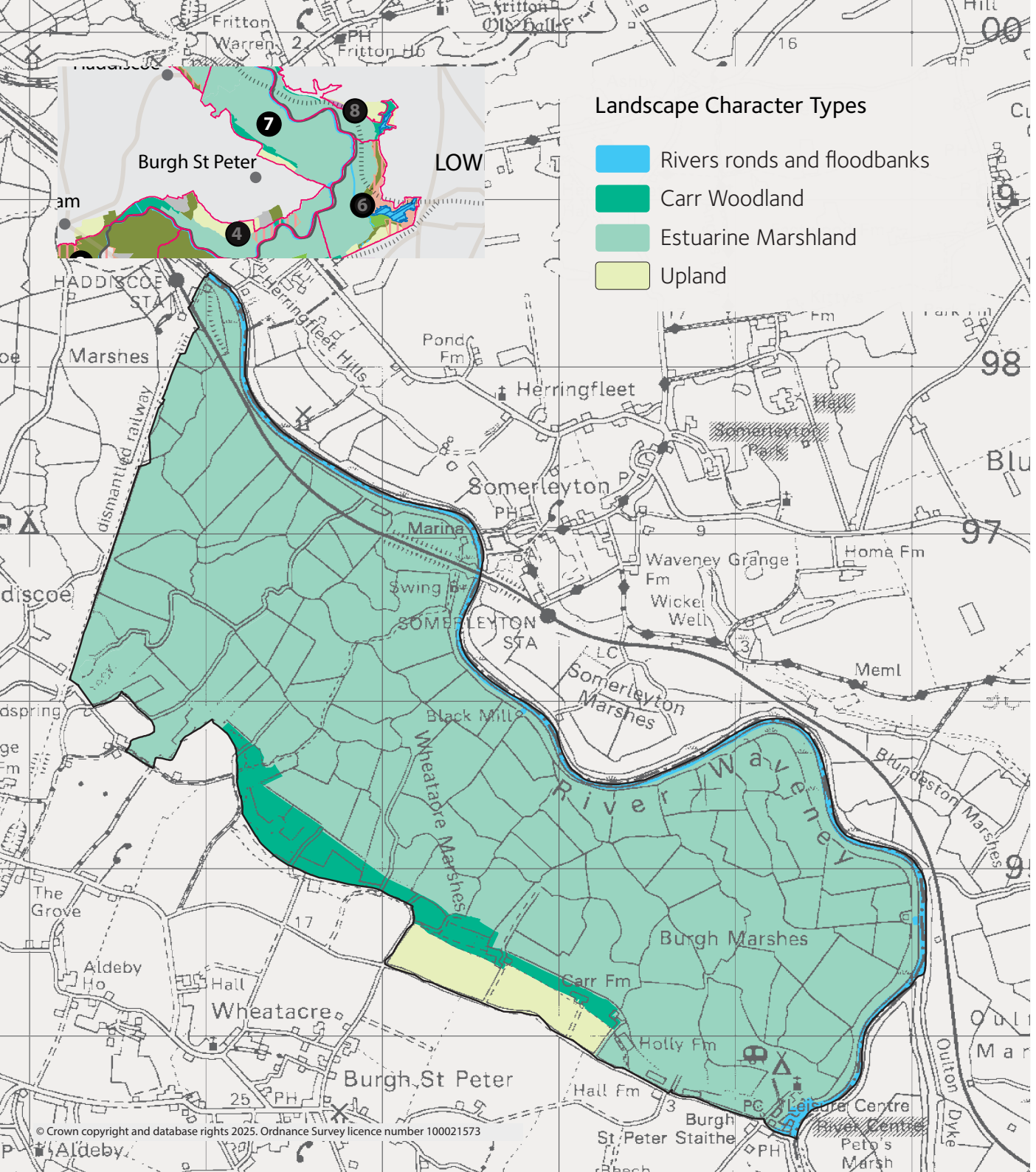


and boundary fencing required to support leisure and recreational activities need to be of an appropriate size and style. See landscape type settlement fringe for more information.

Nature conservation – the use of “hard engineering” solutions for bank protection and/or the provision of mooring needs to be carefully assessed to ensure that natural bank profiles are

not affected.

Arable use in the area is relatively extensive. However, with the purchase of Share and Peto’s Marsh by the Suffolk Wildlife Trust, opportunities to restore the land to grazing marsh with its associated dyke networks are likely to be sought.



7. Waveney Valley - Burgh St Peter to Haddiscoe Dismantled Railway

Nowhere else has a church tower quite like the Ziggerat-inspired Church of St Mary at Burgh St Peter which for centuries was the church of the Boycott family who gave their name to the English language.

Why is this area special?

Even in Broads's terms this is an exceptionally remote area of extensive open marshland with fringing woodland and farm properties dotted along the southern valley edge.

The river Waveney lies on the northern edge of the valley floor at this location thereby creating a wide level floodplain to the south and chain of smaller areas to the north of the river.

The remoteness is compounded by the fact that other than via the navigable river, there are very few public rights of way. There are no riverside footpaths within this area. A footpath does run through the settlement along the marsh edge as far as the Landspring dyke footpath and from there it is possible to continue to the site of a former Ferry crossing to Somerleyton although there is currently no alternative but to return the same way.

The most significant area of development is at the southern most tip of the area at the Waveney River Centre, Burgh St Peter, which caters for both land and water based holidays.

The upland edge of the valley sides across the river to the north are wooded and dotted with

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dwelling creating the wider sense of enclosure. There is a level of localised intrusion associated as a result of the Great Yarmouth to Lowestoft railway and the Lowestoft settlement edge to the east and the infrastructure and settlements located to the west.

However in the main the area has a strong sense of tranquillity, being defined by open, expansive marshland landscapes. As such, the perception is of a remote, largely undisturbed landscape.

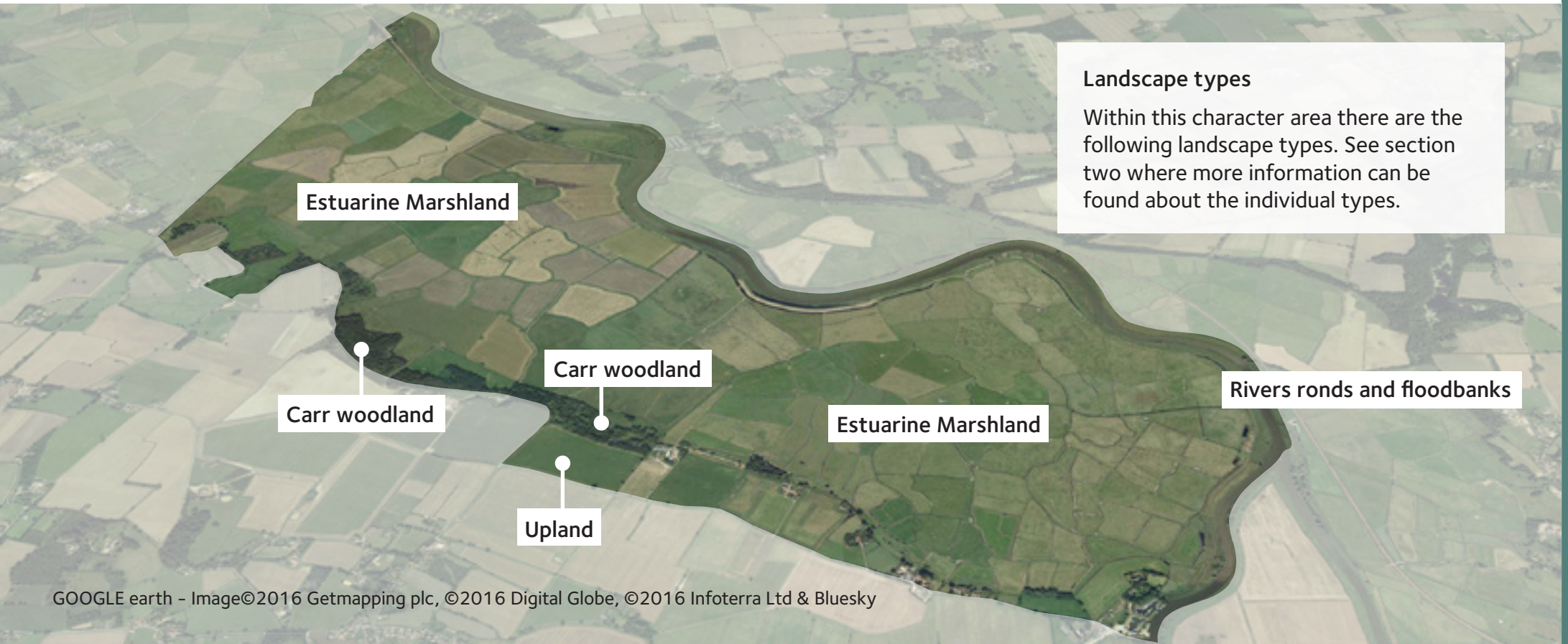
Topography and Skyline

This wide open expanses of level marshland

► *The unique Church of St Mary at Burgh St Peter.*

tends to lie at about 0 OD with small areas of Wheatacre marshes appearing slightly lower according to the more detailed topographical height data. The valley sides are approximately 1.5-2km apart and the valley crests reach around 25m above OD in the south and 15m above OD on the northern side.

The skyline to the north beyond the River Waveney and Oulton Dyke, are defined by distinctive mixed woodland lying on valley side



Landscape types
Within this character area there are the following landscape types. See section two where more information can be found about the individual types.

providing a further vertical element in the landscape – this is a relic of such features which were once more commonplace.

Pylons crossing the area at Thurlton are visible as skyline elements in views to the west

Geology and soils

The marshes are uniformly Breydon formation silty clay. A narrow ribbon of Breydon formation peat runs discontinuously along the upland edge. This thins out toward Burgh St Peter where it is replaced by Aldeby Sands and Gravels.

Enclosure, scale and pattern

This is a large scale, open landscape with localised enclosure provided by the river flood banks which are about 2 metres in height. The wider sense of enclosure is provided by the valley sides and the woodland vegetation that exist on the slopes and crests which also create variations in light and shade.

▼ *Expansive views across Haddiscoe marshes to the wooded valley side across the Waveney.*



Although there has been boundary loss and reversion to arable, it is its pastoral use which still dominates. The Burgh Marshes exhibit a good survival of older fine grain curvilinear dyke patterns, although the effects of this on landscape scale are not readily perceived from the ground.

The meandering River Waveney to the northern edge of the area with its boat traffic creates a sense of movement and reflectivity in the landscape.

Main features of land cover and use

The Burgh Marshes are a well-preserved block of traditional grazing marshland with a good survival of ancient curvilinear boundaries. The Wheatacre Marshes have suffered rather more

▲ *Grazing marsh is still the predominant land use in the area. Photo by Helen Steed - geograph.org.uk*

▼ *One of the farms dispersed along the valley edge.*



boundary loss associated with conversion to arable use, although some is now in arable reversion. The overall impression is still of an extensive pastoral area. This area was drained by windmills all of which are lost. However, the remains of a steam engine house still with a full height chimney, survives, albeit in a very derelict state and provides a notable vertical element in this landscape.

Settlement within this character area comprises a series of marsh-edge farmsteads and cottages between Burgh St Peter and Wheatacre located in close proximity to the fringe carr woodland. The remaining settlements of Wheatacre, Aldeby and Burgh St Peter are all scattered on the higher ground.





▲ In some locations grazing marsh has been replaced by arable which can result in changes to dyke networks and water levels. Image by Evelyn Simak - Geograph.org.uk

The only other built development of any significance and the one concession to Broad's tourism in this otherwise agricultural area is the Waveney River Centre complex centred on the old Burgh St Peter staithe. This leisure development is a mixture of lodges, camping, moorings, a public house and holiday and leisure facilities.

Historic environment - there are former ferry crossing sites on both Wheatacre Marshes and Burgh St Peter Staithe. At Wheatacre, the footpath picks up at Somerleyton across the river, while at Burgh St Peter, the termination of the footpath on the Carlton Colville side marks the spot. The former Ferryman's House survives at Wheatacre. Black Mill, Wheatacre Marshes is a derelict steam engine house with full height chimney. It is unlisted but important for rarity value. The modern electric pump is adjacent. A dismantled railway line crosses Haddiscoe Marshes approximately north-south. The railway bridge piers still survive across the river. The current railway line between Great Yarmouth and Lowestoft also passes across these marshes with Haddiscoe station still active.



▲ The Landspring Dyke footpath which used to lead to a ferry crossing on the river Waveney. Image by Evelyn Simak - Geograph.org.uk

Helping to keep it special

Care needs to be taken when landscape change occurs, to ensure that those positive characteristics that contribute to an area's unique sense of place are conserved and enhanced. What follows are examples of local issues and opportunities.

Landscape - In terms of the marshland area, despite some areas of arable, the overall perception of condition is considered positive from a visual perspective. However with changes to agricultural subsidies systems there may be increased pressure to change to arable.

The Waveney River Centre area although a valuable tourism asset somewhat disrupts the unity of the landscape due to the range of different uses. Future development will need to consider its integration with the natural environment so as not to compound existing adverse landscape impacts.

There is a degree of noise from gravel workings/ landfill outside the area. Intermittent train noise is also a feature. There is also some visual intrusion from outside the area. The pylons



▲ Waveney River centre – the most substantial area of development in this area. Image by David Medcalf - geograph.org.uk

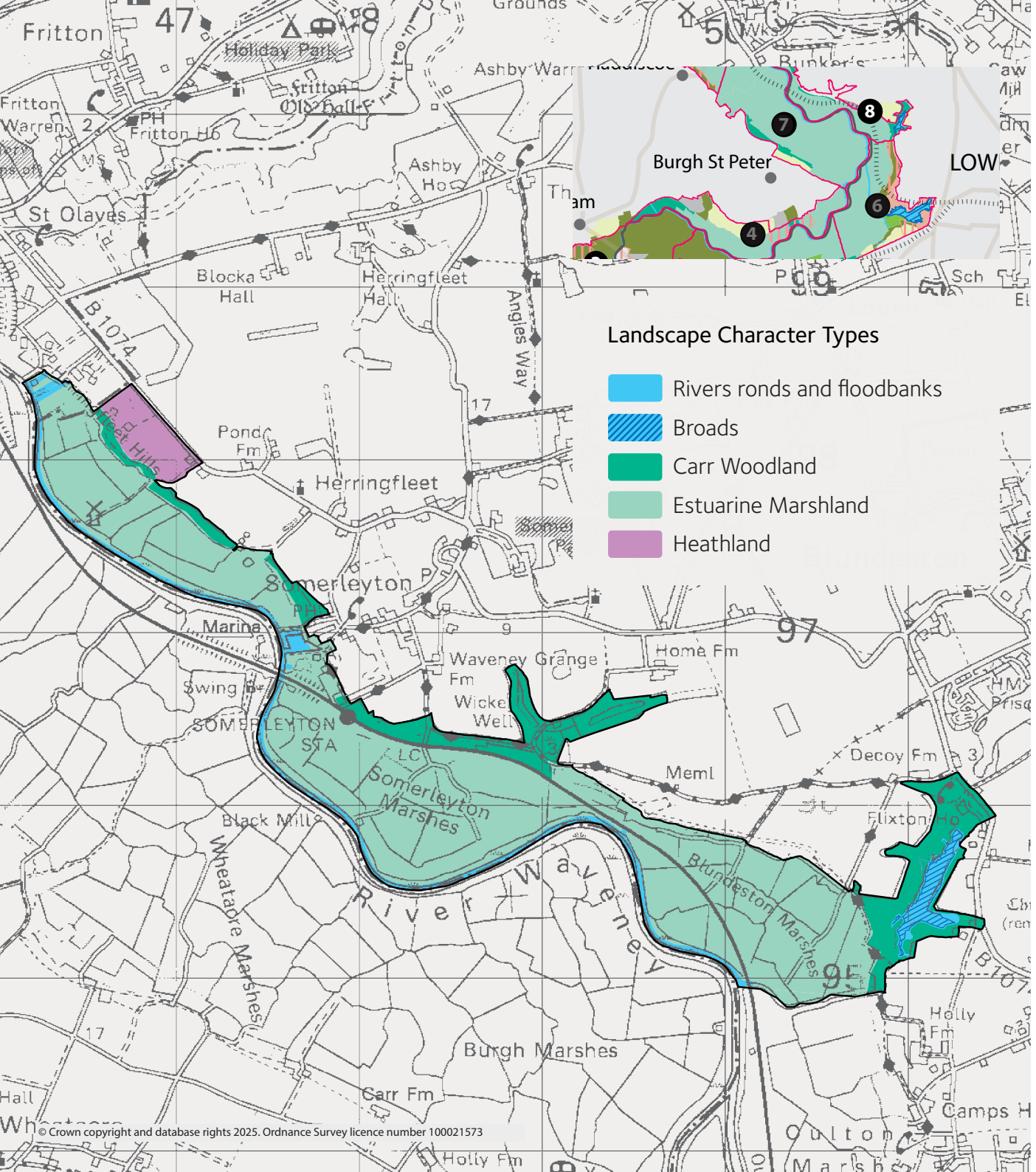
crossing the valley at Thurlton become more prominent moving westwards although are less of an issue here than in LCA 16. The Cantley factory is also distantly visible and there are frequent road movements on the A143 – those across the bridge at Haddiscoe Cut are the most obvious.

Settlement - Ensuring that any changes to land use close to the settled area on the edges of the marshes (settlement fringe) are appropriate and well designed to enhance the landscape character. Some of the marsh edge settlement appears to be in a neglected condition.

Built heritage - the Black Mill steam engine house is in need of consolidation work.

▼ View from the river Waveney southwards to the "upland" peninsular where Burgh St Peter is located. Image by Christine Johnstone - Geograph.org.uk





8. Waveney - Blunderston/Flixton to Herringfleet Marshes

Blundeston as 'Blunderstone' is the birthplace of the title character in Dicken's semi-autobiographical novel David Copperfield.

Dickens wrote the novel in 1849-50. Whilst places mentioned in the book exist in real life, it is unsure whether Dickens ever actually came to the village. It is known that in his letters that Dickens initially chose the village name for the novel after seeing it on a signpost during a trip to nearby Yarmouth (a town that also figures largely in the book, as the home of the Peggotty family).

Why is this area special?

The area has a strong sense of tranquillity due to its largely remote, undeveloped nature, with settlement being confined to isolated dwellings. The only negative influence, albeit a relatively minor one, is the Great Yarmouth to Lowestoft railway line, the route of which after crossing the river over the Somerleyton Swingbridge, passes through Somerleyton and Blundeston Marshes. The railway station building at Somerleyton is highly ornate built by Victorian entrepreneur Sir Morton Peto.

This area comprises three linked areas of estuarine grazing marsh fringed by narrow bands of carr (and some coniferous plantation) woodland established along the peaty edge adjacent to the upland. Between Oulton Broad and Burgh Castle a series of west flowing tributaries are incised through the sandy upland.

This area includes both Flixton Decoy, an excavated tributary valley and early Duck Decoy site surrounded by woodland and Summerhouse Water/Wicker Well, a 17th century watery pleasure ground.

The river Waveney snakes close to the upland on the northern floodplain, here obscuring views from one grazing area to the next north of the river, although the area still feels open as views are available across the valley as far as the wooded edge on the southern side. The flanking woodland edges to the valley create the feel of a wide corridor.

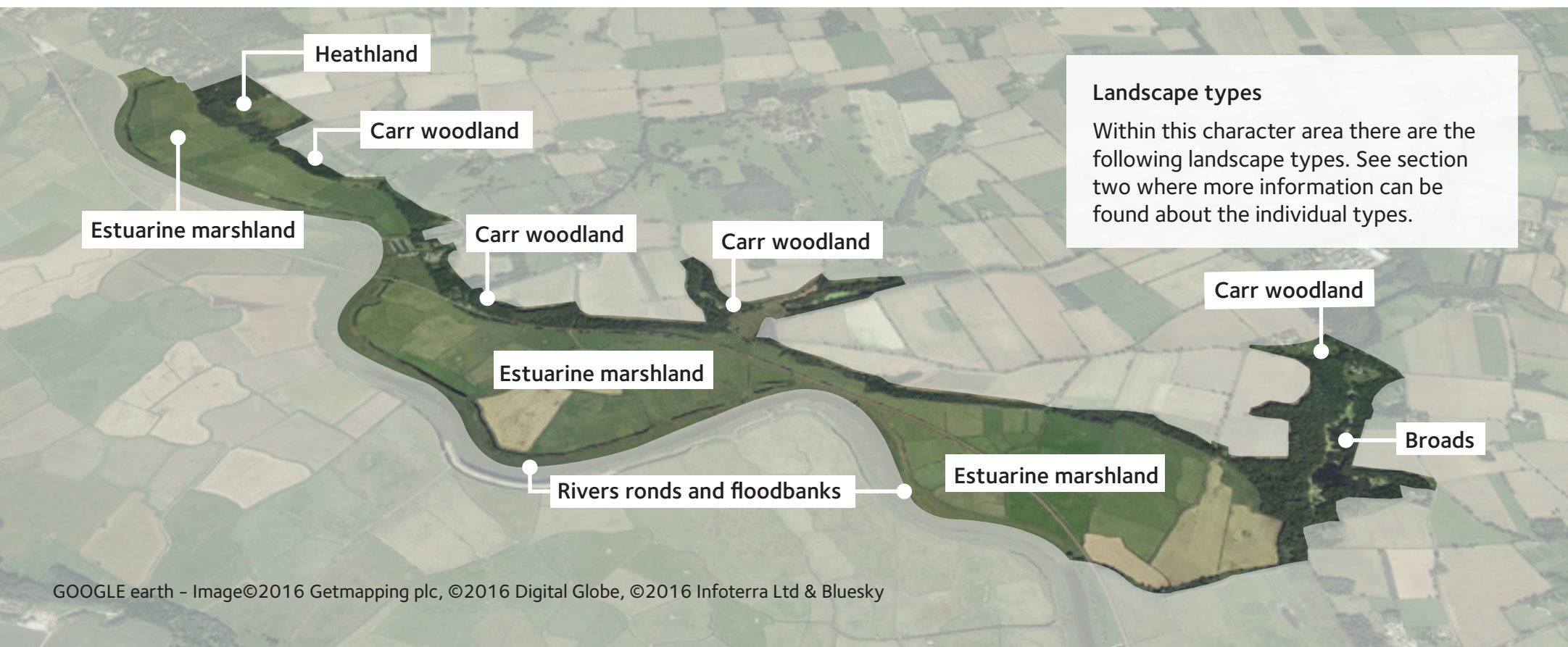
Somerleyton Brickworks was located in this area

close to site occupied by a Boatyard/Marina. This works supplied bricks for Somerleyton Hall and Liverpool Street Station but was closed in 1930s.

The area's sense of remoteness is reinforced in that, apart from the navigable river, only the open access area of Herringfleet area affords good access also accommodating a right of way to the river. The long distance route of the Angles Way skirts part of the area on higher ground.

The historic feature of Flixton Decoy appears to have been formed like the majority of the broads by large-scale medieval peat extraction

and the subsequent filling of the 'quarry' with water. Certainly by 1652 it was in operation as a duck decoy when it was mapped as such. Decoys were operated by decoyman and dog and used to snare large numbers of ducks into netted pipes which covered curving channels off the main body of water. Flixton is a large example of one of a number of such sites in the Broads but is of particular interest as one of the earliest known sites. Today the site is enclosed by woodland and remains privately owned. There are a few 19th century lodge type estate buildings dotted around the perimeter suggesting it was or is part of the Somerleyton Estate.





Panoramic views south westwards across to the other side of the valley past Herringfleet Smock mill (pictured right). Image by Ashley Dace – Geograph.org.uk

The aforementioned map of 1652 also shows Wicker Well and Summerhouse Water. These are two small broads in a very minor tributary valley which had been adapted to form part of an ornamental water garden area with other ponds, islands and ornamental buildings. Today a footpath runs between the two to join with the Angles Way. The watery features can still be discerned in certain conditions.

Topography and skyline

The area consists of a series of small floodplain marshes which lie at around 0 OD or just below, associated tributaries cutting through steep valley sides reaching around 20m OD in Herringfleet Hills.

To the north, the landform rises to the wooded ridge which forms both the skyline and the southern boundary of the Somerleyton Estate. The wooded valley side and ridge within the East Suffolk District's area is visible, with estate features such as plantation woodland/ mature conifers being visually important.

The Herringfleet Smock Mill in the west and Somerleyton Mill and Engine House to the east of the area form locally prominent skyline elements, being only some of the few man-made horizon features in those areas of open marshland.

To the south, skylines are largely formed by the distant wooded ridge on the southern side of the floodplain, LCA 7 – Burgh St Peter to Haddiscoe Marshes, although undulating farmland within the eastern tip of the district of South Norfolk is visible.

The embanked River Waveney meanders along the edge of the area dividing it into three separate parcels of marshland, with the banks creating localised visual filtering in the landscape, although there are long views up and downstream.

Geology and soils

The marshes themselves are Breydon formation silty-clay with a slim band of peat running



adjacent to the valley sides. The valley sides are a mixture of sand and gravel deposits.

Enclosure, scale and pattern.

This is a relatively open, medium scale landscape (the valley floor to the north of the River Waveney ranging from 200–400m in width) is divided into three linked areas of estuarine grazing marsh to the north of the River Waveney. Flood banks at 2m OD and the embankment of the Great Yarmouth to Lowestoft Railway provide localised enclosure.

The area is fringed by narrow bands of carr woodland sited on the low ridge to the north (10m OD). This creates a sense of enclosure, whilst to the south the boundary is defined by



▲ ► *Blundeston marshes with the backdrop of Warren carr woodland located at the bottom of the valley slope on the wetter peatier soils. Image by Evelyn Simak.*

the River Waveney creating a low lying wide valley corridor, although a low, wooded ridge lies within LCA 7, approximately a kilometre to the south, and defines the extents of the valley.

The River Waveney and the Flixton Decoy comprise the largest areas of open water although the Decoy is bounded by wooded carr edges creating localised variation in terms of light and shade.

Pattern and textural variations are created by the dykes networks in the grazing marshes, evergreen coniferous trees, (which are important in defining valley and skyline here), alder carr woodland at the bottom of the valley slope and reedbeds which fringe the River Waveney.



Main features of land cover and use

The land cover is predominantly grazing marsh with small areas converted to arable. There is a narrow wooded edge on the steep valley sides and ridge to the northern boundary of the area. The woodland to the lower valley sides is alder carr, with mixed plantation woodland on the sandy soils of the upper valley slopes, associated with the Somerleyton Estate. Flixton Decoy area comprises open water (broad) and a mixture of carr and coniferous plantation woodland.

This area comprises three linked areas of marshland, Herringfleet Marshes, Somerleyton Marshes and Blundeston/Flixton Marshes. This is the first area in the Waveney Valley – moving down river- that drainage mill remains become a feature in the landscape, although their distribution originally extended as far as Barsham. Herringfleet Mill is visible across the Somerleyton Marshes and is the only remaining wooden smock mill on the Broads and is

therefore of some significance. Unfortunately it is in need of some repair and no longer retains all its sails.

East of the floodplain area on elevated land, there are large areas of sands and sand and gravel deposits which in the past formed large commons or warrens. In this area, only Herringfleet Hills is still recognisably heathland. The grassland closest to Herringfleet Road has been close grazed by rabbits, while the valley sides (which appear to have been excavated in the past) are covered in bracken and other heathy vegetation. Elsewhere the valley sides and upland in this area is under the plough with only tell-tale signs of characteristic vegetation found along verges. For this reason only Herringfleet Hills has been included in this character area although this might be reviewed if the land use should alter.

Settlement in the area is confined to a series of mainly isolated dwellings (the main settlements are concentrated further away on the upland) and that which is associated with the marina and boatyard at Somerleyton. However the area is influenced at the northern end by localised intrusions from the boatyards, holiday accommodation and associated traffic at St Olaves within the adjacent LCA 9 and at the interface with this area and LCA 16 and 18.

Infrastructure elements include the Great Yarmouth railway line which sits on an embankment and the Somerleyton Swing Bridge.



▲ *The marina at Somerleyton is located on the valley edge. Image by Evelyn Simak - geograph.org.uk*

Helping to keep it special

Care needs to be taken when landscape change occurs, to ensure that those positive characteristics that contribute to an area's unique sense of place are conserved and enhanced. What follows are examples of local issues and opportunities.

Landscape - Much of this area was part of the Somerleyton Estate which has probably helped preserve overall unity and longevity of historic features. There are some pockets of marshland in arable use notably to the south of



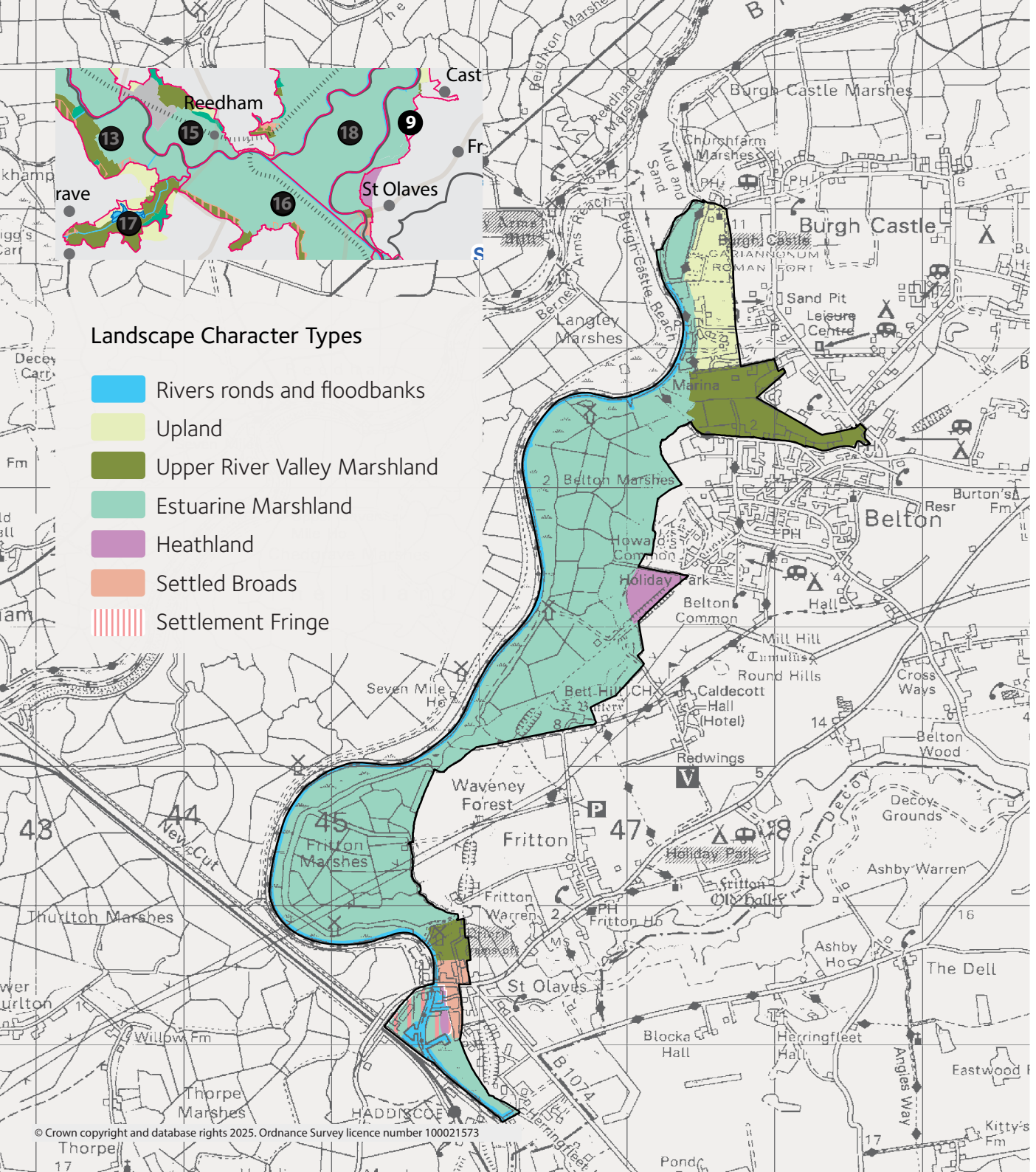
▲ *Map base indications are that Somerleyton marshes has suffered from some boundary loss with dyke systems having been filled in.*

► *The nature of the soils change from sandy/gravel of the "upland" areas to peat and then to silty clays of the estuarine marshland of the valley bottom. Image by Lesley Marsden*

Somerleyton Marshes which have as a result seen greater boundary loss and some lowering of surface level. On the sandier soils there are the potential opportunities for heathland creation.

The area is isolated with very little development this strong sense of tranquillity needs to be conserved.





Landscape Character Types

- Rivers ronds and floodbanks
- Upland
- Upper River Valley Marshland
- Estuarine Marshland
- Heathland
- Settled Broad
- Settlement Fringe

9. Waveney - St Olaves to Burgh Castle

The Burgh Castle Roman Fort, a Scheduled Ancient Monument, is one of a series of Roman coastal forts. Lesser remains of another are sited across the former estuary at Caister.

Why is this area special?

Although this area comprises of relatively small areas of silty clay marshland, this landscape has strong visual connections with the panoramic marshland landscapes of Haddiscoe Island and Halvergate Marshes lying to the west of the River Waveney. Despite the presence of localised areas of development, much of this area has quite a bleak and remote feel.

The area has a wooded backdrop to the east; large floodbanks and wide reed ronds to the west with some large scale boatyard/marina complexes to the most northern and southern ends of the area. This means that although the area has broadly the same physical characteristics as LCA 8 lying to the south, it is subject to far greater impacts from built development and tourism.

The adjacent upland originally comprised large areas of sandy heathland which was common land or large managed rabbit warren. The heathland today, where it is not under the plough, is either covered in coniferous plantation or put to various leisure uses including golf courses and holiday parks. There is one relict gorse-covered, open access area at Belton.

The gradient of the valley sides tend to be

Landscape types

Within this character area there are the following landscape types. See section two where more information can be found about the individual types.

Estuarine marshland

Upper river valley marshland

Upland

Heathland

Rivers ronds and floodbanks

Estuarine marshland

Upper river valley marshland

Settled broads

Heathland

Estuarine marshland

Settlement fringe

more gentle here than in the adjacent LCA 8, other than at Burgh Castle Roman Fort where instead of the usual marsh and peat fringe, a deposit of glacial till surrounded by sand sits close to the river. The extents of the Burgh Castle Fort remains here are striking, with walls and bastions surviving to full height on three sides of the rectangular plan. The western wall is thought to have long since tumbled into the marshland below. The remains are a feature in the landscape across a wide area. For visitors, the absence of the western wall has the effect of opening the structure out to the river, reedbed and marshland beyond. This vantage point provides exceptional views out across the Halvergate Marshes and Haddiscoe Island from which it is not difficult to visualise the former Roman estuary. The site is now in the care of Norfolk Archaeological Trust.

LCA 8 and 9 have a series of side valley tributaries (or former tributaries) Belton Fen and Fritton Decoy both of which relate to this area. These long watery fingers are generally excluded from the Broads Authority's Executive Area however the western end of Belton Fen has been included here. Fritton Decoy, which is hydrologically detached from the Broads network, has not. The scale and varying leisure uses of Fritton Decoy/Lake and its mature wooded environs means it has developed its own distinct identity.

The long distance footpath route, the Angles Way, skirts much of the area following a route on the higher ground to the west. However, at the northern end of the area the route

► *Drainage mills are a feature of the landscape in this area helping to reinforce the visual connection with Haddiscoe Island and Halvergate marshes. The exceptionally tall pylons are visible for many miles. Photo by Ashley Dace - geograph.org.uk*



drops down the valley side to pass alongside boatyards. The River Waveney meanders relatively close to the valley side offering boat users long distance views across the area to the “upland”.

The relatively interrupted skylines created by the wooded valley sides in this area provide an exceptionally important backdrop in long distance views eastwards across the marshes. These are in total contrast to those available of the more developed skylines of Great Yarmouth.

Topography and skyline

On this eastern side of the river Waveney the narrow floodplain, ranges in width from 700-900m, and lies at around -1m to 1m OD with



a series of tributary valleys incised through the higher ground to the east. The wooded ridge to the east rises up to between 8-10m OD.

The area is an open landscape, with panoramic views over the Waveney towards the River Yare and Breydon Water. Skylines to the west are predominantly of simple, open, undeveloped character (marshes and expansive valley floor), whilst the wooded ridge to the east forms a prominent and distinctive skyline element.

Vertical elements such as drainage mills at Berney Arms and those on the Halvergate Marshes, are prominent skyline elements, as are pylons. These pylons are prominent in views in the southern part of the area as the cables are elevated on very tall structures to cross the valley floor.

◄ *The Waveney forest is a significant landscape feature in views eastwards across extensive reedbeds on the River Waveney. At the bottom of the slope where the soils change from sand to peat and soils is more waterlogged, alder carr woodland can be found. Evelyn Simak -geograph.org.uk*

There are some elevated vantage points such as those from the Angles Way adjacent to the ruins of Burgh Castle to the north eastern part of the character area, from where views are available across the river confluence. The wooded ridge on which Burgh Castle is sited, defines the extent of views to the east.

The views to the west are longer than in the adjacent LCA 8 as the valley opens up with settlement at Reedham and Cantley factory visible.

Geology and soils

The marshland area is Breydon formation silty clay for the most part bounded by a narrow band of peat at the upland edge of the floodplain. The valley sides and upland here are part of an extensive area of sand.

Enclosure, scale and pattern

Despite the area's narrowness, it is a landscape with a clear sense of openness to the west, south west and north, due to the open marshland character and visual connection with adjacent marshland landscapes, the horizons of which are punctuated with drainage mills.

The area is contained and enclosed by the river to the west and a wooded ridge and valley sides to the east (the escarpment on which Burgh Castle is sited), and which creates a sense of enclosure. This is reinforced by the presence of Waveney Forest and associated perceived narrowing of the valley at this point.

Depending on the tide, the vast expanse of open water which is created by the course of the River Waveney and its confluence with the Yare, which forms the start of Breydon Water, creates a considerable sense of reflectivity in the landscape.

The patterns and textures of the “natural” landscape are simple and colours muted. These are created by marshes, dyke networks, arable crops, the coniferous plantations and carr woodland at the base of the valley sides together with the reed ronds fringing the River Waveney.

Built development introduces less simplistic patterns and textures at either end of the area, interrupting the overall simplicity of the landscape.

Main features of land cover and use

Much of the area is grassland used as grazing marsh however there is a significant proportion now being used for arable purposes. Coniferous plantation and heathland is found on the sandy soils of the upland with a carr woodland fringe on the peat soils at the toe of the valley side. There are also large areas of reed ronds associated with the river corridor. There are varying forms of infrastructure in this area the most significant being the exceptionally tall pylons which carry the electricity wires across the Waveney valley and the road and rail links at St Olaves. The St Olaves Bridge is an early and important example of cast iron bowstring girder bridge and site of an ancient ferry crossing.

The Marshes and Ronds

This area comprises two main areas of marshland, Fritton and Caldecott/Belton. Fritton Marshes have been subject to large scale conversion to arable use and consequently

▼ *Extensive views towards Cantley and Reedham are available across the arable pasture at Fritton marshes. Photo by Lesley Marsden.*

a large number of drainage dykes have been infilled and associated boundary features – the gates and ‘wings’ have been lost. The Belton/Caldecott Marshes by contrast appears to have seen rather less change and retain a number of sinuous dyke boundaries.

Both areas retain their drainage mills, which along with the large number visible across the river make this a significant feature of this area. Public access to much of this area is very limited with no floodwall footpaths in the marshland area. This area contains other smaller areas of

▼ *Some of the marsh areas are still used for grazing. Image by Lesley Marsden.*





grazing marsh around St Olaves – the Priory Marshes (formerly drained by the small boarded skeleton mill there) and Scale Marshes to the south of the Beccles road. The western end of Belton Fen which has been drained and grazed over a long period is also visually similar to the adjacent grazing marshes.

The commercially managed wide reed ronds along the lower Waveney are also a distinctive feature of this area. The floodwalls have been established quite a distance from the river to provide an area of washland. Some have been grazed in the past but are more commonly managed for reed today.

The two main areas of settlement and development are at Burgh Castle and St Olaves. Both have dominant, industrial scale boatyard/ marina areas with an abundance of metal security fencing. Both also have historic areas

at their core. The Roman fort at Burgh Castle is one of the most important historic sites in the county while at St Olaves are the remains of an Augustinian Priory, and an old waterside settlement core including the Bell Inn and a cluster of older dwellings opposite (albeit heavily modernised).



Both too have holiday chalet and caravan areas. These potentially more visually intrusive caravan park developments are generally well screened. St Olaves has a run of timber chalets, none of which appear particularly old. At Burgh Castle, the holiday area is far more extensive. The Marina caravan park comprises a marina for over 100 boats along with static caravans, touring pitches, and lodges. Adjacent to this is a holiday park consisting of around 100 chalets. These areas link up to larger static caravan parks that have become such a feature of the upland to the north of Fritton Decoy.

Helping to keep it special

Care needs to be taken when landscape change occurs, to ensure that those positive characteristics that contribute to an area's

◀ ▼ *Burgh Castle Fort lies on the crest of the valley side, with alder carr woodland and extensive reedbeds located at bottom of the slope.*

unique sense of place are conserved and enhanced. What follows are examples of local issues and opportunities.

Landscape – The landscape of this area has a relatively strong sense of tranquillity with a mostly rural character. However there are local intrusions at Belton and the A143 which adversely influence the sense of tranquillity. Other localised intrusions include development such as pylons, large scale boatyards and caravan parks – most of which are in adjacent character areas within Great Yarmouth Borough.

Pressures for re development or the extension of facilities tend to be generated mostly by these leisure/recreational industries that are located within the settled areas. The impacts on the landscape may vary and can be significant if not carefully assessed and appropriately mitigated.

Aggregate extraction has in the past been proposed for the Waveney forest although this option has now been considered inappropriate for future county mineral supplies.

Enhancement opportunities exist to; improve dilapidated boundaries and external areas of commercial areas; reinforce planting on the valley side to filter views of developments; and promote schemes to remove the overhead electricity cables.

Nature conservation – The condition of the area is poor from an ecological perspective with areas of dried out fen, arable marshes and only small relict areas of heathland remaining.



▲ ► *Settlement in this area is focused at both the northern end around the marina at Burgh Castle and the southern end at the river crossing point at St Olaves. Image by Lesley Marsden*

Opportunities to make improvements could be considered as part of any new development proposals.

