



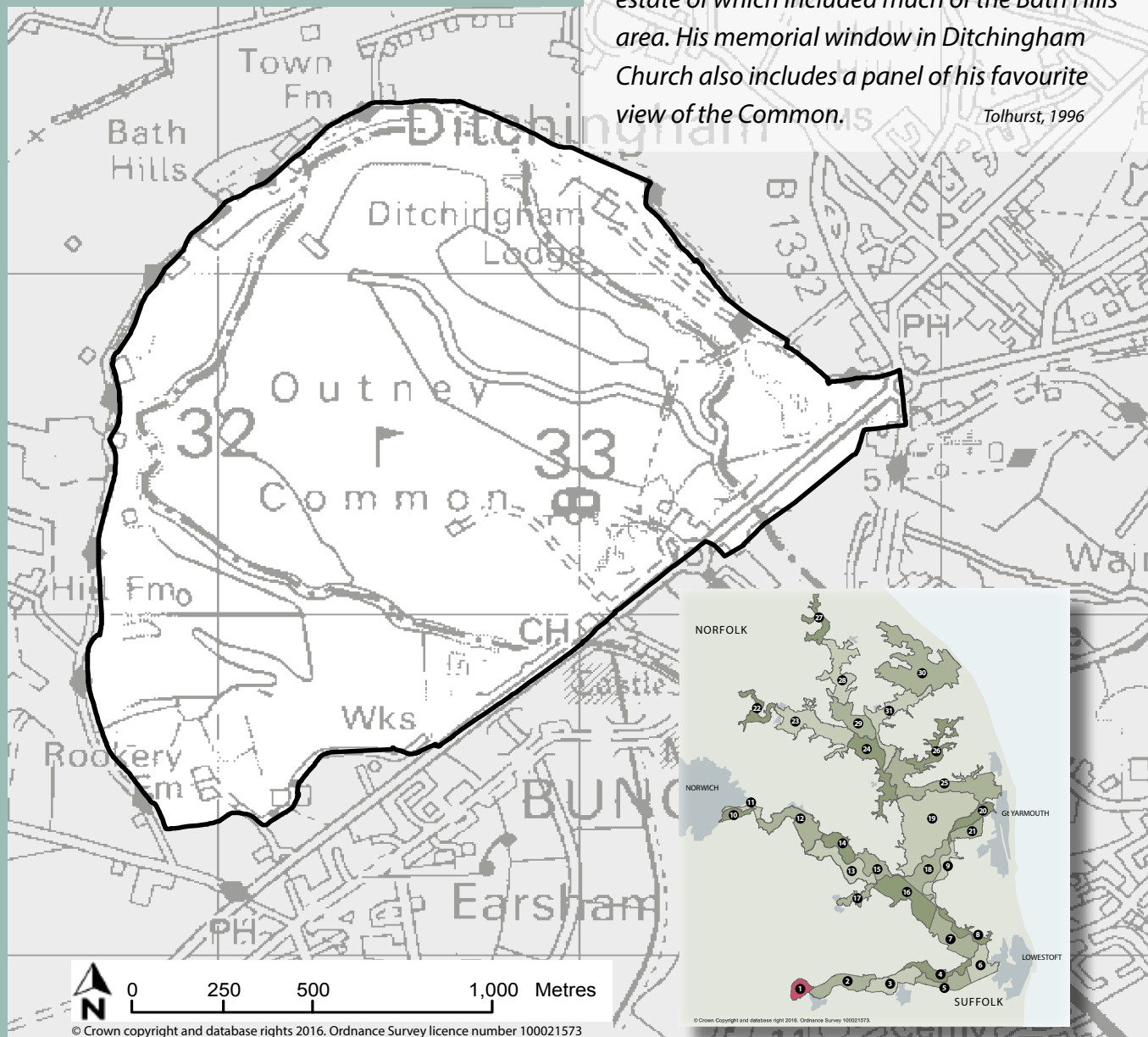
Section 3 *Landscape Character Areas*

3.1 There are 31 Landscape Character Areas in the Broads, each one with a unique combination of landscape features and elements. Other than Character Area 20, Breydon Water, each character area will have a number of landscape types within it.

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.

Tolhurst, 1996



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.



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

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 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 Waveney and South Norfolk District Council areas.

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.



Evelyn Simak - geograph.org.uk



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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.

Geology and soils

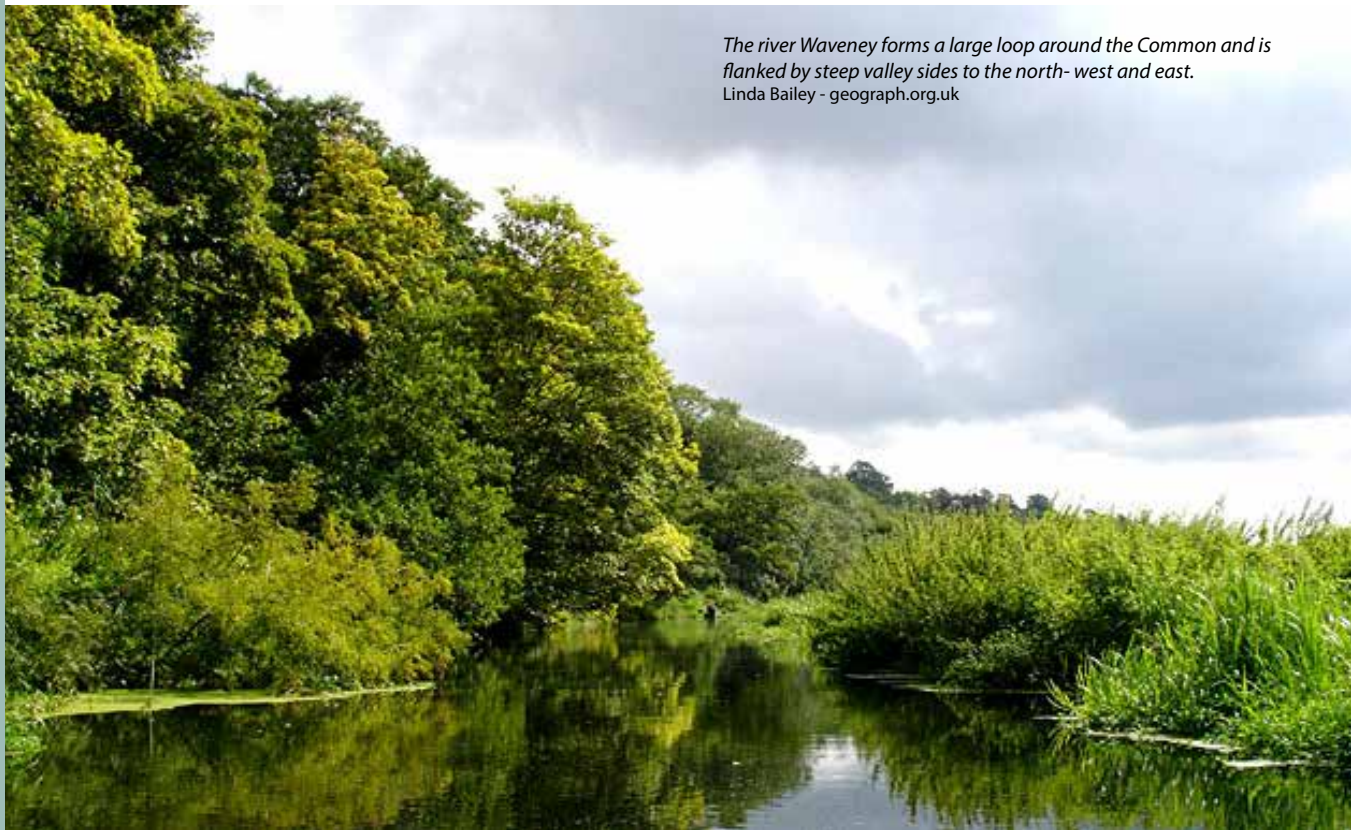
This is an area of River Terrace Deposits of sands and gravels along with other sands, silty clay and smaller areas of peat. Sand Crag Group provides the "bedrock" for this area.

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.

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.

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



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.

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.



Linda Bailey - geograph.org.uk

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.



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

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 detract 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.

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.

Helping to keep it special

Care needs to be taken when landscape change occurs, to ensure that those positive characteristics that contribute to an areas 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 of Bungay allied to the leisure/holiday developments within the area tend to detract from the perceived naturalness of the area. Opportunities to mitigate 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 need to consider what effects they will have on the landscape character of the area and mitigation 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 design 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.



Adrian Cable - geograph.org.uk

Evelyn Simak - geograph.org.uk

The area is partially fenced for grazing and 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.

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?

