

# **Colchester Borough Historic Environment Characterisation Project**

**Draft**

**2009**

Front Cover:

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## Figures

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## **Abbreviations**

ACA	Archaeological Character Area
CBA	Chris Blandford Associates
ECC	Essex County Council
GHQ	General Headquarters
GIS	Geographical Information system
HECA	Historic Environment Character Area
HECZ	Historic Environment Character Zone
HER	Historic Environment Record
HLC	Historic Landscape Characterisation
HLCA	Historic Landscape Character Area
HUCA	Historic Urban Character Area
NMP	National Mapping Programme
OS	Ordnance Survey
PPG 16	Planning Policy Guidance Note 16 Archaeology and Planning
VDS	Village Design Statement



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Thanks are due to karen Syrett and Laura Chase of Colchester Borough Council for commissioning, encouragement, discussion and comment during the course of the project and comment on the first draft. The Colchester Borough Historic Environment Characterisation Project report was prepared by Essex County Council Historic Environment Branch. The project team comprised Nigel Brown, Adrian Gascoyne, Richard Havis, Maria Medlycott and Teresa O'Connor.

# Colchester Borough Historic Environment Characterisation Project

## 1 Introduction

The historic environment is a central resource for modern life. It has a powerful influence on peoples' sense of identity and civic pride. Its enduring physical presence contributes significantly to the character and 'sense of place' of rural and urban environments. In Colchester Borough this resource is rich, complex and irreplaceable. It has developed through a history of human activity that spans many thousands of years. Some of the resource lies hidden and often unrecognised beneath the ground in the form of archaeological deposits. Other elements, such as the area's historic landscape, are a highly visible record of millennia of agriculture, industry and commerce and now form an integral aspect of peoples' daily lives. The 'built' part of the historic environment is equally rich, with towns, villages and hamlets.

As a fundamental aspect of the District's environmental infrastructure the historic environment has a major role to play in Colchester Borough future. At the same time it is sensitive to change and it needs to be properly understood before change is planned in order to ensure proper management and conservation so that the historic environment can make its full contribution to shaping sustainable communities.

It is important that the many opportunities for the enhancement of the historic environment are realised and that adverse impacts associated with development are minimised so as to avoid unnecessary degradation. The historic environment lends character to places and provides a positive template for new development. It can play a key role in creating a 'sense of place' and identities as new communities are created and existing ones enhanced.

The Colchester Historic Environment Characterisation project is designed along similar lines to that of the Thames Gateway Characterisation report produced by Chris Blandford Associates (2004) on behalf of English Heritage, Essex County Council, and Kent County Council although on a more detailed level. A number of Councils across Essex have now had Historic Environment Characterisation projects

completed including Rochford, Chelmsford, The Thames Gateway, Tendring and Maldon with further reports underway for Uttlesford. The characterisation work for Colchester has been undertaken using the methodology refined during the previous projects. The Characterisation work is intended to inform the creation of the Local Development Framework, but should also be useful for a range of other purposes.

The Historic Environment has been assessed using character assessments of the urban, landscape and archaeological resource of Colchester. The results of these studies were then combined to create large Historic Environment Character Areas.

The Historic Environment Character Areas are broken down into more specific and more detailed Historic Environment Character Zones which are more suitable for informing strategic planning, and master planning activity within the Borough.

## **1.1 Purpose of the project**

This project has been developed to primarily serve as a tool for Colchester Borough to use in the creation of the Local Development Framework. The report reveals the sensitivity, diversity and value of the historic environment resource within the Borough. The report should facilitate the development of positive approaches to the integration of historic environment objectives into spatial planning for the Borough.

In addition to this primary purpose there are a range of other potential benefits:

- **Provide the opportunity to safeguard and enhance the historic environment as an integrated part of development within Colchester Borough.**

The report provides the starting point for identifying opportunities for the integration of historic environment objectives within action plans for major development proposals but also offers a means by which conservation and management of the historic environment can be pursued by means outside the traditional planning system.

The report will allow planners, with support from the specialist advisors, to integrate the protection, promotion and management of the historic environment assets both within development master plans and Local Development Documents.

- **Provide Guidance to Planners at the early stages of development proposals**

The report will provide planners with background information on the historic environment covering the whole Borough. This can be used at an early stage for identifying the Historic Environment elements which will be affected and lead to highlighting the need for informed conservation or enhancement, and effective communication and co-ordination between appropriate services.

- **Provide a means for local communities to engage with their historic environment.**

The report may provide a means of engaging the wider public with the historic environment, with regard to the creation of Village Design Statements (VDS) and the Community Strategy.

## 2 The Historic Environment of Colchester Borough

### 2.1 Introduction

## 3 Characterisation of the Resource

The characterisation analysis formed the initial stage of this project, with the methodology based on the work carried out by CBA for the Thames Gateway Historic Characterisation Project and the more refined work undertaken for Rochford, the Thames Gateway and Chelmsford Historic Environment Characterisation Projects by Essex County Council which involved a number of distinct processes. These focussed on preparing three separate strands of characterisation, one for each strand of the historic environment, namely: ***Historic Landscape character***, ***Archaeological character*** and ***Historic urban character*** and then weaving these together into a single combined ***Historic Environment Character***. The detailed methodology and the results of the Historic Landscape and archaeological character are presented later in this report and within the GIS data, and the Historic Environment Character Areas presented within section 4 of this report. The work undertaken by Chris Blanford on the Urban characterisation of the Borough has been used for the urban element of the characterisation.

Although the characterisation of all the three strands drew on existing approaches, e.g. Historic Landscape Characterisation and Landscape Character Assessment, in terms of its scope, subjects and style, the characterisation work undertaken for this and the previous projects is novel and challenging.

The Colchester Characterisation Project, following the methodology used for the Rochford and Chelmsford Historic Environment Characterisation Reports which have divided the Historic Environment Character Areas, which are divisions at a high strategic level, down into Historic Environment Character zones. These form the core of this report and are smaller zones which can be used at all stages of the

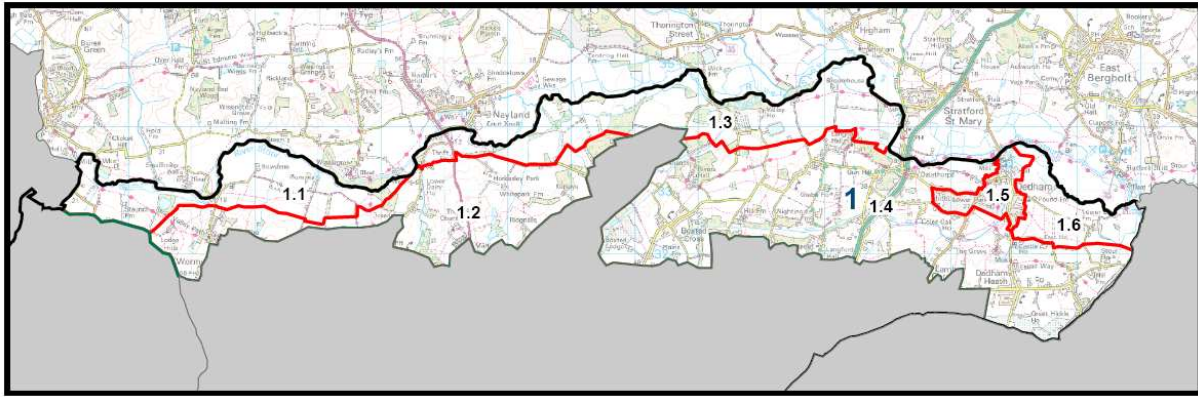
planning process, from the production of Local Development Frameworks, master plans, through to the initial considerations of planning applications (see section 1.1).

The detailed methodology is outlined in Appendix 1. Historic Landscape Character Areas (HLCA) are detailed in Appendix 2, and Archaeological Character Areas (ACA) are described in Appendix 3. The Historic Environment Character Area (HECA) methodology is given in Appendix 1 and the area descriptions are in section 3.1 of this report. The sub division of these areas into Historic Environment Character Zones (HECZ) which form the core of this study is presented in section 5.

### 3.1 Historic Environment Character Area descriptions



Fig. Historic Environment Character Areas



**Fig HECA 1 River Stour Valley**

### **3.1.1 HECA 1 River Stour Valley**

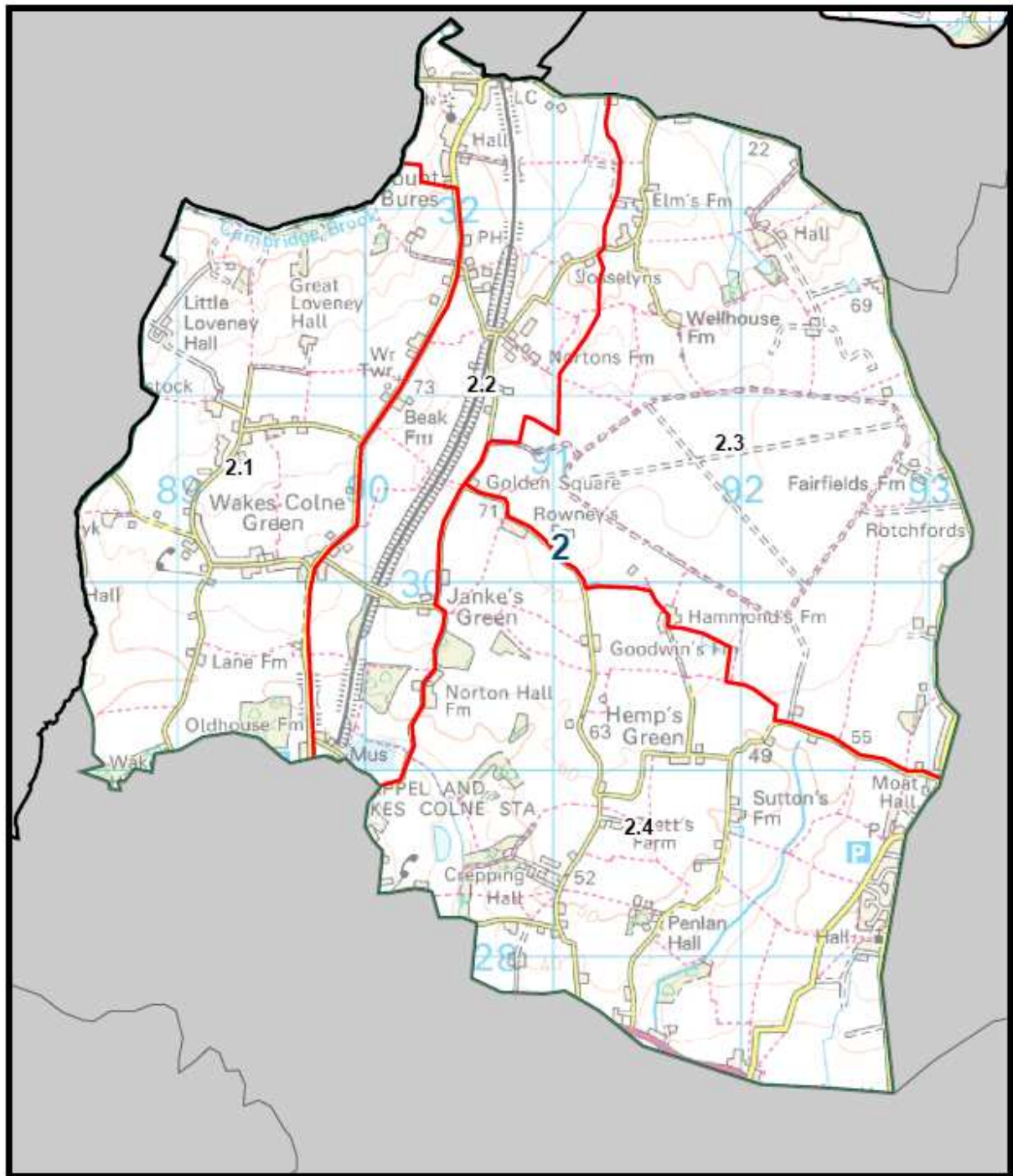
**Summary:** This area encompasses the valley of the River Stour including the flat valley floor and slopes. Settlement comprises the medieval town of Dedham, small villages at Langham, Wormingford and Boxted, halls, farms and cottages. Archaeological character is dominated by concentrations of multi-period cropmarks including complexes of prehistoric funerary monuments.

**Historic Landscape Character:** The geology comprises alluvial deposits overlaying, river gravels and London Clay. The River Stour forms the northern boundary of the area for much of its length, with the 40 m contour approximately demarcating the southern edge. The River Stour meanders naturally but also shows signs of engineering, as at the lock of Dedham Mill and where a new channel was cut for the River Stour Navigation. The fieldscape is ancient in origin with current and former valley bottom pastures, irregular fields and some later, 18<sup>th</sup> century enclosure. There has been a moderate amount of post 1950's boundary loss. Field boundaries include straight field ditches along the valley floor and a mixture of straight and sinuous hedged and ditched boundaries elsewhere. The southern bank of the River Stour is intermittently lined with pollarded willows, particularly to the east of Dedham. Historic settlement in the area comprises the small medieval market town of Dedham, small villages at Langham, Wormingford and Boxted, and a dispersed pattern of halls, and individual farms and cottages. Historic routeways cross the valley, north to south, and the modern A12 bisects the valley between Dedham and Langham. There are small Ancient Woodlands located on the valley sides between Langham and Little

Horkesley with the most substantial example at Boxted Great Wood. Modern development includes the waterworks at Boxted and several agricultural reservoirs.

**Archaeological Character:** In keeping with much of the valley of the River Stour, the archaeological character of this area is dominated by a multi-period cropmarks, including a diverse range of circular, sub rectangular, sub square and irregular ditched enclosures, ring ditch cemeteries, and frequent linear features representing many periods of field systems and trackways. Notable examples include complex ring ditch cemeteries to the east of Dedham and north of Langham, a Scheduled hengiform cropmark and multiple square enclosures to the east of Boxted Cross and ring ditch and enclosure complex to the west of Wormingford Mere. Trackways leading from the river floodplain to the valley side and the plateau above, highlight the former relationship between this area and HECA 3. Many of the cropmarks relate to prehistoric activity but later periods are also represented and the area has clear potential for other periods with finds of Iron Age and Roman material as well as the medieval/post medieval settlement and landscape. Visible medieval features in the area include moated sites at Garnons Hall and Rivers Hall and fishponds at Little Horkesley, timber framed listed buildings and churches including Wormingord and Dedham. Post medieval features largely relate to industrial archaeology including mills at Worminford Bridge, Boxted and Deham. Other structures associated with the River Stour Navigation which originated in the 18<sup>th</sup> century include a disused lock to the west of Stratford St Mary and a working lock at Dedham. A pond bay is recorded in woodland to the east of Wormingford. The area has high potential for palaeoenvironmental remains within waterlogged deposits in the valley bottom and tributary streams and colluvial sequences on the valley sides.





**Fig HECA 2 Bures and Fordham**

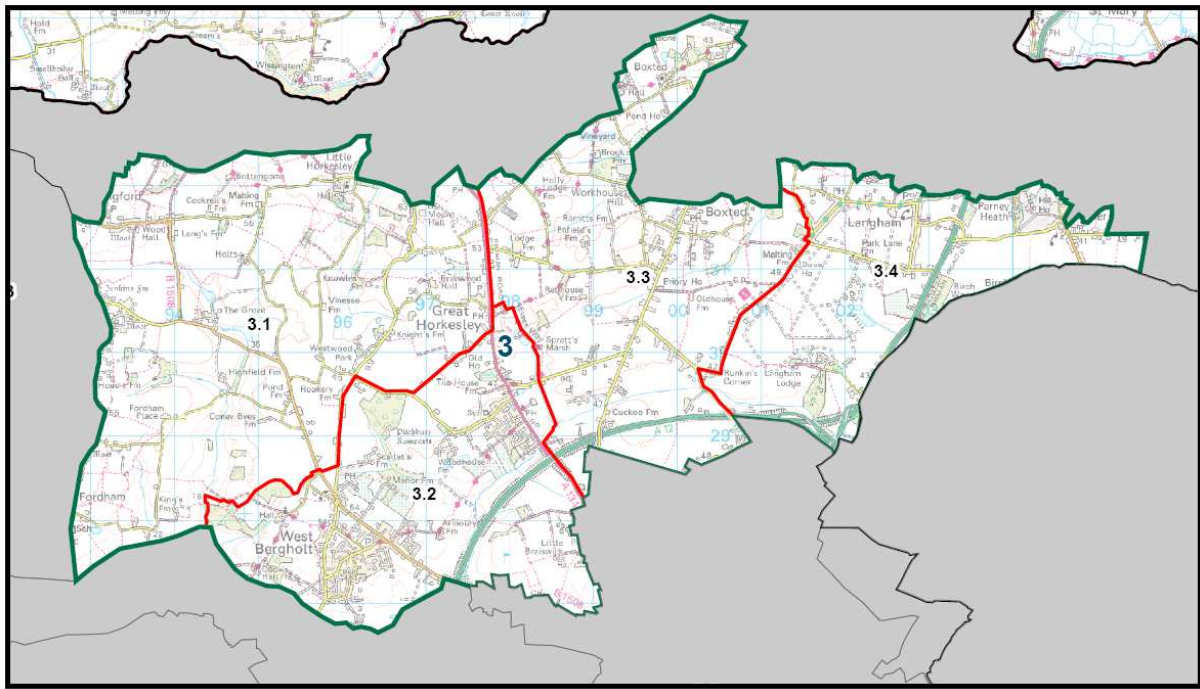
**3.1.2 HECA 2 : Bures and Fordham**

**Summary:** The area comprises the ridge of higher ground between the valleys of the Colne and the Stour. The drift geology consists of Lowestoft formation with gravels and London Clay exposed in the valley sides. The area contained a number of large heathlands. The settlement of the area was historically dispersed. There are

numerous cropmarks recorded within the area, these relate to prehistoric or Roman activity, as well as the medieval/post medieval settlement and landscape and a World War II airfield.

**Historic Landscape Character:** The fieldscape comprises irregular fields, probably of medieval origin. The settlement of the area was historically dispersed, comprising a scatter of cottages and farms, as well as church/hall complexes, moated sites, farms and cottages. This pattern is largely preserved within the present landscape, however, there has been extensive field boundary loss. There are a number of areas of woodland, mostly 18<sup>th</sup> or 19<sup>th</sup> century plantations, largely located in the northern half of the area. The area is bisected by the railway which runs north south. The construction of the WWII airfield at Bures has significantly altered the field layout in this part of the area.

**Archaeological Character:** Cropmarks are largely located within the northern part of the area comprising a range of enclosures and linear features. Evidence of Roman occupation is represented by a number of sites where masonry or roofing tile has been recovered. A designated Motte and Bailey castle of Norman date is located within the village of Bures. There are a large number of surviving historic buildings, many of which are Listed in the western part of the area. Details of the World War II airfields at Bures are also visible as cropmarks. A large number of Second WW defences are located along the line of the railway forming part of the Eastern Command line of defence. The railway itself, running from Marks Tey to Sudbury retains important industrial monuments along its length.



**Fig HECA 3 Great Horksley and West Bergholt**

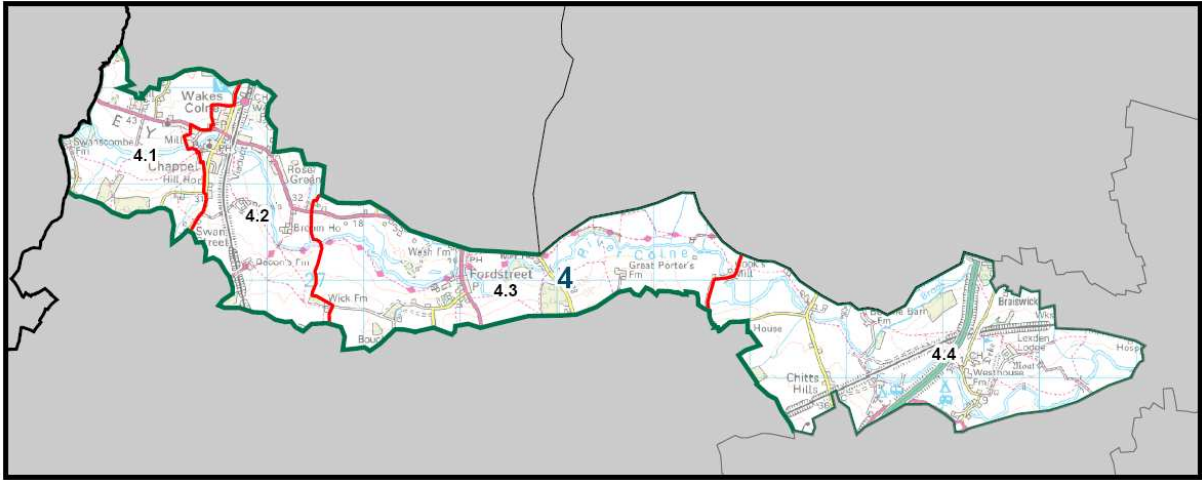
### **3.1.3 HECA 3 Great Horksley and West Bergholt**

**Summary:** The area comprises the ridge of higher ground between the valleys of the Colne and the Stour. The drift geology consists of Lowestoft formation with gravels and London Clay exposed in the valley sides. The area contained a number of large heathlands. The settlement of the area was historically dispersed. There are numerous cropmarks recorded within the area, these relate to prehistoric or Roman activity, as well as the medieval/post medieval settlement and landscape and a World War II airfield. The hillfort at Pitchbury Ramparts is Scheduled.

**Historic Landscape Character:** The fieldscape comprises irregular fields, probably of medieval origin and extensive areas of heath, including Horksley Heath, Bergholt Heath, Boxted Heath and Mile-end Heath. The heathlands were enclosed and subdivided into largely rectilinear fields in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The 1777 map shows a network of wide verges and roadside greens, but these had largely been enclosed by the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century. The settlement of the area was historically dispersed, comprising a scatter of cottages and farms fringing the edges of the heaths, as well as church/hall complexes, moated sites, farms and cottages in the remainder of the area. This pattern is largely preserved within the present landscape, with the addition of ribbon development and infilling on the former heathland. Along the

northern edge of the area are a number of former parks, including Langham Hall. There are also a number of areas of woodland, mostly 18<sup>th</sup> or 19<sup>th</sup> century plantations, largely located in the northern half of the area. There were extensive orchards, particularly on the site of WWII airfield at Boxted, these have however been largely removed.

**Archaeological Character:** There are numerous cropmarks recorded within the area, these include a diverse range of circular, sub rectangular, sub square and irregular ditched enclosures, ring-ditches as well as frequent linear features. Together they represent settlements, cemeteries, field-systems and trackways of prehistoric or Roman date, as well as the medieval/post medieval settlement and landscape. Details of the World War II airfield at Boxted are also visible as cropmarks. In the centre of the area is the Scheduled monument of Pitchbury Ramparts, an Iron Age hillfort. There are numerous surviving historic buildings, many of which are Listed.



**Fig HECA 4 Colne Valley**

**3.1.4 HECA 4 Colne Valley**

**Summary:** This area comprises the lower reaches of the River Colne between Wakes Colne and Colchester. The drift geology consists of Lowestoft formation with gravels exposed in the valley sides, and there are extensive alluvial deposits on the valley floor.

**Historic Landscape Character:** The fieldscape largely comprises pre-18th century irregular fields (these are probably of medieval origin and some maybe even older), interspersed with areas of later enclosure of common fields. This later enclosure largely occurred in the later medieval and early post-medieval period in Essex. Post 1950's boundary loss can be described as moderate, rising to severe in some areas. There are extensive tracts of enclosed meadow pasture along the valley floor. There are a number of areas of ancient woodland, as well as scattered small areas of 19th-20th century woodland plantation and some orchards. There was some former heathland to the north-east, but this has largely been developed and now lies under the modern village of West Bergholt. The historic settlement pattern of the medieval and post medieval period of the area was dispersed, comprising the small historic settlement at Wakes Colne with the remainder comprising halls, moated sites, farms and cottages.

**Archaeological Character:** Within the Colne valley there is a high potential for surviving palaeo-environmental deposits especially with the presence of alluvial deposits in the valley base. There are numerous cropmarks recorded at the eastern end of the area. The cropmarks include a diverse range of circular, sub rectangular, sub square and irregular ditched enclosures, as well as frequent linear features representing many periods of field-systems and trackways. Many of the cropmarks relate to prehistoric activity but other later periods are also represented and the ACA has clear potential for other periods with finds of Iron Age and Roman material as well as the medieval/post medieval settlement and landscape. Part of the Late Iron Age designated Colchester Dyke system bisects the eastern part of the area.

The historic settlement pattern of the medieval and post medieval period of the area was dispersed, comprising the small historic settlement at Wakes Colne/Chappel with the remainder comprising halls, moated sites, farms and cottages. There are numerous remains along the River Colne related to the Second World War Eastern Command line of defence which runs along the line of the River Colne from Colchester before turning northwards running along the line of the Colne Valley Railway.

HECA 5 Modern Colchester

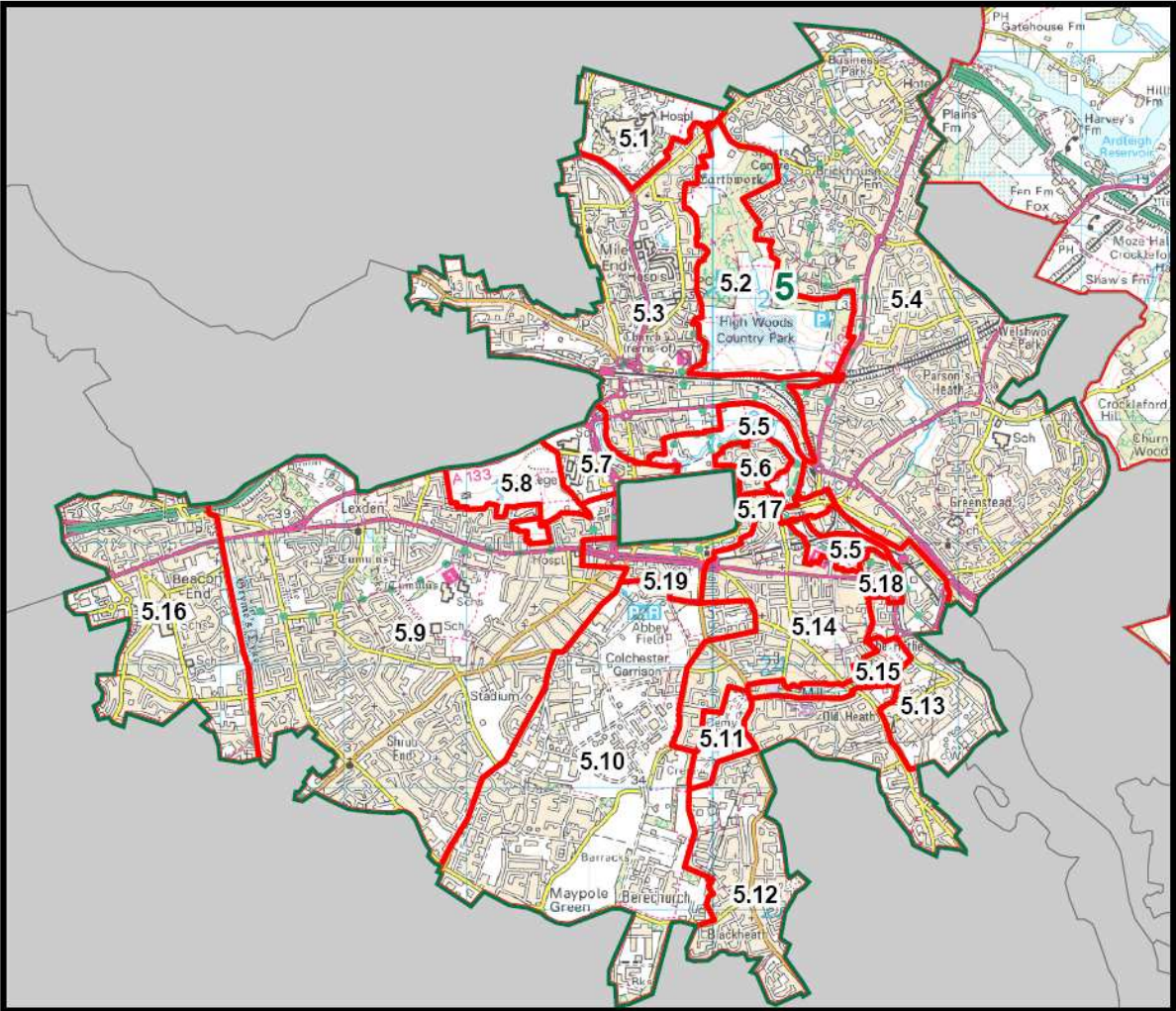


Fig HECA 5 Modern Colchester

3.1.5 HECA 5 Modern Colchester

**Summary:** This area comprises the extent of modern Colchester. It includes much of the late Iron Age oppida of Camulodunum, the immediate hinterland of the Roman and medieval town, the town’s historic port at the Hythe, a significant portion of the civil war siege works, the 19<sup>th</sup> Garrison, WWII defences and 20<sup>th</sup> century suburbs.

**Historic Urban Character:** Modern Colchester has developed around the historic walled town. A number of the main road corridors into the town have Georgian properties surviving along them, mixed in with Victorian and later development. Following the arrival of the railway in the 19<sup>th</sup> century to the north of the town, and the subsequent development of an engineering industry, terrace housing for factory workers spread out from the medieval and post medieval suburbs, taking over land to the south of the town that was previously occupied by the original garrison in New Town and around Old Heath Road and also along Maldon Road. These Victorian suburbs are characterised by regular block and street patterns and terraced housing interspersed with the occasional 'villa-style' house. Growth away from the town centre continued with residential expansion after the 1880's, particularly to the south-west of the walled town and along main road corridors such as Lexden Road. Lexden Road is now of mixed character, with post 1960's infill, as are many of the main road corridors into the town including Ipswich Road, Harwich Road, Mile End Road and Mersea Road. Land use is generally residential housing, although small groups of shops and other commercial properties are also known. A number of these road corridors have large blocks of built up land of similarly mixed character adjacent to them including around: North Station Road, West Bergholt Road and Turner Road in the north of the town; Welshwood Road and Greenstead Road in the west of the town; Magdalen Street, Bourne Road and Recreation Road in the south and Lexden Park, Heath Road and Shrub End to the west. Building styles in these areas range from the medieval period through to post 1960's but housing is usually a mixture of semi-detached, terraced and detached areas. The area to the south of Lexden Road includes a number of schools. The town saw large scale development during the Inter-war years and post war period with housing in these developments generally set out around crescents and cul-de-sacs. Large estates of this type include the areas around Shrub End and Prettygate in the south west, the area between St John's Road and Ipswich Road in the east of the town, and Monkwick, and the area south of Old Heath Road, in the south. Hawthorn Avenue to the south of St John's Road comprises an area of high-density inter-war housing with semi-detached and terraced housing and two and three-storey flats set out in courtyard layout. Several schools are located in the residential area. The town's post 1960's suburbs comprise significant portions of the built environment in the west and north east of the modern town with smaller developments interspersed elsewhere. In the east, the main areas

of development during this period include 1980's/1990's housing estates off Wheatfield Road, residential suburbs to the south of London Road and around Blackberry Road including housing development a former quarry site at Stanway Pit. To the north of the town is an extensive area of residential development dating to the late 1970's and early 1980's with additional construction of residential properties in recent years and the development of a new football stadium for the town next to the A12. Further to the east is a large area of 1960's detached and semi-detached suburban housing around St John's Road and St Cynis Road, late 20<sup>th</sup> century housing around Road Vale. To the south of this several avenues lead off Longridge Road with late 1970's and early 1980's bungalows and larger detached houses from the 1990's. On the north eastern edge of the town, housing around Avon Way comprises a combination of semi-detached houses, terraces and low-rise blocks of flats ranging in date from the 1970s to 1990's. Smaller developments of this period include the Riverside estate situated between the River Colne and the north east corner of the walled town. The town has witnessed extensive housing development during the early years of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, including the Balkerne Heights development outside the walled towns Balkerne Gate, large-scale construction of riverside flats on former industrial land at the Hythe and on former garrison land to the south of the town. Until relatively recently, the Colchester Garrison and associated military housing covered a large 'wedge' of land to the south of the town, extending from St John's Green, in the town's historic core, to Berechurch Hall road and open countryside to the south. The character of the area is currently changing, with Colchester Garrison forming one of the town's regeneration areas. Construction of modern housing as part of an 'urban village' is taking place around the Abbey field area and amongst some of the Victorian barracks. Modern military barrack blocks, recreational and other facilities are being built on formerly open land in the south of the area. Elsewhere there are areas of inter war and post war housing for military personnel and their families. The other characteristic type of built environment in the town are areas of modern commercial, industrial and retail land use, including the Tollgate retail centre off London Road, Whitehall Industrial estate, Peartree Road, Cowdray Centre, the Hythe and Severalls Business Park. Severalls Hospital in the north of the town was opened in 1913 and is set within a Grade II Registered Historic Park and Garden. Further to the south, at Turner Rise, lies the town's modern General Hospital.



**Archaeological Character:** The archaeological character of the area is dominated by above and below ground remains associated with its former function as the late Iron Age oppidum of Camulodunum, its subsequent position as the immediate hinterland of the Roman colonia (HECA 6) and the location within the area, of the town's historic port at the Hythe. Many archaeological investigations have taken place across the area, which have repeatedly demonstrated its high importance and potential. Early prehistoric activity in the area is demonstrated by finds of stray artefacts and pits from the Neolithic and Bronze Age indicating settlement in the area. Middle Iron Age features are limited but include a round house at Ypres Road, in the south of the area. During the late Iron Age, much of the HECA formed part of the oppidum of Camulodunum, which covered the area between the River Colne and Roman River to the south and was demarcated to the west by a series of massive bank and ditch earthworks. Many of the Iron Age dykes run through the area. The HECA contains late Iron Age funerary sites around Lexden, including the high status Lexden Tumulus. The HECA also includes the main area of manufacturing activity within the oppidum, at Sheepen. The site had its own defences and included the coin mint of the Iron Age tribal leader, Cunobelin. Following the Roman invasion, industrial activity including metal working, pottery and tile manufacturing and leather working continued at Sheepen until at least AD 60 when the site was destroyed during the Boudican revolt. A continuation of this activity, and roads linking Sheepen to the Roman town, have been revealed at the Colchester Institute. Two of Colchester's dykes, the Triple Dyke and Gryme's Dyke in the west of the area are considered to be Roman in origin. During the Roman period, burial continued in the Iron Age burial zone at Lexden and cremations have been recorded from Sheepen. Several large extra-mural cemeteries also developed within the area, to the west, north and south of the town. A Roman circus has been identified close to the southern cemetery in the area of the Abbey Field sports ground. The earliest cemetery, which may have had a military origin, was positioned along the London Road close to the Royal Grammar School, from which carved tombstones, a mausoleum and funerary sculptures have been recovered. A number of Temple sites are also known, including those near Sheepen and at the Royal Grammar School. Miscellaneous pits and ditches containing Roman waste have been recorded

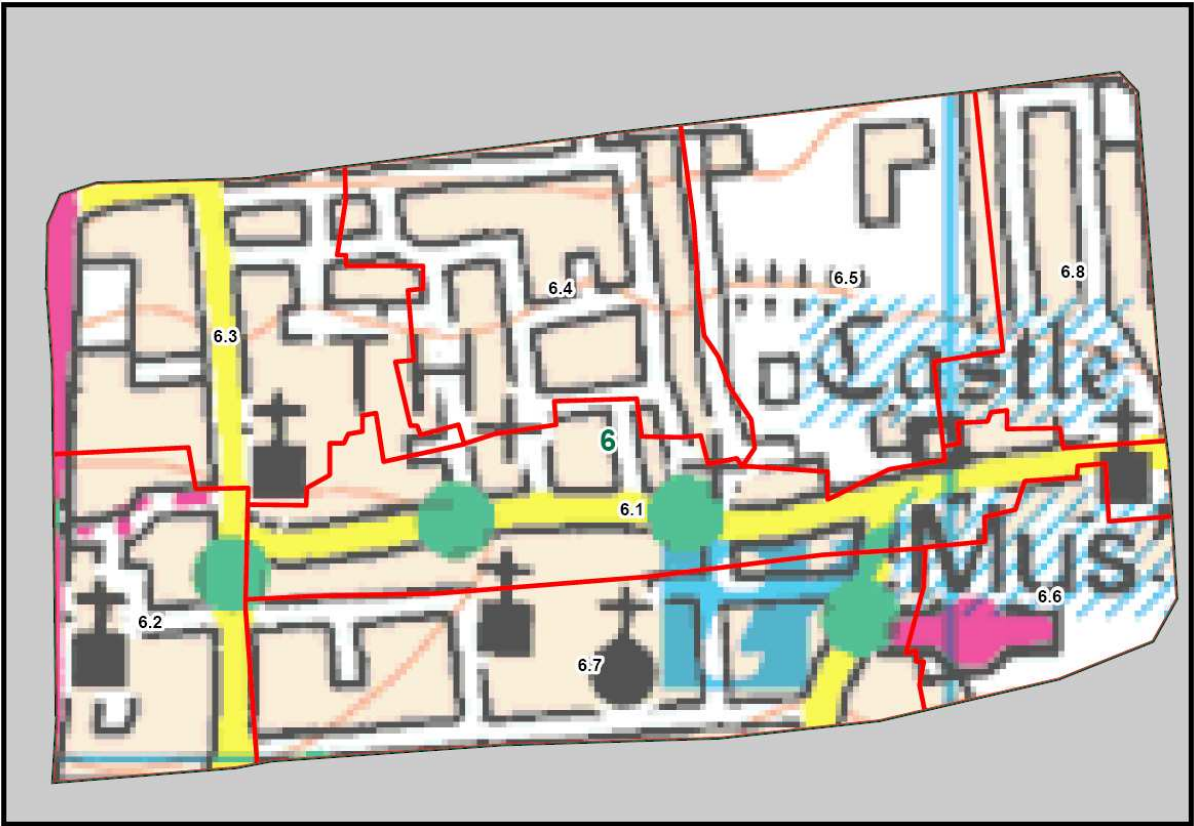
at several locations within the HECA and recent excavations on the former Garrison have revealed settlement including farmsteads at Kirkee McMunn Barracks and Goojerat Barracks.

An early Anglo Saxon cemetery is known from a considerable body of finds to the south of the walled town in the Mersea Road area and two Viking type axeheads were found in the River Colne but there is minimal evidence of the Danish occupation of the town.

During the medieval period, a port and associated settlement was established at the Hythe to the east of the walled town and physically distinct from it. Excavations have revealed settlement around the 12<sup>th</sup> century church of St Leonard-on-the-Hythe and further deposits can be expected including waterlogged deposits/features associated with the former river frontage and quayside. Between the Hythe and the walled town stood the Leper Hospital of St Mary Magdalen. Elsewhere in the zone, medieval pottery kilns are known from a rural site at Mile End, a moated site is located at Lexden Lodge and medieval churches relate to extra mural parishes such as Lexden. Bourne Mill is a scheduled monument, to the south of the walled town, which had its origins as a late 16<sup>th</sup> century fishing Lodge. Bourne Mill was later converted and adjacent fishponds survive. In 1632 upwards of twenty corn mills are recorded in the borough; traces of the millponds can be seen in the river and stream channels and waterlogged deposits are likely to survive in places. High Woods Country Park to the north of the town contains a remnant of woodland which once formed part of the great Forest of Essex and includes the remains of a scheduled earthwork that may have formed part of the Civil War siege works that surrounded the town in 1648. Other evidence for the siege has been recovered nearby at Turner Rise and the significant deposits and the buried remains of a fort have been identified during excavations and from aerial photographs and geophysics survey at Sheepen. In the 17<sup>th</sup> century Winnock's Almshouses in Military Road were established in the town and the hospital building of St Mary Magdalen was also converted into an almshouse.

The onset of the French Wars in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century led to the establishment of a large military garrison in Colchester leading to the building of the largest new barrack

complex in Britain in the area around Barrack Street and Artillery Road and a burial ground located early in the 19<sup>th</sup> century on the site of the later Garrison Church. The first garrison was demolished after the end of the Napoleonic wars but a new one was established after the arrival of the railway in 1843 with large and extensive accommodation built to the south of the town. Significant buildings of the Victorian Garrison survive but others, including the Garrison hospital have been demolished. Some of these have been revealed by recent excavations. During WWII Colchester was fortified as an 'anti-tank island' and the Eastern Command Line or Colchester Stop Line passed through the town. Surviving defensive structures include an extensive anti-tank ditch revealed in excavations at Bluebottle Grove, pill boxes, anti-tank obstacles and air raid shelters.



**Fig HECA 6 Colchester Historic Core**

**3.1.6 HECA 6 Colchester Historic Core**

**Summary:** This area comprises the extent of the walled Roman and medieval town and its associated suburbs. The built heritage includes a number of iconic structures such as the Roman Balkerne Gate, Saxon Trinity Church tower, Norman Castle, St

Botolph's Priory, St John's Abbey Gatehouse and medieval timber framed houses including those of the Dutch Quarter. Despite significant modern development, the town contains extensive archaeological deposits encompassing evidence for prehistoric occupation of the gravel ridge that the town is sited on, the establishment of Britain's first Roman Legionary Fortress and Colonia, a Boudican destruction horizon, the later Roman town, early Saxon settlement and the late Saxon re-establishment of the town, Norman military and religious foundations and medieval and post medieval growth. In places, archaeological deposits are deeply stratified and there is potential for good preservation resulting from localised waterlogging and the Boudican destruction horizon. Extensive excavations have taken place in the town since the Victorian period, with two large sites investigated during the 20<sup>th</sup> century at Lion Walk and Culver Square and large scale excavations outside the Balkerne Gate, at Butt Road and Middleborough. More recently, the area of St Mary's Hospital has been examined as well as re-development on the sixth form college. The town contains a significant number of listed buildings, a Conservation Area, numerous scheduled monuments and Castle Park is also a Grade II Registered Historic Park and Garden.

*Historic Urban Character:* The Roman town walls set the topographical limits for the future medieval and post medieval development in the town and much of the historic street pattern, together with several historic and landmark buildings, survives. The walled town has a relatively dense pattern of development centered on several main street spines. The thorough-fares are also characterised by historic passages and narrow streets. There is rich variation in architectural styles, built-form, materials and details. The wide High Street follows the line of the main Roman road through the town and was formerly the area of the medieval market. Today, it forms a central commercial and retail spine. At its eastern end the High Street curves around the line of the former castle bailey. Landmark buildings include the medieval Red Lion Hotel and St Nicholas Church and St James Church, the George Hotel, the Victorian Corn Exchange, and Edwardian town hall. At the west end of the High Street is the precinct of St Mary's, which is dominated by the Victorian water tower 'Jumbo' and which also contains the distinctive 20<sup>th</sup> century Mercury Theatre, St Mary's Church, Friends Meeting House and Old Court House. The Roman Balkerne gate survives as

a built structure and still serves as an entry point to the walled town. Narrow streets run west from the Head Street frontage. North Hill runs down from the west end of the High Street and retains several medieval timber framed buildings, such as the 16<sup>th</sup> century Marquis of Granby inn, some fine Georgian frontages and the mid 18<sup>th</sup> century St Peter's Church. Behind the North Hill frontage and to the North of the High Street is the town's distinctive Dutch Quarter, named after the Flemish refugees and weavers encouraged to settle in the town during the reign of Elizabeth I. The quarter is predominantly residential with a largely medieval street pattern and significant number of timber framed buildings from that period. Distinctive buildings include St Helen's Chapel, St Martin's Church, and several houses with timbered frontages along West Stockwell Street. To the east of the Dutch Quarter is Castle Park, dominated by the Norman castle keep and its associated earthwork defences set within a Victorian landscaped park. The Georgian mansion of Hollytrees and adjacent War Memorial are landmark features in the area. Queen Street, at the east end of the High Street is predominantly Victorian with occasional Georgian and modern buildings including the bus station. A landmark building to house an art gallery has recently been constructed to the east of Queen Street on one of the last remaining undeveloped areas of the town. South of the High Street are the modern pedestrian shopping precincts of Lion Walk and the Culver Centre, bounded to the south by properties along St Isaac's Walk, Eld Lane and Short Wyre Street and separated from each other by the historic routeway of Trinity Street and its medieval buildings including the late 15<sup>th</sup> century timber framed town house of Tymperleys, now a clock museum, and late Victorian Holy Trinity Church with distinctive Anglo-Saxon tower. Lion Walk precinct includes the former Congregational Church tower re-built in 1884 after the Colchester earthquake.

The historic towns medieval suburbs contain buildings from a range of periods and several landmark structures. East Hill at the east end of the High Street has a mix of medieval, Georgian and Victorian housing and modern infill. The distinctive streetscape includes the former Georgian and Victorian mill and commercial buildings clustered around the river crossing and timber framed Siege House and Rose and Crown Hotel. Adjacent to the river crossing at East Bridge is a crenellated wall built as a defence during WWII. St John's Green is located to the south of the

town based around the 11<sup>th</sup> Century Benedictine Abbey of St John's and its surviving 15<sup>th</sup> century gatehouse.

*Archaeological Character:* The archaeological character of the area is dominated by above and below ground remains associated with its almost continuous function as an urban centre since Roman times. Many archaeological investigations have taken place across the town, which have repeatedly demonstrated its high importance and potential, including deeply stratified deposits, water logging and the Boudican destruction horizon. Prior to the Roman invasion, prehistoric activity in the area has been demonstrated by finds of stray artefacts and occasional pits from the Neolithic. Bronze Age and Iron Age finds also indicate settlement in the area and during the late Iron Age, the HECA formed part of the oppidum of Camulodunum, lying adjacent to the main area of manufacturing activity at Sheepen (HECA 6).

Following the Roman invasion, Britain's first Legionary Fortress was established on the ridge above the River Colne. The fortress covered an area of about 20 ha and had a large annexe to the east. It was defended by a V-shaped ditch and rampart which have been recorded at several locations. No evidence for gates or interval towers has been retrieved to date. Many of the fortresses streets and associated drainage, barrack blocks and non barrack buildings have been identified through excavation.

In AD 49, a colonia was founded on the site of the fortress. Much of the fortress street grid was retained and used as the core of a new grid for the colonia. The destruction of the colonia in AD60/61 during the Boudican revolt, led to excellent preservation of archaeological structures and deposits from the early town within a destruction horizon underlying much of the modern town centre. Archaeological evidence confirms that the fortress ditch was filled in and the town left undefended. Many military buildings were converted for civilian use and the legionary annexe was expanded and used to house the town's public buildings. Excavation has shown that the new colonia was predominantly built of wood, wattle and daub, with the notable exception of the massive Temple of Claudius and the great monumental arch built on the site of the west gate of the fortress. Aside from the former military buildings, excavation has identified a number of pre-Boudican timber structures including an

impressive early town house at the Lion Walk site. Buildings have also been identified with roles for manufacturing, retail and storage including a lamp workshop in the vicinity of North Hill and pottery shops along the main east-west street.

Following the destruction brought by the Boudican revolt, the town was re-founded, and defended by a new masonry wall, much of which survives. Entry to the town was via at least six gates, parts of two of these are still visible above ground, and between 12 and 24 interval towers. The monumental arch was incorporated into the Balkerne Gate. The wall also had an associated V-shaped ditch and preserved timber spikes set into the ground have been recovered from waterlogged deposits along St Peter's Street. Archaeological excavations indicate that by the 2<sup>nd</sup> century the town had begun to prosper and the wall was provided with an internal rampart. Within the walls, the town was divided into around forty insulae, demarcated by gravelled streets and associated drains. Large, well-appointed town houses were constructed containing fine mosaics, plain tessellated pavements, hypocaust systems, window glass and rooms decorated with painted wall plaster. Palatial houses were also built outside the town walls, such as at Middleborough, where one building had its own private baths. Public buildings identified by excavation include the Temple of Claudius and its associated precinct entered via a monumental arch, a theatre and water works. The town is also likely to have contained public baths, a forum and perhaps an amphitheatre but these have yet to be found. Water was probably provided to the town via an aqueduct, for which evidence was recorded at the Balkerne Lane excavations, and conducted around it by wooden water-mains. Drainage was through arched masonry drains, although waterlogged and well-preserved timber drains have been recovered outside the town walls in St Peter's Street. Significant suburban settlement has been identified outside at least two of the town's main gates at Middleborough, and to the north of the River Colne, and Balkerne Lane. However, extra-mural activity can be demonstrated on all sides of the town and current understanding is biased by the pattern of excavation which has been mainly focused to the west.

Archaeological evidence suggests that the town, including its suburbs, went into a dramatic decline during the 3<sup>rd</sup> century, with houses demolished without replacement and open areas increasingly used for cultivation. Improvements to the town

defences, including widening of the town ditch and blocking of Balcerne Gate and Duncan's gate, have also been identified. Evidence for 4<sup>th</sup> century occupation of the town has been identified along the High Street. At Butt Road, outside the south west corner of the walled town, a 4<sup>th</sup> century cemetery with graves containing burials in wooden coffins aligned east-west was laid out over an earlier one. The cemetery was associated with a masonry church and produced evidence for family plots.

There has been no conclusive proof for 5th century occupation of any Roman structures in the town and the transition from Roman to Anglo-Saxon Colchester remains obscure. However, three sunken-featured huts excavated within the walls in Colchester together with scattered small finds and a build up of 'dark earth' suggest dispersed and low level occupation amongst the ruins of the Roman town. Cemeteries are known from archaeological discoveries outside the town walls (HECA 6).

There is no trace in the archaeological record for the documented Danish presence in the town but the town was re-established by Edward the Elder early in the 10<sup>th</sup> century and elements of the walled town's medieval street system indicate that prior to the Norman Conquest, one or more major reorganisations of the town plan were superimposed over the surviving fabric of the Roman town. However, there is scant physical evidence for settlement within the 10th and 11th century town. Notable concentrations of Late Saxon pottery have been identified along the High Street and North Hill but the distribution of other artefacts add little to the understanding of Colchester at this time. The paucity of archaeological evidence from the town suggests that a large portion of the area within the Roman walls remained undeveloped during the period and the almost ubiquitous post-Roman topsoil that accumulated to varying depths across the area appears to support this. The tower of Holy Trinity Church is the best surviving monument from this period of the town's history.

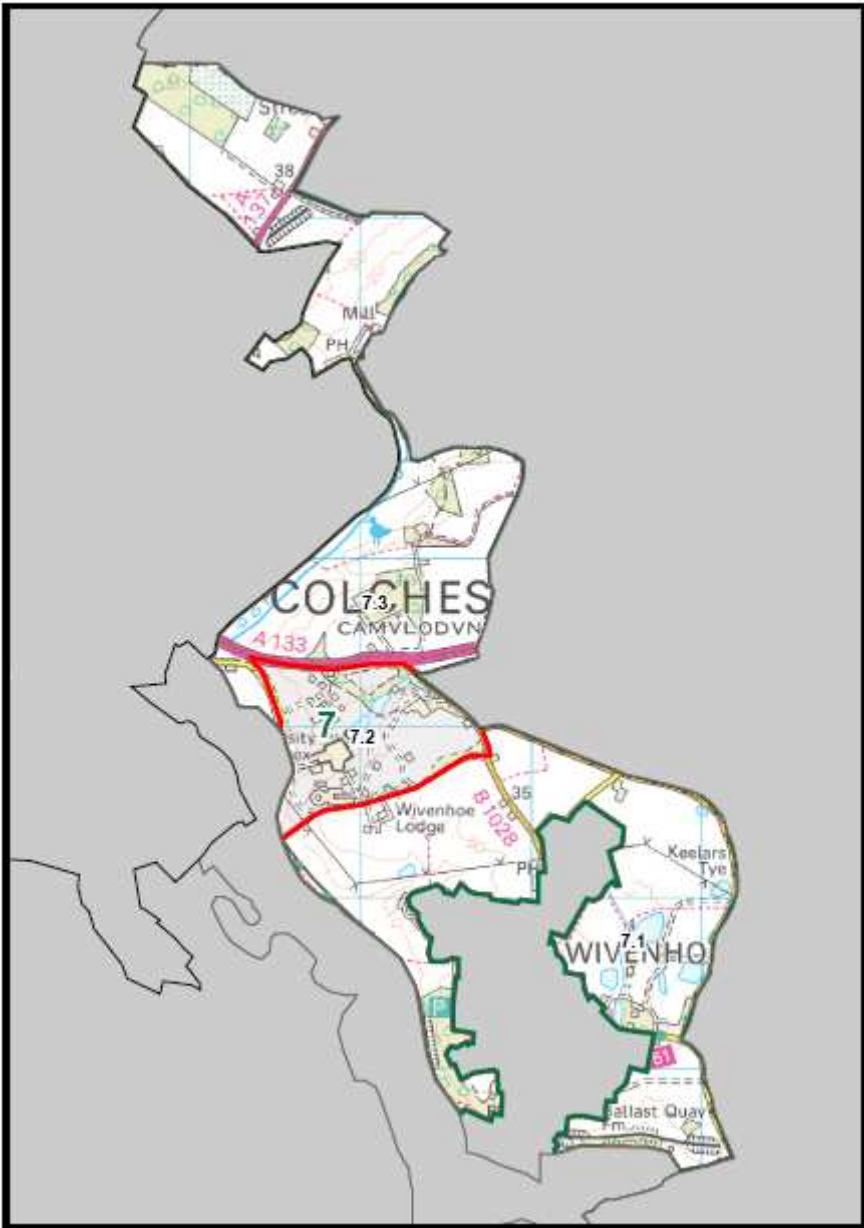
Following the Norman Conquest, Colchester was dominated by the Baron Eudo Dapifer who founded St John's Abbey and restored St Helen's Chapel. He was also responsible for the construction of Colchester Castle, which was built on the base of the Roman Temple of Claudius late in the 11<sup>th</sup> century and provided with defensive



earthworks resulting in a diversion of the High Street. Several stone built buildings have been identified within the Castle's bailey including a chapel. The town was provided with at least four main gates and a number of pedestrian gates for access to the suburbs. St John's Abbey was founded in 1095 AD to the south of the walled town on the site of an earlier church identified from excavations. The abbey gate still survives as does much of the precinct wall but the internal layout of its buildings is poorly understood, despite recent discoveries of parts of the monastic buildings. St Botolph's Priory was founded around 1100 AD outside the town's South Gate and was the first Augustinian foundation in Britain. Only the nave of the church survives above ground but extensive below ground deposits have been demonstrated. Other religious foundations included the House of the Greyfriars which stood on the High Street and the House of the Crutched Friars located outside the south west corner of the walled town along Crouch Street. Little is known about the layout of Greyfriars but the site at Crouch Street, including a cemetery, has been partially excavated. New churches were also founded within the town during the medieval period. Other masonry buildings included the Moot Hall and at least five stone houses concentrated in the commercial centre of the town, particularly the High Street, including one of 12<sup>th</sup> century date recorded at Lion Walk. Stone was also used in the construction of cellars for properties including a number along the High Street. Much of the medieval building utilised re-cycled building materials retrieved from robber trenches dug into the town's Roman layers. Medieval pitting is concentrated along the town's main thoroughfares and represents activity at the rear of properties fronting the streets. Other features such as individual walls, ovens, hearths and wells also point to areas of domestic occupation within the town. The sites of several non-masonry buildings have also been identified during excavations.

The physical evidence for domestic dwellings outside the town walls during the medieval period consists of a handful of excavated buildings and features including sites at Middleborough, outside the North Gate and around the river crossing at East Bridge, which spread east to where a 14<sup>th</sup> century building, the Rose and Crown, still stands. Excavations at Osborne Street, to the south of the walled town and close to the site of North Bridge, have revealed waterlogged organic remains. During the 14<sup>th</sup> century a series of eight bastions were added to the south east circuit of the town walls. A significant number of timber framed buildings survive from the late medieval

period, including along Tinity Street, Queen Street, High Street, North Hill and within the Dutch Quarter. There are a considerable number of later buildings surviving but these remain to be investigated. A number of buildings in the town suffered damage and destruction during the civil war siege in 1648, including St Mary's Church tower. During the 16<sup>th</sup> century, a Dutch community became established in the town, manufacturing 'bays' and 'says' which brought commercial success to the flagging cloth industry that had developed from the 14<sup>th</sup> century. Small finds from the town provide evidence of manufacturing and trade, including leather working, during the late medieval period.



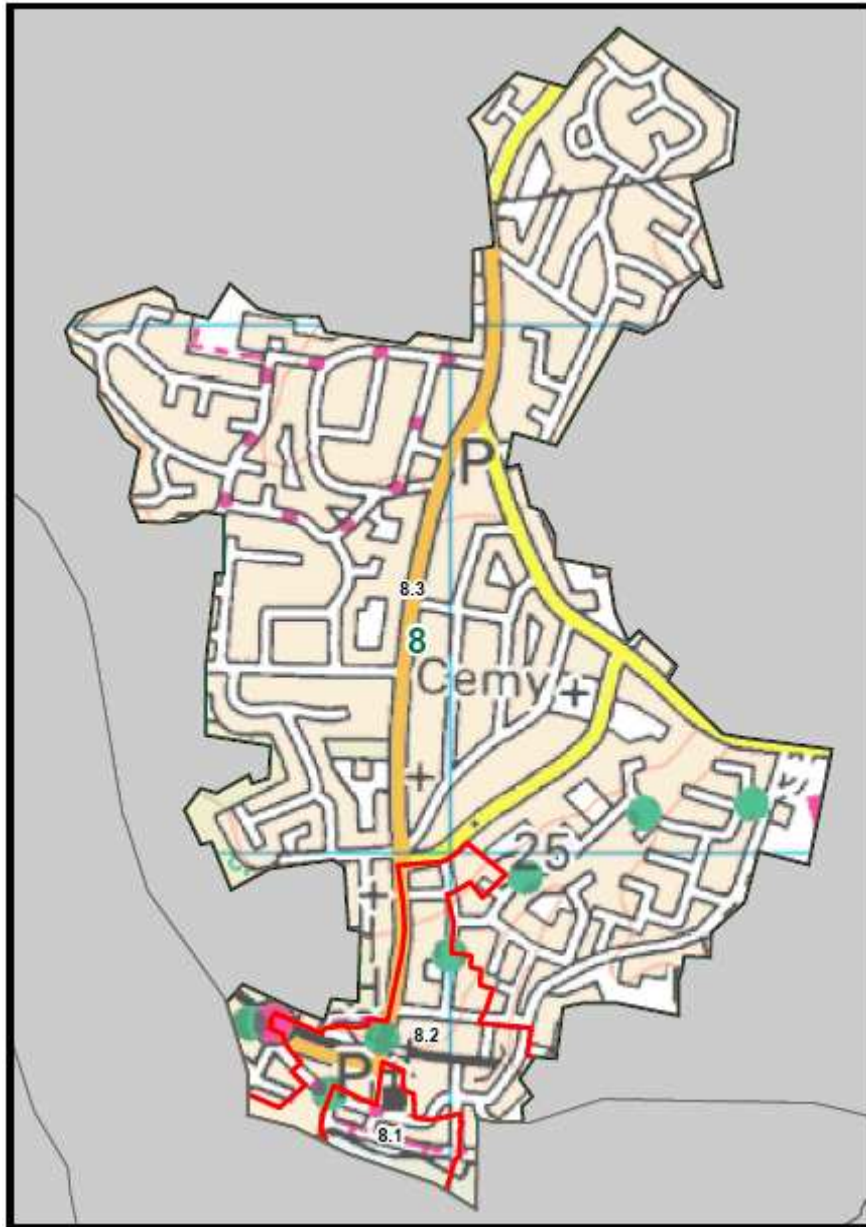
**Fig HECA 7 Wivenhoe Area**

### **3.1.7 HECA 7 Wivenhoe area**

**Summary:** The area comprises a narrow area of land, bounded by the outskirts of Colchester town and the eastern slopes above the River Colne to the east and south, and by the District boundary to the west. The geology consists of Lowestoft formation with Kesgrave sands and gravels and London Clay exposed in the valley sides, and there are extensive alluvial deposits on the valley floor. It includes the former parkland of Wivenhoe Hall, now the University of Essex, former heathlands and a highly dispersed settlement pattern.

**Historic Landscape Character:** Part of a wider historic landscape area which extends across a large area of the Tendring plateau. The area is characterised by large areas of former heathland, including Wivenhoe Heath. Historically they were used for rough pasture but were enclosed in the early 19th century. The present landscape comprises a mixture of irregular fields, probably of medieval origin and more rectilinear fields that were formed by the sub-division and enclosure of the heathlands. There are a few patches of ancient woodland and there were also extensive orchards. The University of Essex, set in the former parkland of Wivenhoe Hall, forms a major component of this landscape. Historically settlement comprised a dispersed scatter of manors, farms, cottages and small hamlets. This settlement pattern is still evident today.

**Archaeological Character:** There are numerous cropmarks recorded, with particular concentrations in the south-eastern part of the area. The cropmarks include a diverse range of ditched enclosures, as well as frequent linear features representing many periods of field-systems and trackways. Many of the cropmarks relate to prehistoric activity but other later periods are also represented and the area has clear potential for other periods with finds of Iron Age and Roman material as well as the medieval/post medieval settlement and landscape. Part of the south-eastern corner of the area has been quarried for sand and gravel. In addition the site of a brick-making site and quarry is recorded on the HER in the northern half of the area.



**Fig HECA 8 Wivenhoe Town**

### **3.1.8 HECA 8 Wivenhoe town**

**Summary:** The area comprises the urban area of Wivenhoe, a small port town located on the west bank of the River Colne. The economy of the town was dominated by its estuarine position, with the principal employers being the boat-building and fishing (particularly oyster-fishing) industries.

**Historic Urban Character:** In the medieval period the Church and churchyard appear to have marked the approximate northern limits of the town, with the southern

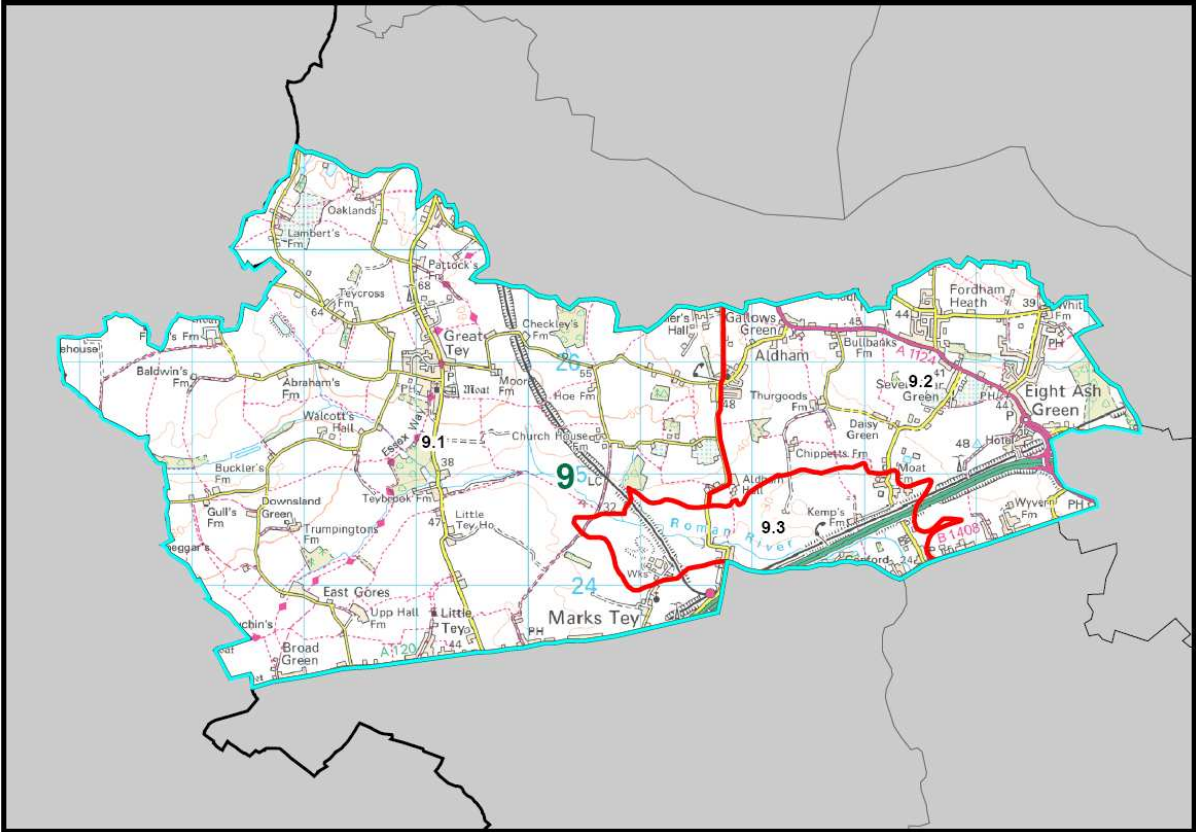
boundary of the town formed by The Quay. There was some expansion to the north and east of the town in the post-medieval period, but the main period of expansion took place in the second half of the nineteenth century following the construction of the railway. The main ship-building works were located on the marshlands to the east and west of the town. On the north-western side of the town stood Wivenhoe Hall, demolished in 1927.

The economy of Wivenhoe was dominated by its estuarine position. It is probable that the medieval buildings facing onto the quay included warehousing and fish-processing facilities, whilst there may also have been boat-building yards on the quay itself. In the post-medieval period Wivenhoe served as an entrepôt for Colchester and it is possible that it also served the same function in the medieval period. In the post-medieval period farm produce from the Wivenhoe hinterland was exported to London, and coal imported in exchange. This activity was reflected in the eighteenth-century maps by the presence of several coal-yards and seven granaries for the storage of grain in transit. However the principal employers in the town were the boat-building and fishing industries, including all their ancillaries such as rope-makers, sail-makers and coopers. In the nineteenth century the ship-building industry was dominated by the building of fishing-vessels and bespoke yachts. By the twentieth century this had expanded to include the building of container ships, and the refitting of ships for use during the two World Wars. The last of the large boat-yards closed in 1986.

Many of the buildings in the historic core are Listed. The earlier buildings are mostly timber-framed, often with later brick facades. The later buildings are of brick construction; particularly notable in this respect are the fine brick tenement buildings in Alma Street. There are a few buildings of particular interest, including the Old Garrison House, East Street is dated to c.1600, is timber-framed and has a particularly good example of pargetting on its first floor street frontage.

**Archaeological Character:** The location of the town on the eastern slope of the River Colne would have made it a favoured location for settlement from the prehistoric period onwards. The Church contains Roman brick and tile within its building fabric, suggesting the presence of a reasonably substantial Roman building

within or in the vicinity of Wivenhoe. Evidence for Saxon occupation comes from the Domesday Book, and remains for this period are most likely along the quay area and around the church. Medieval and post-medieval remains can be anticipated throughout the historic core, and there is the possibility of waterlogged deposits buried behind the modern quay front.



**Fig HECA 9 Great Tey area**

**3.1.9 HECA 9 Great Tey area**

**Summary:** The area comprises the Roman river valley and the area surrounding Great Tey. The drift geology consists of largely Lowestoft formation with gravels exposed in the valley sides, and alluvial deposits on the valley floor of the Roman River. There are deposits deriving from a glacial meltwater lake containing human occupation dating back 40,000 years. A range of cropmark complexes indicate multi-period occupation especially on the sides of the River Valley. The position of Stane Street on the southern boundary of the area influenced the historic fieldscape some of which has been lost to agricultural improvements. The settlement pattern was largely dispersed with a small focal settlement at Great Tey.

**Historic Landscape Character:** The fieldscape is complex, comprising a mix of pre-18th century irregular fields (these are probably of medieval origin and some maybe even older) and pre-18th century co-axial fields (also of probable medieval origin), the latter in particular respond to the local topography. Post 1950s boundary loss can be described as moderate to severe in some areas. There are areas of historic enclosed meadow pasture of probable medieval or earlier origin in the valley floor of the Roman River. The heath at Fordham survives well in the western part of the area.

The historic settlement pattern is dispersed, comprising isolated manors, church/hall complexes, farms, moated sites and hamlets. The Roman roads of Stane Street and the former A12 have also left their imprint on the modern landscape, influencing field alignment and settlement distribution.

**Archaeological Character:** The area is bisected by the valley of the Roman River from which there is a high potential for surviving palaeo-environmental deposits. In the southern part of the zone the complete Hoxnian interglacial cycle is represented by lacustrine deposits within a lake basin which filled with sediment during the entire interglacial and part of the ensuing Wolstonian glacial stage. It both animal, vegetable and some human artifacts, accumulated over a period of 30,000-50,000 years.

Prehistoric occupation is attested by the presence of a range of circular cropmarks indicative of Bronze Age burial mounds overlooking the Roman River valley. Further cropmarks complexes are recorded along the northern side of the Roman River and the eastern end of the area. The cropmarks include a range of, sub rectangular, sub square and irregular ditched enclosures, as well as linear features representing many periods of field-systems and trackways.

The southern boundary of the area is formed by the main Roman Road from Colchester to Braughing (Stane Street). The site of a Roman villa is recorded to the south of Great Tey which is scheduled. The settlement of the area was historically

dispersed, comprising the small settlements at Great Tey with the remaining settlement pattern comprising church/hall complexes, some moats, farms and cottages. The heath at Fordham has a range of farms and cottages surrounding it.

Industrial heritage is represented by brick works with one of the brick kilns located to the north of Marks Tey being scheduled. The area is bisected by two railway lines, one comprising the main London to Colchester link with the second being the Marks Tey to Sudbury route, both of which retain important industrial elements.



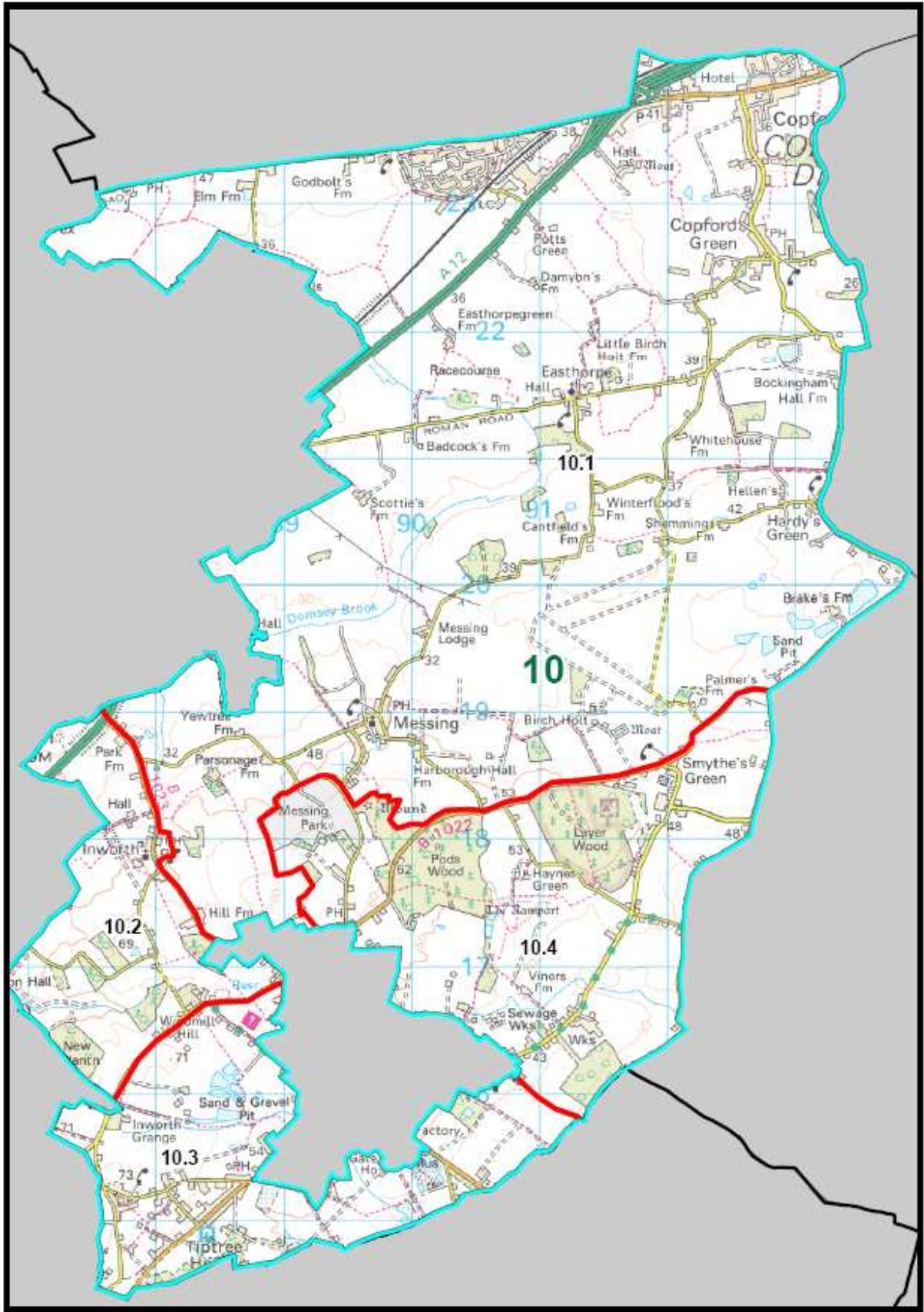


Fig HECA 10 Messing and Marks Tey area

### **3.1.10 HECA 10 Messing and Marks Tey area**

**Summary:** The area comprises a low ridge of land in the southern half of the Borough, dipping to the north into the valley of the Domsey Brook. The geology consists of London Clay, overlain to the north by Boulder Clay and along the ridge by sands and gravels. Historically this area was largely heath, with large areas surviving through to the 19<sup>th</sup> century when much was enclosed. Today most is arable although areas of Tiptree Heath survive. Arable production has provided much of produce for the jam factory. Excavations indicate multi-period occupation across the area from the Bronze Age. A number of Roman roads cut through the area.

**Historic Landscape Character:** Historically this area comprised Tiptree Heath, a huge area of common rough pasture and wood-pasture shared between several neighbouring parishes. Encroachment on this area began in a piecemeal fashion in the medieval period, but extensive open tracts still remained until the early 19<sup>th</sup> century when it was finally enclosed by the Enclosure Act. Post 1950's boundary loss can be characterised as moderate to high, in many cases involving the removal of boundaries introduced in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. Some areas of the original heath and wood-pasture survive, and there are large areas of ancient woodland surviving at Pods Wood and Layer Wood. There is one large park, Messing Park, located in the centre of the area. The valley of the Domsey Brook has enclosed meadow pasture along its floor.

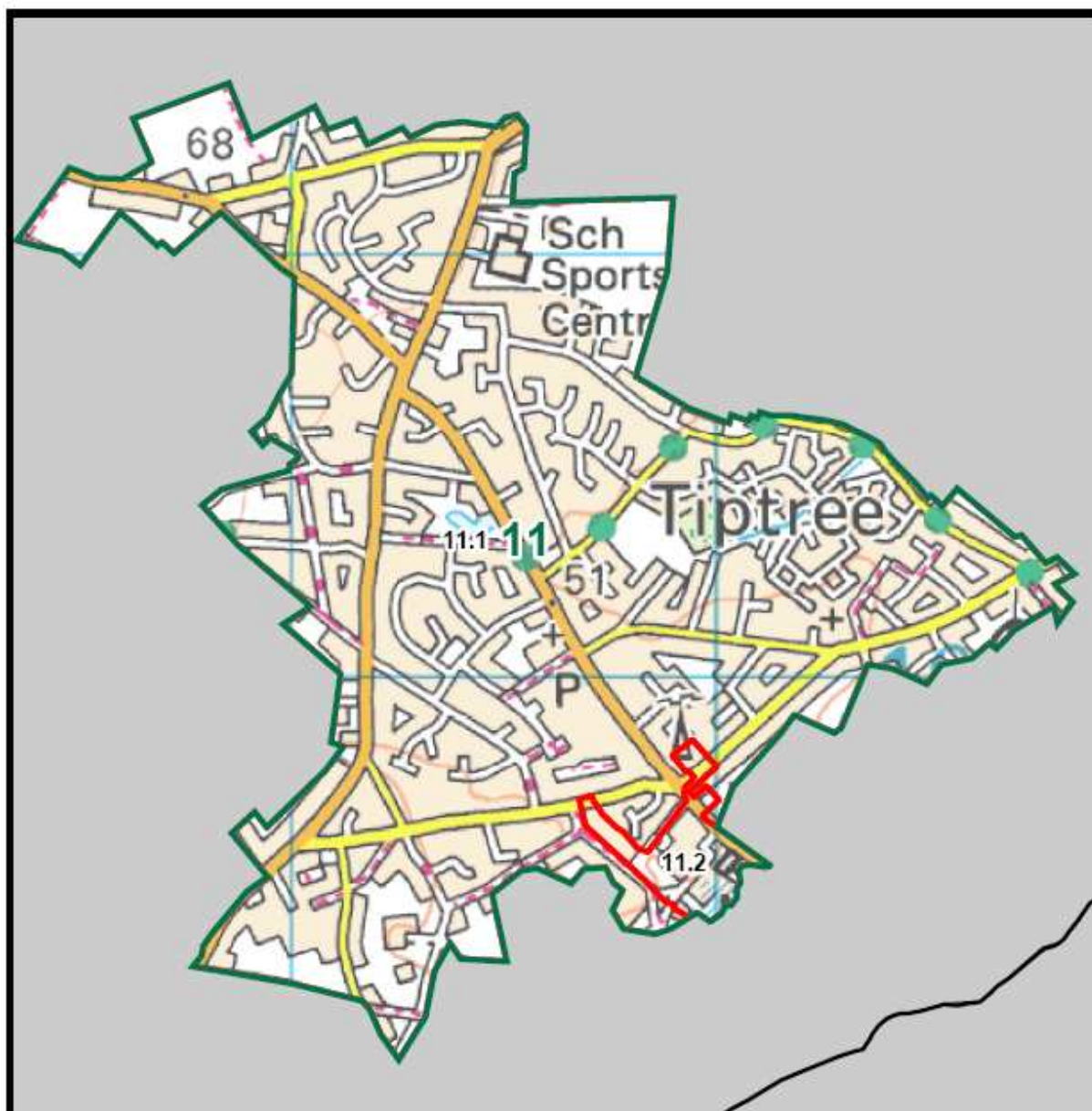
Horticulture, linked to the Tiptree jam Factory, plays a very important role in the development of the 20<sup>th</sup> century landscape in this area. Historically the settlement pattern was very dispersed and sparse, comprising isolated church/hall complexes, manors, farms, cottages and small hamlets. The modern settlement of Tiptree largely dates to the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

**Archaeological Character:** Cropmarks are scarce in this area. This may be a reflection of the geology or of limited exploitation of the area until fairly recently. Those that are visible largely comprise linear features, probably field boundaries and trackways of varying dates, and a number of enclosures, possibly of later prehistoric

in date. Excavations in advance of quarrying have shown multi-period occupation within the area from the Bronze Age.

The Roman road to Colchester forms the northern limit of this area with a number of Roman roads running south west from the town of Colchester. A rampart, located at Haynes Green in part consists of a double bank with a waterfilled ditch between the banks with the central section protected as a scheduled monument. The actual function of this earthwork remains unclear.

The historic settlement pattern was highly dispersed comprising small hamlets situated at the edge of the heath with a small number of church/hall complexes and medieval moated sites. Part of the World War II airfield at Birch survives; the remainder is visible as cropmarks, although quarrying has removed part of it. Industrial development is largely associated with the jam factory at Tiptree, with a large part of the agricultural economy in the area producing material for the factory.



**Fig HECA 11 Village of Tiptree**

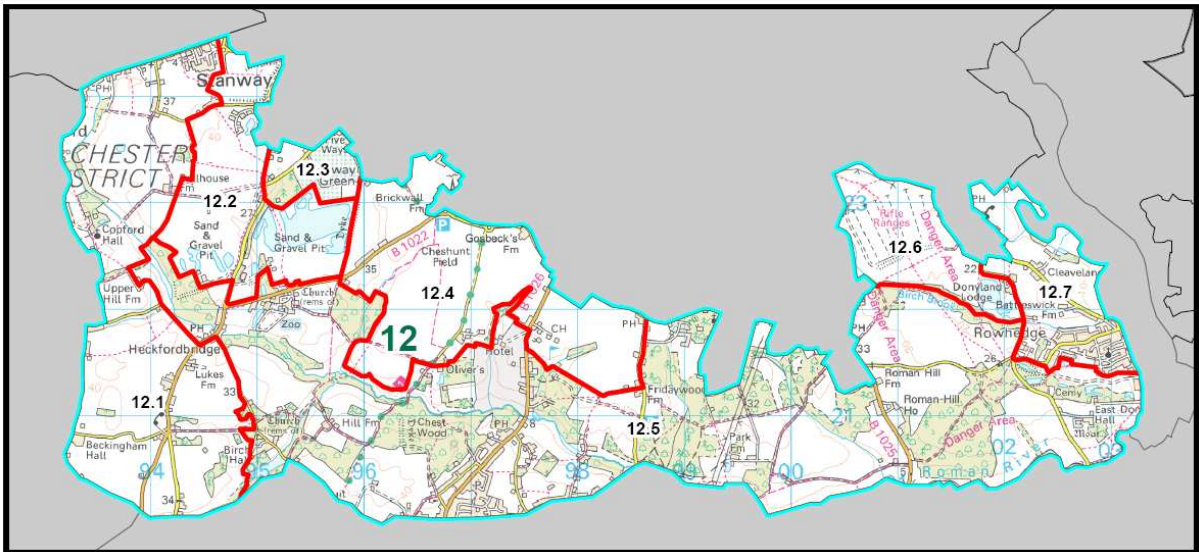
### **3.1.11 HECA 11 Village of Tiptree**

**Summary:** The town of Tiptree lies mainly on glaciofluvial deposits of Middle Pleistocene date. Although little archaeological fieldwork has been undertaken within Tiptree the chance finds indicate a long history back to the Palaeolithic. These deposits are especially important as the town lies on the edge of a Hoxnian Lake. During the medieval and post medieval period Tiptree comprised a small nucleated village with a dispersed pattern of farmsteads around. Only in the 20<sup>th</sup> century with

the construction of the jam factory and the coming of the railway line did the town expand at a rapid rate.

**Historic Urban Character:** In the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century in the southern part of the area the Wilkins jam factory was constructed along with its associated workers housing. The housing and the factory forms an important historic area within the settlement of Tiptree. Major urban expansion took place in Tiptree from the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century with the once linear settlement centred around a crossroads expanding in all directions. The jam factory, in the south of the urban area was, and still is, a major business in the 20<sup>th</sup> century with a number of houses specifically constructed for the workers. The railway line opened

**Archaeological Character:** The town of Tiptree is located on the edge of a melt water lake of Hoxnian date 250,000 – 200,000 years ago. A number of Palaeolithic artifacts have been found in various locations across the urban area of Tiptree. These all comprise flint artifacts. Evidence of Neolithic occupation has been found in Tiptree comprising flint artifacts which has included number of flint axes. The Roman period is represented by a series of coins recovered as chance finds from various locations in the town indicating a presence at this period. The historic settlement pattern in the medieval and post medieval period was very dispersed with historic Tiptree being a very small nucleated settlement surrounded by dispersed farms and cottages.



## **Fig HECA 112 Roman River Valley**

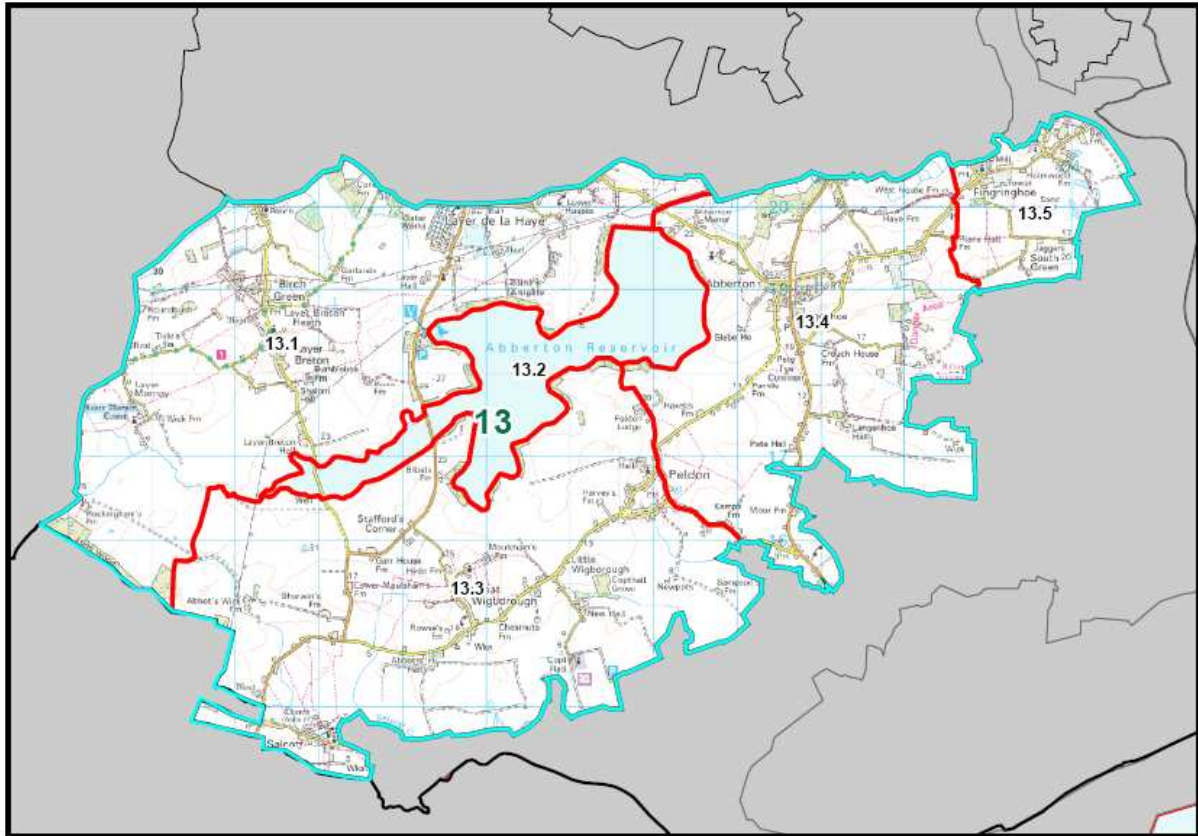
### **3.1.12 HECA 12 Roman River Valley**

**Summary:** This area encompasses the valley of the Roman River between Copford in the west and Rowhedge in the east and land to the north up to the urban fringe of modern Colchester. Settlement comprises the small villages of Rowhedge and Layer de la Haye, hamlets such as Heckfordbridge, individual halls, farms and cottages. Archaeological character is dominated by the dykes of the late Iron Oppidum of Camulodunum and associated Iron Age and Roman activity around Gosbecks, including high status burials, Roman auxiliary fort, temple and theatre.

**Historic Landscape Character:** The geology comprises Kesgrave sands and gravels with head and exposure of London Clay on the valley sides and varying bands of alluvium on the valley floor. The built up urban fringe of Colchester and Stanway forms the northern boundary of the area for much of its length, with the 40 m contour approximately demarcating the southern edge. The Roman River meanders naturally. The fieldscape is ancient in origin with current and former valley bottom pasture, irregular fields, and areas of 19<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> century plantation woodland. There has been a moderate amount of post 1950's boundary loss. Field boundaries include straight field ditches along the valley floor and a mixture of straight and sinuous hedged and ditched boundaries elsewhere. Settlement in the area was historically dispersed comprising the small riverside village of Rowhedge, located at the junction of the Roman River and the River Colne, which has medieval origins, the nucleated village of Layer de la Haye, hamlets at Heckfordbridge and Birch, roadside settlement at Stanway, greenside settlements including Stanway Green and Hardy's Green, with the remainder consisting of church / hall complexes, such as Copford Hall and Birch Hall, and individual farms and cottages. Historic routeways cross the valley, north to south. There are numerous small and medium size areas of Ancient Woodlands located on the valley sides. Modern development includes the zoo next to Stanway church and extensive gravel quarrying around Stanway. The area around

Friday Wood is owned by the MOD and used for troop training; there is a rifle range at Middlewick Ranges.

**Archaeological Character:** There are cropmarks across the area with the densest concentration around the scheduled site at Gosbecks. Gosbecks has a complex history of use through the late Iron Age and Roman period. During the late Iron Age, it was a native tribal centre with an enclosed farmstead connected to a network of droveways and fields protected by a series of dykes. After the Roman invasion the site saw the addition of an auxiliary fortress, Romano-Celtic temple complex and other major buildings including a theatre. Limited excavations have confirmed the identity of these structures. The cropmarks also represent earlier and later periods including Bronze Age ring ditches east of Gosbecks and WWII anti-landing ditches north of Friday Woods. Elements of the scheduled late Iron Age and early Roman Colchester Dyke system survive as earthworks and bisect the western part of the zone running from Gosbecks and Stanway Green, down into the Roman River Valley. The areas north west boundary is marked by the line of the roman road from London to Colchester. The medieval period is represented by the scheduled churches of St Mary's, Birch and All Saints, Stanway and the site of a mill dam and motte and bailey castle at Birch. Extensive gravel quarrying at Stanway has removed important archaeological deposits although the high status Iron Age / early Roman 'Stanway' burials were retrieved through excavation. The area has potential for palaeoenvironmental remains within waterlogged deposits in the valley bottom.



**Fig HECA 13 Abberton area**

### **3.1.13 HECA 13 Abberton area**

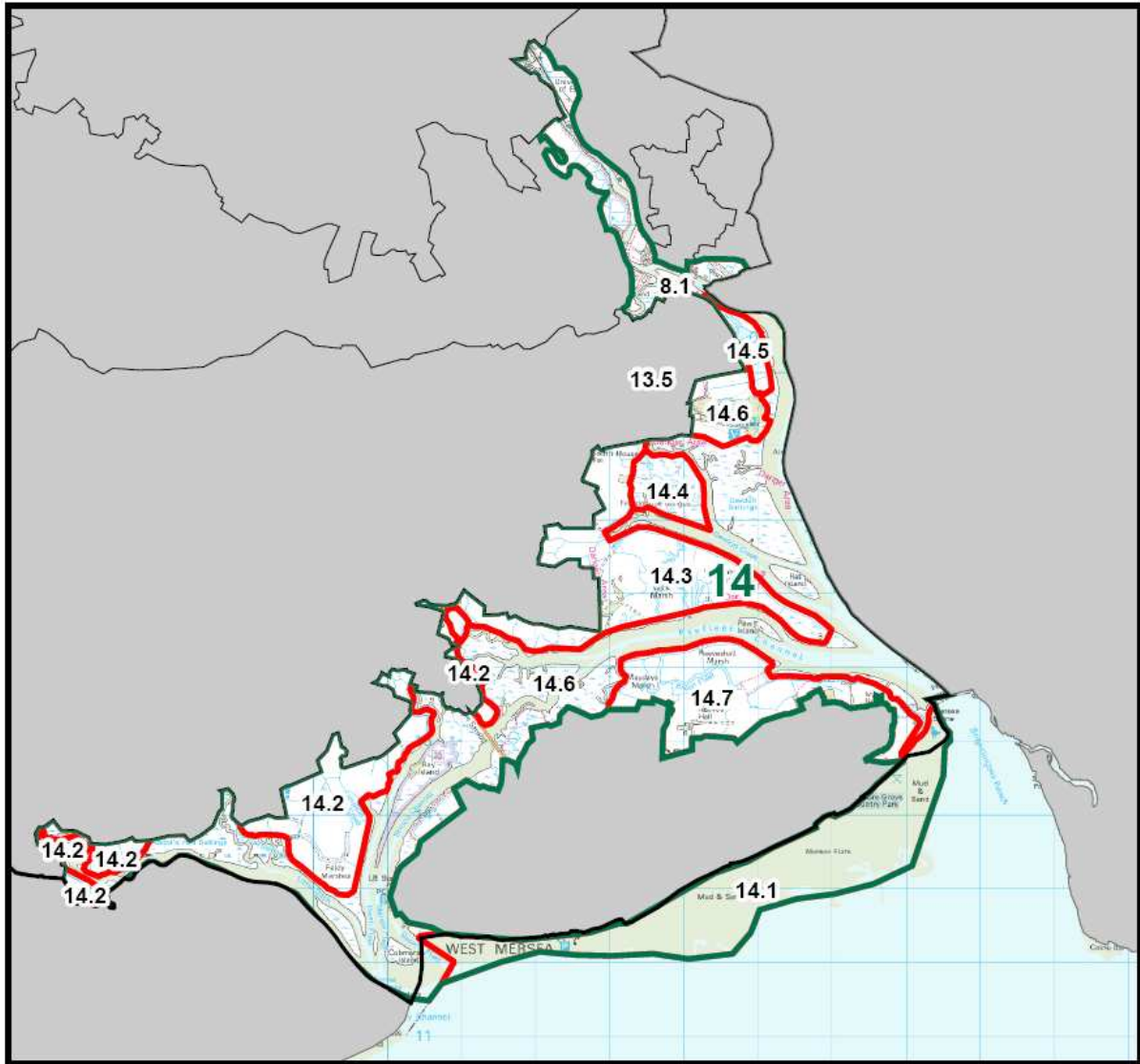
**Summary:** An area of very gently undulating, open landscape to the south of Colchester, bounded by the valley of the Roman River to the north and the coastal marshes to the south. Abberton Reservoir forms the dominant landscape feature of the area. The geology is predominately London Clay, with Kesgrave sands and gravels in the north-west corner. There has been extensive quarrying of the sands and gravels around Fingringhoe.

**Historic Landscape Character:** The field pattern is very varied, ranging from irregular fields (these are probably medieval or earlier in origin) in the north-west of the area, to a more co-axial rectilinear system (also medieval in origin) in the remainder of the area, with dispersed areas of later piecemeal enclosure. Some of this later enclosure dates to the later medieval or post-medieval period, whilst the remainder, particularly on the former Layer Heath dates to the early 19th century.



Within the Roman River valley there are areas of enclosed meadow pasture and ancient woodland of probable medieval origin in the Roman River area. Historically the settlement is highly dispersed, comprising isolated church/hall complexes, manors, farms, cottages and hamlets bordering small greens. The military ranges at Fingringhoe Camp form important components of the recent landscape history of the area. However, the 1930s Abberton Reservoir is the dominant landscape feature of the area, occupying much of the former valley of the Layer Brook. Post 1950's boundary loss can be described as moderate, rising to high in some farms and total on the site of the reservoir.

**Archaeological Character:** The range of archaeological sites includes prehistoric enclosures and ring-ditches, a possible Roman villa and sites related to the medieval and post-medieval settlement of the area. There are numerous Listed Buildings, including the outstanding 16<sup>th</sup> century gatehouse at Layer Marney Tower. There are three Scheduled Monuments: comprising the mill mound and church site at Virley and the Great Wigborough cropmark of a henge. The London Clay is not conducive to crop-mark formation, and as a consequence the few cropmarks in the area are concentrated on the gravels in the north. These include a number of enclosures that maybe prehistoric in date, however the majority appear to largely relate to medieval and post-medieval settlement and landscape features. Further remains relating to the historic dispersed settlement pattern can be anticipated in the remainder of the area. There is the potential for surviving palaeo-environmental deposits in the valley of the Layer Brook.



**Fig HECA 14 Colne Estuary**

**3.1.14 HECA 14 Colne Estuary**

**Summary:** This area comprises historic reclaimed coastal grazing marsh and un-reclaimed salt marsh and the intertidal zone along the south shore of the Colne Estuary, around Mersea Island and the Salcott Channel at the mouth of the Blackwater estuary. Archaeologically the area is characterised by Late Iron Age or Roman red hills, medieval and post medieval structures relating to the exploitation of the marshland and other coastal resources, and post medieval and WWII defences. The area is internationally important for wildlife.

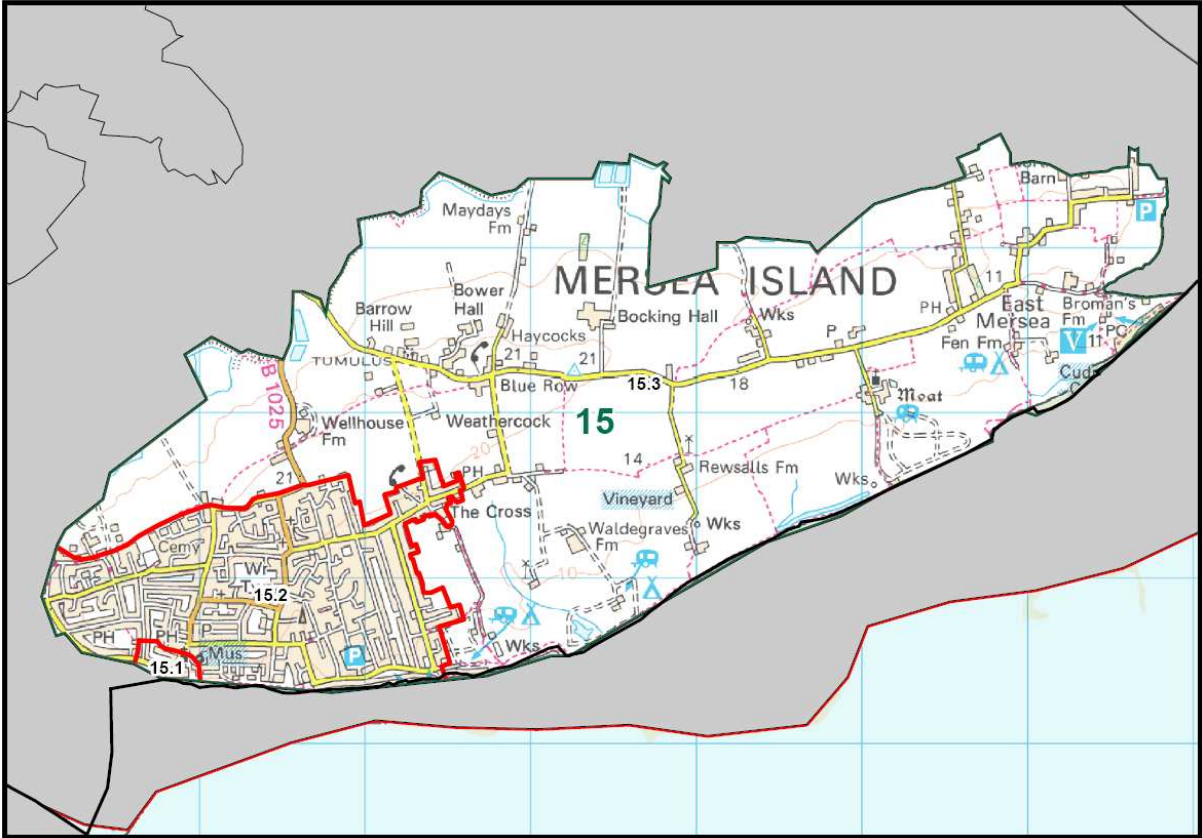
**Historic Landscape Character:** This area comprises the Colne estuary and associated creeks with their islands, intertidal mudflats, areas of saltmarsh and present and former grazing marsh along the south shore, Mersea Island and the Salcott Channel. The geology is largely estuarine alluvium deposits. Geedon Saltings on the south side of the estuary and Abbots Hall saltings along the north side of Salcott Channel are extensive areas of un-reclaimed salt marsh. Fingringhoe Marsh comprises an area of current and former coastal marshland, located adjacent to Geedon Creek. It is owned by the MOD and managed as the Fingringhoe Ranges. Langenhoe Marshes is an extensive tongue of current and former coastal marshland between Geedon Creek and Pyefleet Channel. Old Heath Marshes, are located close to the built up area of the former port at the Hythe. The area was exploited by farms and communities on adjacent uplands (HECA 11), communities on Mersea Island (HECA 13) and in Wivenhoe (HECA 6).

Field boundaries are mainly drainage ditches, many following the sinuous course of former creeks. There has been little or no boundary loss in the area, since the 1950's. The Strood causeway, linking Mersea Island to the main land, and sea walls are dominant landscape features, the latter protecting former marshland from flooding. Other historic landscape features include former oyster beds at the junction of Salcott Channel and Strood Channel, including Cobmarsh Island and Ray Island; also on Pewitt Island, Rat Island and Geedon Saltings; industrial and transport structures such as timber jetties, hulks and the dismantled railway from Wivenhoe to Arlesford Quarry. Modern development includes port, and quay structures at Rowhedge and Fingringhoe, housing development at Wivenhoe, sailing facilities at West Mersea, military structures on Fingringhoe Marsh and nature reserve infrastructure at Fingringhoe Wick and Abbot's Hall.

**Archaeological Character:** The beach at Cudmore Grove, East Mersea overlies a peaty deposit containing the faunal remains of diverse species dating to the pre-Hoxnian period c.300,000 BP. Finds of Mesolithic and Neolithic artefacts retrieved from possible habitation sites along the foreshore suggests the possibility of areas of well preserved land surface, as found elsewhere along the coast, may be present in places. Located throughout much of the area are a large number of Red Hills of

probable late Iron Age/Roman date, with notable concentrations along the Strood Channel, including a Scheduled example on the north side of Mersea Island, and around Feldy and Copt Hall Marsh. Buried timbers of a Roman quay have been recorded at Abbot's Hall marshes. There are two massive timber fish traps of Anglo Saxon date located within the intertidal zone off West Mersea flats and timbers from an earlier phase of the Strood causeway have been dated to the Anglo Saxon period. Earthworks located within areas of coastal grazing marsh include relict sea walls, probably sheep causeways and livestock enclosures of medieval or post medieval date. Post medieval oyster pits, industrial features, and hulks reflect the strong coastal/marine nature of the archaeological remains in this area. Military defences include the earthworks of a Tudor Blockhouse at East Mersea and WWII defensive structures such as pillboxes located along the sea walls and eroded examples at the base of the cliffs at East Mersea. The potential for palaeoenvironmental remains and deposits in this area is high and there are significant possibilities of archaeological remains directly related to these deposits including timber structures.

This HECA has a close and important relationship with HECA 6 and 11 and 13, which share an economic inter-relationship of exploitation of the estuary.



## **Fig HECA 15 Mersea Island**

### **3.1.15 HECA 15: Mersea Island**

**Summary:** The area comprises the dry-land area of Mersea Island. The geology comprises London Clay with isolated patches of sand and gravel, the latter largely in the centre of the island. It differs from the other coastal islands of Essex in that there are numerous fresh-water springs. The landscape comprises a mix of ancient field-patterns, interspersed with modern elements, including the urban area of West Mersea and several large caravan parks. There is evidence for human activity on the island from the Palaeolithic period onwards, including later prehistoric cemeteries and settlements, a Roman villa complex and tomb and many defensive structures including a string of pill-boxes along the coastline.

**Historic Landscape Character:** The fieldscape largely comprises irregular fields, probably of medieval origin. The post 1950s boundary loss can be described as moderate to high. There is only one small area of ancient woodland, although there are a number of areas of secondary scrub. The primary focus of settlement, both historic and modern is at the western end of the island. There is also a line of more dispersed settlement along the spine of the island, modern development has given this a ribbon-development appearance. On the southern side of the island are a number of areas set aside for recreational use, these include youth camps, caravan parks and the Cudmore Grove Country Park.

**Archaeological Character:** There is evidence in the form of worked flints for Palaeolithic, Mesolithic and Neolithic activity on the island. There is also evidence for later prehistoric occupation on the island, in the form of cropmarks of enclosures, trackways and a ring-ditch cemetery. The discovery of Roman finds in the vicinity of the King's Hard on the western tip of the Island and of a road of probable Roman date leading to this area, suggests that it may have functioned as a Hard or hythe in the Roman period also. A Roman villa complex and tombs were sited in the vicinity of West Mersea Church, and Roman finds have been found over the entire island,

suggesting a widespread pattern of settlement and activity. The island was occupied throughout the Saxon period, and briefly formed a defensive encampment for the Danes, although no archaeological features relating to this period have yet been found. The historic settlement pattern for the medieval and post-medieval period comprised the small village and Hard at West Mersea, the church/hall complex at East Mersea and dispersed farms and cottages. In the years following the First World War Mersea developed as a seaside resort and there are numerous surviving elements of this role including beach huts, holiday chalets were built, a Boating Lake off the Esplanade and a Golf Course. The island was heavily fortified against invasion during the Second World War and there is a string of pill-boxes along the coast.

## **4 Creation of Historic Environment Character Zones**

### **4.1 General Background**

This section of the report is designed to look at the Historic Environment in more detail than that appropriate for the larger HECA's. This is achieved by dividing the Historic Environment Character Areas into smaller Historic Environment Character Zones of a size more suitable for strategic planning within Colchester Borough.

### **4.2 Methodology**

Through a combination of analysing the main datasets such as historic mapping, ancient woodland, Historic Environment Record data, and secondary sources, it was possible to develop a series of character zones within the Historic Environment Character Areas. These zones were digitised and descriptions for each have been prepared.

The descriptions draw on a range of sources and attempt to reflect, simply, clearly and briefly the reasoning behind the definition of each zone and, where possible, relate that zone to its wider historic context. The descriptions seek to highlight the key characteristics in an area and identify any particularly significant aspects of the zones historic environment. Preparation of the descriptions of the zones clarified their nature and their boundaries, so that an iterative process between descriptions

and boundary definition resulted in the creation of robust Historic Environment Character Zones.

For each character zone the description comprises an overall summary, a summary of the archaeological character, and either a summary of the historic landscape character or historic urban character as appropriate. A number of particular issues are highlighted relating to the conservation management and understanding of the historic environment in the zones.

### ***4.3 The scoring of the Historic Environment Character Zones***

Each character zone has been scored on a range of criteria for which separate scores are retained within the GIS metadata. The following system is based on scoring developed for the English Heritage Monuments Protection Programme (MPP); modified to consider broad zones rather than particular monuments. This method of scoring is intended as a simple means of engaging with issues of sensitivity, value and importance. It is not designed to be definitive and is likely to be subject to change as new information becomes available and understanding develops.

Seven criteria have been used:

- Diversity of historic environment assets
- Survival
- Documentation
- Group Value Association
- Potential
- Sensitivity to change
- Amenity Value

Each of the criteria have been scored for each of the zones with a rating of 1, 2, or 3 with 1 as the lowest and 3 as the highest. Where in a few instances a score of 1/2 or 2/3 is given in the text the lower score is shown on the metadata.

### **4.3.1 Diversity of historic environment assets**

This indicates the range of Historic Environment Assets within the zone which may be chronologically diverse. For example a zone with multi-period settlement sites or a zone with a range of assets, such as church, village, farmstead, field systems of the same date would both score highly, whilst a zone containing a limited range of historic environment assets would score low.

- 1 = Very few known assets or many assets of a limited range of categories.
- 2 = Contains a range of assets of different date and character
- 3 = Contains a wide range of assets both in date and character

### **4.3.2 Survival**

This relates to the state of completeness of the range of historic environment assets within the character zone. The zone may be relatively well preserved or it may have been disturbed by hostile land-use/development and/or erosion. Even where such factors have adversely affected assets within a zone there may be potential for well preserved but deeply buried deposits.

- 1 = Zone extensively disturbed by for instance quarrying or development. Likelihood is that whilst many of the assets have been disturbed or destroyed there is the potential for survival in some areas or of some types of assets.
- 2 = Zone has little disturbance but there are few known assets, or there are many known assets but there has been some adverse effects from, for instance, development or quarrying.
- 3 = Zone contains known assets which are well preserved.

### **4.3.3 Documentation**

The level of documentation for a zone reflects the extent of investigations that have taken place. Such work includes; excavation, field survey/recording, historical documentation, research project work (this includes for example the National Mapping Programme, coastal zone survey etc).



- 1 = Little or no documentation.
- 2 = A range of documentation containing elements of the above
- 3 = A wide range of documentation.

#### **4.3.4 Group Value Association**

Two forms of association are considered, either historic environment assets of a similar nature or historic environment assets of a similar date. For example a zone with red hills all of the same date or a zone with multi period historic environment assets associated with coastal exploitation would both score highly, whilst a zone with a wide range of diverse assets, which are not associated, would score low.

- 1 = Contains few historic environment assets of a similar date or nature.
- 2 = Contains a limited range of historic environment assets which are related or of a similar date.
- 3 = Contains a range of historic environment assets which are related such as moats with well preserved field systems of medieval origin or salt working sites of different dates.

#### **4.3.5 Potential**

The potential is assessed with reference to the expected average circumstances within the zone. The score considers the nature of the historic environment assets based on current evidence and indicates the likelihood of further assets being present.

- 1 = The potential for surviving historic environment assets within the zone has been significantly reduced by for instance quarrying or development.
- 2 = There are limited known historic environment assets however the landscape has not been significantly disturbed and current lack of knowledge is probably the result of lack of investigation rather than poor preservation.
- 3 = Current evidence and little disturbance indicates that a range of high quality assets probably survive within the zone.

#### **4.3.6 Sensitivity to Change**

Each Historic Environment Zone is assessed with regard to the sensitivity of the area to medium to large scale development, specifically housing expansion. The score is an indication of the vulnerability of the historic environment assets within the zone to this type of change. A lack of sensitivity to change should not be taken as an indication that no historic environment mitigation would be required to accommodate development. It would be possible to consider sensitivity to other types of change e.g. flood risk management.

1 = The historic environment of the zone could accommodate medium to large scale development, however specific historic environment assets may suffer adverse effects.

2 = Medium to large scale development is likely to have a considerable impact on the historic environment character of the zone.

3 = The zones historic environment is highly sensitive to medium to large scale development.

#### **4.3.7 Amenity Value**

Relates to the actual and/or potential amenity value of the historic environment zone and this is indicated in the description box. If there are specific elements which would warrant enhancement these are also indicated in the description box. The score may relate to uniqueness, historical associations, key landmarks, good access, and interest for visitors and educational value etc.

1 = Historic environment does not lend itself to display or visitor attraction. Current knowledge gives limited potential for the historic environment to play a significant role in creating a definable and promotable identity to the zone.

2 = Historic environment does, or could help define a sense of place of the zone. There may be specific elements which are or could be promoted such as woodlands, castles etc.

3 = The historic environment plays, or could play a key role in the zones sense of place for the local people and visitors. The zone contains assets which, are or could be, promoted for the benefit of local people or visitors.

## **5 Colchester Historic Environment Characterisation Zones**

### **5.1 HECA 1 River Stour Valley**

#### **5.1.1 HECZ 1.1 Wormingford**

**Summary:** This zone comprises the flat landscape of the valley floor between Bures Mill and Wiston Mill on the Suffolk side of the river. The geology comprises river terrace gravels overlain by alluvium. Settlement in the zone is limited to the occasional farm and cottage. There is a watermill at Wormingford Bridge. Archaeological character is dominated by complexes of cropmarks comprising ring ditch cemeteries, long mortuary enclosure, linear boundaries, tracks and ditched enclosures. Historically the zone had a close relationship with the adjacent upland zone (HECZ 1.2).

**Historic Landscape Character:** The area comprises an open, flat landscape within the floodplain of the River Stour and the lower slopes of the Stour Valley. Wormingford Mere is a natural water filled feature in the centre of the zone which is designated as a County Wildlife Site. The fieldscape is one of late enclosure with moderate to high 20<sup>th</sup> century boundary loss. Immediately adjacent to the river there are current and former fields of enclosed meadow pasture, characterised by drainage ditches. At the zones western end is a block of former parkland associated with The Old Rectory, Mount Bures. Settlement within the zone includes several cottages, Wormingford Mill and a number of farms. Several farms contain listed barns and other buildings e.g. Garnons Farm and Staunch Farm, which takes its name from one of the water control structures on the River Stour Navigation. There is a bridge crossing at Wormingford. A modern sewage works is located off Bowdens Lane.

**Archaeological Character:** The archaeological character of the zone is dominated by a number of multi-period cropmark complexes. Around Staunch Farm, there is a concentration of ring ditches, double ring ditches, enclosures, linear boundaries and trackways and a long mortuary enclosure indicating the presence of Neolithic and Bronze Age funerary monuments including one or more barrow cemetery. Antiquarian discoveries in the zone include hundreds of urn burials to the west of Wormingford Mere. Finds of Neolithic and Bronze Age stone tools and pottery have been recovered from archaeological field walking in the same area. There is a further cropmark complex around the sewage works on Bowden Lane comprised of ring ditches, linear boundaries and possible enclosures. Further along Bowden Lane, is the site of a former medieval moated site, known from documentary records. The alluvial soils in the zone are conducive to the preservation of organic and calcareous matter and there is potential for waterlogged organic deposits close to the river. Timber structures associated with the rivers former role as a post medieval navigation may also survive, as might features associated with Wormingford Mill.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Historic landscape features, listed buildings diverse range of cropmarks	2
• Survival	Good survival	2
• Documentation	HER data, NMP data, designation documentation, research, documentary records	2
• Group Value Association	Crop-marks and flint and pottery finds	2
• Potential	Good potential for surviving deposits including potential for waterlogging	2
• Sensitivity to change	Landscape and below ground archaeology highly sensitive to change	3
• Amenity Value	Potential for promoting the prehistoric origin and development of the landscape within the valley in conjunction with other zones	2

### **5.1.2 HECZ 1.2 *Wormingford and Little Horkesley***

**Summary:** This zone comprises the valley sides of the Stour Valley around Wormingford and Little Horkesley. The geology is Head and London Clay. Settlement in the zone includes the village of Wormingford, ribbon settlement along the Nayland Road, manors and individual farms and cottages. Archaeological character is dominated by multi-period cropmarks. Historically the zone had a close relationship with the adjacent floodplain (HECZ 1.1).

**Historic Landscape Character:** The area comprises a sloping valley side landscape above the floodplain of the River Stour. The fieldscape is one of irregular enclosure which is likely to be medieval in origin. There has been moderate to high field boundary loss within the zone. Three blocks of ancient woodland are located within the zone at Broxtedhall Great Wood, Little Wood and Creeks Grove. Routeways run north south down the valley sides to historic river crossings at Wormingford and Nayland. Settlement within the zone includes the village of Wormingford, ribbon settlement at Little Horkesley along the Nayland Road, manors, such as Horkesley Park, which is surrounded by informal parkland, and individual farms and cottages. There are numerous medieval and later listed buildings at Wormingford and Little Horkesley as well as a number of the farms such as Garnon's and the Lower Dairy House, Little Horkesley. Modern development includes agricultural reservoirs and a plant nursery to the north of Great Horkesley.

**Archaeological Character:** The archaeology of the zone is characterised by a number of multi-period cropmark complexes and stray finds. In the east of the zone a number of linear field boundaries have been identified close to Lodge Hills. Linear cropmarks and a possible sub circular enclosure have been identified to the west and south of Horkelsey Park. Neolithic flintwork has been retrieved near Wormingford and Romano-British pottery sherds have been retrieved from Lodge Hills, to the west of the village. Roman brick has also been recorded in the medieval fabric of Wormingford Church. A possible Viking axe head has been found near Wormingford and medieval pottery sherds have been retrieved from Lodge Hill in the west of the zone and to the south of Whitepark Farm in the east of the zone. A group of medieval

fishponds survive as an earthwork to the east of Little Horkesley and there is a post medieval pond bay east of Wormingford. There are records for an ammunition shelter dating to WWII in the grounds of Church Hall, Wormingford.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Multi-period cropmarks, stray finds, medieval and later earthworks, listed buildings, historic landscape features	3
• Survival	Good survival of earthworks, ancient woodland, medieval and later buildings	2
• Documentation	HER data, NMP data, designation data	2
• Group Value Association	Historic routes, medieval field boundaries, medieval buildings, medieval earthworks, ancient woodland	3
• Potential	Good potential for below ground archaeology	2
• Sensitivity to change	Historic landscape and below ground archaeology highly sensitive to change	3
• Amenity Value	Good opportunities to interpret the historic development of the valley and its landscape in conjunction with other zones	2

### **5.1.3 HECZ 1.3 Stour Valley around Langham**

**Summary:** This zone comprises the flat landscape of the valley floor between Wiston Mill and Stoke By Nayland on the Suffolk side of the river. The geology is river terrace gravels overlain by alluvium. Settlement in the zone is limited to the occasional farm and cottage. There is a watermill and modern waterworks at Boxted. Archaeological character is dominated by complexes of cropmarks comprising single and concentric ring ditches, linear boundaries, tracks and ditched enclosures. Historically the zone had a close relationship with the adjacent upland zone (HECZ 1.2).

**Historic Landscape Character:** The area comprises an open, flat landscape within the floodplain of the River Stour and the lower slopes of the Stour Valley. The fieldscape is one of current and former fields of enclosed meadow pasture characterised by straight and sinuous drainage ditches. The latter may preserve relict former course of the river. Fields of later enclosure are also present and there has been moderate to high 20<sup>th</sup> century boundary loss. A large block of ancient woodland, Boxtedhall Wood, is located in the middle of the zone. Settlement within the zone includes several cottages, Boxted Mill and a number of farms. Thrift farm contains listed barns and other buildings. There is a bridge crossing at Boxted Mill. A modern waterworks is located off Sky Hall Hill and there are former gravel pits immediately to the north.

**Archaeological Character:** The archaeological character of the zone is dominated by a number of multi-period cropmark complexes. On the western side of the zone, are a number of ring ditches, former water course and possible cursus. North of Boxtedhall Great Wood is a sub square enclosure, and a ring ditch cemetery as well as linear field boundaries and trackways. At Langham, north of Docura's Farm, is a large ,multi-period cropmark complex including groups of ring, a probable mill mound, trackways, and square enclosure. Flakes, scrapers and Bronze Age urns have been found in the vicinity and Bronze Age metal work is known from elsewhere in the zone. At the east end of the zone is another cropmark complex which is thought to represent a Romano-British farmstead. Romano-British pottery and carved stonework

have been found in the area. The alluvial soils in the zone are conducive to the preservation of organic and calcareous matter and there is potential for waterlogged organic deposits close to the river. Timber structures associated with the rivers former role as a post medieval navigation may also survive, as might features associated with Boxted Mill.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Historic landscape features, listed buildings, diverse range of cropmarks	2
• Survival	Good survival	2
• Documentation	HER data, NMP data, designation documentation, research, documentary records	2
• Group Value Association	Crop-marks and flint and pottery finds	2
• Potential	Good potential for surviving deposits including potential for waterlogging	2
• Sensitivity to change	Landscape and below ground archaeology highly sensitive to change	3
• Amenity Value	Potential for promoting the prehistoric origin and development of the landscape within the valley in conjunction with other zones	2



#### **5.1.4 HECZ 1.4 Langham**

**Summary:** This zone comprises the valley sides of the Stour Valley between Dedham and Boxted. The geology is Head and London Clay. The zone is dissected by the valley of the Black Brook, which is a tributary of the River Stour. Settlement in zone includes the village of Langham, hamlet of Boxted Cross ribbon development along Boxted Straight Road and individual manors, farms and cottages.

**Historic Landscape Character:** The area comprises a sloping valley side landscape above the floodplain of the River Stour. There has been moderate to high field boundary loss within the zone. Two blocks of ancient woodland are located within the zone; Cophedge Wood and Ash Wood. The zone includes two large areas of former heathland at Boxted and Dedham Heath, which are depicted on the 1777 Chapman and Andre map. Fields in the area of former heathland originated from enclosure during the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century. Areas of former and current enclosed meadow pasture are located along the Black Brook. Elsewhere in the zone, the fieldscape is one of irregular enclosure which is likely to be medieval in origin. There has been a moderate to high degree of boundary loss. There is an area of informal parkland to the west of Dedham, which is a continuation of parkland in the adjacent zone (HECZ 1.5). Hill House, to the east of Langham sits within its own parkland. Settlement in the zone is generally dispersed but includes the village of Langham and hamlets such as Dedham Heath and Boxted Cross, which grew up around crossroads. Individual manors include Rivers Hall, to the north of Boxted Cross and Langham Hall, which comprises a cluster of post medieval listed buildings. Historically, there was common edge settlement around Boxted Heath and Dedham Heath. Elsewhere there are a scattering of farms and cottages either located alongside main roads or at the end of lanes. The zone is dissected by the modern A12 and the river crossing at Stratford Bridge. Other modern development includes a number of agricultural reservoirs.

**Archaeological Character:** The archaeology of the zone is dominated by a number of multi-period cropmark complexes. East of Boxted Cross there is a dense concentration of linear boundaries, occasional ring ditches and a scheduled henge site. Further east, around Plumbs farm are a number of rectangular enclosures, linear boundaries, trackways and ring ditches. Further linear features have been identified to the south of Langham. A double ditched enclosure and trackway are visible adjacent to Grove Hill with a further cluster east of Boxhouse Lane. Stray finds of archaeological material from across the zone include a prehistoric jadeite axe and Neolithic or Bronze Age arrowheads, cores and flakes, Beaker pottery and roman coinage and tiles. Rivers Hall to the north east of Broxted is a medieval moated site and the site of a post medieval brick kiln and brickfield is known at Dedham Heath.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Cropmarks, ancient woodland, historic buildings, stray finds, historic landscape features	3
• Survival	Good survival of ancient woodland, medieval and later buildings, below ground archaeology	2
• Documentation	HER data, NMP data, designation date	2
• Group Value Association	Historic routes, medieval field boundaries, medieval buildings, ancient woodland	3
• Potential	Good potential for below ground archaeology	2
• Sensitivity to change	Historic landscape and below ground archaeology highly sensitive to change	3
• Amenity Value	Good opportunities to interpret the historic development of the valley and its landscape in conjunction with other zones	2

### **5.1.5 HECZ 1.5 Dedham**

**Summary:** This zone comprises the medieval town of Dedham which rose to prominence with the cloth trade, specialising in bay and say cloth. It contains a wealth of 14<sup>th</sup> century and later buildings and retains its medieval street pattern and morphology. Whilst there has been a lack of archaeological field work in the town, intact archaeological features and deposits can be expected. The geology comprises sands and gravels covered by river alluvium.

**Historic Urban Character:** The town retains much of its medieval buildings and streets including the High Street, Mill Lane and a number of cul-de-sacs. Particularly notable buildings within the town include the 17<sup>th</sup> century Sun Inn, the Marlborough Head which comprises a Merchants house dating to c.1500 with 'wool-hall' at its rear, the courtyard plan Southfields building of late 15<sup>th</sup> or early 16<sup>th</sup> century origin and the Grammar school built in the early 18<sup>th</sup> century. Dedham Hall manor-house was sited to the north east of the town, outside the built up area and surrounded by informal parkland which continues into the adjacent zone (HECZ 1.4). St Mary the Virgin Parish Church was largely re-built in the late 15<sup>th</sup> and early 16<sup>th</sup> century and reflects the wealth of the flourishing cloth trade of the town. The town had a weekly market from the 15<sup>th</sup> century and the current market place consists of a widening of the High Street in the centre of the town. The built-up area of the town changed little from the medieval period to the early post medieval period but there was some ribbon development along the High Street, Brook Street and Mill Lane during the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. The current watermill, which has been converted to apartments, dates to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The town has a total of sixty-one listed buildings, seven of which are medieval and is designated as a conservation area.

**Archaeological Character:** Although there has been a complete lack of archaeological field work undertaken within Dedham, given the lack of recent development in the town, it is highly likely that intact archaeological deposits and features associated with the medieval and post medieval town survive within and around the historic buildings and their plots. The alluvial soils are conducive to the

preservation of organic and calcareous matter and the mill site has the potential for waterlogged organic deposits

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Historic buildings, medieval street pattern and morphology, archeological deposits	3
• Survival	Good survival of medieval and later buildings, street pattern and morphology	3
• Documentation	Exceptionally documentary records, historic mapping	2
• Group Value Association	Medieval buildings, streets, morphology and buried archaeology	3
• Potential	Good potential for buried archaeology including water-logging	3
• Sensitivity to change	Highly sensitive to change	3
• Amenity Value	Historic town of immense character lending itself to interpretation to existing tourist trade	3

### **5.1.6 HECZ 1.6 East of Dedham**

**Summary:** This zone comprises the flat landscape of the valley floor between Dedham and the Judas Gap. The geology comprises river terrace gravels overlain by alluvium. The zone falls within the Dedham Vale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and a small area at its eastern end is designated as Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). Settlement in the zone is limited to ribbon development along East Lane and two farms. Archaeological character is dominated by complexes of cropmarks comprising ring ditch cemeteries, long mortuary enclosure, linear boundaries, tracks and possible enclosures. Historically the zone had a close relationship with the adjacent upland zone (HECZ 1.4).

**Historic Landscape Character:** The area comprises an open, flat landscape of current and former valley bottom pasture within the floodplain of the River Stour. At its eastern end the zone there is a modern barrage and sluices, and continuation of the river wall from the adjacent Cattawade Marshes. Towards the eastern end of the zone, is a fieldscape of reclaimed marshland with one or two field boundaries follow the sinuous course of former creeks, as well as straightened drainage ditches. Further to the west, the fieldscape is one of late enclosure with moderate to high 20<sup>th</sup> century boundary loss. Immediately adjacent to the river there are current and former fields of enclosed meadow pasture. The zone includes two 19<sup>th</sup> century or earlier farms.

**Archaeological Character:** The archaeological character of the zone is dominated by a number of multi-period cropmark complexes. Around Pound Farm, there is a concentration of ring ditches, enclosure, linear boundaries and trackways indicating the presence of a Bronze Age barrow cemetery. To the south of Manningtree Road is a less dense complex including ring ditches, a long mortuary enclosure, linear boundaries and trackway. A third complex to the north of Lower Barn Farm comprises linear boundaries a trackway and possible enclosure. A ring ditch was excavated in the 1950's revealing urned cremations. An Iron Age urn burial was discovered near to Jupes Hill Farm and Roman building material including a tessellated pavement has been reported from within the zone although the precise

location of these finds is unknown. Pound Farm is an early 19<sup>th</sup> century listed building. The alluvial soils are conducive to the preservation of organic and calcareous matter and there is potential for waterlogged organic deposits.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Historic landscape features, listed building diverse range of cropmarks	2
• Survival	Good survival	2
• Documentation	HER data, NMP data, designation documentation	1
• Group Value Association	Crop-marks	2
• Potential	Good potential for surviving deposits including potential for waterlogging	2
• Sensitivity to change	Landscape and below ground archaeology highly sensitive to change	3
• Amenity Value	Potential for promoting the prehistoric origin and development of the landscape within the Dedham Vale AONB in conjunction with other zones	2

## **5.2 HECA 2: Bures and Fordham**

### **5.2.1 HECZ 2.1: Wakes Colne Green**

**Summary:** This zone consists of a rural landscape around Wakes Colne Green. The present settlement pattern is dispersed with most settlement located around the Green with outlying farms and moats. Little archaeological work has been undertaken in the zone, however the presence of chance finds, cropmarks and metal detector finds indicate a high potential for below ground deposits.

**Historic Landscape Character:** The zone comprises a rural landscape on the western edge of Colchester Borough. The fieldscape comprises irregular fields, probably of medieval origin. The settlement of the area was historically dispersed, comprising a scatter of cottages and farms, as well as moated sites. This pattern is largely preserved within the present landscape, however, there has been considerable field boundary loss. There are a small number of areas of woodland at the northern and southern ends of the zone, mostly 18<sup>th</sup> or 19<sup>th</sup> century plantations.

**Archaeological Character:** The zones geology largely comprises Lowerstoft formation, however, on the northern boundary Kesgrave sands are recorded on the edge of the Cambridge Brook. No archaeological investigations have occurred within this zone. Evidence of prehistoric occupation has been found in the form of a Bronze Axe and cropmark indications of a burial mound. Later Roman occupation is attested from the finding of a probable Roman cemetery or occupation site on the western side of the zone.

The layout of the present landscape and settlement pattern is largely of medieval origin. Several moats are recorded within the zone which frequently has their origins in the 13<sup>th</sup> century.

The remains of the Colne Valley Railway line are located in the southern part of the zone, constructed between 1860 and 1863 with the last trains running in 1961

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Bronze age metalwork, Roman finds, medieval settlement pattern,	2
• Survival	Landscape suffered considerable boundary loss, settlement pattern and below ground deposits likely to survive well	2
• Documentation	HER data, cartographic evidence	1
• Group Value Association	Dispersed settlement pattern, listed buildings	2
• Potential	High potential fro below ground deposits	3
• Sensitivity to change	Rural landscape sensitive to significant change	3
• Amenity Value	Limited amenity value within the zone	1



### **5.2.2 HECZ 2.2: Mount Bures and Sudbury Branch Line**

**Summary:** This zone consists of a rural landscape on either side of the Marks Tey to Sudbury Branch line. The small settlement of Mount Bures originated as a church/hall complex on the site of a Norman Motte and Bailey. Cropmark evidence and chance finds indicate the zone contains evidence of a long history from the Neolithic through to the present day. The railway line forms an important industrial corridor which has been reused during the Second World War for the creation of the Eastern Command line of defence.

**Historic landscape Character:** The zone comprises a rural landscape with irregular fields, probably of medieval origin. The historic settlement pattern of the area was dispersed, comprising a church/hall complex and a scatter moated sites, farms and cottages. This pattern is largely preserved within the present landscape, however, there has been slight residential development at Bures in the northern part of the zone. Secondary woodland and scrub has developed on both sides of the railway, which has developed since its construction in the 1860's.

**Archaeological Character:** The zones geology largely comprises Lowerstoft formation, however, on the northern boundary Kesgrave sands are recorded on the edge of the Cambridge Brook along with undifferentiated head deposits.

Limited archaeological investigations have occurred within this zone. Evidence of prehistoric occupation has been found in the form of cropmark evidence indicating potential burial mounds and settlements. Chance finds of Neolithic flintwork indicates occupation of this period in the northern part of the zone. Roman occupation is attested from the finding of Roman material indicative of an occupation site.

Much of the settlement pattern probably has its origins in the medieval period, with the landscape significantly changed partially due to the construction of the railway which cut across much of the historic field pattern. A designated Motte and Bailey castle of Norman date is located within the village of Mount Bures. The Norman

church stands immediately south of the mound and may originally have stood within the bailey. Several moats are recorded within the zone which frequently have their origins in the 13<sup>th</sup> century.

The Marks Tey to Sudbury branch line bisects the zone running north south through it, being opened in 1865 and is still operating a passenger service. The route of the railway was used during the Second World War as part of the Eastern Command line of defence with a significant number of defensive structures including pillboxes and barriers, many of which survive.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Cropmarks, Motte and Bailey, settlement, moat, 2 <sup>nd</sup> WW defences, railway	2
• Survival	Landscape suffered considerable boundary loss, settlement pattern and below ground deposits likely to survive well. 2 <sup>nd</sup> WW monuments survive well	2
• Documentation	HER data, cartographic evidence, 2 <sup>nd</sup> WW defence report, scheduling	3
• Group Value Association	Settlement at Mount Bures	2
• Potential	High potential for below ground deposits,	3
• Sensitivity to change	Rural landscape, below ground deposits and 2 <sup>nd</sup> WW defences sensitive to change	3
• Amenity Value	High potential of promoting Mount Bures and the defensive line along the railway.	2

### 5.2.3 HECZ 2.3: Wormingford Airfield area

**Summary:** This zone consists of a rural landscape in and around the Second World War Wormingford Airfield. A large part of the historic landscape has been cleared due to the construction of the Second World War airfield. The evidence of this landscape will survive as below ground features.

**Historic landscape Character:** The zone comprises a rural landscape with irregular fields, probably of medieval origin with a large part of the zone void of field boundaries due to the construction of the Second World War Airfield. The historic settlement pattern of the area was dispersed, comprising a hall complex and a scatter of farms and cottages. This pattern is largely preserved in the northern part of the zone.

**Archaeological Character:** The zones geology largely comprises Lowerstoft Formation, however, on the northern boundary Kesgrave sands and river terrace deposits are recorded. Limited archaeological investigations have occurred within this zone. Some Roman pottery has been found in the northern part of the zone. Much of the surviving settlement pattern probably has its origins in the medieval period. The construction of the Second World War airfield has removed all of the field boundaries, trackways and buildings present on the site, however this will survive as below ground deposits.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Cropmarks, dispersed settlement, 2 <sup>nd</sup> WW airfield,	2
• Survival	Landscape suffered considerable boundary loss, settlement pattern and below ground deposits likely to survive well. 2 <sup>nd</sup> WW monuments survive well	2
• Documentation	HER data, cartographic evidence, 2 <sup>nd</sup> WW airfield report,	2
• Group Value Association	Airfield features	2
• Potential	Potential for below ground deposits,	2

• Sensitivity to change	Below ground deposits sensitive to change	2
• Amenity Value	Possibility to promote history of the airfield	1

#### **5.2.4 HECZ 2.4: Fordham and rural land to the west**

**Summary:** This zone consists of a rural landscape to the west of the modern settlement of Fordham which developed from a Church Hall complex. Limited excavation has shown the presence of Roman and medieval occupation and indicates the below ground potential.

**Historic landscape Character:** The zone comprises a rural landscape with irregular fields, probably of medieval origin. Elements of meadow pasture survive along the tributaries of the River Colne. The historic settlement pattern of the area was dispersed, comprising a church/hall complex and a scatter of farms and cottages. The church/hall complex at Fordham developed into the present village which was constructed in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The medieval field pattern is largely preserved within the present landscape although there has been some field boundary loss giving an open appearance to the landscape.

**Archaeological Character:** The zones geology largely comprises Lowerstoft Formation, however, within the southern part of the zone Kesgrave sands and Head deposits are recorded within the tributaries of the River Colne. Limited archaeological investigations have occurred within this zone showing evidence of Roman and medieval occupation. Much of the surviving settlement pattern probably has its origins in the medieval period. Industry is represented by a brick making site in the southern part of the zone.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Cropmarks, dispersed settlement,	2
• Survival	Landscape suffered boundary loss, settlement pattern and below ground deposits likely to survive well.	2
• Documentation	HER data, cartographic evidence, site report	2
• Group Value Association	Settlement pattern	2
• Potential	Potential for below ground deposits	2
• Sensitivity to change	Below ground deposits sensitive to change	2
• Amenity Value	Potential to promote the history of the settlement of Fordham and associated area.	2

### **5.3 HECA 3: Great Horkesley and West Bergholt**

#### **5.3.1 HECZ 3.1: The Horksleys**

**Summary:** This zone comprises an area of open, largely flat, rural landscape. The settlement is dispersed, apart from small concentrations along the main road at great Horkesley and at Little Horkesley and outside Wormingford. There is evidence for settlement in the area from the prehistoric period onwards; archaeological sites include a Roman burial in a lead coffin, ring-ditches of probable Bronze Age date and World War II sites.

**Historic Landscape Character:** The geology of this zone consists of boulder clay, with London Clay exposed in the valleys sides, together with Head deposits and alluvium. The fieldscape comprises irregular fields, these are probably of medieval origin. The 1777 map of Essex shows a network of wide verges and roadside greens, but these had largely been enclosed by the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century. The settlement of the area was historically dispersed, comprising a scatter of cottages and farms, as well as church/hall complexes and moated sites. Many of the buildings

are Listed. This pattern is largely preserved within the present landscape. The village of Great Horksley originally comprised a scatter of farms and cottages along the old Roman Road; these have been infilled by late 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century ribbon development. Little Horksley by contrast had its origins as a church/hall complex, and the historic core of the village is a Conservation Area. In the north-west corner of the zone part of Wormingford falls within this zone, this comprises largely modern development, centred on the road junction. There is one small area of ancient woodland, Slough Grove, as well as a number of more modern woods, possibly planted as game cover.

**Archaeological Character:** There has only been limited archaeological fieldwork in this zone. Monitoring during the construction of the Bures-Great Horksley pipeline revealed archaeological features and finds, and further below-ground remains can be anticipated to survive throughout the zone. The cropmarks suggest activity in the area since the prehistoric period. They include ring-ditches of probable Bronze Age date, enclosures of later prehistoric or Roman date and a series of field boundaries and trackways that could be prehistoric, Roman or medieval in origin. A Roman lead coffin and skeleton was excavated in the south-west corner of the zone, and further burials, and indeed settlement, relating to this site can be anticipated. The medieval period is represented by a number of moated sites as well as the surviving built environment and historic landscape, and again below-ground features related to this period probably survive. In the south-west corner of the zone there are a number of ancillary sites relating to the World War II airfield at Wormingford (in HECZ 2.3).

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Cropmarks, burials, historic settlement pattern and landscape	2
• Survival	Below-ground remains, historic buildings	2
• Documentation	HER and NMP data, cartographic and documentary evidence	2
• Group Value Association	Cropmarks, settlement pattern	2
• Potential	Potential for below ground remains	2
• Sensitivity to change	Historic landscape and settlement pattern, below-ground remains	2
• Amenity Value	Historic landscape and settlement pattern could be promoted	2

### 5.3.2 HECZ 3.2: West Bergholt

**Summary:** Much of this zone consists of the former extent of Bergholt Heath, and post-medieval development on the heath. Prior to this the historic settlement pattern was both highly dispersed and sparse, comprising the church/hall complex at Bergholt Hall and isolated farms and cottages. The archaeological evidence dates from the Palaeolithic period onwards, and includes the Scheduled Monument of Pitchbury Ramparts.

**Historic Landscape Character:** The land rises gently from under 20 m. along the Colne and St. Botolph's brook to 50 m. on a broad plateau stretching northwards toward Great and Little Horksley. The geology of this zone is complex. The higher land is largely Lowestoft Formation clays, but the valley sides of St Botolph's Brook reveal London Clay, Kesgrave sands and gravels, Head deposits and alluvium. The fieldscape can be subdivided into three areas. Firstly there is an area of irregular fields, probably of medieval origin, these are largely located on the western edge of the zone. The centre of the zone comprised an extensive area of heathland, Bergholt Heath. This was a large open area of rough ground, gorse, and wood used as common grazing. Assarting on its edges, especially along the banks of the Colne and St. Botolph's brook, had already begun by the earlier 13th century, and the heath

was later subject to increasing piecemeal inclosure, with squatters building cottages on the south of the heath. The heath was finally formally enclosed in 1865, and subdivided into rectilinear fields. To the east the broad grain of the fieldscape was irregular in form, but these were further subdivided into regular parcels. This area now incorporates a golf course and the modern suburb of Braiswick. There are a number of areas of ancient woodland, of which Hillhouse Wood and Pitchbury Wood are possibly the most significant.

The historic settlement was both highly dispersed and very sparse, comprising the church/hall complex of Bergholt Hall and a number of isolated farms and cottages. As the post-medieval period progressed buildings were constructed along the western edge of the heath, adjoining the road, and squatter's cottages encroached on the heath itself. By 1875 the southern part of the heath had been largely subdivided, in what appears to have been a piecemeal fashion, into housing plots. These formed the core of the modern settlement of West Bergholt. Chapel Road, later the heart of the village, was not developed until the late 19th century, the presence of late Victorian and Edwardian houses reflect an influx of professional people from Colchester into the parish. Cottages were built on the Colchester road in the late 19th century for workers at Daniell's brewery and others were purchased; about 1900 the brewery had c.50 houses in the village. Daniell's brewery buildings and grounds were converted and redeveloped in 1989. The area is bisected by the modern route of the A12.

**Archaeological Character:** The earliest evidence for occupation in the zone comprises several Palaeolithic hand-axes recovered from the vicinity of the heath. Prehistoric, Iron Age, and Roman material has been recovered from the vicinity of Bergholt Hall and St. Mary's Church. The Iron Age hill-fort at Pitchbury Ramparts is a Scheduled Monument, the northern part of the monument survives as a substantial bank and ditch within an area of ancient woodland, the remainder is visible as a cropmark. There are several other areas of cropmarks, comprising ring-ditches of probable Bronze Age date, enclosures of later prehistoric or Roman date and undated field-systems and trackways. The medieval and post-medieval period is represented in the surviving historic landscape elements and built environment, as well as by below-ground remains, including a medieval kiln at Mile End. The 19<sup>th</sup>



century maltings and brewery were converted in the 1980s. Earthworks may survive within the ancient woodland.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Cropmarks, historic settlement pattern and landscape, Iron Age hill-fort, burials	3
• Survival	Below-ground remains, historic buildings, earthworks	2
• Documentation	HER data, cartographic and documentary evidence, Scheduling description	2
• Group Value Association	Cropmarks	2
• Potential	Potential for below ground remains, earthworks	3
• Sensitivity to change	Certain areas highly sensitive, modern development areas less so	2
• Amenity Value	High potential for promotion of Pitchbury Ramparts and historic woodland	3

### 5.3.3 HECZ 3.3: *Boxted*

**Summary:** This zone comprises the former extent of Boxted Heath, together with associated heathland settlement and the church/hall complex of Boxted.

**Historic Landscape Character:** The zone lies on the top of a broad plateau stretching northwards. The geology largely comprises Lowestoft Formation clays, with Kesgrave sands and gravels and London Clay revealed in the valleys sides. The fieldscape can be subdivided into two broad areas. Firstly there is an area of irregular and regular fields, probably of medieval origin, these are largely located on the northern part of the zone, around the church/hall complex at Boxted. The remainder of the zone comprised an extensive, roughly triangular area of heathland, Boxted Heath. This was a large open area of rough ground, gorse, and wood used as common grazing. Assarting on its edges began in the medieval period and by the

18<sup>th</sup> century there was a fringe of settlement around the northern part of the heath. It was finally formally enclosed in 1815, and sub-divided into rectilinear fields.

The historic settlement was both highly dispersed and very sparse, comprising the church/hall complex of Boxted which expanded to form a very small village, a number of isolated farms and cottages and the fringe of settlement around the northern part of the heath. Houses and bungalows, including a short-lived Salvation Army colony, were built in the 19th and earlier 20th centuries on the former heath. Piecemeal development of private housing, mostly small-scale, has occurred throughout the later 20th century.

There are no areas of ancient woodland within the zone, however extensive new formal woodlands have been planted around Boxted Lodge.

**Archaeological Character:** There has been little archaeological fieldwork within this zone. However, Prehistoric, Iron Age, and Roman stray-finds have been recovered. There are also several areas of cropmarks, including ring-ditches of probable Bronze Age date, enclosures of later prehistoric or Roman date and undated field-systems and trackways. The medieval and post-medieval period is represented in the surviving historic landscape elements and built environment, and below-ground remains can be anticipated, particularly in the vicinity of the church/hall complex.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Cropmarks, historic settlement pattern and landscape	2
• Survival	Below-ground remains, historic landscape and buildings	2
• Documentation	HER and NMP data, cartographic evidence	2
• Group Value Association	Cropmarks	2
• Potential	Potential for below ground remains	2
• Sensitivity to change	Below-ground deposits sensitive to change	2
• Amenity Value	Limited amenity value based on present knowledge	1

#### **5.3.4 HECZ 3.4: Boxted Airfield area**

**Summary:** This zone comprises the former extent of the World War II Boxted Airfield, in turn formerly an area of woodland. To the north of this was an area of dispersed settlement and former heath. The archaeological record comprises features and finds dating from the Neolithic period onwards.

**Historic Landscape Character:** The zone lies on the top of a plateau, bounded by the valley slopes of the Black Brook to the north and the A12 and the valley of the Salary Brook to the south. The geology comprises Lowestoft Formation clays, with Kesgrave sands and gravels and London Clay revealed in the valleys sides. The 1777 map of Essex shows much of this zone underneath woodland, comprising the Langham Lodge Woods (Langham Park) and the Dedham Heath Woods. To the north of the Park Lane the area was subdivided into smallish rectilinear fields, possibly carved out of Langham Moor, a remnant of the latter survived until the late 19<sup>th</sup> century.

The historic settlement pattern was both sparse and highly dispersed, although there may have been a small hamlet around Langham Moor. Cottages later encroached on or lined the edges of the moor, and by 1601 many poor people had settled there. The remainder of the settlement comprised scattered farmhouses and cottages. Piecemeal ribbon development occurred from the 19th century onwards between Langham Moor and Langham Wick.

Much of the woodland had been removed by the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the land subdivided into large rectilinear fields. The area formerly occupied by Langham Lodge Woods became the site of Broxted World War II airfield. The airfield is now under cultivation; however elements of the runways and the perimeter track remain at reduced width. There was a mass squat of homeless people on the airfield following World War II and in 1948 the airfield huts were converted to temporary homes, a number of these survive.

**Archaeological Character:** Many Neolithic axes and other implements have been found within the zone, particularly from near Park Lane Farm. Cropmarks of ring ditches, trackways, boundary enclosures, and field systems, especially in the north-west of the zone, reveal Bronze Age, Iron Age and Romano British settlement. The historic settlement pattern was dispersed and below-ground elements relating to this may survive within the zone.

Boxted Airfield was a typical American wartime airfield equipped with three runways linked by a perimeter track, around which were placed 45 loop dispersals and six 'frying-pan' dispersals. The runways and the perimeter track survive at a reduced width. The dispersed sites were built south of the airfield to Flood Lane.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Cropmarks, historic settlement pattern and landscape, Neolithic finds, World War II Airfield	3
• Survival	Below-ground remains, historic buildings, airfield	3
• Documentation	HER and NMP data, cartographic and documentary evidence, airfield survey	2
• Group Value Association	Cropmarks, airfield and assoc. structures, Neolithic artefacts	3
• Potential	Potential for below ground remains	2
• Sensitivity to change	Below-ground deposits and surviving elements of airfield	2
• Amenity Value	History of airfield has potential for promotion	1

## **5.4 HECA 4: Colne Valley**

### **5.4.1 HECZ 4.1: Land to the West of Wakes Colne**

**Summary:** This zone consists of a rural landscape to the west of the historic village of Wakes Colne. The present settlement pattern is highly dispersed with farms and cottages. The field pattern has survived well with meadow pasture still present in the valley. Little archaeological work has been undertaken in the zone, however the presence of Roman material in the church and lack of development in the zone indicates potential for below ground deposits.

**Historic Landscape Character:** The zone comprises a rural landscape on the western edge of Colchester Borough. The fieldscape largely comprises pre-18th century irregular fields (these are probably of medieval origin and some maybe even older), interspersed with areas of later enclosure of common fields. Areas of meadow pasture survive along the edges of the River Colne. The historic landscape survives well across the zone. The settlement of the area was historically dispersed, comprising a scatter of cottages, halls and farms. There are a small number of areas

of ancient woodland at the southern edge of the zone. During the post medieval period changes in agricultural production are reflected in the changing design of farm complexes with the development of the ‘Victorian High Farming tradition as shown by the complex at Wakes Hall Farm.

**Archaeological Character:** The zones geology largely comprises Alluvium in the valley bottom with river terrace gravels and Kesgrave sands on the valley slopes. There is a high potential of surviving palaeoenvironmental deposits in the base of the valley. No archaeological investigations have occurred within this zone. Roman occupation is attested from the finding of tile and brick within the fabric of the medieval church of All Saints. The presence of this material in the church is indicative of a Roman building or settlement nearby. The layout of the present landscape and settlement pattern is largely of medieval origin and survives well.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Roman finds, medieval settlement and landscape pattern,	2
• Survival	Settlement pattern and below ground deposits likely to survive well	2
• Documentation	HER data, cartographic evidence	1
• Group Value Association	Dispersed settlement pattern, historic landscape	2
• Potential	High potential for below ground deposits	3
• Sensitivity to change	Historic landscape and below ground deposits sensitive to significant change	3
• Amenity Value	Limited amenity value within the zone	1

#### **5.4.2 HECZ 4.2: Wakes Colne and Chappel**

**Summary:** This zone consists of a rural landscape including the historic settlements of Wakes Colne and Chappel and land to the south and east of the settlement. The historic settlement pattern is highly dispersed with halls, farms and cottages. The field pattern has survived well with meadow pasture still present in the valley. The zone is bisected by the Marks Tey to Sudbury Branch Line with the important Chappel viaduct located in a conservation area.

**Historic Landscape Character:** The fieldscape largely comprises pre-18th century irregular fields (these are probably of medieval origin and some maybe even older), interspersed with areas of later enclosure of common fields. Areas of meadow pasture survive along the edges of the River Colne. The historic landscape survives well across the zone. The settlement of the area was historically dispersed, with church/hall complexes, cottages, halls and farms. A concentration of listed buildings lies within the conservation area. The area around Chappel viaduct and the historic core of chapel is protected as a Conservation Area. The zone is bisected north south by the Marks Tey to Sudbury Branch Line.

**Archaeological Character:** The zones geology largely comprises alluvium in the valley bottom with river terrace gravels and Kesgrave sands on the valley slopes. There is a high potential of surviving palaeoenvironmental deposits in the base of the valley. No archaeological investigations have occurred within this zone. The layout of the present landscape and settlement pattern is largely of medieval origin and survives well. The zone contains the important railway monument of the Chappel viaduct. Remains related to the Second World War Eastern Command line of defence which runs along the line of the River Colne from Colchester before turning northwards running along the line of the Colne Valley Railway survive well within the zone with a distinct concentration in the area of the railway viaduct.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	medieval settlement and landscape pattern, railway features, 2 <sup>nd</sup> WW features	2
• Survival	Settlement pattern, below ground deposits, industrial and 2 <sup>nd</sup> WW assets survive well	3
• Documentation	HER data, cartographic evidence, 2 <sup>nd</sup> WW report	2
• Group Value Association	World War II monuments, railway monuments	3
• Potential	High potential for below ground deposits	3
• Sensitivity to change	Historic landscape, listed buildings, industrial and 2 <sup>nd</sup> WW monuments and below ground deposits sensitive to significant change	3
• Amenity Value	Both the railway and 2 <sup>nd</sup> WW monuments can be further promoted.	2

#### **5.4.3 HECZ 4.3: Ford Street and River Colne Valley**

**Summary:** This zone consists of a rural landscape including the historic settlement of Ford Street and the River Colne Valley. The historic settlement pattern is highly dispersed with farms and cottages on the edge of the valley slopes. The field pattern has survives well with meadow pasture still present in the valley.

**Historic Landscape Character:** The fieldscape largely comprises pre-18th century irregular fields (these are probably of medieval origin and some maybe even older), interspersed with areas of later enclosure of common fields. Areas of meadow pasture survive along the edges of the River Colne. The historic landscape survives well across the zone. The settlement of the area was historically dispersed, with cottages, halls and farms overlooking the valley. A single nucleated settlement developed at the river crossing at Ford Street. Industrial production is represented



by a mill with surviving mill race at Ford Street. Fiddler's Wood in the centre of the zone is an Ancient Woodland, there is evidence around its boundary for a woodland bank and ditch and further earthworks may survive inside.

**Archaeological Character:** The zones geology largely comprises alluvium in the valley bottom with river terrace gravels, Kesgrave sands and London clay on the valley slopes. There is a high potential of surviving palaeoenvironmental deposits in the base of the valley. Cropmark complexes on the valley slopes indicate the potential of prehistoric occupation on the valley sides. A number of ring ditches have been recorded which are indicative of ploughed out Bronze Age burial mounds. Evidence of Iron Age occupation was identified within Ford Street with the finding of an iron spear. The layout of the present landscape and settlement pattern is largely of medieval origin and survives well. Remains related to the Second World War Eastern Command line of defence comprising a number of pill boxes runs along the valley of the River Colne survive well.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Cropmarks, prehistoric finds, medieval settlement and landscape pattern, 2 <sup>nd</sup> WW features	2
• Survival	Settlement pattern, earthworks in woodland, below-ground deposits, industrial and 2 <sup>nd</sup> WW assets survive well	3
• Documentation	HER data, cartographic evidence, 2 <sup>nd</sup> WW report	2
• Group Value Association	World War II monuments, cropmarks	3
• Potential	High potential for below ground deposits	3
• Sensitivity to change	Historic landscape, industrial and 2 <sup>nd</sup> WW monuments and below ground deposits sensitive to significant change	3
• Amenity Value	2 <sup>nd</sup> WW monuments and historic landscape within the valley can be promoted.	2

#### **5.4.4 HECZ 4.4: River Colne Valley**

**Summary:** This zone consists of a rural landscape including the historic settlement of Ford Street and the River Colne Valley. The historic settlement pattern is highly dispersed with farms and cottages on the edge of the valley slopes. The field pattern has survived well with meadow pasture still present in the valley. Extensive archaeological deposits survive on the valley slopes indicated by the presence of significant cropmark complexes. A large number of remains related to the Second World War Eastern Command line of defence survive within the valley of the River Colne.

**Historic Landscape Character:** The fieldscape largely comprises pre-18th century irregular fields (these are probably of medieval origin and some maybe even older), interspersed with areas of later enclosure of common fields and meadow pasture along the River Colne and its tributaries. The historic landscape survives well although there has been some boundary loss across the zone. The settlement of the area was historically dispersed, with cottages, halls and farms overlooking the valley. A single nucleated settlement developed at the river crossing at Ford Street. Industrial production is represented by a mill with surviving mill race at Ford Street.

**Archaeological Character:** The zone's geology largely comprises alluvium in the valley bottom with river terrace gravels, Kesgrave sands, Head deposits and London clay on the valley slopes. There is a high potential of surviving palaeoenvironmental deposits in the base of the valley. Extensive cropmark complexes containing a range of enclosures and linear boundaries on the valley slopes indicate the potential of probable prehistoric occupation on the valley sides. A number of ring ditches have been recorded which are indicative of ploughed out Bronze Age burial mounds. Three elements of the linear dyke system of Iron Age date around Colchester bisect this zone running north south across it. Moat Farm Dyke, surviving as an earthwork is protected as a scheduled monument. The layout of the present landscape and settlement pattern is largely of medieval origin and survives well. Remains related to the Second World War Eastern Command line of defence comprising a number of pill boxes runs along the valley of the River Colne survive well.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Cropmarks, dyke system, medieval settlement and landscape pattern, 2 <sup>nd</sup> WW features, alluvial deposits	3
• Survival	Settlement pattern, upstanding earthworks, below ground deposits, and 2 <sup>nd</sup> WW assets survive well	3
• Documentation	HER data, cartographic evidence, 2 <sup>nd</sup> WW report, NMP	2
• Group Value Association	World War II monuments, cropmarks	3
• Potential	High potential for below ground deposits, alluvial deposits.	3
• Sensitivity to change	Historic landscape, and 2 <sup>nd</sup> WW monuments and below ground deposits sensitive to significant change	3
• Amenity Value	2 <sup>nd</sup> WW monuments, historic landscape within the valley, and dyke system can be promoted.	2

## **5.5 HECA 5 Modern Colchester**

### **5.5.1 HECZ 5.1: Severall's Hospital**

**Summary:** This zone comprises the main buildings, outlying separate villas and associated parkland landscape of Severall's Hospital. The geology of the zone is brickearth overlying Kesgrave Sands and Gravels. The psychiatric hospital includes a listed building and associated registered historic parkland. There are few archaeological finds from the zone.

**Historic urban character:** This zone encompasses the main buildings (central, two-storey accommodation blocks linked by corridors), water tower, chapel and outlying separate villas of Severall's Hospital. The hospital was designed by the County

Architect Frank Whitmore and opened in 1913. Buildings are set within a diverse and attractive parkland landscape, containing mature parkland trees and areas of formal planting. A circular link road surrounds the central buildings and connects to Boxted Road via entrance gates at the eastern edge of the site. The main administration building is designated as Grade II listed building. The parkland is designated as a Grade II Registered Historic Park and Garden. The site is currently being developed for housing.

**Archaeological character:** The zone contains most of the former area of Mile End Heath, as recorded on the 1777 Chapman and Andre map and includes the site of a windmill. There are few recorded archaeological remains in the zone, with only post medieval or modern features identified during evaluation trenching for the Colchester Northern Approach road. A single find of a flint arrowhead has been made in the north of the zone.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Buildings and parkland, stray find	2
• Survival	Good survival of historic buildings and associated parkland	2
• Documentation	Historic mapping, evaluation report, HER	2
• Group Value Association	Range of surviving assets (buildings, parkland) related to the use and function of the hospital	3
• Potential	Low potential for below ground archaeology	1
• Sensitivity to change	Design and layout of the buildings and parkland sensitive to change	3
• Amenity Value	Historic identity of the hospital could be promoted and parkland offers recreational opportunities	2

### 5.5.2 HECZ 5.2: *Highwoods Country Park*

**Summary:** This zone encompasses a large publicly accessible greenspace running northwards from the town centre to the urban fringe and includes areas of Ancient Woodland and grassland designated as a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation. The geology of the zone is London Clay. The zone contains evidence for the town’s civil war siege works.

**Historic landscape character:** The zone encompasses a small, gently sloping tributary valley of the River Colne at its southern end but is flatter towards the north. It is managed as a Country Park by Colchester Borough Council and contains a diverse mixture of wildlife habitats including woodland, grassland and a lake used for fishing. High Woods, a predominantly deciduous Ancient Woodland separates the northern and southern halves of the park and mature parkland trees are dotted throughout the park. Friars Grove is also an area of Ancient Woodland.

**Archaeological character:** The zone contains an unclassified rectangular earthwork at Brinkley Grove which is designated as a Scheduled Monument. It was considered to have formed part of the town’s civil war siege works but excavation has proved inconclusive and the feature remains to be dated. In the south of the zone, field walking and metal detecting surveys have recovered evidence including lead shot, 17<sup>th</sup> century coinage and pottery thought to be linked to Fort Rainsborough, part of the civil war siege works.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Brinkley Grove earthwork, ancient woodland, stray finds	1
• Survival	Survival of ancient woodland and below ground deposits	2
• Documentation	HER data, historic mapping, research	2
• Group Value Association	Civil war below ground archaeology and	1

	earthworks	
• Potential	Potential for below ground archaeology	2
• Sensitivity to change	Ancient Woodland habitat highly sensitive to change	3
• Amenity Value	Ancient woodland provides opportunities to interpret the evolution of the landscape	2

### 5.5.3 HECZ 5.3: Mile End

**Summary:** This zone comprises the north western urban portion of Colchester encompassing the historic parish of Myland. The zone is largely characterized by a mixed age residential suburbs, industrial and commercial properties and the Colchester General Hospital. The surface geology of the zone comprises brickearth, Kesgrave Sands and Gravels and London Clay. A Roman cremation cemetery has been recovered at Turner Rise. The foundations of the nave of the medieval parish church survive and the parish was the site for local pottery production during the medieval period.

**Historic urban character:** The zone is predominantly characterized by mixed age residential suburbs, situated along the A1345 Subury Road and B1508 to West Bergholt, but includes two areas of largely inter-war housing; at Defoe Crescent and lining the north side of Cowdray Avenue. It also has two large areas of predominantly retail buildings (Turner Rise Retail Park and Cowdray Centre) which are split by the railway line which runs east west through the southern end of the zone. The zone also contains the town's North Station.

**Archaeological character:** Evaluations around the Turner Village and General hospital sites have revealed a scatter of late Iron Age and Roman linear features suggesting an agricultural landscape. On the western edge of the zone, a modern road and development overlies the course of one of the Iron Age dykes (Moat Farm dyke). In the south of the zone, work on the site of the Asda superstore at Turner Rise recovered sixty cremation burials of late 1st –2nd century date indicating the location of a cemetery to the north of the Roman town. Additional burials have been

recovered to the south of Cowdray Avenue and there is evidence for one or more buildings close to Colchester Leisure Centre. Roman brick has been identified in the foundations of the nave of the 14<sup>th</sup> century medieval church, which have been uncovered for display. Three wells of uncertain date were recorded in the near vicinity. Evidence for medieval pottery production was recovered during road works and included pits, postholes, gullies, ditches, kiln furniture and wasters from a late 12<sup>th</sup> to early 13<sup>th</sup> century pottery kiln. The site was producing cooking pots, jugs, bowls, louvers and chimney pots for local consumption. The zone contains the location of two windmills marked on the 1777 Chapman and Andre map, but both sites have been developed. 19<sup>th</sup> century brickworks are recorded at a number of locations, immediately to the north and south of the railway line, and below ground structures may survive, although these areas have been largely built over. Burials have been recorded on the site of the demolished Victorian church of St Peter's. The locations of WWII defensive structures including pill boxes, spigot mortars and an ammunition shelter have been identified around the approaches to North Station and close to the River Colne, and Braiswick is the recorded location of a WII prisoner of war camp but no known remains have been identified.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Ruined church, Roman cremations, medieval pottery manufacture, brickworks, WWII defences	3
• Survival	Survival of below ground remains	1
• Documentation	HER data, excavation, research	2
• Group Value Association	Medieval pottery and church; railway and former industrial sites	1
• Potential	Potential for further below ground remains, particularly in areas of remaining open ground	1
• Sensitivity to change	Largely mixed built environment with low sensitivity to change	1
• Amenity Value	Limited opportunities to interpret the historic development of Mile End	1

#### **5.5.4 HECZ 5.4: North East Colchester**

**Summary:** This zone comprises the north eastern urban portion of Colchester and encompasses the historic parish of Greenstead. The zone is characterized by a mixed age residential suburbs situated along the main roads leading out of the town, two developments of inter war/post war suburbs and substantial areas of post 1960's suburban development including the Severalls Business Park. The surface geology of the zone includes brickearth, Kesgraves Sands and Gravels and London Clay. The zone includes records for a number of prehistoric stone hand axes, indications of Roman activity and was the location of parts of the World War II airfield at Boxted. A remnant of Ancient Woodland survives at Welshwood.

**Historic urban character:** The zone is predominantly characterized by mixed age residential suburbs, situated along the A 1232 Ipswich Road, A 137 Harwich Road and A133, but includes two areas of largely inter-war/post war housing; at Hawthorn Avenue and between the Ipswich and Harwich roads. It also has substantial areas of post 1960 suburbs including: High Woods, the area off St Johns Road and St Cynis Road, Hawthorn Avenue, Roach Vale, Longridge and Avon Way. The area around St Johns and St Cynis roads comprises relatively low density detached and semi-detached properties, mostly with private gardens and drives. Hawthorn Avenue to the south of St John's Road comprises an area of high-density inter-war housing with semi-detached and terraced housing and two and three-storey flats set out in courtyard layout. Several schools are located in the residential area. Roach Vale is a typical housing development of the 1980's/1990's. It is divided by a large swathe of greenspace comprising school playing fields, sports grounds and Welsh Wood. Longridge overlooks Salary Brook to the east. Houses range from large detached houses with large gardens in the north to bungalows and terraces in the south. The large residential suburb around Avon Way occupies the northern slope of Salary Brook. Housing comprises a combination of semi-detached houses, terraces and low-rise blocks of flats. In the north of the zone is the modern Severalls Business Park, adjacent to the A12. The church of St John is 19<sup>th</sup> century in date and there is a listed 17<sup>th</sup> or 18<sup>th</sup> century farmhouse along the Ipswich Road. Mayland Hall is a 15<sup>th</sup> century listed, timber framed house.



**Archaeological character:** A total of five stone or flint hand axes have been recovered from the zone, including four from the area around Parson's Heath. A possible roman road and villa have been tentatively identified in the south of the zone and a set of Roman bronze figures were found in the area in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The Church of St Andrew at Greenstead is 12<sup>th</sup> century in origin with a 16<sup>th</sup> century brick tower. The church yard was used to house a gun battery during the civil war. The 1777 Chapman and Andre map depicts the site of a windmill near Parsons Heath and extensive areas of Ancient Woodland in the zone, of which, only a small area (Welshwood) survives. The Chapman and Andre map also depicts linear greens and droves leading to a large area of open ground at Parson's Heath which has mostly been built over. In the north east of the zone is the site of 19<sup>th</sup> century brickworks which has been built over with car showrooms. The north west of the zone also includes the site of Myland Hospital for Infectious diseases that was built in 1884 and demolished in 1989, remains of which survive below the ground. The Severall's Industrial Business park is the location of dispersal sites belonging to the WWII airfield at Boxted and there are defensive structures recorded in the south of the zone.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Ancient Woodland, medieval church, roman remains	1
• Survival	Survival of below ground remains	1
• Documentation	Historic mapping, HER data	1
• Group Value Association	WWII Airfield and defensive structures; medieval church and ancient woodland	1
• Potential	Potential for roman remains	1
• Sensitivity to change	Ancient Woodland and Medieval church graveyard sensitive to change	2
• Amenity Value	Limited potential but opportunity to explain civil war siege in conjunction with other zones	1

### **5.5.5 HECZ 5.5: Riverside Walk**

**Summary:** This zone comprises open space alongside the meandering River Colne to the north and north east of the walled town. The zone includes Lower Castle Park, the Cricket Ground and the corridor of the River Colne between the Hythe Station and North Bridge. Much of the zone is characterized by mature riverside trees and amenity grassland. The surface geology of the zone is alluvium. The zone contains the Roman town's outer defensive ditch, probable late Roman burials and the site of medieval and later watermills at Middle Mill. The river was defended by pill boxes during WWII. Potential for water-logging and good preservation of archaeological and palaeo-environmental deposits is high.

**Historic landscape character:** The zone is characterized by former riverside meadows, which are now utilized as public open space including: Lower Castle Park, a riverside walk between East Mill and North Bridge, and one between East Bridge and the Hythe, the Bull Meadows nature reserve, allotments and marshland along the north bank of the River Colne towards the Hythe. Lower Castle Park is separated from the more formal layout of Upper Castle Park by the standing Roman town wall. The park contains public amenities including a boating lake, bowls green and toilet block. On the north side of the River Colne is the grounds of Colchester and East Essex Cricket Club and adjacent amenity grassland with a children's play area. Closer to East Mill part of the open area is taken up by school playing fields.

**Archaeological character:** The most significant recorded archaeological remains within the zone are the defensive ditch of the Roman town situated at the foot of the town wall. This survives as a visible earthwork outside Duncan's Gate and is designated as a scheduled monument. The earthwork contains evidence for modifications to the Roman town's defences towards the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD. Further to the north, on the site of the bowling green, a large number of human bones were reported in the 1930's with accompanying grave goods including late Roman military belt fittings and further human skeletal remains were found to the north in the 1970's, presumed to be of Roman date. Middle Mill is recorded early in the 12<sup>th</sup> century when it was attached to the castle. A mill was operated almost continuously

on the site until demolition of the 19<sup>th</sup> century steam powered mill in the 1950's. The mill pond, and structural elements including sluices survive and there is potential for waterlogged deposits relating to earlier mills to be present on the site. Potential for good preservation of archaeological and palaeo-environmental deposits is high throughout most of the zone. The river was defended by pill boxes and associated structures during WWII, some of which survive including anti-tank blocks in lower caste park and a pill box to the south of Cowdray Avenue.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Roman earthworks and below ground deposits, medieval and post medieval mill site, Victorian parkland and WII defences	3
• Survival	Good survival of earthworks, standing structures and below ground remains	3
• Documentation	Historic mapping, HER data, research, documentary evidence	3
• Group Value Association	Roman earthworks and below ground deposits	2
• Potential	High potential for good preservation of archaeological and palaeoenvironmental deposits.	3
• Sensitivity to change	Historic parkland, earthworks and below ground deposits sensitive to change	3
• Amenity Value	Good opportunities to interpret the Roman, medieval and post medieval development of Colchester	3

### 5.5.6 HECZ 5.6: Guilford Road estate

**Summary:** This zone comprises the Guilford Road estate located directly outside the north east corner of the walled town. The geology of the zone is river gravel terraces. Early Anglo -Saxon burials have been recovered from the zone.

**Historic urban character:** The zone is characterized by the residential housing of the Guilford Road estate. The estate was built in the 1970's and mainly comprises two-storey detached houses with gardens off a curvilinear arrangement of closes and avenues linked to Guilford Road.

**Archaeological character:** An early Anglo-Saxon burial area is suggested from the zone, close to the town ditch (HECZ 5.5) where two early 5<sup>th</sup> century burial groups were recovered by a metal detector. There is the potential for further fragmentary remains of burials surviving within the private gardens of the estate.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Anglo Saxon burials	1
• Survival	Limited survival	1
• Documentation	Historic Environment Record	1
• Group Value Association	Anglo Saxon burial groups	1
• Potential	Limited potential for below ground remains	1
• Sensitivity to change	Little sensitivity to change	1
• Amenity Value	Limited potential to interpret Anglo-Saxon Colchester in conjunction with other zones	1

### **5.5.7 HECZ 5.7: Middleborough and the Institute**

**Summary:** This zone comprises the area to the north west of the walled town including the Colchester Institute, St Helena School, Middleborough and St Peter's Street. The built environment comprises modern car parking and modern offices at Middleborough, offices and apartments along St Peter Street, retail outlets at Sheepen Road, and educational facilities at Colchester Institute and St Helena's secondary school. The geology of the zone is a mixture of Kesgrave Sands and Gravels and London Clay, River Terrace gravels and alluvium. Considerable archaeological remains have been recovered from the zone including evidence of Roman, medieval and post medieval suburban development and Roman temples adjacent to the Sheepen site (HECZ 5.8). Low lying areas around Sheepen Road, the Institute and St Peters Street have potential for waterlogging.

**Historic urban character:** The zone is characterized by a modern retail park of warehouse type units at Sheepen road, office blocks and car parking at Middleborough and offices and apartments along St Peter's Street. The Colchester Institute comprises a mixture of 1960's and post 1960's college buildings and grounds, currently undergoing redevelopment. St Helena School was built in the late 1930's and has playing fields to the north adjacent to the A133 'Avenue of Remembrance'.

**Archaeological character:** Outside the North Gate, excavations at Middleborough revealed well appointed town houses, a kiln and street leading toward temples situated in the grounds of St Helena school. Work on the Institute site has revealed a graveled road with minor roads leading off it to give access to parts of the Sheepen site (HECZ 5,8). Beside the roads were timber built workshops, ovens, kilns, hearths and metal working floors. Timber lined wells were preserved through waterlogging. At St Peters Street Roman timber drains and a street have been identified leading out of the walled town. The area next to the river between St Peters Street and the bottom of Balkerne Hill are known areas of water-logging and good preservation of organic materials can be anticipated. Evidence for medieval leather-working has also been recovered from water-logged deposits adjacent to North Bridge.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Extensive multi-period below ground deposits	1
• Survival	Good survival in remaining areas of open ground including school playing fields	3
• Documentation	Research, HER data	2
• Group Value Association	Below ground archaeological remains of late Iron Age and Roman periods	3
• Potential	Good potential for below ground archaeological remains and waterlogging	3
• Sensitivity to change	Below ground archaeology highly sensitive to change	3
• Amenity Value	Good opportunities to interpret the late Iron Age and Roman development of Colchester in conjunction with other zones (particularly HECZ 5.8).	2

### **5.5.8 HECZ 5.8: Sheepen**

**Summary:** This zone comprises the green space of Hilly Fields situated to the north west of the walled town. The green space is former farmland, characterized by grassland, ponds and dense scrub on the side of the Colne valley. The site is known to be archaeologically rich and formed the main area of manufacturing activity within the late Iron Age oppidum of Camulodunum.

**Historic landscape character:** The zone is an area of former farmland which was converted to a public open space after the development of the A133 'Avenue of Remembrance' and associated archaeological excavations in the 1930's. The zone now contains a diverse patchwork of wildlife habitats including wet grassland, ponds, acid grassland and hawthorn scrub and is designated as a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation.

**Archaeological character:** Early 20<sup>th</sup> century excavations demonstrated that Sheepen was the main area of manufacturing activity within the late Iron Age oppidum of Camulodunum. The site had its own defences, Sheepen dyke, and included the coin mint of the Iron Age tribal leader, Cunobelin. Following the Roman invasion, industrial activity including metal working, pottery and tile manufacturing and leather working continued at Sheepen until at least AD 60 when the site was destroyed during the Boudican revolt. After the revolt, the site became a religious sanctuary with temples located beneath St Helena school (HECZ 5.7) and adjacent to the River Colne (HECZ 4.4). The eastern part of the site was used as a small cemetery during the 4<sup>th</sup> century. In 1648 the area was the site of Fort Ingoldby, which formed part of the Civil War siege works. A WWII pillbox is located within the zone.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Extensive multi-period below ground deposits	1
• Survival	Good survival in remaining areas of open ground including school playing fields	3
• Documentation	Research, HER data	2
• Group Value Association	Below ground archaeological remains of late Iron Age and Roman periods	3
• Potential	Good potential for below ground archaeological remains and some waterlogging	3
• Sensitivity to change	Below ground archaeology highly sensitive to change	3
• Amenity Value	Good opportunities to interpret the late Iron Age and Roman development of Colchester in conjunction with other zones (particularly HECZ 5.7).	2

### **5.5.9 HECZ 5.9: Lexden and St Mary's**

**Summary:** This zone comprises the historic village of Lexden and post medieval infill to the walled town to the east along London Road and Lexden Road. The urban character is largely dominated by suburbs from the inter-war and post-war periods and suburbs of mixed date. An area of historic parkland survives to the south of Lexden Village and there are extensive school playing fields in the centre of the zone. The zone contains numerous scheduled monuments including several of the Colchester dyke's and two burial mounds. The zone also contains extensive below ground archaeological remains including a late Iron Age cemetery and extensive Roman cemetery located along the main Roman road into the walled town, a number of Roman temples, burials and extra mural settlement outside the Balkerne Gate. The geology of the zone is Kesgrave Sands and Gravels.

**Historic urban character:** The zone is characterized by the Victorian suburb of St Mary's, inter-war and post war suburbs and suburbs of mixed age and a modern development at Balkerne Heights. The zone is demarcated to the west by Straight Road, lined by a large area of mixed age suburb, to the south by Shrub End Road with houses ranging from Victorian to post 1960's in date and a mixture of terraced, semi-detached and detached housing, and to the north by Lexden Road and London Road. Lexden Road has a large number of listed buildings from the 19<sup>th</sup> century with several grand properties within large plots. Buildings range from Georgian to Victorian and post 1960's infill. There are a number of secondary schools in the area and a large area of school playing fields to the south of London Road. Around the historic core of Lexden and Lexden Park, is an area of low density housing with houses of mixed architectural style set within large plots. South of the junction of London Road and Straight Road is an area of post 1960's residential suburbs with a mixture of 1970's to 1990's architectural styles arranged a curvilinear street pattern of avenues and cul-de-sacs. South of this the mixed character of the suburbs between Heath Road and Shrub End Road includes areas of post-war semi-detached houses and later detached houses. To the north of Shrub End Road, the area of Prettygate contains inter-war suburbs with high density housing predominantly of two storey



terraces and some small blocks of flats. Modern housing and low rise apartments have been developed at Balkerne Heights.

**Archaeological character:** A scatter of early prehistoric finds ranging from Palaeolithic stone implements to Bronze Age metal work have been found across the zone. The zone includes the surviving, scheduled earthworks of the Iron Age Heath Farm Dyke, Lexden Dyke, Triple Dyke and Gryme's Dyke. Lexden Dyke runs roughly north-south along Bluebottle Grove and the eastern side of Lexden Park. Grymes Dyke which is probably a Roman addition to the Iron Age dyke system, marks the western extent of the zone. The zone also includes the course of Prettygate Dyke which has been identified at its junction with Lexden Dyke. The area around Lexden is characterized by late Iron Age and Roman funerary monuments including a late Iron Age cemetery immediately to the east of Lexden dyke and the scheduled earthworks of the high status burial of Lexden Tumulus and Lexden Mount. Lexden Road is the site of one or more extensive Roman cemeteries, which lined the main Roman road into the town from the west and clustered around a major road junction located beneath the Colchester Royal Grammar School. One of the roads leading from this junction, runs south west across the zone to Gosbecks (HECZ 12.4) whilst another heads south east towards the cemeteries at Abbey Field (HECZ 5.10). Hundreds of burials have been recovered from the area and significant finds within the cemetery have included early military carved tombstones, a mausoleum, temple-tomb and funerary sculptures. Roman temples are known from the Royal Grammar school, and extra mural settlement outside the Balkerne Gate. Excavations along Balkerne Lane and on the St Mary's Hospital site revealed Roman extra mural settlement including roadside workshops and temples, a possible aqueduct and the town's defensive ditch. Roads led from the Balkerne Gate to the southwest and the Sheepen site (HECZ 5.8) to the northwest. There was also another large cemetery on the St Mary's Hospital site. There is a cluster of listed medieval houses along Lexden Road, close to the parish church and during the medieval period a significant portion of the zone was occupied by heathland (Lexden Heath), as depicted on the 1777 Chapman and Andre map. During the Napoleonic war the heath was used as an army camp. It was enclosed in 1821. Lexden Park was laid out in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. During WWII, Lexden dyke was incorporated into the anti-tank ditch which formed part of the town's defences. Pill boxes are also recorded in the zone.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Below ground deposits, earthworks, stray finds, listed buildings	3
• Survival	Good survival of below ground remains, historic buildings, extensive earthworks	3
• Documentation	HER data, historic mapping, research	2
• Group Value Association	Earthworks and below ground deposits	2
• Potential	Good potential for below ground remains, particularly within remaining areas of open space	2
• Sensitivity to change	Earthworks, below ground remains, historic parkland and Lexden Road and Lexden Village Conservation Areas sensitive to change	2
• Amenity Value	Good opportunities to interpret the late Iron Age and Roman history of Colchester in conjunction with other zones e.g. HECZ 12.4	2

### **5.5.10 HECZ 5.10: Colchester Garrison**

**Summary:** This zone comprises a large area to the south of the walled town which is either current or former garrison land. The zone includes a number of listed barrack blocks, in addition to later housing and recently built barrack blocks and associated buildings. Abbey Field forms a large block of open space in the centre of the zone. The zone contains multi-period below ground archaeological remains including the scheduled remains of the Roman Circus and extensive Roman burials in the north of the zone. The geology of the zone is Kesgrave Sands and Gravels.

**Historic urban character:** The zone comprises a large 'wedge' of land within the southern half of the town, which is either owned by the Ministry of Defence or has been sold off for regeneration in recent years. The character of the zone ranges from Victorian Cavalry Barracks to modern blocks of barrack buildings, small housing estates and open sports grounds/playing fields. Abbey Field is a historic open space located towards the middle of the zone. The Victorian barrack buildings provide the zone with considerable historic interest and character. The character of the area is affected by ongoing regeneration work.

**Archaeological character:** The zone is characterized by a scatter of early prehistoric finds and features, ranging from Mesolithic flints, Neolithic and Bronze Age pits, gullies and ditches and concentrations of pottery indicating former areas of settlement. Evidence for Early Iron Age activity has also been recorded along with an Early or Middle Iron Age field system and Middle Iron Age enclosure and associated features including a roundhouse. The course of Berechurch Dyke runs along the eastern side of the zone, surviving as a substantial earthwork adjacent to Berechurch Hall Camp. During the Roman period the south of the zone is characterized by agricultural activity, including a farmstead, whilst in the north outside the walled town over one hundred burials indicate one or more cemeteries. The zone also includes the remains of the scheduled Roman circus. Medieval field boundaries have been recorded in the zone and in the 18 century there was a farm building, later replaced by a large enclosure, which went out of use in 19<sup>th</sup> century. During WWI and WWII, Abbey Field was used as a military camp and the zone includes the course of the

anti-tank ditch which ran to the south of the town and practice trenches to the south of Roman Way camp.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Below ground archaeological deposits, scheduled monument and listed buildings, historic open space	2
• Survival	Good survival of below ground archaeology and historic buildings	2
• Documentation	HER data, documentary records, excavation reports, research, designation documentation	3
• Group Value Association	Post medieval barrack buildings	1
• Potential	Good potential for multi-period below ground archaeology	2
• Sensitivity to change	Listed barrack buildings, and below ground archaeology sensitive to change	2
• Amenity Value	Good opportunity to interpret the military history of the garrison town. Good opportunity to interpret the Roman town, in conjunction with other zones	2

#### **5.5.11 HECZ 5.11: Colchester Cemetery**

**Summary:** This zone comprises the town's main Victorian cemetery complete with memorials, chapels, boundary wall, landscaping and associated buildings. There is limited evidence for earlier below ground archaeological remains. Geology of the zone is Kesgrave Sands and Gravels.

**Historic urban character:** The zone encompasses the main cemetery of Colchester. Its boundaries are demarcated by mature trees and a tall wall. Several single mature trees also characterize the cemetery, which is divided by informal paths that lead through the zone, and provide separation between different areas of graves. The cemetery includes a range of headstones and memorials as well as two chapels and a house built for the superintendent. It has been extended on a number

of occasions since it was opened in the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century and now covers 67 acres. The zone is generally flat, but slopes gently downwards at its northern end towards the Bourne Valley (HECZ 5.15).

**Archaeological character:** Stray finds of prehistoric flintwork and late Iron Age pottery have been recovered from the zone and the course of Barnhall Dyke has been identified. Below ground archaeology is likely to have been affected by 19<sup>th</sup> century and later burials within the cemetery.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Below ground archaeology, historic cemetery	1
• Survival	Form and historic character of Victorian cemetery survives well	2
• Documentation	HER data, documentary records	1
• Group Value Association	Cemetery and its associated structures	2
• Potential	Good potential for Victorian burials	2
• Sensitivity to change	Highly sensitive to change	3
• Amenity Value	Opportunity for sensitive interpretation of Victorian Colchester in conjunction with other zones	1

### **5.5.12 HECZ 5.12: Monkwick and Old Heath**

**Summary:** This zone comprises a mixture of suburbs ranging from the inter-war period up to the late 20<sup>th</sup> century with some Victorian housing along the main routes into the town from the south. A range of prehistoric material has been found in the zone but there is little open space in which below ground remains are likely to survive well. An earthwork redoubt survives on the eastern side of the zone and WWII defences are also visible in places. The geology of the zone is Kesgrave Sands and Gravels.

**Historic urban character:** The zone is characterized by a combination of inter-war/post-war suburbs, post war and mixed age suburbs. The area of Monkwick and Blackheath is dominated by the coherent and uniform nature of inter-war housing arranged as short terrace or semi-detached houses along a series of short roads and closes. Housing along Canwick Grove and Cavendish Avenue is high density whilst housing lining D'Arcy Road is much lower density with larger and longer plots. Around Cheveling Road, housing is set out in a slightly curvilinear pattern. The area around Normandy Avenue and Mountbattern Drive is largely post war in character with housing set around a curvilinear pattern with modern (c.1980's) semi-detached and terraced housing. To the east, Old Heath Road comprises a mixture of architectural styles and periods, dating from Victorian to post-war with occasional post-1960's infill. To the west, housing along Mersea Road also consists of a mix of styles and periods from post-war to modern infill. A mixture of semi-detached and detached housing is typical of the area.

**Archaeological character:** Early prehistoric activity within the zone is indicated by finds ranging from palaeolithic hand axes to Bronze Age urns. The courses of Berechurch Hall dyke and Barnhall dyke run through the zone and buried remains can be expected to survive. During the medieval period there was a moated site and fishpond at Monkwick Farmhouse, which was leveled in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. The site is now built over by a school. A large area of heathland survived at Blackheath to be recorded on the 1777 Chapman and Andre map. In the south east of the zone there is an earthwork redoubt, which may have originated as one of the civil war siege

works, although its precise origin remains unknown. The area was used as an emergency landing ground for the Royal Flying Corps during WWI, but it is unlikely that any traces of this survive. During WWII, the zone was bisected by an anti-tank ditch. Where this bisected the Mersea Road and Old Heath Road, additional defensive structures including pill boxes, anti-tank obstacles and spigot mortars were constructed, a few of which survive.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Post medieval earthwork defence, WWII defences	1
• Survival	Below ground survival is likely to be limited to the remaining open spaces	1
• Documentation	Historic mapping, HER data	1
• Group Value Association	Defensive structures	1
• Potential	Limited potential for below ground archaeology	1
• Sensitivity to change	Earthwork redoubt sensitive to change	1
• Amenity Value	Limited opportunity to interpret history of defence of the town in conjunction with other zones	1

**5.5.13 HECZ 5.13: The modern Hythe**

**Summary:** This zone comprises the post medieval and modern port of Colchester. Historically the area was industrial but recent regeneration means it is now a mix of residential, industrial and commercial properties. Recorded archaeological remains largely relate to post medieval industrial activity. The geology of the zone is a mixture of alluvium, London Clay and River Terrace gravels.

**Historic urban character:** The zone is characterized by a large number of industrial and commercial buildings but also a recently developed mix use area containing private and University accommodation within three-six storey high blocks of flats, alongside large commercial superstores. The zone falls within the East Colchester regeneration area and so is in a state of flux. The character of the zone is also

dominated by a mixture of 'hard' elements such as tall metal security fencing lining the industrial areas. High Pylons cross the zone. The area immediately around the river has a mixed character with a number of vessels, including house boats, moored on the river.

**Archaeological character:** The Hythe's function as the town's port continued into the post medieval period and activity spread south along the river front. King Edward Quay formed the core of Colchester Port, but commercial use of the quays has now ceased. Records document significant industrial and port related activities in the zone but little archaeological evidence for these has been recovered to date. A Victorian red brick three-storey maltings and gas works with street railway were both demolished in the 1970's and have since been built over. There were also 19<sup>th</sup> century brickworks at the southern end of the Hythe and a sewage works, which originated in the 1930's still survives on Haven Road. During WWII, the Hythe was bisected by an anti-tank ditch and defended with pill boxes and anti-tank obstacles which have been demolished.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Industrial archaeological remains and structures	1
• Survival	Limited survival	1
• Documentation	HER data, documentary records	1
• Group Value Association	Surviving industrial buildings/remains and port structures	2
• Potential	Potential for below ground archaeology particularly relating to industrial and port activities	1
• Sensitivity to change	Low sensitivity to change	1
• Amenity Value	Opportunities to interpret the industrial and port related history of Colchester	2



#### **5.5.14 HECZ 5.14: New Town**

**Summary:** This zone comprises the Victorian suburb of New Town to the south east of the walled town, the Paxman's Iron Foundry overlooking the Hythe and 20<sup>th</sup> century industrial, commercial and retail activity north of Madgdalen Street and around Brook Street. The zone includes the former leper hospital of St Mary Magdalen and the site of the town's first post medieval garrison and listed garrison church. The geology of the zone is Kesgrave Sands and Gravels.

**Historic urban character:** This zone is demarcated to the south by Bourne Valley, to the east by the Hythe, to the west by the former garrison and to the north by the River Colne, East Hill and the walled town. A large part of the zone contains the Victorian suburb of New Town comprising terraced houses laid out in a gridiron road pattern with some occasional larger houses and higher quality houses overlooking the Old Heath Recreation Ground and along Granville and Gladstone Roads. Much of New Town is a Conservation Area. The north of the zone is dissected by Magdalen Street which is more mixed in character and includes commercial and light industrial activity in addition to residential uses. Redevelopment in recent years has resulted in blocks of apartments and a new superstore but a number of listed buildings remains. Brook Street is a mixed commercial and retail area to the south of the railway line. Roseberry Avenue is a distinctive inter-war/post-war suburb of semi-detached houses. The zone includes Colchester Town Station and the site of the Britannia Works. Other distinctive buildings include Kendall's, Winnock's and Winsleys Almshouses and the listed, timber-framed and weather boarded Garrison Church.

**Archaeological character:** Evidence for prehistoric and Roman activity within the zone comes from occasional stray finds including a late Neolithic flint knife and Roman coinage. During the medieval period, the zone was rural in character, with fields separating the walled town from the port at the Hythe. This is suggested by the location of the 11<sup>th</sup> century leper hospital and medieval church on Magdalen Street. This was also the site of a medieval fair, recorded in the 14<sup>th</sup> century. Further to the east, pits and ditches of 14<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> century date have been identified along with

evidence for sand and clay quarrying. The Chapman and Andre map of 1777 depicts three windmills located around the junction of Military Road and Mersea Road. The zone includes the site of the town’s first military garrison comprising a large barrack complex established during the late 18<sup>th</sup> century in the area around Barrack Street and Artillery Road and a burial ground located early in the 19<sup>th</sup> century on the site of the later Garrison Church. The first garrison was demolished after the Napoleonic wars. The 19<sup>th</sup> century Paxman’s Iron Foundry stood in the north east corner of the zone until its recent demolition and the Britannia Works were located to the north of Colchester Town Station.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Medieval leper hospital, post medieval public, military and industrial buildings	2
• Survival	Survival of historic buildings	1
• Documentation	HER data, historic mapping, designation documentation	2
• Group Value Association	Industrial sites and associated housing	1
• Potential	Limited potential for below ground remains	1
• Sensitivity to change	New Town has a distinctive historic urban form and character which is sensitive to change. Elsewhere in the zone, change could be more easily accommodated.	2
• Amenity Value	Opportunity to promote the post medieval growth of the town and its links to military and industry.	

### 5.5.15 HECZ 5.15: Bourne Valley

**Summary:** This zone comprises the wooded Bourne Valley which forms a tributary of the River Colne to the east. It has been the location of a series of watermills since at least the medieval period and retains a number of historic buildings and earthworks associated with the function including Bourne Mill which is designated as a scheduled monument. The zone is likely to contain associated archaeological deposits with potential for water-logging. The geology of the zone is London Clay.

**Historic urban character:** The zone is largely unsettled although urban development borders it on all sides and has encroached into the zone at its eastern end with a modern housing development, Albany Gardens, situated on the site of the Old Laundry Works, formerly the location of Hull House and Mill. Cannock Mill is a listed building located alongside Old Heath Road. It is three-storey, timber-framed and weather boarded. Bourne Mill is a National Trust property built of re-used freestone rubble and brick, with adjacent cottage. Distillery Pond is designated as a Conservation Area.

**Archaeological character:** Evidence for prehistoric and Roman activity within the zone comes from occasional stray finds including late Iron Age pottery and Roman coinage. During the medieval period the valley and its stream served three watermills (Bourne mill, Cannock mill, and Hull mill). Bourne Mill is a scheduled monument. It was constructed as a fishing lodge in 1591, probably built on the site of the medieval mill and its pond, but was later converted to a watermill. Cannock Mill. The site includes surviving fish ponds. The earthworks of the Cannock Mill pond remain and it is likely that further archaeological features and deposits survive, with potential for water-logging. The final mill, Distillery Mill on Distillery Pond was demolished in 1896, but the sluice gate and wheel pit remain intact.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Watermill earthworks and buildings	2
• Survival	Good survival of historic buildings and earthworks	2
• Documentation	HER data, designation documentation,	1

• Group Value Association	Mills and associated earthworks and deposits	2
• Potential	Good potential for below ground remains including water-logged deposits	3
• Sensitivity to change	Landscape, historic buildings, earthworks and below ground remains highly sensitive to change	3
• Amenity Value	Opportunity to interpret development of industry in Colchester	2

#### **5.5.16 HECZ 5.16: Stanway**

**Summary:** This zone comprises a large area of post war and 1960's suburbs and modern retail development on the west side of modern Colchester. The zone lies outside the area of the Iron Age oppidum of Camulodunum but contains the routes of a number of roman roads leading towards the walled town. The geology of the zone is Kesgrave Sands and Gravels.

**Historic urban character:** The zone is characterized by post-war and post-1960's suburbs together with a modern retail centres at Tollgate and around Dugard Avenue. The area around Villa Road is predominantly comprised of semi-detached, two storey post-war housing. Further east is an area of modern (1980's/1990's) housing around Wheatfield Road. North of this, along London Road is the former Lexden and Winstree Union Workhouse, built in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and listed as Grade II. To the north of London Road is another area of post-1960's suburban housing situated off Lucy Lane which is split into northern and southern suburbs by the A12. In the south of the zone, Blackberry Road is an area of post 1960's housing comprising a mixture of detached and semi-detached housing off Cul-de-sacs and Avenues. East of this, is the Peartree Industrial estate, consisting of commercial and light industrial units and a large supermarket. On the western edge of the zone a modern housing development has been built within a former gravel pit. To the north of this is the Tollgate retail centre comprised of large, pre-fabricated warehouse-style units and extensive car parking. There are a number of historic buildings

located along the main road leading into Colchester including a cluster of medieval farmhouses and barns east of the Tollgate Roundabout.

**Archaeological character:** Early prehistoric activity in the zone is indicated by a few stray finds of flint work and pottery. The zone falls outside the Iron Age Oppidum of Camulodunum and is demarcated on its east side by the scheduled earthworks of Gryme’s Dyke, which are thought to be Roman in origin. The conjectural routes of a number of Roman roads or trackways run across the zone towards the walled town, several of which have been confirmed through field work. During the medieval period the zone was covered by a large area of heathland (Stanway Heath and Lexden Heath), which survived to be depicted on the 1777 Chapman and Andre map. During the post medieval period, brickworks were established along London Road and a small gravel quarry was located at King Coel’s Kitchen.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Historic buildings, roman roads	1
• Survival	Survival of historic buildings	1
• Documentation	HER data, historic mapping	1
• Group Value Association	Historic buildings and routes	1
• Potential	Limited potential for below ground archaeology in surviving open spaces	1
• Sensitivity to change	Historic buildings sensitive to change	1
• Amenity Value	Limited opportunity to interpret the historic routeways into the town	1

**5.5.17 HECZ 5.17 East Hill**

**Summary:** This zone comprises the principal eastbound road from the walled town and the medieval and post medieval suburb which developed along it. The zone is limited to the rear plot boundaries to the north and south of East Hill. It is predominantly residential with occasional commercial activity. The street frontage has a number of distinctive medieval and Georgian houses. East Hill follows the line of a

Roman road out of the East Gate of the walled town and archaeological investigations have demonstrated the potential for activity within the medieval property boundaries along East Hill from the 12<sup>th</sup> century onwards. The geology of the zone is a mixture of alluvium, River Terrace gravels, London Clay and Kesgrave Sands and Gravels.

**Historic urban character:** The zone is characterized by a wealth of listed buildings facing onto the street frontage. These include 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> century jettied timber framed buildings and later Georgian and Victorian houses. The historical integrity of the zone remains largely intact despite the intrusion of modern buildings and modernisation of some older buildings such as the 14<sup>th</sup> century Rose and Crown hotel, East Mill and Colchester Brewing Company building. At the river crossing, East Bay, there is a cluster of Georgian and Victorian mill buildings, retail properties and houses retaining the historic character of the areas as a commercial wharf. The Siege House is a late 14<sup>th</sup> century timber-framed house famous noted for being damaged in the civil war siege. East Bridge is early 19<sup>th</sup> century in date.

**Archaeological character:** Archaeological investigations in the zone have demonstrated the potential for well-preserved medieval and post medieval deposits and remains within building plots and the interiors of buildings, although some plots have been found to be deeply truncated by later activity. The zone has WWII defensive structures recorded within it, including an unusual crenellated wall overlooking the river crossing. There is potential for water-logging along the river frontage and for extra-mural settlement from the Roman period.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Historic buildings and below ground deposits	2
• Survival	Good survival of buildings and associated below ground archaeology	2
• Documentation	HER data, designation documentation, historic mapping	2
• Group Value Association	Medieval and post medieval buildings and associated below ground archaeological remains	2

• Potential	Good potential for below ground archaeology including potential for waterlogging. Potential for Roman extra-mural activity	3
• Sensitivity to change	Highly sensitive to change	3
• Amenity Value	Good opportunities to promote the medieval and post medieval development of the town.	2

### **5.5.18 HECZ 5.18: The Hythe**

**Summary:** This zone comprises the historic port of the Hythe and includes the medieval church of St Leonard's and a number of listed buildings within the Hythe Conservation Area. The zone has seen regeneration in recent years but below ground archaeological deposits will remain, with potential for water-logging along the river frontage. The geology of the zone is a mixture of alluvium, London Clay and River Terrace Gravels.

**Historic Urban Character:** The historic core of the Hythe is focused around Hythe Hill, Back Lane to the north and Hythe Quay to the east. It is designated as a Conservation Area and contains numerous listed buildings in addition to later infill and some modern regeneration around Maudlyn Road. Historic buildings include the 12<sup>th</sup> century church of St Leonard's, 16<sup>th</sup> century and later houses, a 16<sup>th</sup> century Inn and 18<sup>th</sup> century Inn and Georgian Customs House.

**Archaeological Character:** The historic port and settlement at the Hythe was a detached community, situated on the west bank of the River Colne, which probably originated in the 11<sup>th</sup> century, possibly as a planned settlement. St Leonard's Church probably denotes the edge of the settlement at the time of the church's foundation in the 12<sup>th</sup> century. Historical sources reveal that the Hythe's facilities as a port were further developed in the 14<sup>th</sup> century and excavations have revealed activity along both sides of Hythe Hill dating from the 12<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> centuries and timber structures, likely to relate to quays or wharfs along the river front. Further deposits can be expected, within and around surviving historic buildings and current and former plots,

including waterlogged deposits/features associated with the former river frontage and quayside.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Historic buildings, below ground archaeology	2
• Survival	Good survival of historic buildings and urban form, below ground remains	2
• Documentation	HER data, documentary records, excavation reports, designation documentation	2
• Group Value Association	Historic buildings, river frontage and below ground archaeology	2
• Potential	Good potential for below ground archaeology including water-logging	3
• Sensitivity to change	Historic buildings and below ground remains highly sensitive to change	3
• Amenity Value	Opportunities to interpret the medieval development of Colchester	2

#### **5.5.19 HECZ 5.19: South of the walled town**

**Summary:** This zone comprises the area immediately to the south of the walled town, including suburbs outside the South Gate and Scheregate which originated in the medieval period. The zone contains a number of landmark buildings and structures including the religious precincts of St John’s Abbey and St Botolph’s Priory and has been shown to have extensive below ground archaeological remains ranging from Roman cemeteries to waterlogged medieval deposits. St Botolph’s Priory and St John’s Abbey Gatehouse are designated as scheduled monuments. Much of the zone falls within the town centre conservation area and St John’s Green falls within the Garrison Conservation Area. There are numerous listed buildings. The geology of the zone is a mixture of alluvium, London Clay and River Terrace Gravels.

**Historic urban character:** South of the medieval Scheregate is a jumble of medieval and later buildings grouped around St John’s Street and defined by



properties abutting the Roman wall to the north and the Southway ring road to the south which cuts it off from St John's Green. St John's Green is a distinct settlement outside the scheduled 15<sup>th</sup> century gatehouse of St John's Abbey precinct. Extensive lengths of the abbey's precinct wall survive. The precinct is now occupied by Garrison buildings. Immediately to the north east is St Gile's Church and the remains of St Botolph's Norman Priory church and its associated graveyard, which is also a scheduled monument. Much of the Priory precinct survives as open space although it has been partially built over by the modern St Botolph's Church. To the north of St Botolph's Priory, the Roman town walls are a dominant feature overlooking a car park next to Priory Street. The wall here is one of the longest stretches visible in the town; five bastions added to the wall in the medieval period are also visible. In the eastern portion of the zone, Crouch Street retains a mixed historic character.

**Archaeological character:** Hundreds of Roman burials have been recorded from the zone including a 4<sup>th</sup> century cemetery associated with a masonry church at Butt Road on and around the site of the modern Police Station. At St Botolph's, a late Roman building has been identified beneath the east end of the Priory Church and Roman burials have been found elsewhere in the precinct. A section of the scheduled Roman circus lies within St John's Abbey precinct. The buried defensive ditch of the Roman walled town runs along the base of the wall and has been identified at a number of locations. A 10<sup>th</sup> or 11<sup>th</sup> century defensive ditch also runs along the base of the wall to the south of the town. Excavations within the abbey precinct have revealed the remains of a possible late Anglo-Saxon church and early medieval burial ground pre-dating the foundation of St Gile's Church in the 12<sup>th</sup> century. Only limited evidence has been found for the monastic buildings of St John's Abbey. Another religious establishment, the House of the Crutched Friars, was established in a medieval suburb outside the south-west corner of the town, situated on the south side of Crouch Street. Remains of the church and associated burials have been recorded during excavations. Excavations outside the South Gate have revealed medieval waterlogged deposits including evidence for leather working. Further waterlogging can be anticipated in the area of the zone immediately to the south of the town walls within a former stream valley.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Ecclesiastical buildings, below ground archaeology, historic urban form	3
• Survival	Good survival of historic buildings and below ground archaeology	2
• Documentation	HER data, historic mapping, excavation reports, research	3
• Group Value Association	Medieval secular and ecclesiastical buildings and below ground archaeology	2
• Potential	Good potential for below ground archaeology including water logging	2
• Sensitivity to change	Historic buildings, below ground deposits and historic urban form sensitive to change	3
• Amenity Value	Good opportunities to interpret the medieval development of the town and its religious history	2

## **5.6 HECA 6 Colchester Walled Town**

### **5.6.1 HECZ 6.1 High Street**

**Summary:** The High Street has been the main historic routeway through the town since Roman times and contains a wealth of historic buildings ranging from the medieval Red Lion Hotel to the Edwardian town hall. Numerous structural remains from Roman buildings have been made within plots fronting the High Street, Anglo-Saxon pottery is relatively well represented and the during the medieval and post medieval periods, its commercial importance was reflected in the construction of well built buildings, many with cellars and undercrofts. The zone falls within the Colchester Conservation Area and there are many listed buildings. The geology of the zone is Kesgrave Sands and Gravels.

**Historic Urban Character:** Both historically and today, the High Street forms the central commercial and retail spine of the town. The architecture of the High Street has a varied character, with a mixture of styles and several landmark buildings

including: the 15<sup>th</sup> century Red Lion Hotel, All Saints Church and St James Church, the George Hotel, the Victorian Corn Exchange, and Edwardian town hall. There is also a selection of well-preserved late Georgian frontages. At its eastern end the High Street curves around the line of the former castle bailey. The High Street is designated as a Conservation Area and contains a multitude of listed buildings.

**Archaeological Character:** Little evidence has been retrieved from the zone for the Roman Legionary Fortress although the High Street follows the line of the via praetoria and runs over the predicted site of the Headquarters building. The via praetoria later became the main Roman road through the town and a number of tessellated pavements, foundations, drains and walls from Roman buildings have been found within Insulae fronting onto the street. A number of gravelled streets running off the main street have also been identified. The Boudiccan destruction horizon has provided evidence for commercial activity along the street, including shops selling pottery and glass. Remains of a monumental arch and columned screen have been identified along the southern side of the Temple precinct. Notable concentrations of Late Saxon pottery have been identified along the High Street. All Saints Church and St James Church have associated graveyards. The sites of two other churches, St Nicholas and St Runwalds are known and the detached graveyard of St Runwalds is located behind the Town Hall. Other medieval masonry buildings in the town included the Moot Hall, on the site of the current town hall and a number of stone houses concentrated in the commercial centre of the town, particularly the High Street. During the medieval period stone was also used in the construction of cellars for properties including a number along the High Street, reflecting the commercial importance of this part of the town. Two medieval coin hoards deposited in lead canisters have been found in adjacent properties at the western end of the High Street. The market place, was centered along a widened section of the High Street reaching from its junction with North Hill and Head Street down to St Nicholas's church. Excavations at Angel Yard revealed at least four 14<sup>th</sup> century or earlier buildings that formed a distinctive settlement pattern within this part of the town centre consisting of crowded frontages, with long straggling buildings reached by narrow alleyways and enclosing gravelled yards. Elsewhere, areas of domestic occupation during the medieval period are best revealed by numerous rubbish and cess-pits. Wells have also been located within High Street building plots and robber

trenches are another feature of the period. Evidence for metal working has been identified in the zone. Medieval pitting, robber trenches and cellarage along the High Street have reduced the survival of earlier deposits and remains.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Below ground archaeology, historic buildings and urban form	2
• Survival	Good survival of below ground archaeological remains but pre-medieval deposits disturbed by cellarage along the High Street frontage and pit digging	2
• Documentation	HER data, designation documentation, historic mapping, excavation reports, research	3
• Group Value Association	Medieval buildings, below ground archaeology and urban form	2
• Potential	Good potential for buried archaeology from medieval and post medieval period.	3
• Sensitivity to change	Below ground remains, historic buildings and urban form highly sensitive to change	3
• Amenity Value	Good opportunities to interpret the historic development of Colchester	2

### **5.6.2 HECZ 6.2 St Mary's Precinct**

**Summary:** This zone includes a wide range of historic structures and buildings from the remains of the Roman Balkerne Gate and town wall, to the landmark Victorian water tower 'Jumbo' and Mercury Theatre. Multi-period deposits survive across the zone including evidence for the Roman Legionary Fortress. The zone falls within the Colchester Conservation Area, there are many listed buildings and the town wall and Balkerne Gate are a scheduled monument. The geology of the zone is Kesgrave Sands and Gravels.

**Historic urban character:** At the west end of the High Street is the precinct of St Mary's, which is dominated by the Victorian water tower 'Jumbo' and which also contains the distinctive 20<sup>th</sup> century Mercury Theatre, St Mary's Church, the Friends Meeting House, the Old Court House and Georgian Almshouses as well as modern sheltered housing. The Roman Balcerne gate survives as a built structure and still serves as an entry point to the walled town. Historic plots and older buildings remain along narrow streets running west from the Head Street frontage. The zone falls within the Colchester Conservation Area and has numerous listed buildings.

**Archaeological character:** Military buildings from the Legionary Fortress have been identified close to the Mercury Theatre and during excavations at the Odeon Cinema site on Head Street. Evidence for Boudiccan destruction has also been recorded at a number of locations including the Head Street Odeon Cinema site. Roman houses, including one with an ornamental pool, were later built on the site and numerous tessellated pavements and walls have been recorded elsewhere in the zone indicating the presence of further buildings. Gravelled streets with footways have also been identified. The scheduled town wall survives well along the west side of the zone, but has been demolished or built over in the south east corner and along the south side. Head Gate was one of the main entrances into the Roman town and was the principal entrance in the medieval period. A pedestrian gate in the wall close to St Mary's Church is medieval in origin but was formed from a Roman drain. St Mary's Church is a possible Anglo-Saxon foundation; the presence of an early church was indicated by the discovery of inhumation burials of probable pre-conquest date to the south of the present graveyard. The Bishop of London is recorded as having an estate in this corner of the town in the late Anglo-Saxon period. St Mary's Church has a large churchyard. It was ruined during the siege of Colchester and was largely rebuilt in the 18th century but much of the late medieval tower remains.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Diversity of historic environment assets</li> </ul>	Roman structures, multi-period below ground archaeological remains, post medieval buildings	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Survival</li> </ul>	Good survival of Roman and medieval below ground archaeology and historic buildings	2

• Documentation	HER data, historic mapping, excavation, research, designation documentation, documentary records	3
• Group Value Association	Roman structures and below ground archaeology	1
• Potential	Good potential for multi-period below ground archaeology	3
• Sensitivity to change	Above and below ground archaeological remains, historic buildings and urban form highly sensitive to change	3
• Amenity Value	The historic structures and buildings show the evolution from Roman to modern periods better than any other part of the walled town providing good opportunities for interpretation	2

### **5.6.3 HECZ 6.3 North Hill**

**Summary:** North Hill was one of the main thoroughfares in the Roman and medieval town and retains a wealth of historic buildings and archaeological deposits. The zone falls within the town centre Conservation Area and contains numerous listed buildings. The geology of the zone is Kesgrave Sands and Gravels. Preservation of below ground deposits is variable but very good in places with potential for water-logging at the bottom of North Hill.

**Historic urban character:** North Hill runs down from the west end of the High Street and retains several medieval timber framed buildings, such as the 16<sup>th</sup> century Marquis of Granby inn, some fine Georgian frontages and the mid 18<sup>th</sup> century St Peter's Church. The zone is predominantly commercial, but to the west of North Hill is the early 20<sup>th</sup> century Gilbert School, now the sixth form college, which has had significant new development in recent years. East of North Hill is a multi-storey car park and the tower block of the telephone exchange. The zone falls within the town centre conservation area and contains many listed buildings.

**Archaeological character:** Archaeological discoveries and investigations within the zone have revealed evidence for the construction and use of the Roman legionary fortress including a number of barrack buildings and gravelled streets. Evidence for Boudiccan destruction has been noted on a number of sites including at the Gilbert School. The remains of a number of later town houses including tessellated floors, painted wall plaster robbed out foundations and mosaic pavements have also been located. Until recently, much of the zone to the west of the North Hill street frontage had remained as open space, possibly since the Roman period, and preservation is good, although some terracing has taken behind the street frontages on both sites of North Hill. At the north end of the zone, water-logging is present and investigations at the base of the town wall have shown that it was constructed on timber pile foundations. Notable concentrations of Late Saxon pottery have been identified along North Hill, suggesting that it remained one of the main thorough fares into the town via the North Gate. Medieval pitting is also concentrated along North Hill and represents activity at the rear of properties fronting the street. A significant number of late medieval timber-framed buildings survive along the street and are likely to have associated archaeological deposits within their plots.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Diversity of historic environment assets</li> </ul>	Roman military and civilian buildings and deposits, medieval pitting, timber framed buildings	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Survival</li> </ul>	Good survival of historic buildings and below ground archeology	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Documentation</li> </ul>	HER data, historic mapping, excavation, research, designation documentation, documentary records	3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Group Value Association</li> </ul>	Medieval timber framed houses and associated below ground deposits and urban form	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Potential</li> </ul>	Good potential for multi-period below ground archaeology	3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sensitivity to change</li> </ul>	Below ground archaeological remains, historic buildings and urban form sensitive to	3

	change	
• Amenity Value	Good opportunities to interpret the historic development of the town	2

#### 5.6.4 HECZ 6.4 Dutch Quarter

**Summary:** The highly distinctive Dutch Quarter contains a wealth of timber framed buildings and retains a largely medieval street pattern. Significant structures include St Martin’s Church, St Helen’s Chapel and the Roman Theatre. The zone is part of the town centre conservation area and contains numerous listed buildings. The geology of the zone is Kesgrave Sands and Gravels and London Clay.

**Historic urban character:** Behind the North Hill frontage and to the North of the High Street is the town’s distinctive Dutch Quarter, named after the Flemish refugees and weavers encouraged to settle in the town during the reign of Elizabeth I. The quarter is predominantly residential with a largely medieval street pattern and significant number of timber framed buildings from that period. Distinctive buildings include St Helen’s Chapel, St Martin’s Church, and several houses with timbered frontages along West Stockwell Street. The zone falls within the town centre Conservation Area and contains a wealth of listed buildings.

**Archaeological character:** Archaeological discoveries and investigations within the zone have revealed limited evidence for the Roman town largely due to the lack of modern development that has taken place within the zone. A number of tessellated pavements, walls and gravel streets have been identified and the remains of a masonry theatre have been partially explored and are now exposed within a purpose built building. The density of medieval occupation indicates that earlier deposits are likely to have been affected by pit digging. The Roman town wall is mainly hidden beneath later buildings. There are likely to be significant medieval and post medieval deposits associated with historic building plots within the zone as demonstrated by excavations at Angel Yard where buildings and yards were discovered backing onto the West Stockwell Street frontage. St Martin’s Church has an associated graveyard



and St Helen's Chapel is also medieval in origin. There is potential for water-logging in the north of the zone.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Timber-framed buildings, religious foundations, below ground archaeology	2
• Survival	Good survival of historic buildings and below ground archaeology	2
• Documentation	HER data, historic mapping, designation documentation	2
• Group Value Association	Historic buildings, streets and urban form and below ground archaeology	3
• Potential	Good potential for medieval and post medieval archaeological deposits	3
• Sensitivity to change	Historic buildings, urban form and below ground archaeology sensitive to change	3
• Amenity Value	Good opportunities to interpret the medieval development of the town including its association with the cloth trade	2

### 5.6.5 HECZ 6.5 Castle Park

**Summary:** Castle Park is a Victorian landscaped park containing Colchester Castle, the Hollytrees Georgian mansion and extensive below ground archaeological remains, particularly from the Roman period, including town houses and a water-works. The zone is designated as a scheduled monument and Conservation area. The surface geology of the zone is a mix of Kesgrave Sands and Gravels and London Clay.

**Historic urban character:** Castle Park is a Victorian landscaped park dominated by the Norman castle keep and its associated earthwork defences. The Georgian mansion of Hollytrees and adjacent War Memorial are landmark features in the area. The majority of the zone is a scheduled monument and the park is a Registered

historic park and garden. The whole of the zone falls within the town centre Conservation Area.

**Archaeological character:** Evidence for a number of Roman town houses, walls, numerous tessellated pavements, metalled streets, masonry drains and a water-works have been recorded within the park. Two rooms of one building have been left exposed and a drain near Duncan’s Gate is visible, as are the collapsed remains of the gate itself. The zone also contains the site of the Temple of Claudius and its forum. The base of the temple is preserved beneath the Norman Castle. Along the north edge of the zone the town, the town wall is a dominant feature and a section of the town wall’s inner rampart is visible. South of the Norman Castle is the site of a late Saxon chapel which was replaced by a masonry chapel in the 11<sup>th</sup> or 12<sup>th</sup> century following construction of the castle. Colchester Castle was built late in the 11<sup>th</sup> century and provided with defensive earthworks resulting in a diversion of the High Street (HECZ 6.1). In addition to the chapel, several stone built buildings have been identified within the Castle’s bailey. A landscape park was developed in the 18<sup>th</sup> century in the grounds of the privately owned castle. The public park was created in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Norman keep and earthwork defences, medieval masonry buildings, below ground archaeological remains. designed landscape	3
• Survival	Good survival of buildings, below ground archaeology and designed landscape	3
• Documentation	HER data, historic mapping, documentary records, research, excavations	3
• Group Value Association	Roman above and below ground remains, Norman castle, masonry buildings and earthwork defences, designed landscape	3
• Potential	There is high potential for well preserved archaeological remains, including possible water-logging	3
• Sensitivity to change	Designed landscape, landmark buildings,	3

	below ground archaeology highly sensitive to change	
• Amenity Value	High amenity value with potential for enhanced interpretation linked to the Castle and Hollytrees Museums	3

### 5.6.6 HECZ 6.6 Bury Fields

**Summary:** This zone contains a newly built landmark art gallery and well preserved below ground archaeology from the Roman period as well as the town wall. A large part of the zone is designated as a scheduled monument and falls within the town centre Conservation Area. The geology of the zone is Kesgrave Sands and Gravels.

**Historic Urban Character:** This zone consists of the south west corner of the walled town behind the High Street and Queen Street frontages, which was one of the last remaining undeveloped areas of the town until the recent construction of a landmark art gallery. It was formerly the location of the town's bus station and the site of a multi-storey car park. The only other building in the zone is a small day nursery. The zone is demarcated to the south and east by the Roman town wall which has a number of bastions that were added during the medieval period.

**Archaeological Character:** Archaeological investigations within the zone have revealed well preserved remains of a number of gravelled streets and Roman town houses including mosaics and tessellated pavements and walls with painted wall plaster. A number of burials have also been recovered. The art gallery was constructed so as to have minimum impact on below ground archaeological remains. During the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the zone contained the gardens of East Hill House and it is likely that the area had been open ground since the end of the Roman period.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Below ground archaeological remains	1
• Survival	Good survival of below ground archaeology	3
• Documentation	HER data, research, excavation, designation	2

	documentation	
• Group Value Association	Roman buildings, streets and burials, town wall	2
• Potential	High potential for well preserved below ground archaeology	3
• Sensitivity to change	Below ground archaeology highly sensitive to change	3
• Amenity Value	Good opportunities to interpret the Roman history of the town in conjunction with other zones	2

### **5.6.7 HECZ 6.7 South of High Street**

**Summary:** This zone, to the south of the High Street, comprises a mixture of historic streets and modern shopping precincts. It includes landmark buildings such as Anglo-Saxon tower of Holy Trinity Church and timber-framed town house of Tymperleys. The zone falls within the town centre Conservation Area and contains a number of listed buildings. Extensive multi-period archaeological remains have been identified during the development of the Culver Square and Lion Walk shopping precincts. The geology of the zone is Kesgrave Sands and Gravels.

**Historic Urban Character:** South of the High Street are the modern pedestrian shopping precincts of Lion Walk and the Culver Centre, bounded to the south by properties along St Isaac's Walk, Eld Lane and Short Wyre Street and separated from each other by the historic routeway of Trinity Street and its listed medieval buildings including the late 15<sup>th</sup> century timber framed town house of Tymperleys, now a clock museum, and late Victorian Holy Trinity Church with distinctive Anglo-Saxon tower. Lion Walk precinct includes the former Congregational Church tower re-built in 1884 after the Colchester earthquake. Queen Street, at the east end of the High Street is predominantly Victorian with occasional Georgian and modern buildings including the bus station. The zone falls within the town centre Conservation Area and there are a number of listed buildings

**Archaeological Character:** Two large scale excavations have been undertaken in the zone at Culver Square and Lion Walk. Excavations at Culver Square revealed early prehistoric activity including a late Neolithic rubbish pit and three Late Bronze Age pits. At the Culver Square and Lion Walk sites Roman structures recorded included military barracks of the Legionary Fortress, evidence for Boudiccan destruction and town houses with hypocausts, and mosaic floors. Both Lion Walk and Culver Square had the remains of a square courtyard house containing at least 30 rooms. Metalled streets, footways and drains were also recorded and a number of mosaics, tessellated pavements and walls have been identified elsewhere in the zone. The Roman town wall survives as a significant feature on the southern edge of the zone, but is largely built over. It has been breached at two locations to provide entry to underground access to the Culver Square and Lion Walk precincts. During the late Roman period, occupation within the town became less intensive. Buildings were demolished and areas of open ground were used for cultivation. The Culver Street site was occupied by a large aisled barn and a corn drying oven. Both sites revealed the remains of early Anglo-Saxon huts with characteristic sunken floors. During the late Anglo-Saxon or early medieval period several new streets developed in the zone. The tower of Holy Trinity Church is the best surviving Anglo-Saxon monument in the town. A stone house of 12<sup>th</sup> century date was recorded at Lion Walk and a number of earthfast buildings were recorded on both sites. A late medieval building and associated features were revealed during excavations at Long Wyre Street. Other evidence for medieval domestic occupation in the zone takes the form of pitting, gravel yards and robber trenching. Pitting is particularly associated with the rear of properties fronting onto Head Street and High Street. The zone retains potential for extensive multi-period deposits despite modern intrusions including several large scale developments, which have removed significant portions of the historic environment.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Historic buildings, buried archaeology, urban form	2
• Survival	Good survival of below ground archaeology	2
• Documentation	HER data, designation documentation, historic mapping, documentary records, excavation reports	3
• Group Value Association	Medieval buildings, streets and below ground archaeology	2
• Potential	Good potential for buried archaeology	2
• Sensitivity to change	Below ground archaeology and historic form sensitive to change where not destroyed by modern developments	3
• Amenity Value	Good opportunities to interpret the development of the town in conjunction with other zones.	2

### **5.6.8 HECZ 6.8 Greyfriars**

**Summary:** This zone comprises the north east corner of the walled town and includes an area of Victorian terraced houses on the site of the 19<sup>th</sup> century Botanic Gardens, formerly the precinct of Greyfriars monastery. The zone includes a stretch of the Roman town walls and inner rampart. Few other archaeological remains have been identified in the zone. The Geology of the zone is Kesgraves Sands and Gravels.

**Historic Urban Character:** This zone consists of the north east corner of the walled town and is demarcated on the east and to the north by the Roman town wall. It is separated from the adjacent Castle Park (HECZ 6.5) by a high masonry wall. The majority of the zone is occupied by an area of Victorian terraced housing comprised of two long streets of modest Victorian two storey villas. In the south west corner of the zone are modern buildings behind the High Street frontage.

**Archaeological Character:** The Roman town wall and inner rampart survive along the northern edge of the zone and are designated as a scheduled monument. Along the zones eastern side, the town wall is buried within the backgardens of properties along Roman Road, but its outer face is exposed. Limited finds of Roman and later remains have been discovered in the zone including a robbed foundation and early Anglo-Saxon pottery. During the medieval period the zone formed part of the precinct of the House of Greyfriars. None of the monasteries cloisteral buildings have been identified and its layout is uncertain, but finds include wall foundations and demolition debris. A number of finds of worked stone and evidence for burials have been made from the area. A Botanic garden was established on the site in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century and during WWII, an air raid shelter was built there.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Victorian terraced housing, Roman and medieval below ground archaeology including monastic site	2
• Survival	Moderate survival of below ground deposits	2
• Documentation	HER data, historic mapping, documentary evidence, excavation	2
• Group Value Association	Roman wall and rampart and below ground archaeology	1
• Potential	Moderate potential for below ground archaeology	2
• Sensitivity to change	Victorian terraced housing and below ground archaeology sensitive to change	2
• Amenity Value	Opportunity to interpret the Roman and medieval town in conjunction with other zones	2

## **5.7 HECA 7: Wivenhoe area**

### **5.7.1 HECZ 7.1: Wivenhoe hinterland**

**Summary:** This zone comprises an area of open, rural landscape, sloping westwards down to the River Colne. The zone includes Kesgrave sands and gravels with potential for early Palaeolithic finds. There is evidence for prehistoric and Roman settlement in the zone. In the medieval and post-medieval period the historic settlement pattern was both sparse and highly dispersed, and this pattern survives into the present day. There has been extensive quarrying in the west of the zone.

**Historic Landscape Character:** The geology of this zone consists of Kesgrave sands and gravels, overlain by Lowestoft Formation to the east; London Clay is exposed in the River Colne valley sides with alluvium bordering the river. The fieldscape comprises a mix of irregular and rectilinear fields, the former maybe of medieval origin. The rectilinear fields are largely located on the former Wivenhoe Heath (which extended into Tendring District), and date to the enclosure of the heath in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The gravels, particularly in the east of the zone, have been quarried and this has impacted on the historic landscape in that area. The 1777 map of Essex shows woodland on the slopes down to the River Colne, much of this survives as Wivenhoe Wood. The historic settlement was both highly dispersed and very sparse, comprising one or two farms and a couple of cottages. The only modern addition is a small group of houses at the road junction at Black Horse Corner.

**Archaeological Character:** The Kesgrave sands and gravels mark an earlier route of the River Thames, these both underlie and overlie an organic silty clay that contains the remains of temperate-climate plants and beetles. It is believed that this entire sequence pre-dates the Anglian glaciation, which would suggest that the temperate interval represented falls within the Cromerian Complex. A number of Palaeolithic flints have come from this clay and there is the potential for further finds belonging to the earliest stages of human occupation in Britain. Monitoring during gravel extraction at Wivenhoe Quarry has revealed archaeological features and finds, dating from the prehistoric to the Roman period, and further below-ground remains



can be anticipated to survive throughout the zone. There are numerous cropmarks within the zone, these largely comprise enclosures, usually sub-rectangular and probably either later prehistoric or Roman in date, and undated field boundaries. Some of these field boundaries may date to the prehistoric and Roman periods, whilst others may represent various stages in the development of the medieval field-system. The site of the medieval windmill is also visible as a cropmark. In addition to the modern quarrying, a number of small-scale quarry-pits of unknown date are visible on the aerial photographs.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Cropmarks, Palaeolithic potential, multi-period finds and sites, ancient woodland	3
• Survival	Below-ground remains, historic buildings, potential for earthworks within woodland (eastern side of zone quarried)	2
• Documentation	HER data, cartographic evidence, NMP, geological records	2
• Group Value Association	Cropmarks, Kesgrave sands and gravels	2
• Potential	Potential for below ground remains, earthworks within woodland	2
• Sensitivity to change	Western side highly sensitive, much of eastern side has been quarried	2
• Amenity Value	Woodlands	2

### **5.7.2 HECZ 7.2: Wivenhoe Park**

**Summary:** This zone comprises the entirety of Wivenhoe Park. The park had its origins as a medieval deer-park, Wivenhoe House was built in the mid-eighteenth century and the park re-landscaped as part of this process. The park became the site of the University of Essex in the 1960s

**Historic Landscape Character:** The geology of this zone consists of Kesgrave sands and gravels in the southern half of the zone, with London Clay exposed to the north and west. The zone is bisected by the valley of a small stream, now dammed to form two ornamental lakes, this flows into the River Colne. The park had its origins as a medieval deer-park. Wivenhoe House was constructed in 1759 and the park re-modelled in the landscape style in the 1770s. This re-modelling included the creation of the lakes. A painting by Constable records the appearance of the park in 1816. The house was re-modelled in the 1840s in the Tudor style, two picturesque lodges date to this period. In 1961 the park was acquired by the University of Essex. The university buildings largely date to this period, it is characterised by its tall tower-blocks, built as student accommodation, the intention was to create an academic San Gimignano rising from the parkland but the visual impact is more of concrete monoliths in a parkland setting. The university has been added to and adapted over the following decades.

**Archaeological Character:** The Kesgrave sands and gravels mark an earlier route of the River Thames, these both underlie and overlie an organic silty clay that contains the remains of temperate-climate plants and beetles. It is believed that this entire sequence pre-dates the Anglian glaciation, which would suggest that the temperate interval represented falls within the Cromerian Complex. There is the potential for Palaeolithic finds belonging to the earliest stages of human occupation in Britain. The density of cropmarks in the adjoining zones would suggest that features relating to the prehistoric and Roman periods may survive within the area of the later park. Elements of the medieval and post-medieval parks survive, these include buildings, boundary ditches, the lakes and trees, and associated below-ground features can also be anticipated.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Medieval deer-park, post-medieval parkland and mansion, 1960s university	2
• Survival	Elements of parkland survive within University setting	2
• Documentation	Cartographic and documentary, Constable paintings	3
• Group Value Association	Medieval and post-medieval parkland, 1960s university	3
• Potential	Potential for surviving parkland features, earlier below-ground features and finds	2
• Sensitivity to change	Parkland setting and university structures	2
• Amenity Value	Potential for interpretation and promotion of parkland and university	3

### **5.7.3 HECZ 7.3: East of Colchester**

**Summary:** This zone comprises a narrow strip of land sandwiched between the eastern suburbs of Colchester and Tendring District. Historically the zone contained a mix of agricultural land, woods and heath. The latter was enclosed in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. There is archaeological evidence in the form of cropmarks for settlement of the area since the prehistoric period. The modern and historic settlement pattern is however both highly dispersed and sparse in nature.

**Historic Landscape Character:** The geology of this zone is complex, comprising areas of consists London Clay, Lowestoft Formation clays and silts, small patches of Kesgrave sands and gravels and a narrow band of alluvium in the floor of the Salary Brook valley. The Salary Brook valley forms the south-western limit to the zone, and drains much of the area. The historic field pattern comprises irregular fields, possibly of medieval origin, in the south of the zone, and rectilinear fields in the north of the zone. These were formed as a consequence of the 19<sup>th</sup> century enclosure of Crockleford Heath. There were long, thin areas of enclosed meadow pasture along

the floor of the Salary Brook valley, these still largely survive, but are now used for recreational purposes, such as dog-walking. There are a number of areas of ancient woodland. Historically the settlement pattern was both highly dispersed and very sparse, comprising one or two farms and cottages, Crockleford Mill and a couple of inns on the main roads leading out of Colchester, and this pattern survives into the present day.

**Archaeological Character:** There has been only limited archaeological fieldwork within this zone. There are however several cropmarks within the zone, these comprise enclosures, usually sub-rectangular and probably either later prehistoric or Roman in date, ring-ditches of probable Bronze Age date and undated field boundaries. Some of these field boundaries may date to the prehistoric and Roman periods, whilst others may represent various stages in the development of the medieval field-system. More modern periods are represented by the post-medieval Greensteadvale Brickyard and the cropmark of a possible anti-tank ditch dating to the Second World War. The alluvial deposits associated with the Salary Brook have the potential for palaeoenvironmental evidence.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Cropmarks, woodland, mill and brickyard	2
• Survival	Good survival for below-ground deposits, woodland and industrial features	2
• Documentation	NMP, cartographic, HER	2
• Group Value Association	Cropmarks and woodland	1
• Potential	Potential for below-ground features and palaeoenvironmental deposits	2
• Sensitivity to change	Below-ground features and woodland highly sensitive to change	2
• Amenity Value	Woodland	2

## **5.8 HECA 8: Wivenhoe town**

### **5.8.1 HECZ 8.1: Historic centre of Wivenhoe**

**Summary:** This zone comprises the historic core of Wivenhoe, including the medieval town, church and quay. The economy of Wivenhoe was dominated by its estuarine position and this is reflected in the urban plan-form, which is dominated by lanes leading down to the Quay.

**Historic Urban Character:** The zone comprises the historic core of Wivenhoe. The Domesday Book records that Wivenhoe was a small manorial village in 1066. It is not known when it began to take on an urban aspect, but the taxation data suggests that the settlement did not really expand until the end of the medieval period. In the medieval period the Church and churchyard appear to have marked the approximate northern limits of the town, with the southern boundary of the town formed by The Quay. The main road from Colchester (High Street) runs from north to south, along the western edge of the churchyard, terminating in Anchor Hill. The medieval town was probably bordered by Bath Street to the west. To the east the medieval town and early post-medieval expansion merge, stopping at St John's Road and the marshes.

The economy of Wivenhoe was dominated by its estuarine position. It is probable that the medieval buildings facing onto the quay included warehousing and fish-processing facilities, whilst there may also have been boat-building yards on the quay itself. In the post-medieval period Wivenhoe served as an entrepôt for Colchester and it is possible that it also served the same function in the medieval period.

The earlier buildings are mostly timber-framed, often with later brick facades. There are a few buildings of particular interest:- St Mary's Church is 14<sup>th</sup> century in date, The Old Garrison House, East Street is dated to c.1600 and has a particularly good example of pargetting on its first floor street frontage.

**Archaeological Character:** There has only been limited archaeological fieldwork in Wivenhoe. However, the geology comprises river terrace gravels, Bridgland's map assigns them to the Wivenhoe formation, these are of Pleistocene origin and may contain faunal remains relating to the Pleistocene period. The quay area, together with the eastern end of the zone and the foreshore are all located on estuarine alluvial deposits, these have the potential to contain palaeoenvironmental evidence.

The zone also has high potential for the survival of medieval and post-medieval remains relating to the development of the town and quay. There is also the possibility of earlier versions of the waterfront surviving behind the present Quay, as well as of waterlogged deposits.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Medieval and post-medieval town, historic buildings, Pleistocene gravels	3
• Survival	Good survival of historic buildings, town plan and probably below-ground remains	2
• Documentation	HER data, cartographic and documentary evidence, historic town survey	3
• Group Value Association	Settlement assets	3
• Potential	Potential for below ground deposits in the historic core	2
• Sensitivity to change	Sensitive to change in the historic core	2
• Amenity Value	High potential for promotion of the historic assets of the town.	3

## **HECZ 8.2: Post-medieval Wivenhoe**

**Summary:** This zone comprises the post-medieval expansion of Wivenhoe, including the site of the boat-building yards and 19<sup>th</sup> century brick tenements.

**Historic Urban Character:** The zone comprises the post-medieval expansion of historic Wivenhoe. Wivenhoe appears to have grown slowly but steadily in the early post-medieval period, however its main period of expansion did not take place until the nineteenth century. The post-medieval street pattern is relatively well understood, due to the presence of maps dating from the eighteenth century onwards. The five blocks of buildings along the quay certainly existed in the beginning of the post-medieval period as they contain sixteenth and seventeenth century buildings. Ribbon development along the main road to Colchester began in the sixteenth or seventeenth centuries. By 1830 the town had expanded along The Quay as far west as St John's Street and the building of what was to be named Alma Street had begun. In the 1840's - 50's the tenements on Alma Street were built. The railway was built in 1863, effectively delimiting the extent of the oldest part of the town. To the north of the railway Queen's Road, Park Road and Clifton Terrace were built, whilst to the south-west Hamilton Road, Brook Street, Paget Road and Anglesea Road were built.

The economic and industrial life of the town continued to be dominated by its estuarine position. It served as a port for Colchester, with the larger ships coming up the Colne and offloading into smaller lighters for Colchester Hythe. Farm produce from the Wivenhoe hinterland was exported to London, and coal imported in exchange. The principal employers in the town were the boat-building and fishing industries. In the nineteenth century the ship-building industry was dominated by the building of fishing-vessels and bespoke yachts. By the twentieth century this had expanded to include the building of container ships, and the refitting of ships for use during the two World Wars. The boat-yards were located on the western side of the waterfront, the last one was closed in 1986 and they have now been built over.

**Archaeological Character:** There has only been limited archaeological fieldwork in Wivenhoe. However, the geology comprises river terrace gravels, Bridgland's map assigns them to the Wivenhoe formation, these are of Pleistocene origin and may contain faunal remains relating to that period. The boat-building yards are located on estuarine alluvial deposits, these have the potential to contain palaeoenvironmental evidence. A band of London Clay outcrops

The zone also has high potential for the survival of post-medieval remains relating to the development of the town and the boat-yard, in particular the dry-docks should survive below-ground. There is also the possibility for the survival of below-ground remains relating to the rural environs of the medieval town.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Medieval and post-medieval town, historic buildings, Pleistocene gravels	2
• Survival	Good survival of historic buildings, town plan and probably below-ground remains	3
• Documentation	HER data, cartographic and documentary evidence, Historic Town report	3
• Group Value Association	Settlement assets	3
• Potential	Potential for below ground deposits	2
• Sensitivity to change	Sensitive to change of the historic fabric	2
• Amenity Value	High potential for promotion of the historic assets of the town in association with historic core	3



### **5.8.2 HECZ 8.3: Modern Wivenhoe**

**Summary:** This zone comprises the modern extent of Wivenhoe, largely of post 1960s date, but incorporating the older hamlet of Wivenhoe Cross and development dating to the 1920s, and inter-war and post-war period suburbs. It includes the site of Wivenhoe Hall, now demolished.

**Historic Urban Character:** The zone comprises the modern expansion to the north of historic Wivenhoe. Until the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century the tiny hamlet of Wivenhoe Cross comprised a small group of cottages and farms. However by 1920 ribbon-development along the Colchester Road had effectively linked historic Wivenhoe with Wivenhoe Cross. There are a number of inter-war and immediately post-war suburbs; however the majority of the housing estates date to post-1960s.

**Archaeological Character:** There has only been limited archaeological fieldwork in Wivenhoe. However, the geology comprises river terrace gravels, Bridgland's map assigns them to the Wivenhoe formation, these are of Pleistocene origin and may contain faunal remains relating to that period. There is evidence for prehistoric activity within the zone, in the form of stray finds. A cropmark of a sub-oval enclosure is recorded on the western side of the zone and part of another enclosure also extended into the eastern side, these are probably of later prehistoric date, they have been largely built-over, but some below-ground features may survive.

Wivenhoe Hall stood next to the High Street at the southern end of this zone. The hall was brick built and according to Morant, it was a 'large and elegant seat', which had 'a noble gatehouse with towers of great height, that served for a seamark', probably similar to the gatehouses at St Osyth and Layer Marney. The earliest part of the Hall dated to the 1530's, and it was probably rebuilt in brick following the restoration of the land to the Earl of Oxford by Henry VII. The hall was demolished in 1927, but there is the possibility of some below-ground remains surviving.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Pleistocene gravels, Wivenhoe hall	1
• Survival	Mostly built-over, limited possibility of below-ground remains	1
• Documentation	HER data, cartographic and documentary evidence, Historic Town report	2
• Group Value Association	Pleistocene gravels	1
• Potential	Potential for below ground remains related to Wivenhoe Hall, potential for Pleistocene finds from the gravels.	1
• Sensitivity to change	Limited sensitivity to change due to modern development	1
• Amenity Value	Potential of linking history of Wivenhoe hall to that of the historic town	2

## **5.9 HECA 9: Great Tey area**

### **5.9.1 HECZ 9.1: Great Tey area**

**Summary:** This zone consists of a rural landscape including the historic settlements of Great Tey. The historic settlement pattern is highly dispersed with church/hall complexes, moats, halls, farms and cottages. The field pattern has survived well with meadow pasture still present in the Roman River valley. Multi-period archaeological deposits are present from the prehistoric period onwards. A Roman villa lies to the south of Great Tey. The zone is bisected by the Marks Tey to Sudbury Branch Line.

**Historic Landscape Character:** The fieldscape largely comprises pre-18th century irregular fields (these are probably of medieval origin and some maybe even older), interspersed with areas of later enclosure of common fields. Areas of meadow pasture survive along the edges of the Roman River, although much of this has been ploughed. The basic structure of the historic landscape survives well although there had been field boundary loss across the zone. The historic settlement pattern of the area was dispersed, with church/hall complexes, moats, halls cottages, and farms. A

concentration of listed buildings lies within the conservation area in the southern part of the settlement of Great Tey. The zone is bisected north south by the Marks Tey to Sudbury Branch Line.

**Archaeological Character:** The drift geology consists of largely Lowestoft formation with gravels exposed in the valley sides, and alluvial deposits on the valley floor. The zone is bisected by the valley of the Roman River from which there is a high potential for surviving palaeo-environmental deposits. Cropmarks complexes are recorded along the northern side of the Roman River including a range of, sub rectangular, sub square and irregular ditched enclosures, as well as linear features representing many periods of field-systems. The southern boundary of the area is formed by the main Roman Road from Colchester to Braughing (Stane Street). The site of a Roman villa is recorded to the south of Great Tey, this is a Scheduled Monument. The magnificent 12<sup>th</sup> century Norman tower in Great Tey church contains a quantity of Roman tile and brick, which may well derive from this site. The settlement of the area was historically dispersed, comprising the small village at Great Tey which is clustered around the church, with the remaining settlement pattern comprising church/hall complexes, some moats, farms and cottages. Industrial heritage is represented by brick works with one of the brick kilns located to the north of Marks Tey being scheduled. The area is bisected by two railway lines, one comprising the main London to Colchester link with the second being the Marks Tey to Sudbury route, both of which retain important industrial elements.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Cropmarks, Roman villa, medieval settlement and landscape pattern, railway features	2
• Survival	Settlement pattern, below ground deposits, and industrial assets survive well	3
• Documentation	HER data, cartographic evidence	1
• Group Value Association	cropmarks	2

• Potential	Potential for below ground deposits	2
• Sensitivity to change	Historic landscape, listed buildings, industrial and below ground deposits sensitive to significant change	2
• Amenity Value	Roman villa and settlement history of Great Tey could be promoted.	1

### **5.9.2 HECZ 9.2: Eight Ash Green area**

**Summary:** This zone consists of a rural landscape including the historic heath at Fordham Heath. The historic settlement pattern is highly dispersed with church/hall complexes, moats, halls, farms and cottages. Complex archaeological deposits known from cropmarks are present south of the present A12 with further cropmarks in the east of the zone.

#### **Historic Landscape Character:**

The fieldscape largely comprises pre-18th century irregular fields (these are probably of medieval origin and some maybe even older), interspersed with areas of later enclosure of common fields. The basic structure of the historic landscape survives well although there had been considerable field boundary loss across the zone. The heath survives at Fordham, now developed on its eastern side by Eight Ash Green it originally had a range of farms and cottages around its perimeter. Fordham Heath was known in 1391 as '*le Hathe*' and had rights of common grazing. The many greens in the area (Eight Ash Green, Seven Star Green and Daisy Green) were probably early woodland clearings and were used as common land linked by green lanes. Post 1950 residential development has occurred at Eight Ash green, Fordham Heath and Aldham.

**Archaeological Character:** The drift geology consists of largely Lowestoft formation overlying London Clay bedrock with small areas of head deposits. Little archaeological work has been undertaken within the zone. Neolithic flints, including a polished have been recovered from a field near Fordham Heath. Cropmarks complexes are recorded specifically in the area to the south of the A12 including a

range of enclosures and possible ring ditches, as well as linear features representing many periods of field-systems. Other cropmarks in the eastern part of the zone comprise possible enclosures and field boundaries. Roman occupation has been identified including possible buildings at Eght Ash green and the southern boundary of the zone is formed by the main Roman Road from Colchester to Braughing (Stane Street).

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Cropmarks, Roman building, medieval settlement and landscape pattern, Historic heath	2
• Survival	Settlement pattern, below ground deposits, landscape features survive well	3
• Documentation	HER data, cartographic evidence, NMP	2
• Group Value Association	cropmarks	2
• Potential	Potential for below ground deposits	2
• Sensitivity to change	Historic landscape, listed buildings, and below ground deposits sensitive to significant change	2
• Amenity Value	Development of Fordham Heath and associated settlement could be promoted	2

**5.9.3 HECZ 9.3: South of Marks Tey**

**Summary:** This zone comprises a large lake originally formed in debris deposited by a previous ice advance. From pollen washed into the lake it preserves one of the most complete ancient vegetational sequences known in Britain. Flint artifacts have also been recovered indicating very early exploitation of the zone.

**Historic Landscape Character:** The fieldscape largely comprises pre-18th century irregular fields (these are probably of medieval origin and some maybe even older). Areas of meadow pasture survive along the edges of the Roman River. The basic

structure of the historic landscape survives well although there had been field boundary loss across the zone. The historic settlement pattern comprises a single farmstead on the eastern side of the zone. Housing estates have been added on the southern boundary of the zone related to expansion of Copdock and Stanway The zone is bisected east west by the London to Norwich Train Line and the main A12 trunk road. These both have had the potential to cause significant impact in the southern part of the zone.

**Archaeological Character:** The complete Hoxnian interglacial cycle is represented by lacustrine deposits occupying a deep trough cut in the subglacial surface during the Anglian glaciation. This trough subsequently formed a lake basin which filled with sediment during the entire interglacial and part of the ensuing Wolstonian glacial stage. It contains laminated diatomaceous muds, and if the laminations are annual, as may well be the case, then the sediments represent the accumulation over a period of 30,000-50,000 years. Excavations on the Lake have recovered a few flint artifacts including handaxes.

The zone is bisected by the valley of the Roman River from which there is a high potential for surviving palaeo-environmental deposits. On the site of a former brickworks at Copdock a wide range of animal bones were recovered including giant beaver, mouse, bear, giant ox and elephant were recorded in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Palaeoenvironmental deposits, animal deposits, flint artifacts	2
• Survival	Nationally important Hoxnian deposits survive	3
• Documentation	HER data, reports, geological data	2
• Group Value Association	Animal bones, artifacts	3
• Potential	Significant potential for nationally important research on early historic environment.	3
• Sensitivity to change	Hoxnian deposits highly sensitive to	3

	change	
• Amenity Value	Important early history of zone can be promoted in relation to very early occupation of Essex	2

## **5.10 HECA 10: Messing and Marks Tey area**

### **5.10.1 HECZ 10.1: Marks Tey and Messing area**

**Summary:** This zone consists of a rural landscape around the modern settlements of Messing and Marks Tey. The historic settlement pattern is highly dispersed and survives well in the modern landscape. Excavations indicate multi-period occupation including settlement sites, burial sites and transport links. The zones location to the west of Colchester means that a significant number of Roman roads cut through the zone. The medieval settlement pattern survives well with excavation indicating that in the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> century further occupation was present.

**Historic Landscape Character:** The fieldscape in the majority of the zone comprises pre-18th century irregular fields (these are probably of medieval origin and some maybe even older), interspersed with areas of later enclosure of common fields. Some areas of Tiptree Heath were enclosed in the 19<sup>th</sup> century in the southern part of the zone. Post 1950's boundary loss can be characterised as moderate to high. The valley of the Domsey Brook has enclosed meadow pasture along its length. Historically the settlement pattern was very dispersed and sparse, comprising isolated church/hall complexes, manors, farms, moats, and cottages. The many greens in the zone were probably early woodland clearings and were used as common land linked by green lanes. Conservation areas protect the settlements of Copford Green and Messing. Only limited modern development has occurred most of which is located in the northern part of the zone along the line of the old London Road.

**Archaeological Character:** The drift geology consists of largely Lowestoft formation with alluvial deposits in the valley of the Domsey Brook. The lacustrine deposits occupying a deep trough cut in the subglacial surface during the Anglian glaciation identified in zone 9.3 potentially extend into the northern part of this zone. Extensive cropmarks are recorded across the zone, many relating to previous field boundaries. Cropmarks of ploughed out round barrows are common especially in the southern part of the zone. Excavation in advance of mineral extraction on and adjacent Birch airfield identified prehistoric occupation in the form of an enclosure and ring ditch (remains of a burial mound). A number of the cropmarks form enclosures which may be of prehistoric date. A total of six possible Roman roads lie within the zone, including that of Stane Street on the northern boundary. Some lie under existing roads, others are visible as cropmarks. Excavations have shown the presence of Late Iron Age and Roman settlement at Birch airfield with further evidence of Roman material present in the church at Messing. The evidence indicates extensive occupation of this zone during the Roman period.

Historically the settlement pattern was very dispersed and sparse, comprising church/hall complexes, manors, farms, moats, and cottages frequently located at Greens across the zone. Many of the buildings on these sites are now listed. Medieval deposits identified during excavation indicate that further settlement sites existed in the medieval period but were abandoned in the 13<sup>th</sup> or 14<sup>th</sup> century. Birch airfield in the southern part of the zone was one of the last airfields completed by the US army being operational in May 1944. A number of dispersed airfield related sites are recorded to the west of the airfield. Elements of the airfield are now being quarried for sand and gravel deposits.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Cropmarks, Iron Age and Roman settlement, Roman roads, medieval settlement and landscape pattern	2
• Survival	Settlement pattern, below ground deposits, survive well	3
• Documentation	HER data, cartographic evidence, NMP, excavation reports	2



• Group Value Association	Cropmarks, Roman roads	2
• Potential	Potential for below ground deposits	2
• Sensitivity to change	Historic landscape, listed buildings, and below ground deposits sensitive to significant change	2
• Amenity Value	Settlement pattern, rural landscape can be promoted with other zones	2

### **5.10.2 HECZ 10.2: Inworth area**

**Summary:** This zone comprises a rural landscape to the west of Inworth. The historic settlement pattern and much of the landscape features survive with considerable ancient woodland in the southern part of the zone. No archaeological work has been undertaken within the zone, however, cropmark evidence indicates the potential of surviving archaeological deposits.

**Historic Landscape Character:** The fieldscape in the majority of the zone comprises pre-18th century irregular fields (these are probably of medieval origin and some maybe even older), interspersed with areas of later enclosure of common fields. Post 1950's boundary loss can be characterised as moderate to high. Historically the settlement pattern was very dispersed and sparse, comprising a church/hall complex, farms, and cottages largely located on the Kelvedon to Tiptree Road frontage. Historic woodland survives in the southern part of the zone.

**Archaeological Character:** The drift geology consists of largely London clay with Lowestoft formation in the northern part of the zone. A number of enclosures recorded as cropmarks are potentially of prehistoric origins. Other cropmarks are recorded, many relating to earlier field boundaries. Historically the settlement pattern was very dispersed, comprising a church/hall complex at Inworth, farms, and cottages located along the Kelvedon to Tiptree road, many of which are listed. The church at Inworth dates back to the 11<sup>th</sup> century with possible medieval structures recorded in the grounds of the present Rectory. Historic woodland in the southern

part of the zone has the potential for surviving earthworks both related to the woods or earlier occupation. A windmill is recorded in the area of the woodland.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Cropmarks, medieval settlement and landscape pattern	2
• Survival	Settlement pattern, below ground deposits, survive well	2
• Documentation	HER data, cartographic evidence, NMP,	1
• Group Value Association	Historic settlement pattern, woodland	1
• Potential	Potential for below ground deposits	2
• Sensitivity to change	Historic landscape, listed buildings, and below ground deposits sensitive to significant change	2
• Amenity Value	Historic development of Inworth could be promoted	1

### **5.10.3 HECZ 10.3: Tiptree Heath area**

**Summary:** Historically this area was largely heath, with large areas surviving through to the 19<sup>th</sup> century when much was enclosed. Archaeological deposits are represented by a range of undated cropmarks and a number of pottery kilns at Tiptree. Today most is arable although areas of Tiptree Heath survive. Ribbon development has occurred along the roads through the Heath.

**Historic Landscape Character:** Historically this zone comprised Tiptree Heath, a large area of common rough pasture and wood-pasture shared between several neighbouring parishes. Encroachment on this area began in a piecemeal fashion in the medieval period, but extensive open tracts still remained until the early 19th century when it was finally enclosed by the Enclosure Act. Post 1950's boundary loss can be characterised as moderate to high especially to the south of Tiptree, in many cases involving the removal of boundaries introduced in the early 19th century. Some areas of the original heath and wood-pasture survive specifically in the

southern part of the zone. Much of the arable cultivation in the zone is producing products for use in the jam factory within Tiptree.

**Archaeological Character:** The drift geology consists of glaciofluvial deposits of sand and gravel overlying London clay. Cropmarks are recorded to the west of Tiptree largely comprising linear features, both of field boundaries and possible enclosures. Part of Tiptree Heath survives in the southern part of the zone. In the south western corner of the zone lies the site of a small Augustinian priory, founded in the 12<sup>th</sup> century, and dedicated to St Mary and St Nicholas. The only remaining part of the priory is a rubble wall. A number of post medieval pottery kilns are recorded to the west of Tiptree. A significant part of the zone to the west of Tiptree has been quarried.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Cropmarks, Heath, landscape pattern, Priory	2
• Survival	Settlement pattern, below ground deposits, survive	2
• Documentation	HER data, cartographic evidence, NMP,	1
• Group Value Association	Historic landscape pattern	2
• Potential	Potential for below ground deposits	2
• Sensitivity to change	Historic landscape, Priory and below ground deposits sensitive to significant change	2
• Amenity Value	History of the Heath could be promoted	1

**5.10.4 HECZ 10.4: Tiptree Heath area**

**Summary:** Historically this area contained areas of heath, parkland and woodland. The historic settlement pattern is very dispersed comprising greens and separate farms. The woodland contains and is adjacent to important earthworks and has the

potential of containing more. Archaeological deposits are represented by a range of cropmarks and surviving earthworks of either prehistoric or Roman date.

**Historic Landscape Character:** Historically this zone comprised part of Tiptree Heath, a large area of common rough pasture and wood-pasture shared between several neighbouring parishes. Encroachment on this area began in a piecemeal fashion in the medieval period, but extensive open tracts still remained until the early 19th century when it was finally enclosed by the Enclosure Act. Significant areas of the original heath and wood-pasture survive in the zone. The historic settlement pattern is very dispersed at greens and farms. Messing Park contains a listed building with internal features dating back to the 16<sup>th</sup> century and parkland in existence in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Much of the arable cultivation in the zone is producing products for use in the jam factory within Tiptree.

**Archaeological Character:** The drift geology consists of Glaciofluvial deposits of sand and gravel overlying London clay. Only limited cropmarks are present within this zone, however, those located between Pods Wood and Layer Wood are indicative of settlement. A mound within Pods Wood is recorded as a bowl barrow (prehistoric or Roman burial mound) surviving as an earthwork. A further earthwork both within Pods Wood and to its east comprises a double banked rampart with a water filled area between. The exact function or date is unknown. The presence of this earthwork and the barrow indicates the high potential of further earthworks being present within the ancient woodland.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Cropmarks, burial mound, heath, ancient woodland earthworks,	2
• Survival	Settlement pattern, earthworks, woodland earthworks below ground deposits, survive	3
• Documentation	HER data, cartographic evidence, NMP, scheduling	2
• Group Value Association	Earthworks, ancient woodland	3

• Potential	Potential for below ground deposits, earthworks, parkland features	3
• Sensitivity to change	Historic landscape, ancient woodland and below ground deposits sensitive to significant change	3
• Amenity Value	Woodland history, earthworks and Tiptree heath history could be promoted	2

## **5.11 HECA 11: Village of Tiptree**

### **5.11.1 HECZ 11.1: Tiptree**

**Summary:** This zone comprises most of the modern settlement of Tiptree. Although little archaeological fieldwork has been undertaken within Tiptree the chance finds indicate a long history back to the Palaeolithic. These deposits are especially important as the town lies on the edge of a Hoxnian Lake. During the medieval and post medieval period Tiptree comprised a small nucleated village with a dispersed pattern of farmsteads around. There has been considerable expansion in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

**Historic Urban Character:** Tiptree has expanded considerably during the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The once linear settlement, centred on the crossroads, has expanded in all directions especially along the route ways. Until the 20<sup>th</sup> century Tiptree remained a very dispersed community, however, especially from the 1960's extensive urban expansion occurred continuing into the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

**Archaeological Character:** The town of Tiptree lies mainly on glaciofluvial deposits of Middle Pleistocene date. and is located on the edge of a melt water lake of Hoxnian date 250,000 – 200,000 years ago. A number of Palaeolithic artifacts have been found in various locations across the urban area of Tiptree. These all comprise flint artifacts. Evidence of Neolithic occupation has been found in Tiptree comprising flint artifacts which have included number of flint axes. The Roman period is represented by a series of coins recovered as chance finds from various locations in

the town indicating a presence at this period. The historic settlement pattern in the medieval and post medieval period was very dispersed with historic Tiptree being a very small nucleated settlement surrounded by dispersed farms and cottages.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Listed buildings, chance finds of multi period artifacts including flint and coins	2
• Survival	Limited survival due to 20 <sup>th</sup> century development.	1
• Documentation	HER, cartographic	1
• Group Value Association	Flint tools	1
• Potential	Potential for below ground deposits to survive in undeveloped areas. Potential for surviving geological deposits containing flints.	2
• Sensitivity to change	Post 1960's development mean little sensitivity to change	1
• Amenity Value	History of town can be tied into the development of the jam factory.	2

**5.11.2 HECZ 11.2: Tiptree Jam Factory**

**Summary:** This zone comprises the area of the jam factory and its associated industrial housing at the southern end of the modern settlement of Tiptree. The factory and its workers housing, forms an important industrial monument within the present town of Tiptree.

**Historic Urban Character:** This zone is situated at the southern edge of Tiptree containing the Wilkins Jam Factory, consisting of a combination of modern and older buildings, including the factory, museum and tea shop, dominates the character of the area. Modern museum buildings are low-rise red brick and black timber-faced, whilst the factory buildings are silver pre-fabricated warehouses. Two associated tall

chimneys are distinctive landmarks within views from adjacent zones. Hints to the original fabric and layout of the factory can easily be seen in the tall red brick wall, which surrounds the site, and also in the prominent older entrance arch, with associated gates.

**Archaeological Character:** In 1885 Arthur Charles Wilkin established the Britannia Fruit Preserving Co Ltd, renamed Wilkin & Sons Ltd in 1905 on its present site at Trewlands Farm. The jam factory is still operational and many of the original houses built around it remain as a group of inter related industrial and social buildings.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Restricted to assets related to the jam factory	1
• Survival	Good survival of jam factory	2
• Documentation	HER, cartographic and documentary	2
• Group Value Association	Jam making industry	1
• Potential	Potential limited to the development of the jam factory	1
• Sensitivity to change	Industrial housing and older jam factory buildings sensitive to change	2
• Amenity Value	Good amenity value to promote the history of the jam factory and its associated buildings	3

**5.12 HECA 12 Roman River Valley**

**5.12.1 HECZ 12.1: Copford**

**Summary:** This zone consists of a rural landscape to the south of Stanway. The historic settlement pattern is highly dispersed and survives well in the modern landscape. Cropmarks indicate multi-period occupation including probably settlement sites, burial sites and transport links. The zones location to the west of

Colchester means that a significant number of Roman roads cut through it. The drift geology comprises Lowestoft formation deposits with alluvium in the valley of the Roman River Valley.

**Historic Landscape Character:** The fieldscape in the majority of the zone comprises irregular fields that are probably medieval or earlier in origin and which have been affected by later enclosure and then, during the 20<sup>th</sup> century, boundary loss. Post 1950's boundary loss can be characterised as moderate to high. The valley of the Roman River dissects the northern half of the zone and has fragments of enclosed meadow pasture surviving along its length, although much has been affected by tree planting, including Cricket Bat Willows, during the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Copford Hall is surrounded by the remnants of informal parkland which originated in the medieval period. Historically the settlement pattern was highly dispersed and sparse, comprising isolated church/hall complexes, farms and cottages. Only limited modern development has occurred most of which is located in the northern part of the zone along the line of the old London Road. There is a sewage works to the north of Copford Hall.

**Archaeological Character:** