

10.0 COPFORD TO MARK'S TEY

10.1 Landscape Context

- 10.1.1 The village of Mark's Tey is situated approximately 0.15km to the west of the village of Copford, and the two settlements are separated open fields on either side of the B1408. Mark's Tey forms a linear settlement along the B1408 at its eastern-most end. From the centre of Copford, the settlement continues both west along the B1408 and south along School Road. The A12 and a railway line pass to the north of both settlements (see Figure 10.1).

10.2 Baseline Review

Topography

- 10.2.1 Both Mark's Tey and Copford sit on a plateau above the Roman River, at approximately 35-40m AOD. About 400m north of the B1408 and about 400m east of Copford, the plateau descends to meet the Roman River. The stream valley sides are fairly steep on both sides of the river, with the floor of the valley situated between approximately 25m and 30m AOD in the vicinity of Mark's Tey and Copford.
- 10.2.2 At the southern end of Copford, along School Road, the settlement occupies a small stream valley that is tributary to the Roman River. This valley begins south of Mark's Tey and intersects with the Roman River to the east of Copford. It has fairly gentle slopes, being about 30m AOD within Copford and descending to the river at approximately 25m AOD.

Land Use

- 10.2.3 Land use in the fields between Copford and Mark's Tey consists mainly of arable agriculture but includes some pasture and rough grassland along the edge of Copford and on the southern side of Mark's Tey.
- 10.2.4 The eastern part of Mark's Tey, southeast of the A12, contains a mix of uses, including a hotel, retail businesses, housing, the village's historic church, and a bus/trailer storage area, with a large arable field interspersed between them. Copford's eastern edge consists mostly of housing, but a vehicle repair and sales centre also occupies part of the eastern edge, north of the B1408. The A12 and a railway corridor lie north of the two settlements, and large roundabout intersections with the A12, the B1408 and the A120 lie further west on the northern edge of Mark's Tey.

Vegetation

- 10.2.5 Vegetation in the area between, and south of, the two settlements consists mainly of mature hedgerows with interspersed deciduous trees along the boundaries of agricultural fields. These hedgerows are robust in most places, but gappy in a few locations.
- 10.2.6 Woodland in the area between the two villages consists of a large deciduous woodland block that lies below the southeastern corner of Mark's Tey and connects with the village's churchyard. North of Copford, a large deciduous woodland block separates the settlement from the A12. Mark's Tey Hall, located south of Mark's Tey, is surrounded by mature trees, scrub, and a robust hedgerow containing deciduous trees.
- 10.2.7 The B1408 between the two villages is lined by a narrow deciduous hedgerow. Trees and scrub occupy the southern edge of the A12. Houses in both villages contain rear-garden vegetation, consisting of a mix of both evergreen and deciduous mature trees, unmanaged hedgerows, and clipped hedges. Buildings along the B1408 in Mark's Tey contain relatively little front-garden vegetation.

Settlement Edges

- 10.2.8 The eastern edges of Copford are visually softened and substantially enclosed in views from areas to the west and from the B1408. This enclosure is provided by a combination of rear-garden vegetation, and mature hedgerows along adjacent field boundaries.
- 10.2.9 Buildings along the eastern edge of Mark's Tey are visually softened by garden vegetation. However, buildings along the B1408 generally do not have much front-garden vegetation, with the result that these buildings are prominent in views from the B1408. The southern edges of Mark's Tey are softened by a mature block of deciduous woodland, mature rear-garden vegetation, and hedgerows surrounding adjacent agricultural fields.

Public Rights of Way

- 10.2.10 There is a network of footpaths in the area south of Mark's Tey and west of Copford. One of these paths leads west from School Road, then turns north and branches into two footpaths, one leading to the church in Mark's Tey, and one to the A12, passing Mark's Tey Hall. Two footpaths are located further to the west, leading south from the A12. The area between the B1408 and the A12 between the settlements does not contain public footpaths.

Landscape Character

10.2.11 This area of open countryside is situated within the Easthorpe Farmland Plateau (B2) and Easthorpe Farmland Plateau Sub-Area (B2a) Landscape Character Areas, as identified within the Colchester Borough Landscape Character Assessment (November 2005). The key characteristics of each area are listed below:

Easthorpe Farmland Plateau (B2)

- Raised farmland plateau, dissected by the wooded Roman River valley in the east;
- A mixture of small, medium and large irregular, predominantly arable fields;
- Small patches of deciduous woodland and several ponds/ reservoirs;
- Area crossed by a network of narrow, sometimes winding lanes;
- Airfield, surrounded by large open fields has a dominant influence on the landscape character in the south of the area;
- Settlement pattern consists of small villages and hamlets with scattered farmsteads amongst predominantly arable agricultural land.

Easthorpe Farmland Plateau Sub-Area (B2a)

- Linear settlement corridor extending from the western edge of Colchester Urban Area, including the western edges of Colchester, Copford village and Marks Tey in the west;
- Northern boundary delineated by main A12 and railway corridor which is a dominant visual feature within the character area;
- Visually dominant major road junctions/ roundabouts within the character area;
- Landscape character is disturbed by the visual, movement and noise intrusion of cars on the A12 and also by frequent trains on the main railway line.

10.2.12 The character of the landscape between the settlements has been examined in further detail as part of this study to ascertain the degree to which variation in landscape character contributes to the separation of settlements. The area predominantly comprises a patchwork of medium - scale arable fields, which have a variable sense of enclosure as a result of mature hedgerows at the field boundaries. Views across the farmland from roads and public rights of way are partially enclosed and framed by hedgerows and small patches of woodland; however, it is generally possible to obtain medium-range views across arable farmland. The degree of enclosure provided by trees and scrub alongside the A12 is such that the highway does not generally detract from the rural character within this area.

Inter-visibility

- 10.2.13 There is some inter-visibility between Copford and Mark's Tey due to the short distance between the two settlements. At the eastern tip of Mark's Tey, where housing protrudes outwards along the B1408, as well as along the footpath leading south from the village's historic church, views towards Copford are substantially enclosed by hedgerows and rear-garden vegetation (see Photograph 10.1 and Photograph 10.2)
- 10.2.14 From the eastern edge of Copford along the B1408, views of Mark's Tey are restricted by the hedgerows along the road, garden vegetation at the eastern end of Copford, and a slight curvature in the road's alignment (see Photograph 10.3).

Intra-visibility

- 10.2.15 Intra-visibility (i.e. the ability to see both settlement edges from a single point) can be perceived along the B1408 between Copford and Mark's Tey. This is mainly due to the short-distance between the two villages and the limited amount of intervening vegetation in the area.
- 10.2.16 The edges of both settlements are difficult to perceive from a single point in areas south of the B1408 because of the screening effect of woodland, tree belts, field boundary hedgerows and rear-garden vegetation.

10.3 Evaluation

- 10.3.1 Although there is a relatively small distance and some inter-visibility between the settlements, the open arable fields and deciduous hedgerows still contribute to a sense of separation between the two settlements and this helps to conserve the identity of each village. To the south and southeast of Mark's Tey, vegetation plays the primary role in providing a sense of settlement separation, including the block of woodland adjacent to Mark's Tey and dense treebelts surrounding the fields between the settlements. These limit both inter-visibility and intra-visibility between Copford and Mark's Tey in these areas. Topography plays little role in supporting a separate sense of identity for each of the two settlements, as they occupy approximately the same elevation. The upper part of a stream valley near the southern end of Copford is too shallow to contribute the sense of separation between the settlements.

High Contribution

- 10.3.2 The arable fields between Copford and Mark's Tey along the B1408 provide a high contribution to settlement separation. Further south, where the distance between Copford and

Mark's Tey widens, and the small block of woodland, robust hedgerows and treebelts prevent inter-visibility and intra-visibility between the two settlements and again provide a high contribution to settlement separation.

Medium Contribution

- 10.3.3 None of the assessed land is considered to provide a low medium contribution to the separation of settlements.

Low Contribution

- 10.3.4 Adjacent to the northwestern edge of Copford, there is a narrow field that has a closer visual and physical relationship with the built-up edge of Copford than with the countryside to its west. The field abuts residential properties on its eastern side, a business property on its south side, a woodland block on its north side and is divided from the arable land to the west by a hedge with occasional trees. This field, lying to the rear of the hedgerow in Photograph 10.4, provides a low contribution to settlement separation.

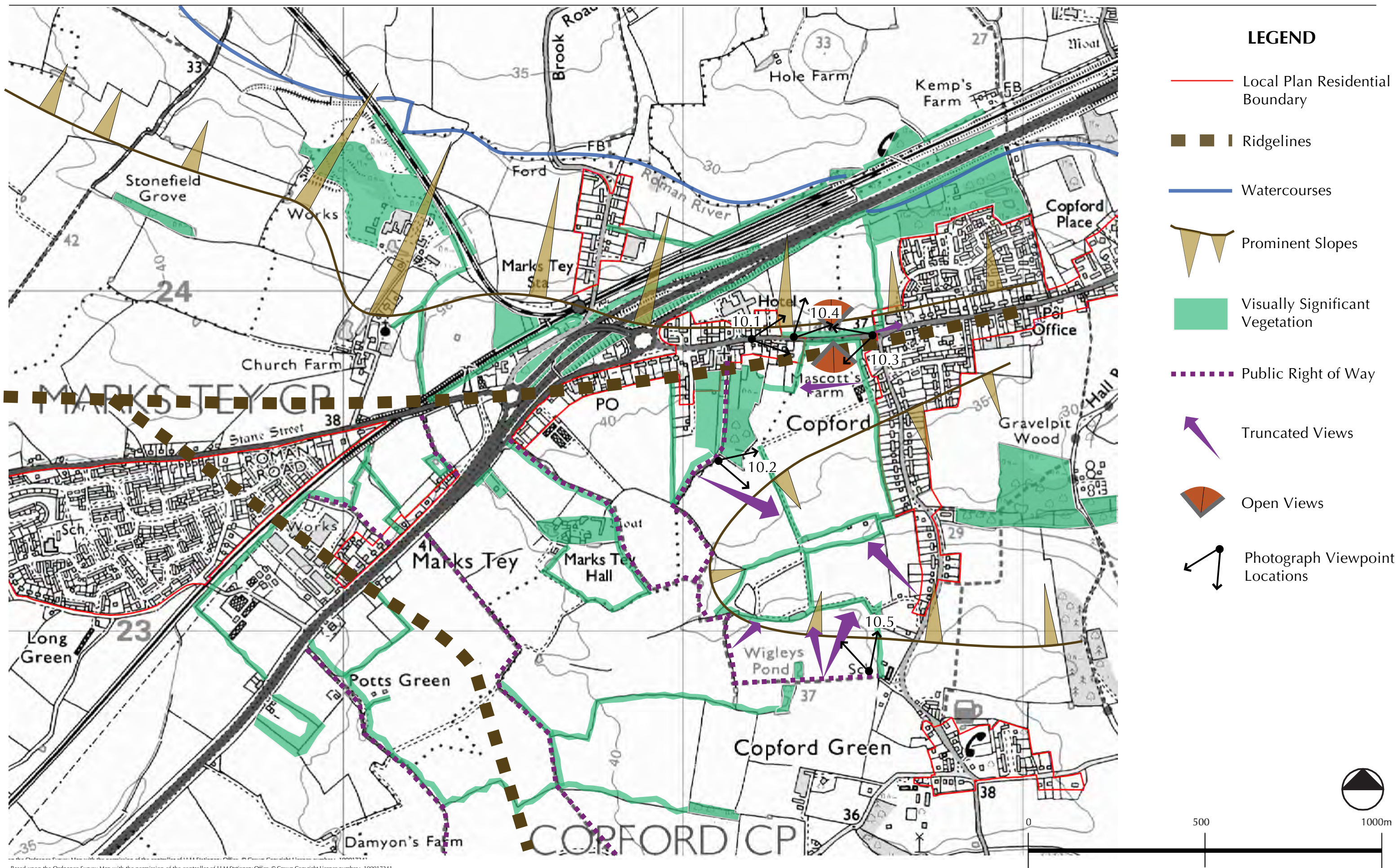
10.4 Conclusions

- 10.4.1 Any new built development between Copford and Mark's Tey is likely to seriously undermine the sense of settlement separation and the rural character of the intervening land, as perceived by people moving along the B1408. Any such development is likely to result in visual coalescence with Copford and/or Mark's Tey and also visual coalescence with either the existing houses located alongside the B1408. This visual coalescence is likely to seriously undermine the already precarious sense of settlement separation and the predominantly rural character of this land. The sense of leaving one settlement and entering another would also be significantly diminished.

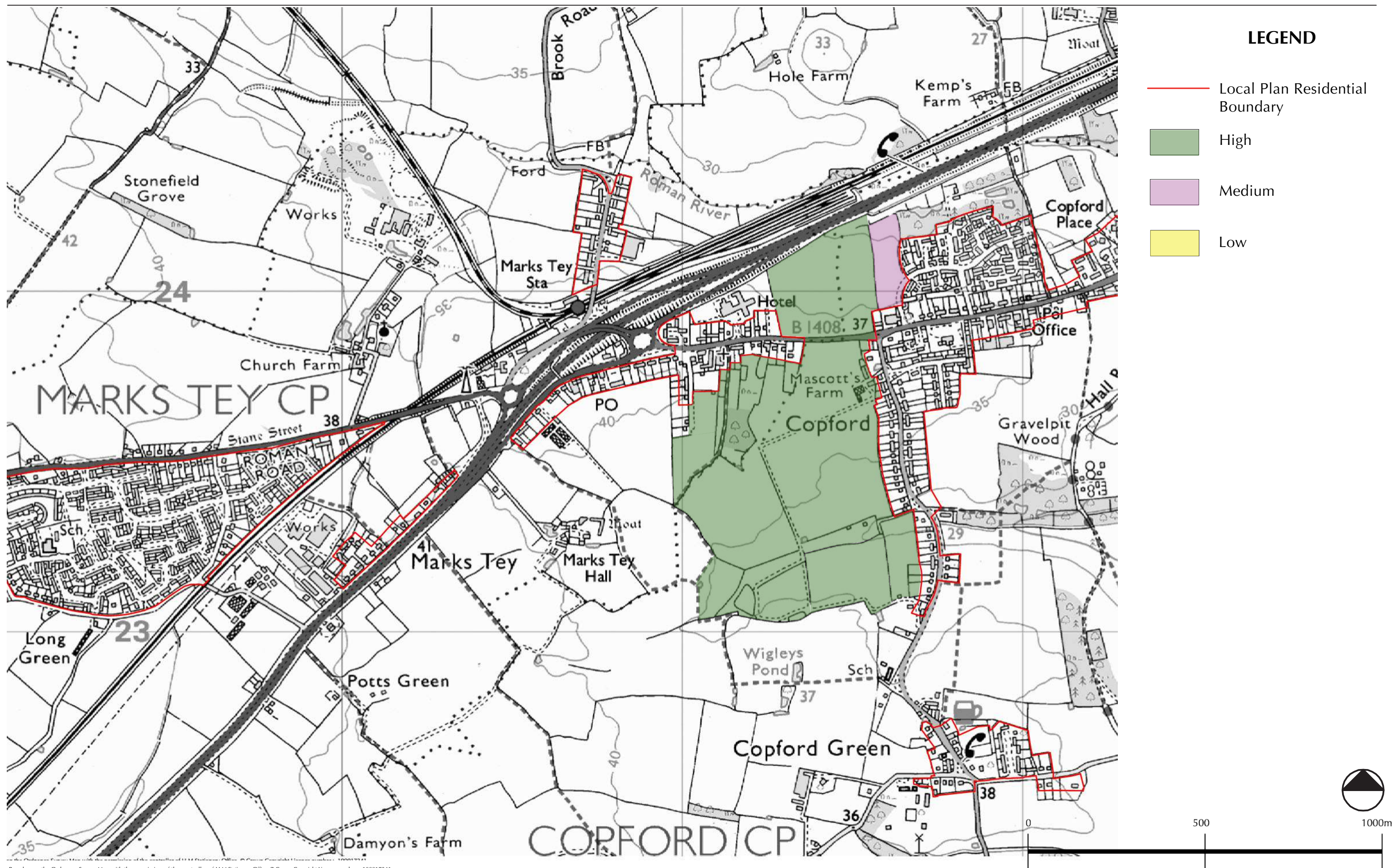


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Photograph 10.1
View east from Mark's Tey toward Copford along the B1408.



Photograph 10.2
View from public footpath southeast of Mark's Tey toward Copford.



Photograph 10.3
View west from the edge of Copford toward Mark's Tey along the B1408.



Photograph 10.4
Field north of the B1408 between Mark's Tey and Copford.



Photograph 10.5
Pan from footpath near Copford Green toward Mark's Tey.

11.0 MARK'S TEY TO LITTLE TEY

11.1 Landscape Context

- 11.1.1 The village of Little Tey is situated approximately 0.8km to the west of the village of Mark's Tey along the A120 (See Figure 11.1). The two villages are separated by open fields, as well as by various built development that lines parts of the A120, which include nurseries, farmhouses, a few houses, and an area of greenhouses. Large-scale open fields surround this roadside development and the two settlements.

11.2 Baseline Review

Topography

- 11.2.1 Mark's Tey and Little Tey both lie on top of a plateau at approximately the same elevation, with the western edge of Mark's Tey situated at 40m AOD and Little Tey being at 45m AOD.

Land Use

- 11.2.2 The A120 road connects the two settlements. The Great Tey Road joins the A120 between Mark's Tey and Little Tey, and extends north to connect with Great Tey. Church Lane marks the eastern edge of Little Tey where it intersects with the A120, and the settlement is then centred on this lane as it leads north from the A120.
- 11.2.3 The A120 is surrounded by arable fields that form the principal land use between the two settlements. Within this area, there are two farmhouses and two groupings of houses on the north side of the road. Godbolt's Nursery and Poplar Nurseries lie south of the road, with Poplar Nurseries occupying land directly west of the Mark's Tey. Poplar Nurseries is developed to a greater degree than Godbolt's Nursery, with greenhouses and car parking along the A120 and a large car park situated away from the road. To the east of Little Tey, is an agricultural field that also contains some greenhouses.

Vegetation

- 11.2.4 Little Tey and Mark's Tey are surrounded by small to large sized arable fields. These extend both northwards and southwards from the edge of the A120. Many of the fields are lined with mature hedgerows.

- 11.2.5 Hedgerows along the A120 tend to limit views from the road. The notable exceptions to this are the fields directly east of Little Tey along the A120.
- 11.2.6 Poplar Nurseries, south of the A120, has a more ornamental character than the surrounding farmland, due to its area of 'turf grass', trimmed hedges and mature trees. Its boundary along the A120 is devoid of tall vegetation, but boundaries away from the A120 are surrounded by mature trees and evergreen hedges. Much of Godbolt's Nursery is surrounded by tall evergreen hedges that limit views into the site from the A120 and the surrounding landscape.
- 11.2.7 Houses and farmhouses along the A120 typically have dense garden vegetation enclosing them from surrounding fields, but not from the road. Some of these properties present a manicured, but well-treed character to the road.
- 11.2.8 There are numerous mature trees and hedges along the edges of both Mark's Tey and Little Tey, many of which are trimmed.

Settlement Edges

- 11.2.9 There is a moderate amount of tree/shrub vegetation along the western edge of Mark's Tey and this serves to soften the appearance of the settlement edge. North of the A120, the edge is enclosed by mature vegetation associated with the farmstead for Mott's Farm, and a dense hedgerow of an adjacent arable field. South of the A120, trimmed hedges and garden vegetation serve to soften the edge. A mixed hedgerow along the eastern edge of Poplar Nurseries further softens the appearance of the area.
- 11.2.10 The edges of Little Tey are generally softened and enclosed by rear garden hedges and mature deciduous trees, and by hedgerows within fields to the east of the village.
- 11.2.11 Pockets of linear development alongside the A120 have a visually harsh edge when seen from the road corridor. However, vegetation at the rear of these properties, when combined with intervening hedgerows, softens most views of this development from public footpaths, Church Lane, and Great Tey Road.

Public Rights of Way

- 11.2.12 The area north of the A120 contains several short sections of public footpath that connect Mark's Tey and Little Tey. One extends north from the edge of Mark's Tey, and connects with a footpath north of Mott's Farm, which runs west to Great Tey road. Another footpath then

connects Great Tey Road with Little Tey and continues north from the village. A short-distance footpath connects Little Tey to the A120 through one of the housing areas along the A120.

- 11.2.13 There are no footpaths directly connecting the two settlements south of the A120, but one footpath leads into the countryside southwest from Mark's Tey, and then connects with a footpath leading west, which is situated approximately 0.9km south of the A120.

Landscape Character

- 11.2.14 This area of open countryside is situated within the Easthorpe Farmland Plateau (B2) and Easthorpe Farmland Plateau Sub-Area (B2a) Landscape Character Areas, as identified within the Colchester Borough Landscape Character Assessment (November 2005). The key characteristics of each area are listed below:

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Easthorpe Farmland Plateau Sub-Area (B2a)

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- Visually dominant major road junctions/ roundabouts within the character area;
- Landscape character is disturbed by the visual, movement and noise intrusion of cars on the A12 and also by frequent trains on the main railway line.

- 11.2.15 The character of the landscape between the settlements has been examined in further detail as part of this study to ascertain the degree to which variation in landscape character contributes to the separation of settlements. The area predominantly comprises a patchwork of predominantly medium to large-scale arable fields, which have a variable sense of enclosure as

a result of mature field boundary hedgerows of varying robustness. Views across the farmland plateau from roads and public rights of way are generally limited. The degree of enclosure provided by hedgerows and trees alongside the A120 is such that the highway does not detract from the strong rural character within this area. The nurseries south of the A120 present a different character than Mark's Tey or Little Tey and this together with the adjacent agricultural fields strengthen the sense of separation between the two settlements. Farmsteads with historic buildings, such as Godbolt's Farm, as well as robust tree belts on the periphery of the nurseries, contribute to the sense of settlement separation and rural character.

Inter-visibility

- 11.2.16 There is very little inter-visibility between Little Tey and Mark's Tey. The distance between the two settlements combined with intervening buildings, trees and hedgerows serve to visually separate the two settlements.
- 11.2.17 Looking eastwards along the A120 from the edge of Little Tey, views towards Mark's Tey are enclosed by mature trees and hedgerows lining the A120, with enclosure enhanced by a slight bend in the road near Great Tey Road (see Photograph 11.2). Views from the public footpath near Little Tey's church are limited by intervening buildings, hedgerows and trees, and the edge of Mark's Tey is difficult to perceive in these views (see Photograph 11.3).
- 11.2.18 Looking westwards from the edge of Mark's Tey, views of Little Tey's settlement edge are enclosed by the cumulative screening effects of buildings, trees and mature hedgerows in the landscape (see Photograph 11.1). Similarly, views of Little Tey cannot be obtained from the public footpath leading north from Mark's Tey due to the cumulative screening effect of trees and mature hedgerows.

Intra-visibility

- 11.2.19 Intra-visibility (i.e. the ability to see the edges of Little Tey and Mark's Tey from a single point) is difficult to perceive along the A120, due to a slight rise in topography at Godbolt's Nursery, and the screening effect of mature trees and field boundary hedgerows.
- 11.2.20 There is, however, a considerable degree of visual coalescence between groups of buildings in the open countryside alongside the A120 between Little Tey and Mark's Tey. This development has a different character from the two settlements, and when combined with the intervening agricultural fields, one does not perceive these buildings as being part of either Little Tey or Mark's Tey.

- 11.2.21 The nurseries, houses and farms along the A120, however, provide near-continuous views of built development from along the road between the two settlements, but with glimpsed views out to agricultural fields obtained through roadside hedgerows. It is these views of agricultural fields (see Photograph 11.5) and the high proportion of nursery/farm related roadside development (see Photograph 11.1) that provides contrast with the concentrations of residential development in the settlements and a sense of settlement separation.

11.3 Evaluation

- 11.3.1 In the short-distance between Mark's Tey and Little Tey, there is a complex pattern of landuse and vegetation, and a large amount of existing roadside development. As a result, this area is highly sensitive to changes that might lessen the sense of separation that currently exists between the two settlements.
- 11.3.2 The nurseries to the west of Mark's Tey present a character different from the predominantly residential character of the village, and are more closely allied with the agricultural uses and other facilities associated with the agricultural land between the settlements.
- 11.3.3 The contribution made by various areas of land between Mark's Tey and Little Tey to the separation of settlements has been assessed below according to whether they provide a high, medium, or low contribution. These assessment findings have been mapped on Figure 11.3.

High Contribution

- 11.3.4 Most of the area between Mark's Tey and Little Tey is considered to provide a high contribution to the perceived separation between the settlements. Inter-visibility and intra-visibility between the two settlements is limited along the A120 by vegetation alongside the A120, and by a slight rise in the topography. There is a degree of visual coalescence between Godbolt's Nursery, the clusters of housing to its northwest, and the nurseries to the west. However, these have a distinctly different character from the adjacent settlements and, together with the adjacent agricultural fields, provide a high contribution to the sense of settlement separation. This sense of settlement separation has a high sensitivity to potential change on account of the relatively high proportion of roadside built development between the two settlements.

Medium Contribution

- 11.3.5 None of the assessed land is considered to provide a medium contribution to the separation of settlements.

Low Contribution

- 11.3.6 One field on the south-western edge of Mark's Tey is considered to provide a low contribution to the physical and visual separation of settlements, having no inter-visibility with Little Tey and being bounded by residential development on two sides.

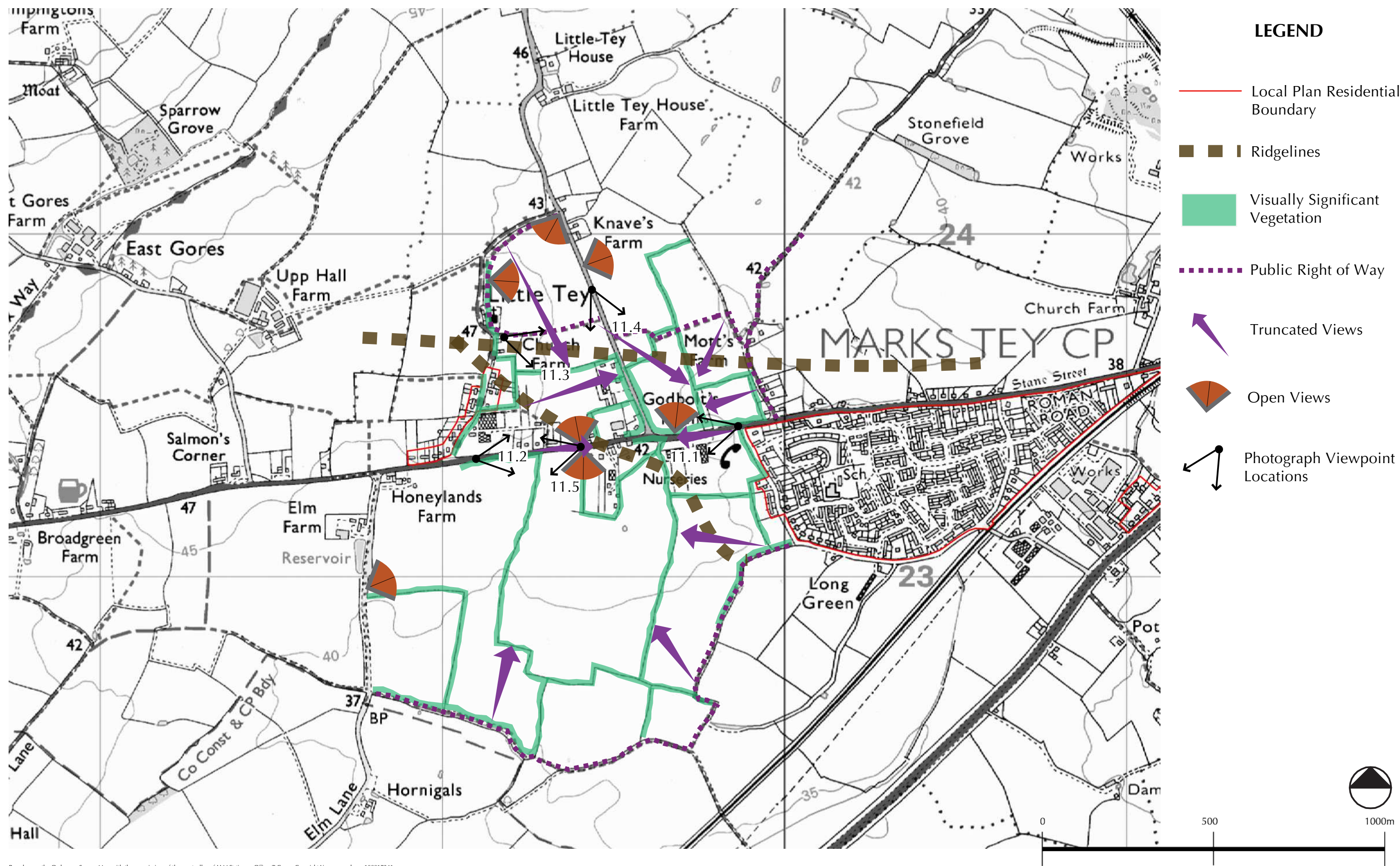
11.4 Conclusions

- 11.4.1 There is a large amount of existing roadside development in the relatively narrow belt of land between Mark's Tey and Little Tey. As a result, this land is highly sensitive to changes that might diminish the sense of separation between settlements. Any new built development between Little Tey and Mark's Tey is likely to seriously undermine the sense of settlement separation and the rural character of the intervening land, as perceived by people moving along the A120. Any such development is likely to result in visual coalescence with Little Tey and/or Mark's Tey and also visual coalescence with either the existing buildings located alongside the A120. This visual coalescence is likely to seriously undermine the already precarious sense of settlement separation and the predominantly rural character of this land. The sense of leaving one settlement and entering another would also be significantly diminished.

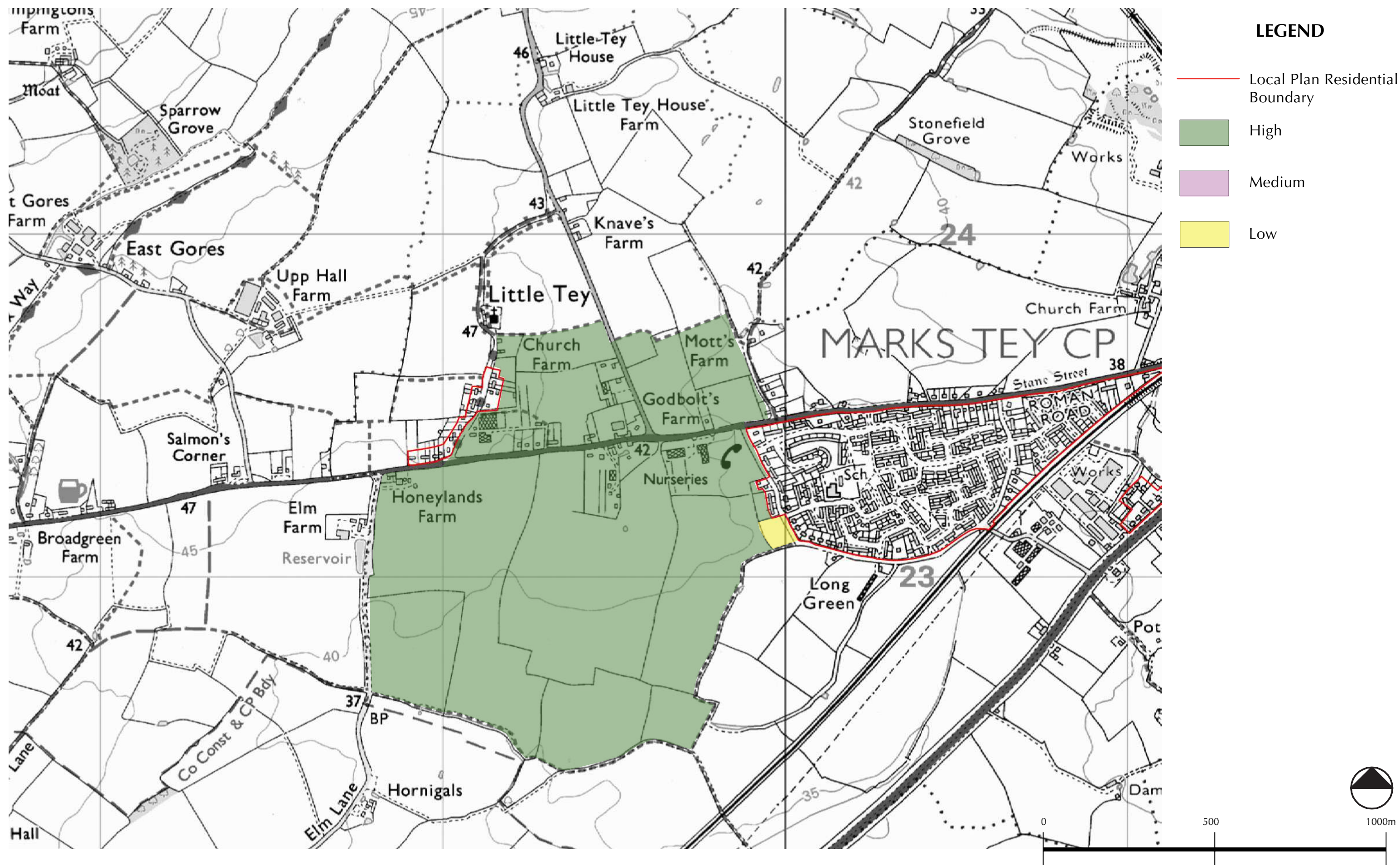


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April 2009

ASSESSMENT OF OPEN COUNTRYSIDE BETWEEN
SETTLEMENTS IN BOROUGH OF COLCHESTER

MARK'S TEY - LITTLE TEY
FIGURE 11.3 :CONTRIBUTION TO SEPARATION OF
SETTLEMENTS PLAN



Photograph 11.1
View from edge of Mark's Tey toward Little Tey along the A120.



Photograph 11.2
View from edge of Little Tey toward Mark's Tey along the A120.



Photograph 11.3
View from public footpath at northern side of Little Tey towards Mark's Tey.



Photograph 11.4
Pan from public footpath at Great Tey Road between Little Tey and Mark's Tey.



Photograph 11.5
View toward Little Tey from west of Godbolts Farm along A120.