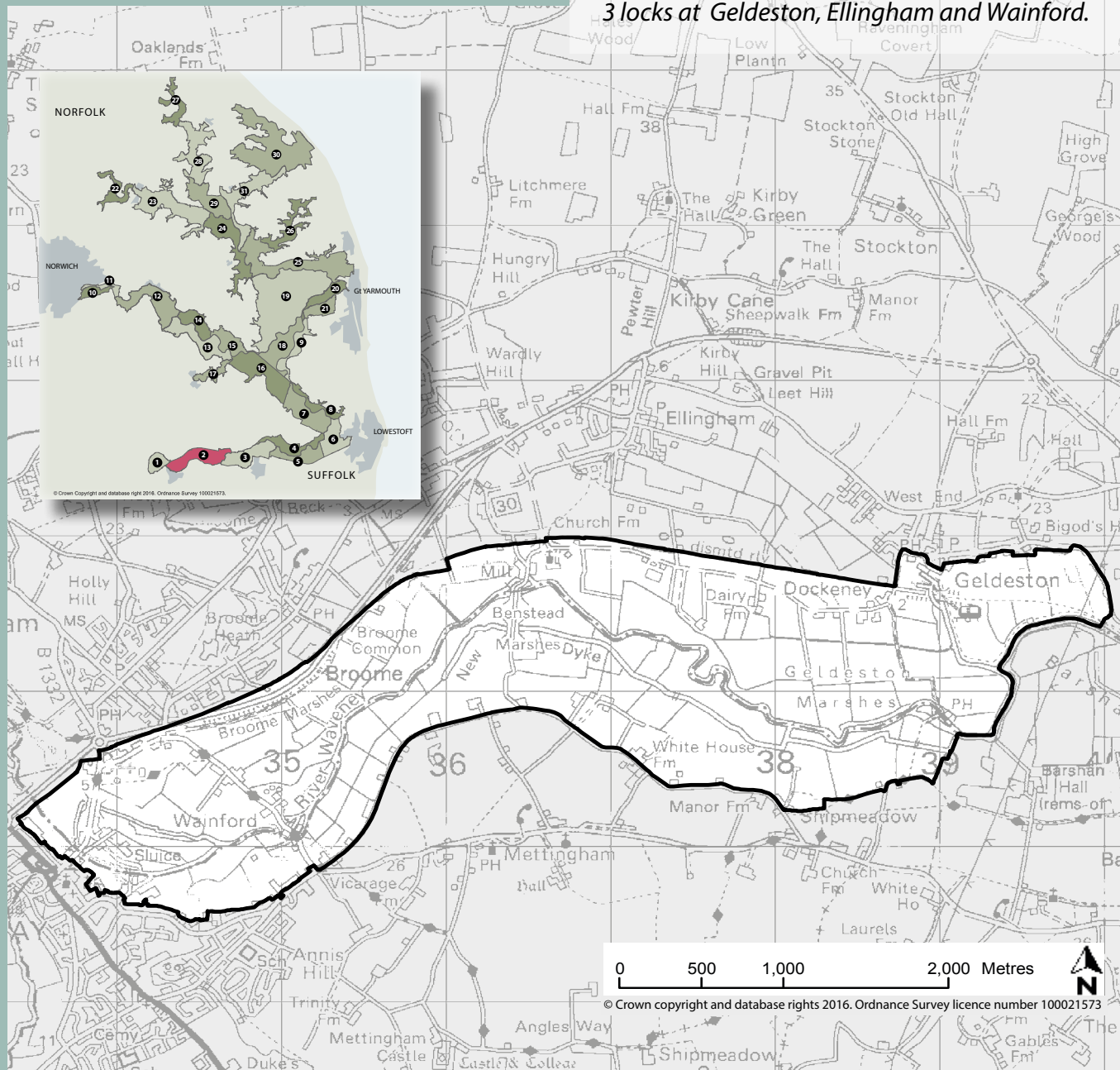
The overall calm, tranquil, isolated pastoral landscape of today belies its more industrial past. This section of the Waveney was an area of watermills with sites at Ditchingham, Geldeston, Bungay, Wainford, and Ellingham. The sites of those now lost are often still apparent by the by-pass loops created 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 and texture of the landscape.

Ashley Dace - geograph.org.uk



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 Waveney District.



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.
Evelyn Simak - geograph.org.uk

Geology and soils

The valley floor largely comprises of peat soils overlying Breydon formation silty clay deposits. The valley sides to the north contain sand and gravel deposits.

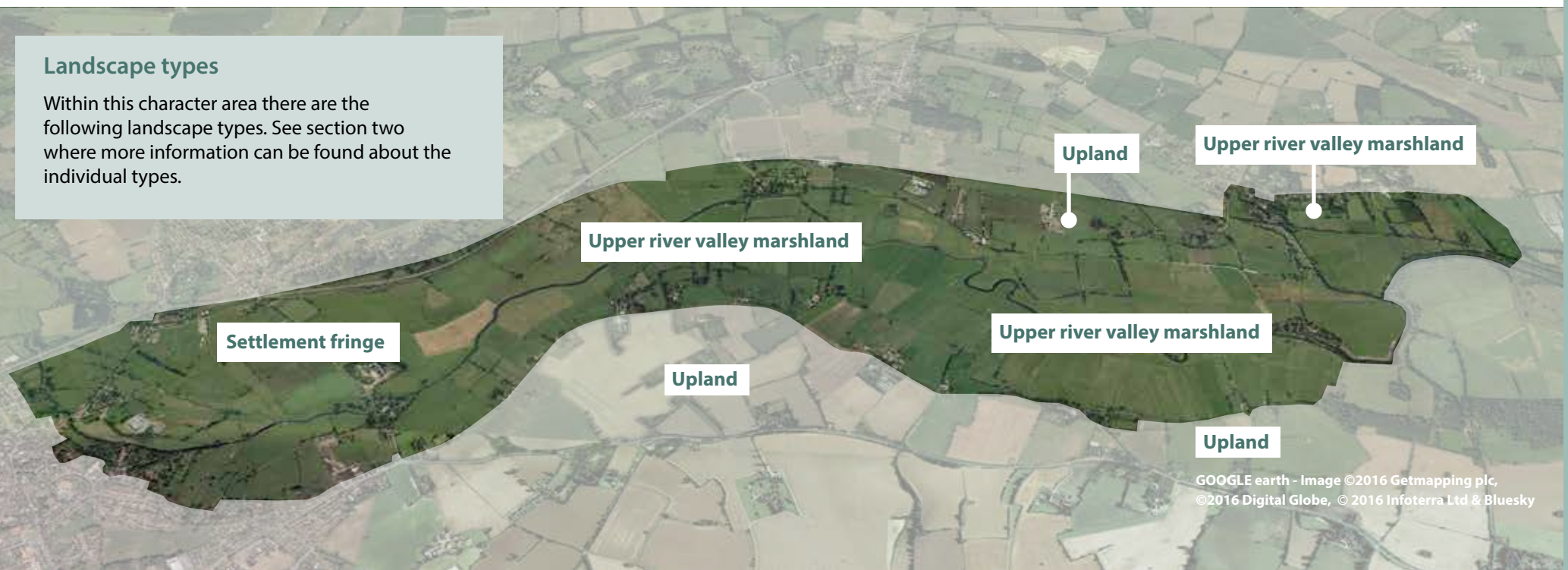
Enclosure, scale and pattern

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

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.



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.



Buildings and structures in the landscape give an indication of the significance of the areas importance for malting and flour milling.

Ashley Dace - geograph.org.uk

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.
Evelyn Simak - geograph.org.uk



Adrian Cable - geograph.org.uk



Adrian Cable - 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 part of active farms, are aligned with Low Road. A series of large imposing modern barns are located in close proximity to each other along part of Low Road. These dominate the local landscape and prevent views southwards across the marshland.

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 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 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.

Why is this area special?

Care needs to be taken when landscape change occurs, to ensure that those positive characteristics that contribute to an areas 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 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.

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.

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



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.
Alison Yardy



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.

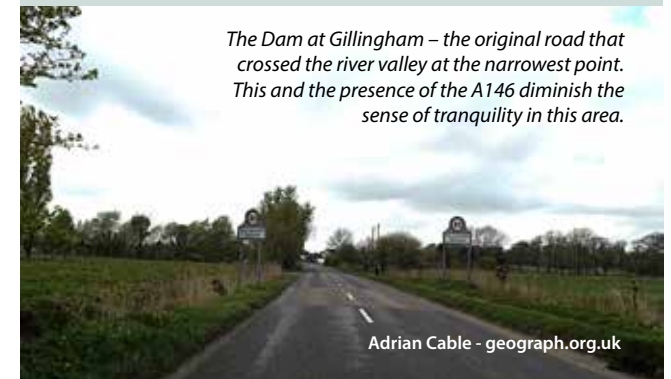
Why is this area special?

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.

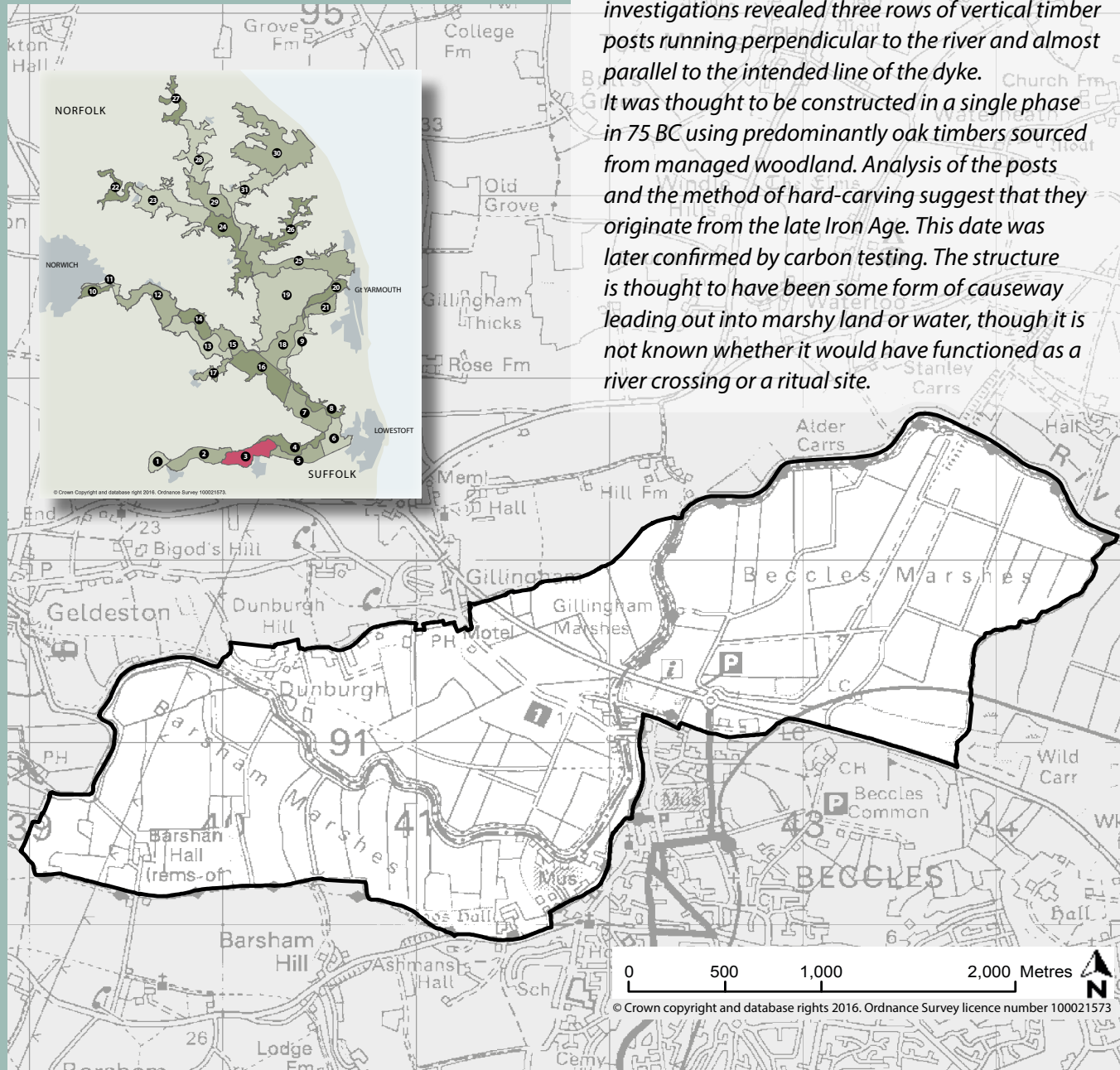
The area is bisected by two roads, the A143 and the road known as the Dam which formed the original highway between Beccles and Gillingham.

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 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.



Adrian Cable - geograph.org.uk



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 remoteness and tranquillity.

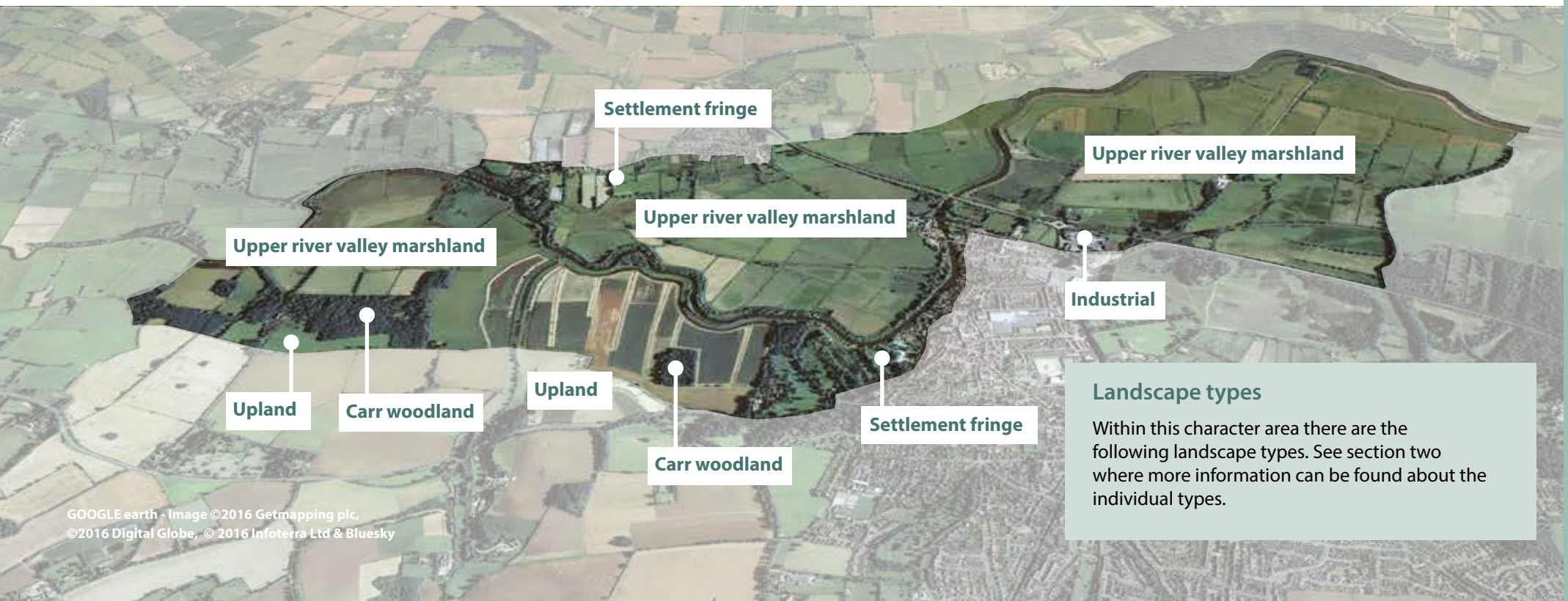
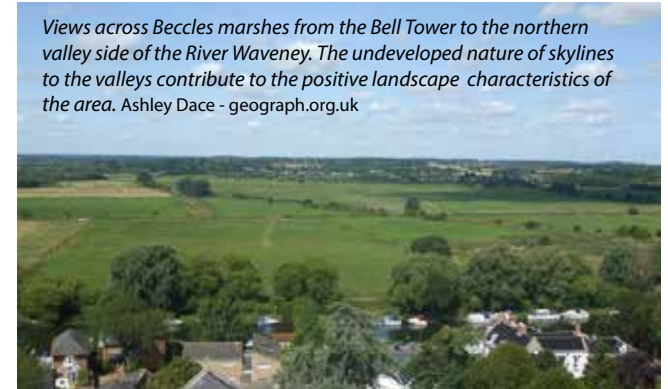
Topography and skyline

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 skylines are mostly uninterrupted and undeveloped and make a positive contribution to the setting of the Broads area.

Views across Beccles marshes from the Bell Tower to the northern valley side of the River Waveney. The undeveloped nature of skylines to the valleys contribute to the positive landscape characteristics of the area. Ashley Dace - geograph.org.uk



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.

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 a 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 widenend 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 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. Landscape improvements have been made relatively recently through the removal of significant lengths of low voltage electricity lines, with their associated wooden poles and pylon structures.

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 the area partly converted to

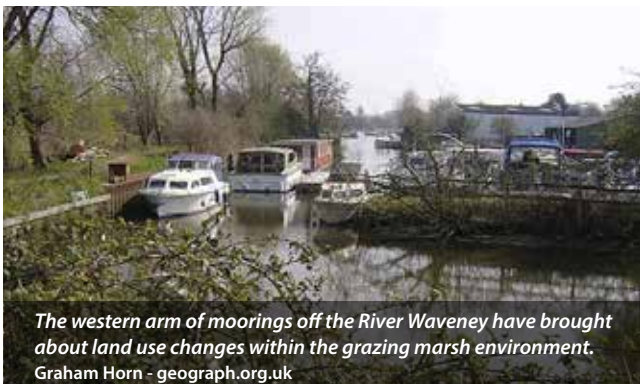
Much of Barsham marshes is under arable cultivation although some blocks of woodland can be found. Evelyn Simak - geograph.org.uk





arable use although much is still used for 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. Other areas are related to **settlement fringe** activities and include allotments, fishing areas, sailing



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



The proximity to settlement creates pressures on the landscape for land use other than traditional agriculture.
Alison Yardy

club base. There are also small areas of **woodland**. A new Superstore has been built on the part severed by the A146.

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



A small scale residential development and a boatyard are located to the west of Beccles Old Bridge.
Alison Yardy

Helping to keep it special

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

Landscape – open areas which about 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 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.

4 Waveney - Aldby 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.

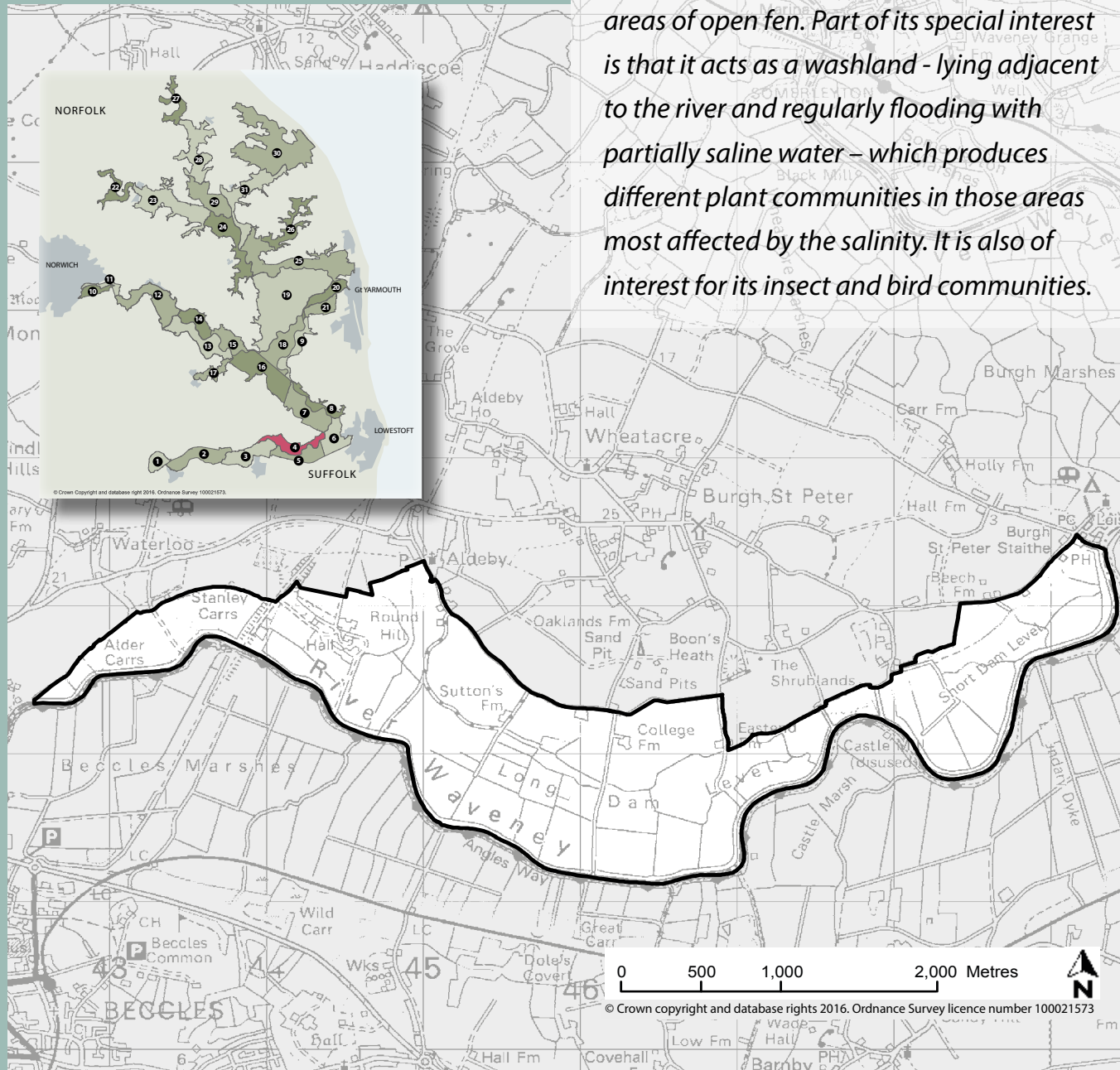
Why is this area special?

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 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.



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.
Keith Evans - geograph.org.uk



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.

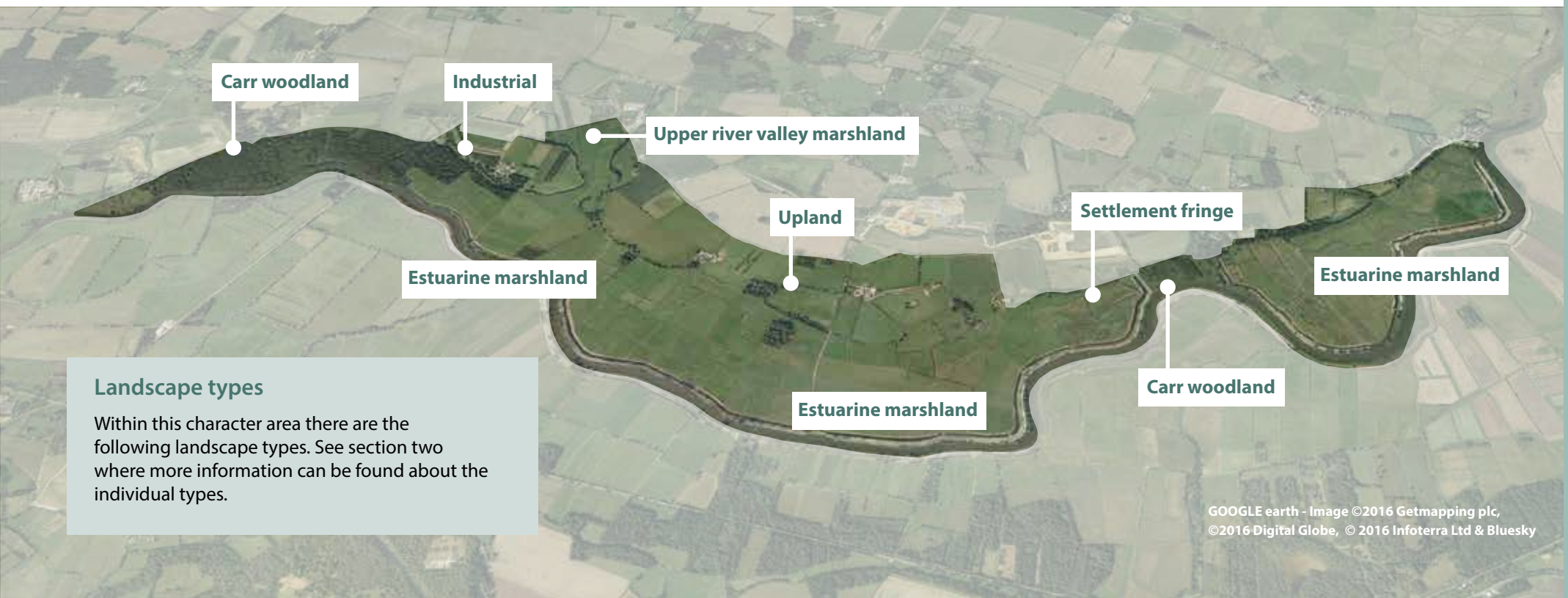


Topography and skyline

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.*
Evelyn Simak - geograph.org.uk



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.

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 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.



Evelyn Simak - geograph.org.uk

Stanley and Alder Carrs are a significant landscape feature in this area.
Adrian S. Pye - 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 – 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.

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.



Adrian S. Pye - geograph.org.uk



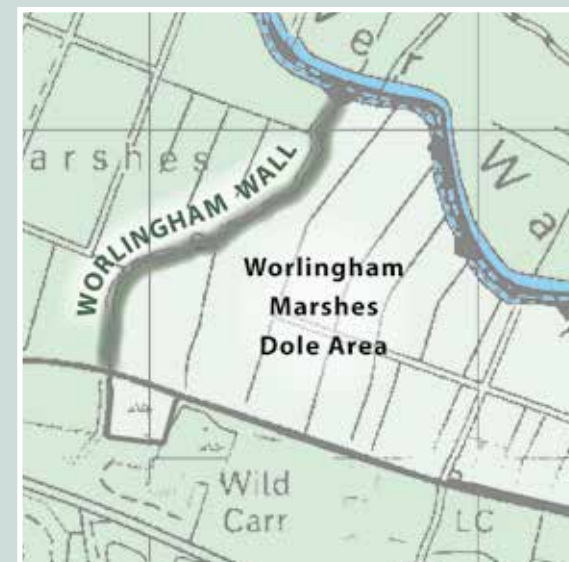
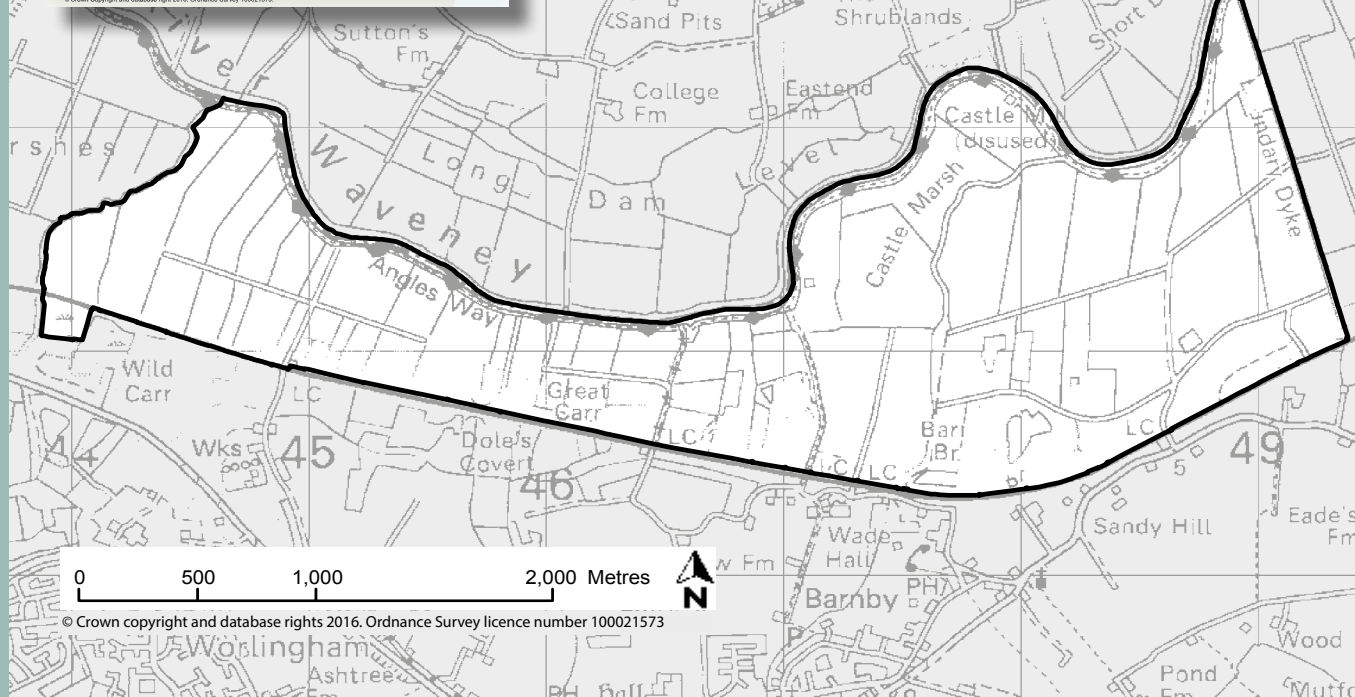
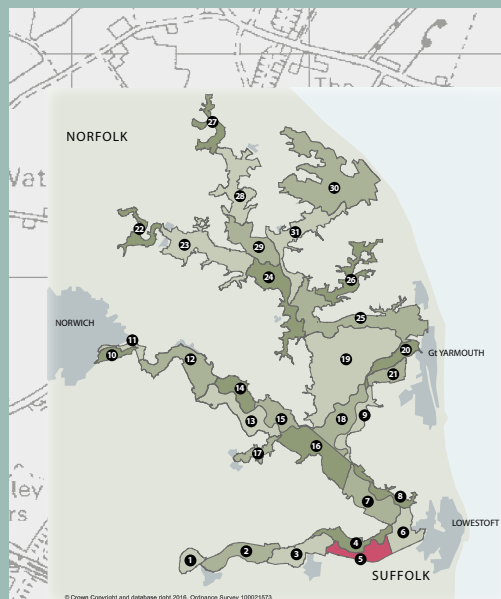
Evelyn Simak - geograph.org.uk

5 Waveney - Worlingham Wall to Boundary Dyke, Barnby

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 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 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.

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 Waveney District and beyond.

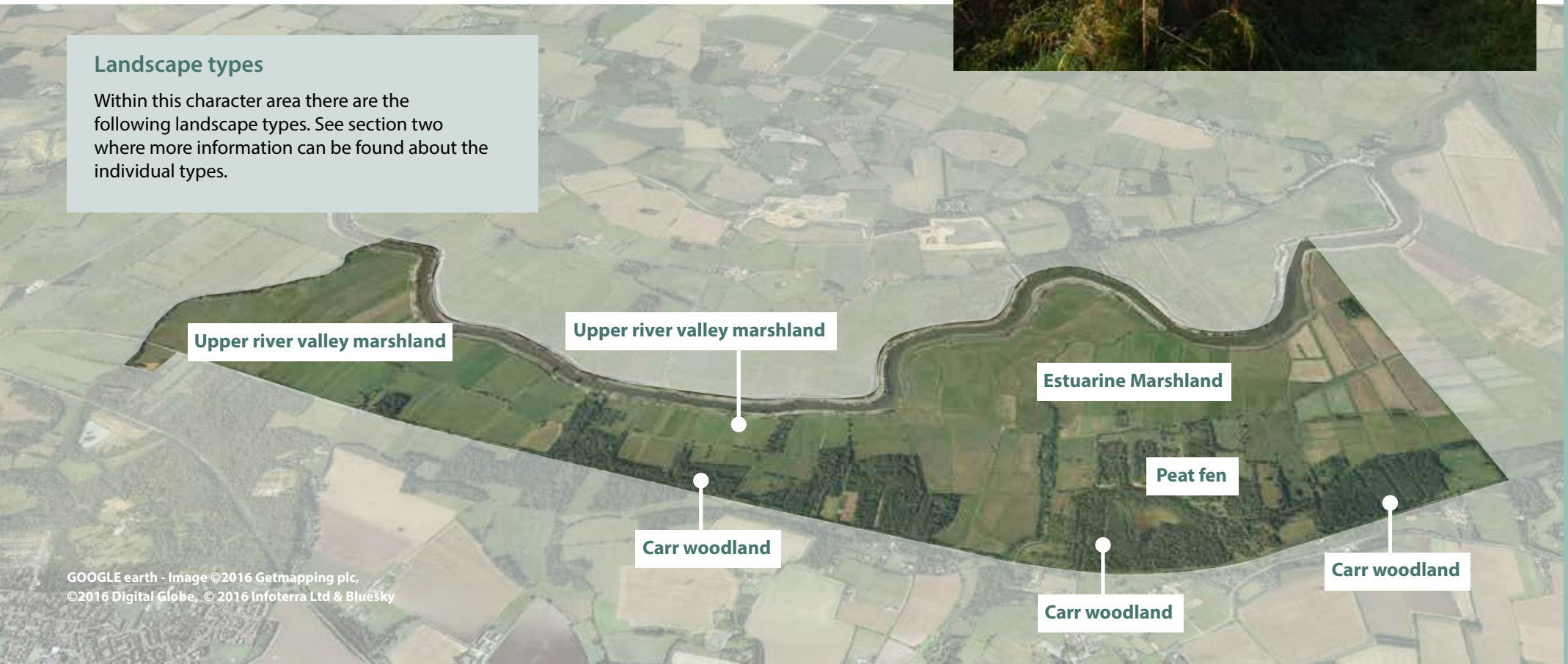
To the north, views are more open as there is less woodland vegetation towards these "upland" areas lying within South Norfolk District. The skylines are of arable fields some grazing and quarrying activities. There are occasional glimpses of property, views of which are filtered by intervening vegetation. 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.



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.
Lesley Marsden

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.



Geology and soils

The drift geology map shows 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 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 reeds closer to the river's edge provide localised enclosure.

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.

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

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.

The River Waveney meanders across the valley floor which is over a kilometre in width creating a reflective quality to the landscape.

Roger Jones - geograph.org.uk



Marsh dykes are a significant landscape and historic feature in the area. Evelyn Simak - geograph.org.uk



Much of the area is managed for nature conservation. The range of habitats increases the textural variation and patterns within the landscape. Roger Jones - geograph.org.uk

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 use in the area is for cattle grazing and whilst area is managed for shooting and nature conservation.

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.



Grazing marsh is the predominant land cover in this area.
Alison Yarley

North Cove staithe with the wood fringed track from the settlement.
Lesley Marsden



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)

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 areas 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.

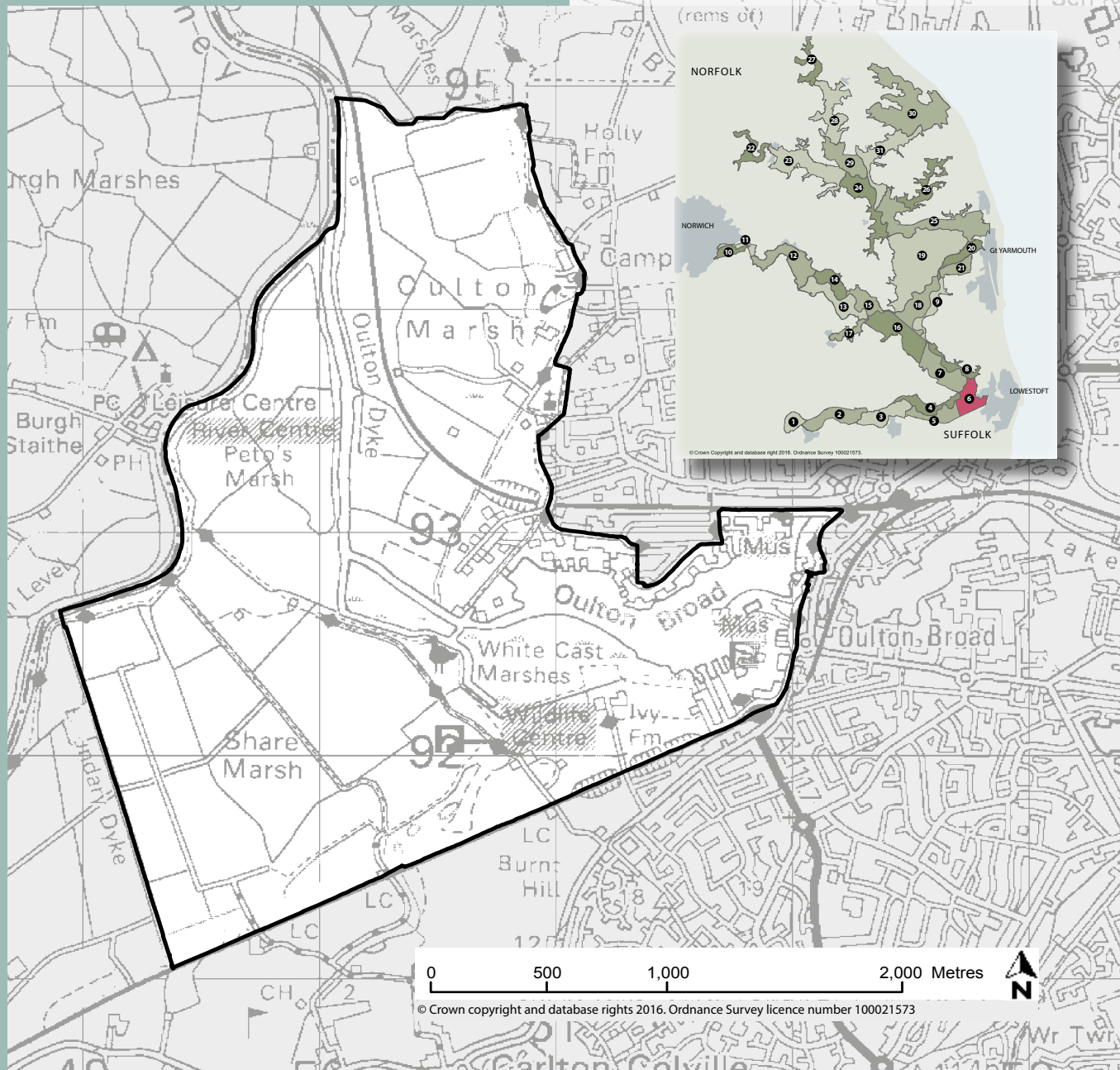
Opportunities therefore to enhance the landscape through removal of overhead lines should be sought.

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 (Built development).

The A1117 passes close to the broad contributing traffic noise and constant movement. It 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.

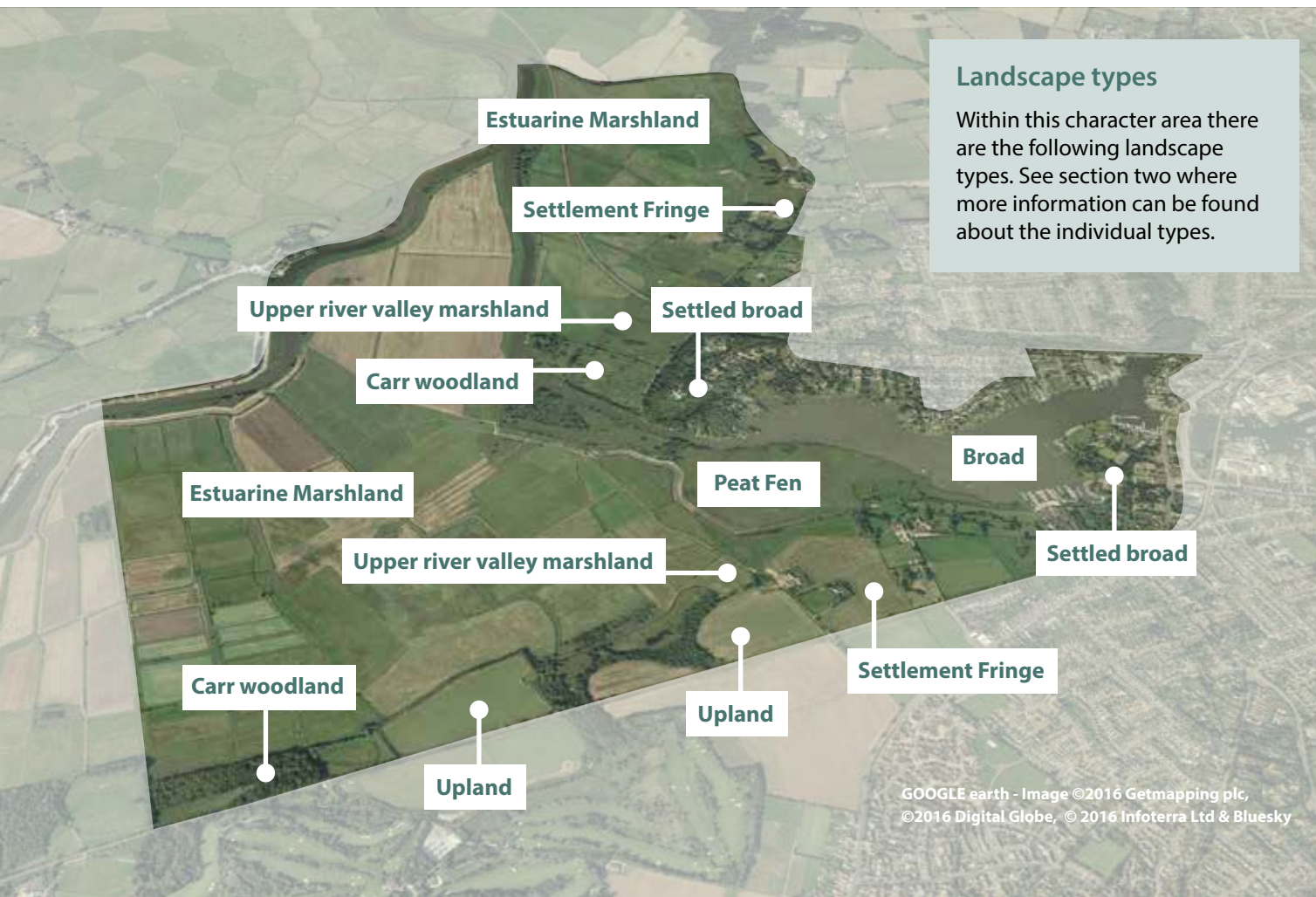
Nicholas Everitt Park on the eastern edge of the Broad is one of the few public parks from which members of the public can access the Broads. The long distance footpath the Angles Way skirts the area to the north and east and utilises the flood banks on the River Waveney to the south of this area.

The area is the location of two Suffolk Wildlife Trust reserves Carlton and Oulton marshes which provides some breathing space around the urban area and open countryside. Although in both of these areas, the proximity of the built development is always apparent as is occasional traffic noise.

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.
Waveney Rush Company



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.

Topography and skyline

This part of the Waveney valley floodplain contains some of 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 Waveney 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.



There is 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. Evelyn Simak - geograph.org.uk

Oulton Broad is a popular destination for boaters and as a result there are increasing pressures for moorings.
Adrian S. Pye - geograph.org.uk



Main features of land cover and use

Land cover in the area consists of expansive areas of **grazing marsh**, **reed ronds** 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 Everitt Park, a Victorian park with a variety of **leisure and amenity** uses including holiday chalets and caravan parks.

Both Share Marsh and Peto's Marsh in Carlton Colville are under intensive **arable** cultivation and have suffered severe dyke boundary loss (in the case of Peto's Marsh every dyke has been filled in). Occupying some of the land between the two, and some land to the north of Oulton Broad, the Carlton Marshes nature reserve comprises fragments of wetland habitat which is buffered to alleviate effects of the adjacent land use.

The railway line from Norwich to Lowestoft forms a significant piece of **infrastructure** as it crosses Oulton marshes running parallel to Oulton Dyke. Low voltage overhead cables can also be seen on the marshes providing electricity for the drainage board pumps located on the river's edge. 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 heavily designated areas small areas of 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.

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. ►
Jeremy Halls - geograph.org.uk

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, much 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.

Expansive views are available across the river valley from Carlton marshes.
Suffolk Wildlife Trust





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.
David Medcalf - 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 – 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 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 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 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.

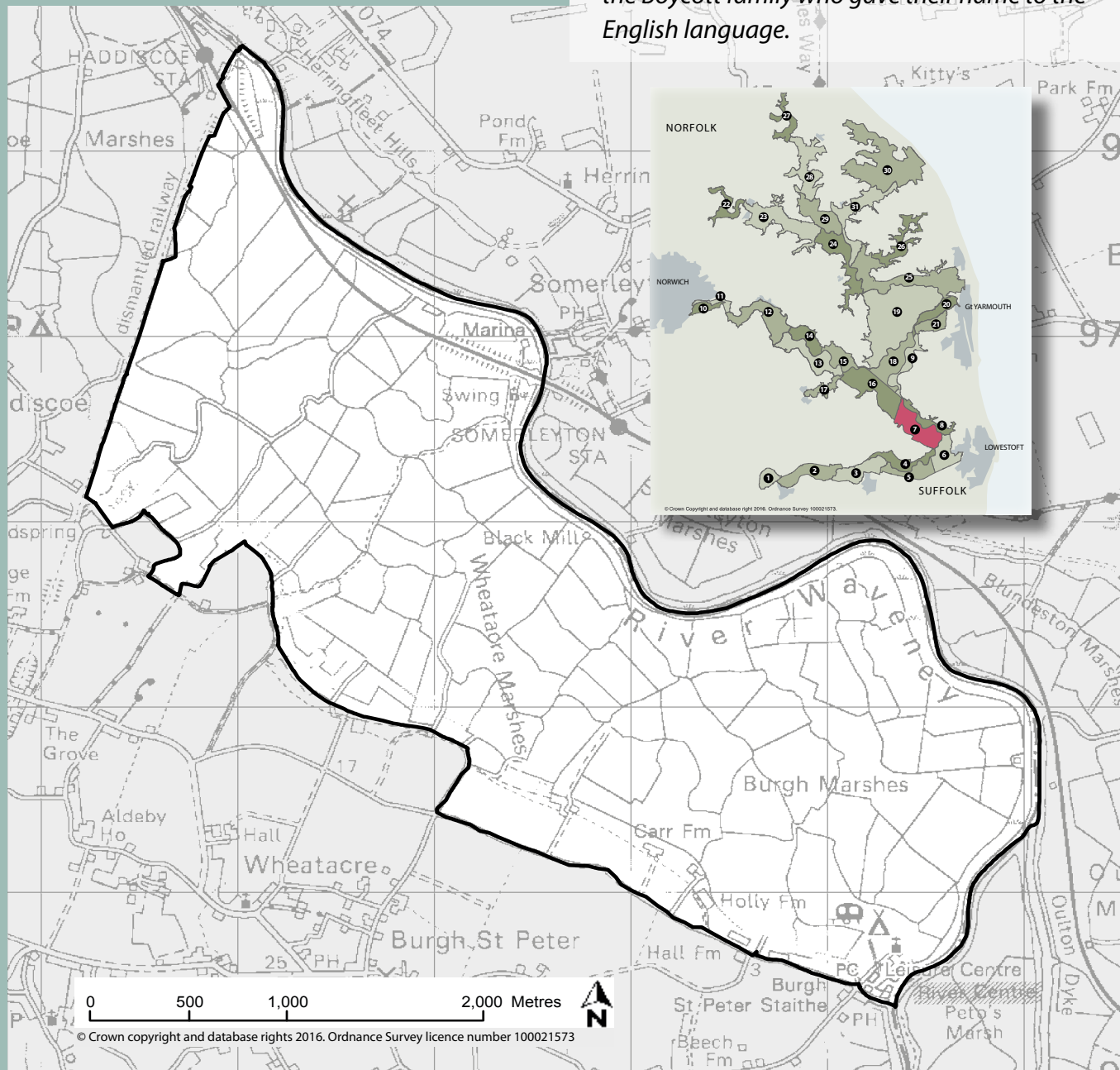
Nature conservation – the use of "hard engineering" solutions for bank protection and/or the provision of mooring needs to be carefully assessed to ensure that natural bank profiles are not affected.

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 only 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 dwellings 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.



◀ The unique Church of St Mary at Burgh St Peter.
Lesley Marsden

Topography and Skyline

This wide open expanses of level marshland 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.

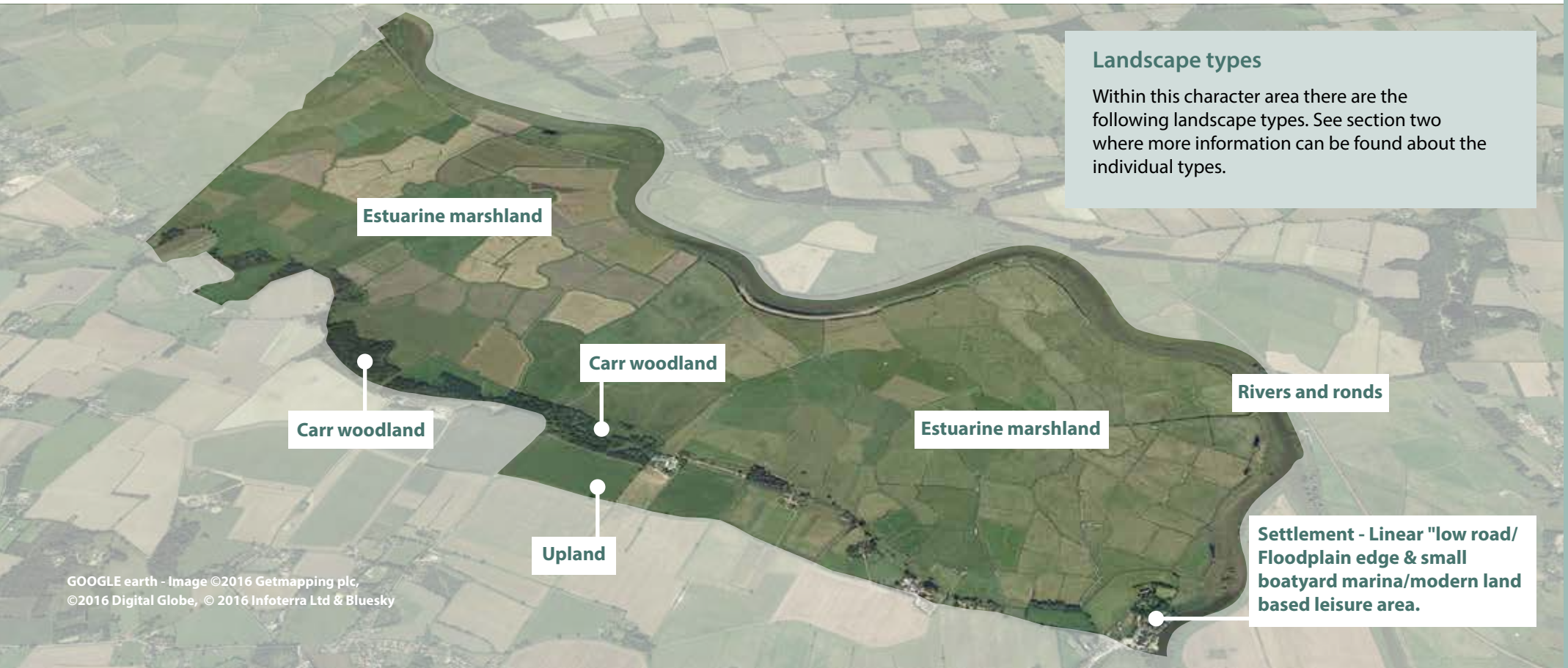
The skyline to the north beyond the River Waveney and Oulton Dyke, are defined by distinctive mixed woodland lying on valley side and the woodlands fringing Flixton and Wicker Well Decoys.

Similarly to the south the skylines are defined by a band of carr woodland on the low valley slopes, largely foiling the valley crests outside the Broads area in views southwards from the marshland area or the river.

Skylines are mostly undeveloped, with the exception of occasional wind pumps such as at Herringfleet, and the church at Burgh St Peter.

The remains of a steam engine house with full chimney stack survive in the Burgh Marshes, 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



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.

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 exists on the slopes and crests which also create variations in light and shade.

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.

Expansive views across Haddiscoe marshes to the wooded valley side across the Waveney.
Lesley Marsden



Main features of land cover and use

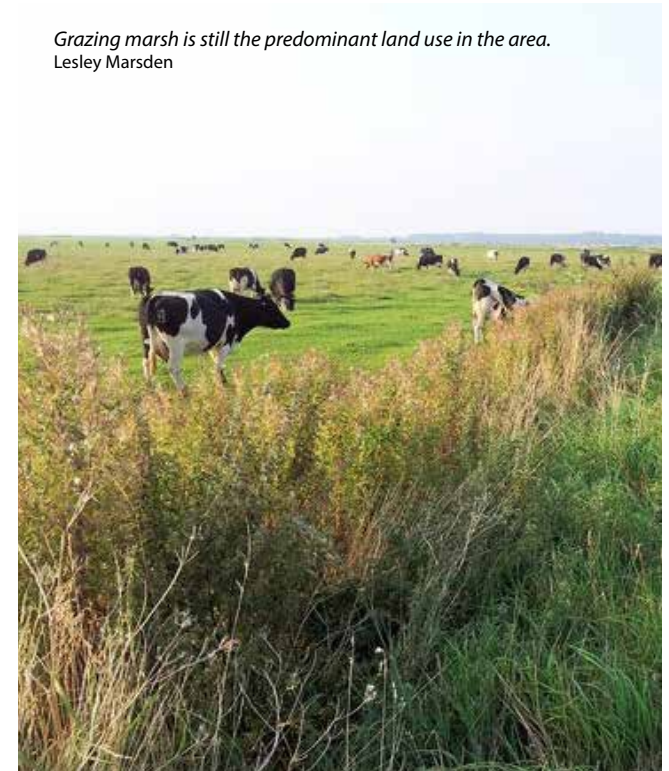
The Burgh Marshes are a well-preserved block of traditional **grazing marshland** with a good survival of ancient curvilinear boundaries. The Wheatacre Marshes have suffered rather more boundary loss associated with conversion to **arable** use, although some is now in arable reversion. The overall impression 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 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.



One of the farms dispersed along the valley edge.
Lesley Marsden

Grazing marsh is still the predominant land use in the area.
Lesley Marsden



In some locations grazing marsh has been replaced by arable which can result in changes to dyke networks and water levels. Lesley Marsden

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

The Landspring Dyke footpath which used to lead to a ferry crossing on the Waveney. Lesley Marsden

View from the river Waveney southwards to the "upland" peninsular where Burgh St Peter is located. Lesley Marsden

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. 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.

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 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 appeared to be in a neglected condition.

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

8 Waveney - Blunderston/Flixton to Herringfleet Marshes

Blundeston as 'Blunderstone' is the birthplace of the title character in Dickens'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?

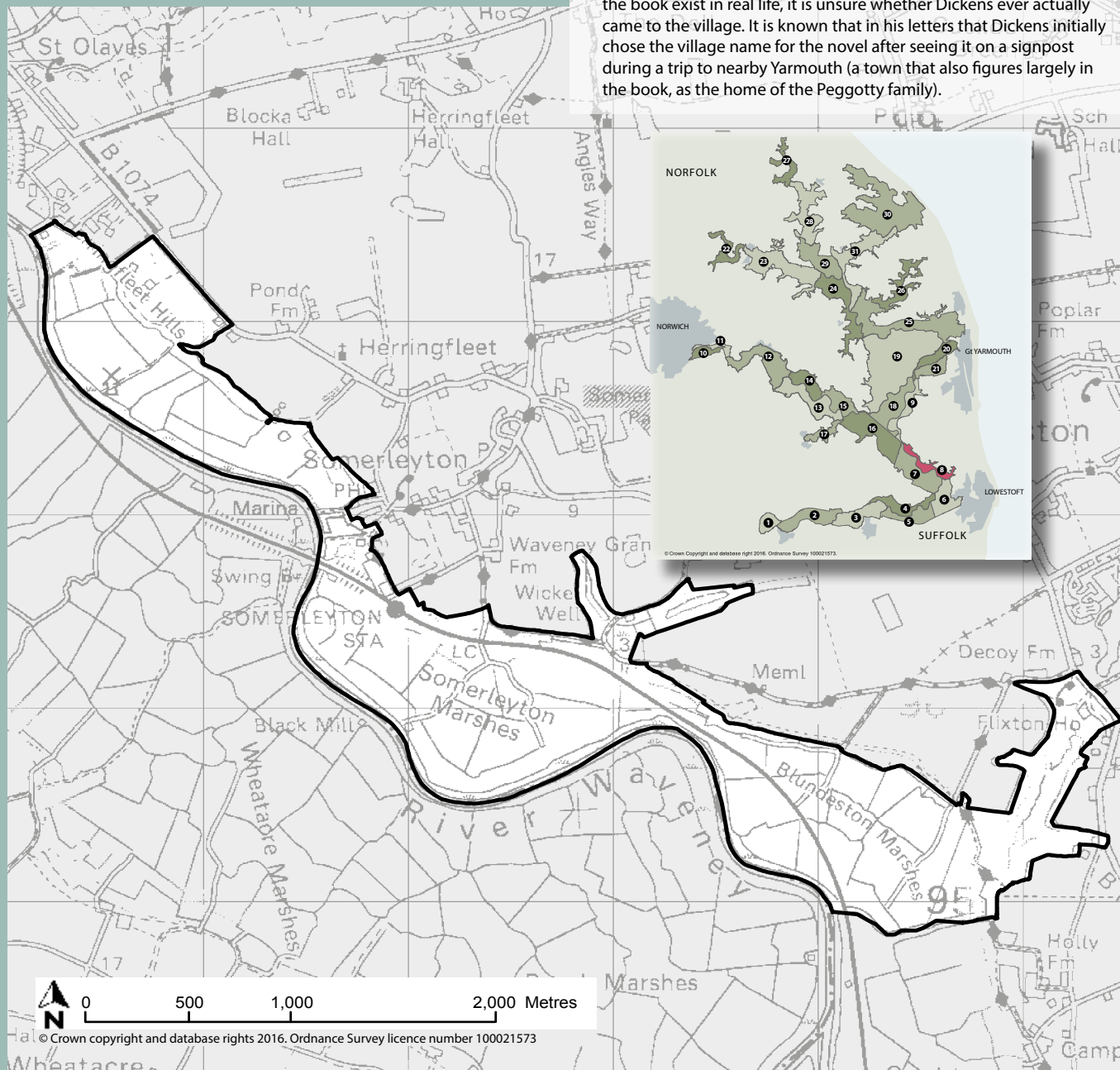
The area has a strong sense of tranquillity due to its largely remote, undeveloped nature, with settlement being confined to isolated dwellings. The only negative influence, albeit a relatively minor one, is the Great Yarmouth to Lowestoft railway line, the route of which after crossing river over the 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 areas 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

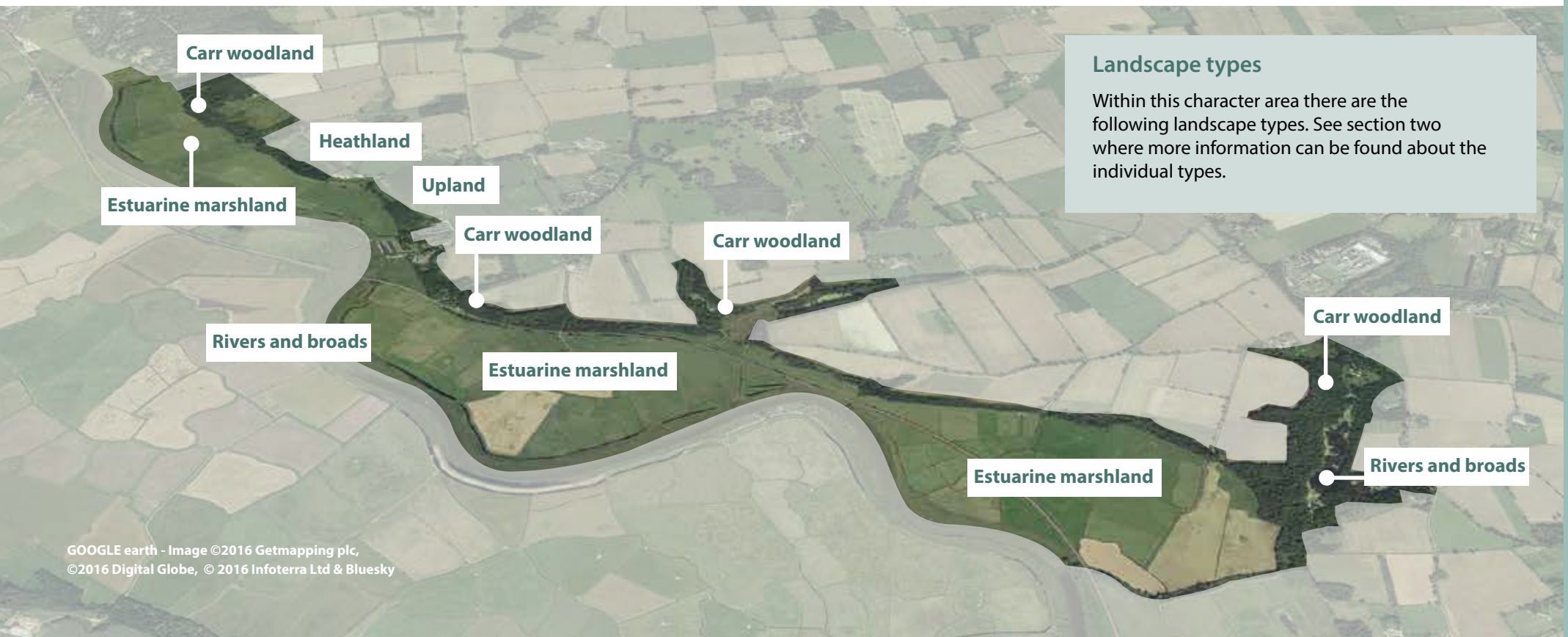
particular interest as one of the earliest known sites. Today the site is enclosed by woodland and remains privately owned. There are a few 19th century lodge type estate buildings dotted around the perimeter suggesting it was or is part of the Somerleyton Estate.

The aforementioned map of 1652 also shows Wicker Well and Summerhouse Water. 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 Waveney 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.



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.



Blundeston marshes with the backdrop of Warren carr woodland located at the bottom of the valley slope on the wetter peatier soils.

Lesley Marsden

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 valleys 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), which creates a sense of enclosure, whilst to the south the boundary is defined by 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 Flixtton 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.



Ashley Dace - geograph.org.uk

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. Flixtton 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/Flixtton 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 Marshes includes a well preserved wooden smock mill which is one of the most photographed of all the Broads mills. Other remains survive on the Somerleyton Marshes but not to full height.



Evelyn Simak - geograph.org.uk

Panoramic views south westwards across to the other side of the valley past Herringfleet Smock mill.

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.



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



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.
Lesley Marsden

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 Gt. Yarmouth railway line which sits on an embankment and the Somerleyton Swing 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 areas 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 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.

Somerleyton railway station is highly ornate and was built by Victorian entrepreneur Sir Morton Peto.
Evelyn Simak - geograph.org.uk



Grazing marsh at Herringfleet with views towards the signal box at Haddiscoe on the far side of the river.
Ashley Dace - geograph.org.uk



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