

Heritage and Settlement Sensitivity Assessment for Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils

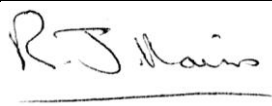


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1 Introduction

The Heritage and Settlement Sensitivity Assessment for Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils will provide part of the evidence base for a new Joint Local Plan and to inform Strategic Site Allocations for the Districts. The assessment ensures that the local planning authorities have up-to-date evidence about the historic environment in their districts, including an understanding of the significance of heritage assets. It also ensures that an assessment of the historic landscape is integrated within the council's existing assessments of landscape character and wider evidence base. This will help Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils to meet the requirement of the NPPF to 'set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment' within their Local Plans (para 126), and will help ensure that their future site allocations are found sound.

The quality of the historic environment within both districts is high; including areas, settlement and buildings of national significance, which makes a fundamental contribution to the character of Babergh and Mid Suffolk. It therefore has a major role to play in shaping the future of both Districts. At the same time, the historic environment is sensitive to change, and can be severely adversely affected by inappropriate development. It therefore needs to be properly understood before changes are planned, to ensure that it can make a positive contribution to shaping sustainable development, to encourage the creation of communities which reflect and complement the significant historic character of the two districts.

The assessment has been designed to produce an analysis of the susceptibility of the historic settlements within the two Districts to new development. The report will identify both areas and settlements which are sensitive, vulnerable or irreplaceable areas and highlight specific heritage assets of particular importance both above and below ground. It will also identify those settlements which are of lower value, which have a greater capacity from a heritage perspective to accommodate development.

The first phase of the project, undertaken in 2017, involved the identification of the settlements within both districts where detailed assessment was required, and defined the most appropriate methodology to assess the potential impact of development on their historic character and special historic interest. This enabled the creation of an agreed methodology for the main phase of the project (Phase 2), as well as the desired project outputs. This methodology was adopted and has formed the basis of this report.

The ultimate output of the project has been a report with separate appendices of the assessed settlements in each of the Districts. The report sets out the background, methodology and criteria for the project production, before providing a summary table of the settlement assessed, setting out their value, susceptibility and overall ability to accommodate development. It then offers overview and thematic conclusions applicable across both the districts. The appendices contains detailed assessments of the evaluated settlement within the two districts. These are set out using the previously agreed pro-forma sheets. These provide targeted assessments of each settlement, which allow a detailed understanding of the settlements historic value, susceptibility and capacity to accommodate change, and provides an evidence base for the assessment of proposed site allocations.

Each of the settlement assessments contained identified key views, which make important contribution to the significance of the settlement or individually significance assets. These views are however indicative, to illustrate the findings of this report, and should not be taken to be exhaustive. Nor should it be assumed that views which are not identified are not potentially significant. The assessment provides a series of recommendations which specifically relate to the historic importance of the settlements and its ability to accommodate new housing allocations.



2 Criteria for Settlement Assessment

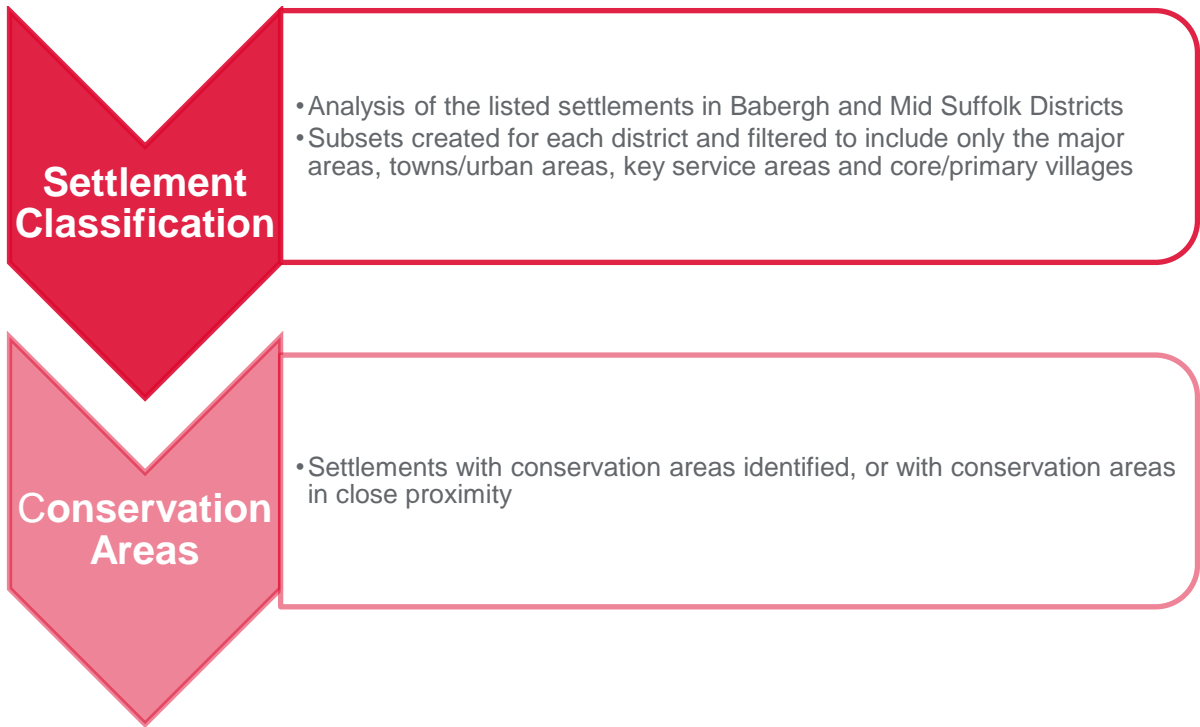
The process and criteria for the screening and selection of the potential settlements for assessment was completed as part of phase I. A GIS project was created, which was used in the settlement screening process and utilised in the sensitivity assessment. The data collected, consisted of all readily available published, source documentation and GIS data, which is listed below:

- Relevant map data (including OS Mastermap; GIS data from previous technical studies, digital historic mapping and conservation area extents)
- Joint Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Council Landscape Guidance (2015)
- Suffolk Historic Landscape Characterisation (SHLC)
- The Suffolk Landscape Character Assessment (SLCA)
- Dedham Vale and Stour Valley AONB Landscape Characterisation
- Suffolk Historic Environment Record including designation data as digital layers
- National Heritage List for England (NHLE)
- Mid Suffolk Conservation Area Appraisals
- Babergh Conservation Area Appraisals
- Local Lists
- Good Practice Guidance Note 1: The Historic Environment in Local Plans (Historic England, 2015)
- Good Practice Advice Note 2: Managing Significance in Decision Taking in the Historic Environment (Historic England ,2015)
- Good Practice Advice Note 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets (Historic England , 2015)
- Advice Note 3: The Historic Environment and Site Allocations in Local Plans (Historic England, 2015)
- Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment (Historic England, 2008)
- Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (GLVIA3) (Landscape Institute, 2013)



The process and criteria used for the settlement screening and selection are set out below:

2.1.1 Process for Settlement Selection



2.1.2 Criteria for Settlement Selection

Type of Settlement	The settlement is classified as a major area, town/urban area, key service area or core/primary village and therefore is more likely to be considered for further development
Sensitivity of Settlement	The settlement has a conservation area within it or in close proximity to it and therefore is likely to be more sensitive to development

Process for Settlement Sensitivity Assessment

Baseline Assessment

- Set out settlement description, history, location and character areas and establish historic environment and landscape designations prior to site visit.

Key Characteristics

- Identification of key characteristics for the settlement and surrounding landscape.

Value Factors

- Identification of value factors including (but not limited to):
 - Designations in and around the settlement (national or local);
 - Indications of local or community interest or use eg local green spaces, village greens;
 - Cultural contribution- art and literature, tourism or promotional literature including key views;
 - Local heritage / landscape objectives;
 - Assessment of landscape integrity/condition, scenic quality, sense of place/ character, rarity, representativeness, perceptual qualities eg tranquillity; and
 - Assessment of significance of affected heritage asset/historic environment.

Susceptibility Factors

- Identification of susceptibility factors including (but not limited to):
 - LDU/HCA sensitivities; characteristics ; function ; water; skyline; key views; Intervisibility; noise sources; rarity; potential for unidentified assets (eg archaeological);
 - Functional and visual relationship of the site with surroundings;
 - Reliance on adjacent areas based on function or visual characteristics;
 - The nature of the settlement edge and the setting of the town;
 - Visual receptors - numbers and sensitivity;
 - Relationship of the site with affected assets /landscape and the contribution it makes to their value or significance; and
 - Impacts of development on the significance of affected heritage assets/historic environment.

Identify Sensitivity / Harm

- Value and susceptibility to change factors combined to make judgement on sensitivity and likely degree of harm;
- Justification given as to why a settlement has a particular sensitivity/harm;
- Cumulative impact should be considered to inform the relative site sensitivity/harm; and
- Greater weight should be given to assets/landscapes of greater importance.



2.1.3 Criteria for Settlement Sensitivity Assessment

Low	Characteristics of the assessed settlement are degraded; and/or Settlement values are low; and/or Settlement can accommodate development without adverse impact on the key aspects that contribute to the significance, special interest and importance of the heritage assets or landscapes affected. Significant potential for enhancement.
Medium/Low	Characteristics of the assessed settlement are resilient to change; and/or Settlement values are medium/low or low; and/or Settlement can accommodate development in many situations without significant adverse impact on the key aspects that contribute to the significance, special interest and importance of the heritage assets or landscapes affected. Some potential for enhancement.
Medium	Characteristics of the assessed settlement are susceptible to change; and/or Settlement values are medium/low through to high/medium; and/or Settlement has potential to accommodate some defined development without impact (positive or negative) on the key aspects that contribute to the significance, special interest and importance of the heritage assets or landscapes affected.
Medium/High	Characteristics of the assessed settlement are vulnerable to change; and/or Settlement values are medium through to high; and/or Development of settlement would have adverse impacts on the key aspects that contribute to the significance, special interest and importance of the heritage assets or landscapes affected.
High	Characteristics of the assessed settlement are very vulnerable to change; and/or Settlement values are high or high/medium; and/or Development of settlement would have significant adverse impacts on the key aspects that contribute to the significance, special interest and importance of the heritage assets or landscapes affected.

These categories, and the related judgements formed, relate purely to heritage, and should be interpreted as such. This characterisation does not take into account other potential factors which contribute to the value of the settlement, and which are pertinent considerations to be taken into account within the planning system. Low value should not be taken as synonymous with no value, and assets within a settlement which is characterised overall as being of low value may be of high or very high value in their own right.



3 Methodology

3.1 Phase 2 Settlement Sensitivity Assessments

Baseline Assessment

For each of the historic settlements a baseline assessment was undertaken, which recorded all data on the sensitivity assessment sheet pro-forma, which form the appendices of this report. The baseline assessment included maps identifying the settlement's location, written text describing the character of each of the settlements (including built heritage, archaeology and historic landscape components) and an overview appraisal of each settlement's historic form and development. The main relevant historic environment designations and landscape designations have been identified, and an assessment has been made of the interrelationships between assets and their wider built and natural landscapes, and the contribution this makes to their significance will be explained.

Site Surveys and Visual Analysis

A site visit was made to each of the settlements, which built on the initial baseline information gathered and enabled the completion of the sensitivity assessment. The key characteristics of the settlements, and their surrounding landscapes were established, and a clear indication of the features or qualities of significance which make important contributions to the character of the settlement, which the local planning authority should seek to preserve or enhance. The assessment was carried out utilising the holistic approach to assessing setting as set out in *Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning: Note 3 (Historic England, 2015)* but particular emphasis was placed on key views from, towards, through and across settlements and key heritage assets, and the contribution that these make to their significance. The assessment of significance is proportionate to the strategic nature of the study but is based around the heritage interests identified in Annex 2 of NPPF¹. It will also take into consideration *Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment (Historic England, 2008)*.

The principal sensitivities for each of the settlements and the settings of key heritage assets were considered. The assessment identified areas where development of appropriate design and scale could be accommodated without causing harm to the significance of the identified heritage assets; and where it could cause harm to historic areas, and heritage assets. It also provided an overall assessment for the setting of the settlement, as well as setting out areas of potential enhancements.

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/national-planning-policy-framework/annex-2-glossary>



4 Settlements Assessed

As outlined above a screening of all major areas, towns/urban areas, key service areas and core/primary villages was undertaken as a phase I assessment. This enabled the production of the list of settlements for detailed assessment, which is set out below. In addition, the table denotes whether a settlement incorporates a conservation area or is in proximity to a conservation area, in order to identify settlements that may be more sensitive to development.

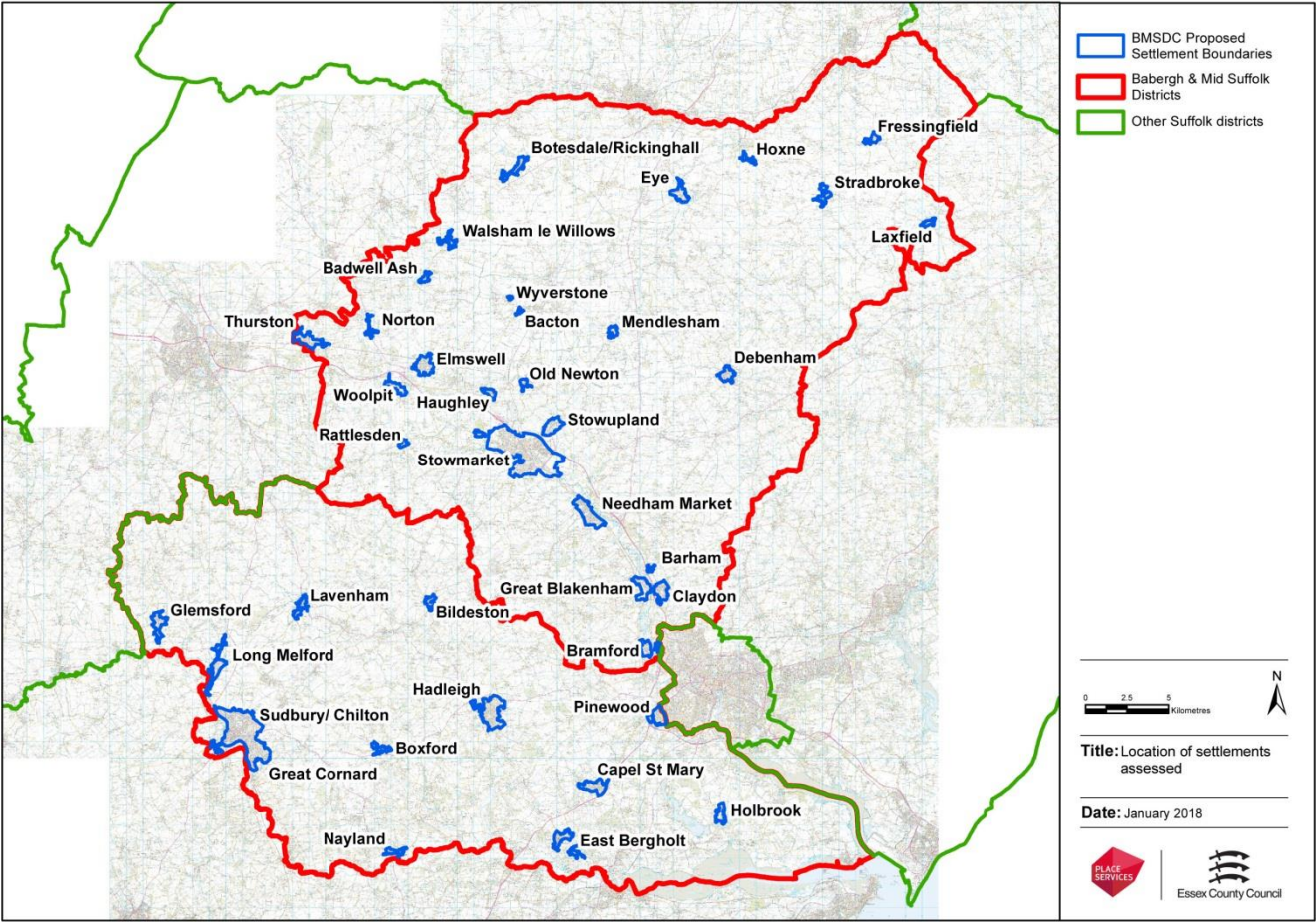
The list of settlements below was agreed with Babergh and Mid Suffolk council at the outset of the project. During the course of the project this was amended to combine the assessments of Sudbury, Great Cornard and Chilton into a single report, as they now form a single conurbation.

4.1 Babergh District

Settlement Name	Settlement Classification	Conservation Area
Bildeston	Core Village	Bildeston Conservation Area
Boxford	Core Village	Boxford Conservation Area
Capel St Mary	Core Village	
Chilton	Town/Urban Area (& Countryside)	
East Bergholt	Core Village	
Glemsford	Core Village	Glemsford Conservation Area
Great Cornard	Town/Urban Area	
Hadleigh	Town/Urban Area	Hadleigh Conservation Area
Holbrook	Core Village	
Lavenham	Core Village	Lavenham Conservation Area
Long Melford	Core Village	Long Melford Conservation Area
Nayland	Core Village	Nayland Conservation Area
Pinewood	Town/Urban Area	
Sudbury	Town/Urban Area	Sudbury Conservation Area

4.2 Mid Suffolk District

Settlement Name	Settlement Classification	Conservation Area
Bacton	Key Service Centre	
Badwell Ash	Primary Village	
Barham	Key Service Centre	
Bramford	Key Service Centre	
Claydon	Key Service Centre	
Debenham	Key Service Centre	Debenham Conservation Area
Elmswell	Key Service Centre	
Eye	Town	Eye Conservation Area
Fressingfield	Primary Village	Fressingfield Conservation Area
Great Blakenham	Key Service Centre	
Haughley	Key Service Centre & Town	Haughley Conservation Area
Hoxne	Primary Village	Hoxne Conservation Area
Laxfield	Primary Village	Laxfield Conservation Area
Mendlesham	Key Service Centre	Mendlesham Conservation Area
Needham Market	Town	Needham Market Conservation Area
Norton	Primary Village & Key Service Centre	
Old Newton	Town & Primary Village	
Onehouse	Town	
Rattlesden	Primary Village	Rattlesden Conservation Area
Rickinghall and Botesdale	Key Service Centre	Botesdale Conservation Area
Stowmarket	Town	Stowmarket Conservation Area
Stowupland	Key Service Centre	
Stradbroke	Key Service Centre	Stradbroke Conservation Area
Thurston	Key Service Centre	
Walsham-le-Willows	Primary Village	Walsham le Willows Conservation Area
Woolpit	Key Service Centre	Woolpit Conservation Area
Wyverstone	Key Service Centre	



Location plan for all Settlement assessed as part of this report



5 Results –Sensitivity Assessment

Each settlement has been assessed in detail, and these can be found within the appendices of this report. These assessments formed the basis to assess the value, susceptibility and capacity of each settlement to accommodate change. These have been ascribed a value on a scale low-medium/low-medium-medium/high- high which is set out in the table below. This table also includes short explanatory notes on each, but the table should be read in accordance with the relevant settlement assessment within the appendices.

Settlement	Value	Susceptibility	Overall assessment	Notes
Babergh District				
Bildeston	Medium/Low	Medium/Low	Medium/Low	The historic core contains a dense concentration of listed buildings, particularly around the market place. However, extensive modern development has reduced the value of the settlement and its susceptibility to change. The physical separation between the church and the settlement contributes highly to their value, meaning the assets are susceptible to infill development.
Boxford	High	Medium/High	Medium/High	The settlement is of high value, with a well preserved linear core containing a high number of - listed buildings. This is highly susceptible, as is Stone Street to the south. There has been Modern development to the east which divorces the historic settlement edge from the surrounding landscape, making this area less susceptible.
Capel St Mary	Low	Low	Low	The value of the historic core, - and its susceptibility to change, is low, with a small area of higher value assets centred on the church at the western edge of the settlement. The surrounding - landscape is however of high value, and includes the exceptionally significant complex at Little Wenham Hall.
East Bergholt	High	Medium/High	Medium/High	The historic core and the southern part of the settlement are of high value and sensitivity, with an important historic association with -John Constable. The northern part of the settlement has been considerably developed, and is of accordingly lower sensitivity to new development. The landscape to the south, which includes the parkland associated with Old Hall and the landscape surrounding Flatford is of exceptionally high value.



Settlement	Value	Susceptibility	Overall assessment	Notes
Glemsford	Medium/high	Medium/high	Medium/High	The settlement is formed of several historic greens, with a linear settlement area to the south along Egremont Street and Hunts Hill and an important cluster of buildings in close proximity to the church to the north-east. The value of the historic settlement areas is high, but the value of the settlement as a whole has been harmed by the extent of modern development to the east, which is of low value.
Hadleigh	Medium	Medium/Low	Medium/Low	The historic core of the settlement is of high value, in particular the built form along and adjacent to the High Street. There are several historic east-west roads to the east of the High Street and a second area to the north of the river flood plain, which are also of high value. The eastern boundary of the settlement has been subject to large areas of modern development, and is of low value.
Holbrook	Low	Low	Low	There are a small number of important listed buildings within the boundary of the settlement, including the highly significant parish church. These along with Holbrook Gardens to the east are of high value. The majority of the settlement is of modern origin and the settlement as a whole is of low value. The complex of buildings associated with the Royal Hospital School, located to the south are of high value, but do not have a visual and physical association with the settlement.
Lavenham	High	Medium/High	High	Lavenham is an exceptionally significant medieval market town, which is notable for both the extent and quality of the surviving built form. The historic core including the High Street, Water Street and the Market Square are of very high value. However the settlement has seen unsympathetic development to the northern, southern and western peripheries, which has altered the sense of arrival in the settlement, and divided the settlement from the surrounding landscape. There are also several areas of unsuitable backland development.

Settlement	Value	Susceptibility	Overall assessment	Notes
Long Melford	High	High	High	Long Melford is a well preserved medieval and early modern historic linear settlement of high value. At the northern end of the settlement are two large country houses, set within their associated parkland, both of which are registered parks and gardens. The settlement is extremely susceptible to change, with very limited areas where development might sensitively be accommodated, given the extent of the boundary which is defined by the registered parks and gardens and by the earthworks associated with the historic railway.
Nayland	High	High	High	Nayland is a well preserved settlement of high evidential historic and architectural value, and has seen relatively few modern accretions. The settlement is situated within the AONB, and retains its important association with the River Stour. The settlement is therefore considered to be of exceptional value, and to be highly susceptible to inappropriate development either within or on the boundary of the settlement.
Pinewood	Low	Low	Low	Apart from the present Belstead Hall there are no other heritage assets of value. The building's setting has been considerably altered, and it therefore has a low susceptibility to change. The rest of the settlement has no susceptibility at all from a conservation perspective.
Sudbury	Medium/High	Medium	Medium	The historic core of Sudbury is of high value, with several historic streets running through the settlement which are high concentration of listed buildings. Three of these radiate away from the historic market place, with another important group to the south-west close to the river crossing. The settlement has however considerably expanded, and the majority of these later areas are of low susceptibility. However this expansion has incorporated several historic separate areas of high significance, such as the group at St. Bartholomew's Priory Farmhouse, and has encroached on the setting of several historically separate settlements; Great Cornard and Chilton. The surviving separation between Sudbury and these settlements is therefore significant in preserving the value of several of these settlements and highly designated assets such as Abbas Hall and Chilton Hall. These areas are therefore highly susceptible to development. The southern part of the settlement is defined by the River Stour flood plain for which the landscape would also be highly sensitive to any change.



Settlement	value	Susceptibility	Overall assessment	Notes
Mid Suffolk District				
Bacton	Medium/High	Medium/High	Medium/High	The character of the settlement is characterised by historic built form centred on two historic greens. The Manor, which is sited between the two greens, would be particularly susceptible to infilling between the Greens on either side of the road. Both the Manor and the Church are of high value.
Badwell Ash	Low	Low	Low	Badwell Ash was historically a linear settlement, but was considerably altered by a fire of 1723, which destroyed much of the previous built form. The settlement is now characterised by large areas of twentieth century development, of low value, and therefore has a relatively low vulnerability to further development. It does however contain some assets of high value, including the Church of St. Mary and Brook Farm the latter of which is vulnerable to change.
Barham	Medium	Medium/High	Medium/High	The area assessed comprises a small area to the east of Claydon on the boundary of Shrubland hall. The boundary of Shrubland Hall is sensitive to change. The historic church at Barham is highly sensitive to change and is covered within the Claydon settlement assessment. This settlement assessment should be read in conjunction with the assessment for Claydon
Bramford	Medium/Low	Medium/low	Medium/low	The area around Mill Lane and Church Green is of high value, as is the small area of historic linear form along The Street. However the remainder of the settlement is of low value and of low susceptibility.
Claydon	Medium/Low	Medium/High	Medium	The historic core of Claydon is of low value, although it does contain several buildings of historic and architectural interest. However, the two church hall complexes overlooking the settlement are of medium to high value, and Barham Church still sits within its historic rural landscape setting, making it highly susceptible to change. This assessment should be read in conjunction with the settlement at Barham.

Settlement	value	Susceptibility	Overall assessment	Notes
Debenham	High	High	High	The core within the Conservation Area is of high value and susceptibility, particularly the area around the historic marketplace. The church is highly significant and is visible in long views within the wider landscape. The western boundary of the settlement has been eroded with modern development.
Elmswell	Medium	High	Medium/High	Although the majority of the settlement can be identified as being of low value the church and its setting on the southern boundary of the settlement is of high value and sensitivity. The church is viewed from long distances and stands in a prominent position within a largely agricultural landscape. The group of historic farm complexes to the north is also considered to be of high value, and is the last surviving evidence of an historic green.
Eye	High	Medium	Medium/High	The settlement is built around the castle, which stands at the centre of the settlement. The core of the conservation area, and its surrounding countryside to the east and south, are highly sensitive, in particular the open landscape between the church on the edge of the settlement and the Priory to the east. The northern part of the settlement has been more heavily developed, and is of lower value.
Fressingfield	Medium/Low	Medium/Low	Medium/Low	Within the centre of the village is a complex of buildings including the church and church house which are of high value. However, there has been considerable development within the settlement, curtailing the setting of several important assets and groups of assets.
Great Blakenham	Low	Low	Low	There is only a small group of surviving historic buildings within the settlement, located at the northern end of the settlement and screened in longer views. The value and susceptibility of the settlement is accordingly low, and relates to this small group of listed buildings and to the ancient woodland to the north-west.
Haughley	High	Medium/High	High	The core of the settlement, within the conservation area, is well preserved and is of high value for both its built and archaeological significance. Of particular are the important complex and buildings and earthworks associated with a motte and bailey castle at the northern end of the settlement, which includes the parish Church of St. Mary the Virgin. The southern and south eastern area of the settlement is largely characterised by modern development, and is of significantly lower value.



Settlement	value	Susceptibility	Overall assessment	Notes
Hoxne	High	High	High	Hoxne is a polyfocal settlement with two settlement areas situated on two spurs of higher ground above the Goldbrook River and its associated flood plain. The settlement contains several areas and complexes of exceptional significance including the church and moated hall complex to the north, and the Priory to the south. The settlement also has exceptionally high archaeological value, and important association with significant historic figures, including St. Edmund and the Bishops of Norwich.
Laxfield	Medium/High	Medium/High	Medium/High	The historic core of Laxfield is of high value, particularly the church and market buildings at its eastern end. The value and susceptibility of the settlement has been harmed by large areas of modern development on the southern side of the settlement. The north-eastern end is highly susceptible to change.
Mendlesham	Medium/High	Medium/High	Medium/High	Mendlesham is a well preserved late medieval settlement, with a well preserved historic linear core, and a clear church and hall complex located to the east. The value of the settlement has been partially harmed by the modern development to the north, south and west.
Needham Market	Medium	Medium/Low	Medium/Low	The historic core, along the main north-south axial road is of high value. However, this core has been totally encircled by modern development, which is of low value and divorces the settlement from its historic landscape. The exception is to the east, and there are several important mill complexes within the river valley. The core of the settlement is susceptible to development, however the settlement edges are of low sensitivity.
Norton	Low	Low	Low	The historic value of the settlement as a whole is low, although it contains several buildings and groups of buildings of high value. The susceptibility of the settlement is similarly low, but individual groups, including the church complex are of medium to high susceptibility.

Settlement	value	Susceptibility	Overall assessment	Notes
Old Newton	Medium/Low	Medium/Low	Medium/Low	The majority of the settlement of Old Newton is of modern construction and has limited value and susceptibility. However there is a significant group of listed buildings either side of the river tributary, including a highly significant group of buildings centred on the church, which are of high value. The settlement is also surrounded by a series of historic farmsteads which are also of high value and susceptible to enclosing development. The separation between both the church complex and the farmsteads, and the main settlement area is important to preserve.
Onehouse	Low	Low	Low	The settlement consists almost exclusively of modern housing development and is of low value and of low susceptibility. There is however, a highly significant church and hall complex to the south west of settlement, and this is of high value and high susceptibility. This is set within an open agricultural landscape and this separation and isolation should be preserved if Onehouse expands.
Rattlesden	Medium/Low	Medium/Low	Medium/Low	The historic core of the settlement is centred on an historic church, with the site of its associated hall to the north, this core of the settlement contains buildings of high value, but its overall value has been harmed by the extent of later infill. To the south are several historic greens, which vary in value. Birds Green is well preserved and is of high value, however Poy Street Green has been considerably altered and infilled, thereby harming its value. Overall the modern infill and development has considerably reduced the value and susceptibility of the settlement.
Rickinghall and Botesdale	Medium/High	Medium	Medium/High	Whilst historically two settlements, the two have been conjoined as a single later settlement since the later nineteenth century. The historic core of the single settlement is of high value, particularly the central core of Botesdale which includes a group of high quality listed buildings at the crest of the hill. Modern development on the south eastern side of the settlement has divorced the conservation area from the agricultural landscape and has reduced the overall value of the settlement. The historic core and northern side of the settlement is of high susceptibility, whilst the south eastern side is of low susceptibility.

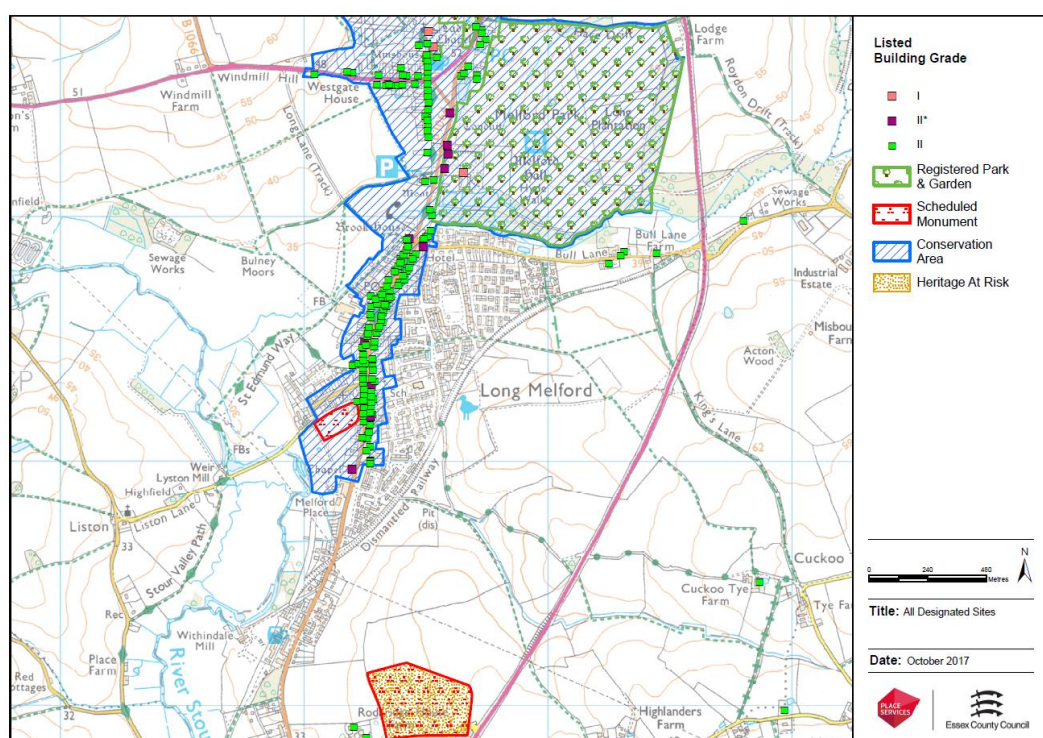


Settlement	value	Susceptibility	Overall assessment	Notes
Stowmarket	Medium	Medium/Low	Medium/Low	The historic core is of high value with many buildings of high quality, including the Church of St. Peter and St. Mary and seven others listed grade I or II*. However, the historic core now forms only a small section of the settlement of Stowmarket, and has been almost completely ringed by modern development, meaning that large areas of the settlement are of low or no value. The historic core is of high susceptibility to infill development, with the outer areas being of low susceptibility. There are small areas of higher value on the outskirts of the settlement including several farmsteads and the grade I listed church at Combe Hall.
Stowupland	Medium/Low	Medium/Low	Medium/Low	The settlement contains several elements of historic value, including clusters of historic farm complexes and a large T-shaped historic green at the core of the settlement, an important historic landscape feature of high value. The majority of the built form, and much of the present settlement pattern is of modern origin and is of low value. The historic greens and their relationship with the listed buildings are of high susceptibility, but the rest of the settlement is of low susceptibility.
Stradbroke	Medium	Medium/Low	Medium/Low	The historic core is set around a staggered crossroads and contains areas of high value, and several high status buildings, including the parish church of All Saints. It also includes two large moated sites to the north and south. These are of higher susceptibility, although the setting of several of these assets has already been compromised by the proximity of modern development. The extensive areas of modern development have already harmed the value of the settlement, and these are several areas of low susceptibility. The areas of agricultural land immediately adjacent to the moats, however, are important to retain the value of these complexes, and are therefore highly susceptible to change.

Settlement	value	Susceptibility	Overall assessment	Notes
Thurston	Low	Low	Low	The majority of the settlement is modern in construction and is therefore of low value. This has also harmed the setting of several heritage assets, most notably the railway station, which has reduced their further susceptibility. There is however a manor and church complex to the east of the settlement, which is both of high value and of high susceptibility. There are also several historic houses, set within associated grounds to the south of the settlement, which would be susceptible to the further encroachment of development.
Walsham Le Willows	Medium	Medium	Medium	The historic linear of the core of the settlement, sited along The Street is of high value, as is the area around the church at the western end of The Street. The Street is susceptible to infill development, as is the land to the west of the settlement. However, there has been considerable modern development to the east and north, which has not made a positive contribution to the settlement and means this area is of low susceptibility. The hamlet of Four Ashes is located to the south of the settlement, but has suffered from considerable modern intrusion. It is therefore of low value and susceptibility.
Woolpit	Medium/High	Medium/Low	Medium	The historic core of the settlement contains a dense core of listed buildings, with limited and sensitive infill development. This area is of high value and of high susceptibility. However the settlement has seen large areas of modern development, enclosing its historic core, severing its relationship with its rural historic landscape setting. This has been to the detriment of its value, and has reduced its susceptibility to change. There is a separate conservation area of Drinkstone Mill to the south-west of the settlement. This contains two highly designated assets, set within a wider landscape in which they are highly visible. This complex is of both high value and high susceptibility.
Wyverstone	Low	Medium/Low	Medium/Low	The historic settlement contains several groups of medium to high value, including a church to the east, a green to the west and a number of historic farmsteads and moated sites along Mill Road. However the character of the settlement has been considered by modern infill development, and the overall value of the settlement is therefore medium/low. Similarly the susceptibility of individual assets is varied, but can overall be characterised as medium/low.

6 Conclusion/Discussion

The assessment of historic settlements has been undertaken by Place Services, assessing 42 settlements identified by Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils, as potential areas of residential expansion, to support the necessary site allocations within the next Local Plan. The assessment undertaken comprised of both a desk based assessment and site visits to all of the settlements. All assessments were undertaken with the purpose of identifying the potential impact both on the settlements as a whole, and the impact on the significance of the individual heritage assets associated with them. This included an appraisal of both designated and non-designated heritage assets, incorporating assets such as conservation areas, listed buildings, scheduled monuments, registered parks and gardens, and other archaeological sites. Each settlement assessment was carried out including the completion of a pro-forma assessment sheet to ensure consistency. This assessment identified the value and susceptibility of the settlement and of the heritage assets within these settlements, as well as offering enhancement proposal where these were appropriate.

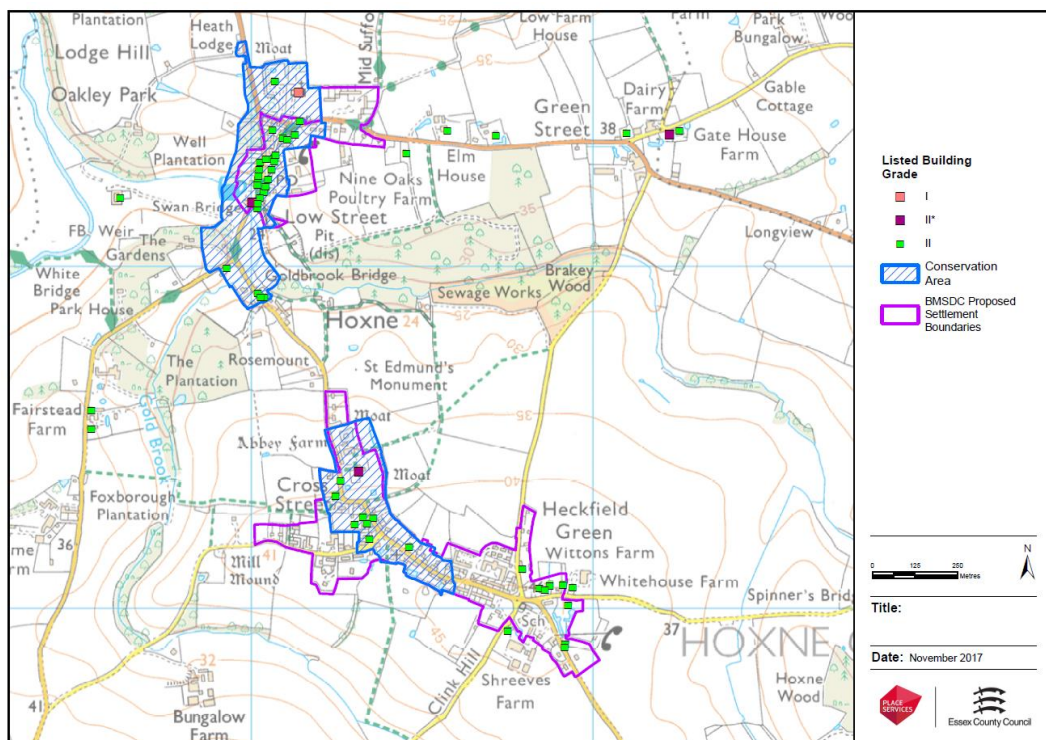


Plan showing all designated heritage assets within Long Melford

The assessment produced a number of important conclusions, not least to further highlight the high significance of the two districts from a heritage perspective. In particular a number of settlements were identified as being of cumulatively high value, in regard to the value of the settlement as a whole, and in relation to individual heritage assets. These were Boxford, Debenham, East Bergholt, Eye, Hoxne, Lavenham, Long Melford and Nayland. As the majority of these have been well preserved, there is a strong correlation between those which are of high value, and those which are also susceptible to harm from inappropriate housing

developments and allocations. This report has specifically highlighted Long Melford, Nayland, Debenham and Hoxne as settlements of particular vulnerability to poorly located development, and the potential for allocations in these villages is likely to be comparatively lower, and any applications or site allocation should be given especial consideration before they are granted. In the example in Long Melford, shown on the map on the next page, this relates to the number of nationally important assets on the periphery of the settlement, including two country houses, their landscaped grounds, and a number of scheduled monuments.

The assessment highlighted a number of important asset types, which were both of high value and highly susceptible to change. These include churches and hall/manors (particularly where they form an associated complex), and moated sites and historic farm complexes set within a wider agricultural landscape. These groups are not distinctly separate, and there are a number of assets which form into all three of these groups- such as at Old Newton, and Hoxne.



Hoxne- an example of a Polyfocal settlement

Polyfocal settlements were identified where communities have developed in a number of closely related locations such as Hoxne and Old Newton. The poly-focal nature of these settlements is important to preserve, especially in settlements where there has been minimal modern intrusions and infill such as Hoxne. Similarly at Bacton there are two historic greens containing clusters of listed buildings, with a grade I listed manor house located in open agricultural land between. With regard to new developments the polyfocal nature of these settlements should be preserved with any new development designed to preserve and

respect this historic settlement pattern. At Old Newton the element of the settlement centred on Church Farm is of a much higher value and susceptibility than the area to the West around Lodge Farm.

Both districts have a comparatively large number of surviving church and hall complexes, and these tend to be of very high significance, not only from a historic and social perspective but also because many also exhibit high architectural significance. They were also frequently placed on the edge of the settlement, or set away from the settlement completely. This was a deliberate decision made by the lord of the manor to reinforce his social position and to distance themselves from the lower social orders. It is also important to note that these church/hall complexes often form part of settlements which are of lower value overall, and in these instances decision-making will need to differentiate between the low value of the settlement as whole, and the significance of these complexes in their own right. One example is the highly significant church and hall complex, with associated buildings in Elmswell. Whilst large areas of the remainder of the settlement to the north are of low value, the church and hall complex and its wider setting are high significance.



View from the west towards Elmswell Church

The Church of St John in Elmswell also highlights the significance of topography in relation to the settlements, something which the site visits identified. Many of the higher status assets, particularly churches have been sited on high points in the landscape, and were deliberately intended to be visible in long views throughout the wider landscape. This gives these assets large settings, which make an important contribution to their value, and both extent and value

of their wider landscape setting will be integral considerations in considering proposed site allocations.



View of Lavenham Church from Monk Eleigh road

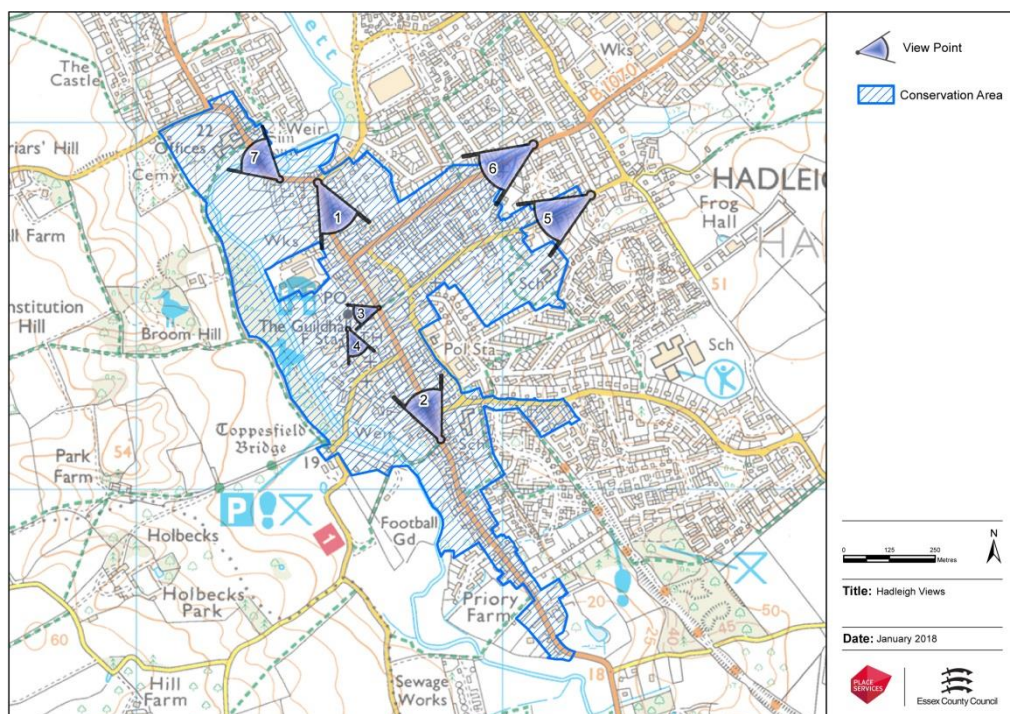
Many of the settlements are also set within valleys, many of them in close proximity to rivers. This makes an important contribution to their value, and also means that they are vulnerable to being screened or overshadowed by later development sited higher on rising topography, and the impact of this will need to be considered in the siting of new development. Many of the settlements also have close relationships to these water bodies, and the interrelationship between these bodies and nearby assets are often integral to the significance of both the individual assets and the settlement as a whole- such as in the case of the numerous mill complexes located throughout both districts.

The results have highlighted several settlements which are of low value from a heritage perspective. These settlements have a much greater capacity to accommodate development from a heritage perspective, in particular Pinewood which contains only a single designated building and no other historic features, and therefore has almost no constraints from a heritage perspective. It should however be highlighted, that while these settlements cumulatively have low susceptibility, the majority contain individual heritage assets, such as the church and mill complex at Great Blakenham or the railway station at Thurston, which are susceptible in their own right and these will constrain development in specific areas in settlements which are otherwise of low value and susceptibility.

The study also highlighted areas where modern development has had a considerably detrimental impact on the value of a number of historic settlements. These can be characterised as falling into one or both of two groups.

The first is that a number of settlements where the historic core has been virtually encircled by modern development from the second half of the twentieth century, for example Stowmarket and Needham Market. Although in most cases their cores are still of high value and are susceptible to modern infill and inappropriate repair they are at little risk from larger scale developments on the periphery of the settlements, and the overall value of the settlement is correspondingly lower.

The second relates to the fact that the value of a number of some historic settlements has been harmed by the erection of modern development in very close proximity to the rear of the linear core of settlements, developing either in back gardens of historic properties, or forming parallel areas of development. This has not only curtailed the setting of several important heritage assets, but has also harmed the understanding of the character of these settlements as a whole. Again this modern development can be seen to have made the periphery of some of these settlements less susceptible to further development, by divorcing the core from its surrounding landscape. It is recommended that within these settlements further development should be restricted to those areas of modern development away from the boundaries of conservation areas or historic cores, such as in Hadleigh, where it is suggested that development should be kept to the east rather than west of the settlement.



View of Hadleigh showing modern development all on the eastern side of the settlement

It is also notable that the detrimental impact of unsuitable modern development on the value of several of these settlements is something which may raise more wide-reaching concerns. One such example is Lavenham, which has a nationally important historic core, which is also

a major tourist attraction. This survey showed that the entrances to the settlement and the areas behind the main road frontage are being gradually eroded by the level of modern development that is taking place, and this in turn harms both the significance of the settlement and its position as a tourist attraction. This may itself in turn also have economic consequences.

A number of settlements have expanded to such an extent they have either enclosed, or are encroaching upon the setting of, adjacent settlements and their heritage assets. The most obvious being Sudbury where the modern expansion has enclosed Great Cornard and is having a significant impact on the parish of Chilton to the north. The church/hall complex at Chilton, with its associated registered park and moated site has been encroached by the industrial development of Sudbury resulting in the church now abutting the northern boundary of the town. A similar situation is occurring with Claydon and Barham where the church of Barham is now situated on the border of Claydon. For future development in these areas the importance of the siting of the heritage assets and their historic relationship and setting to other assets needs to be preserved.



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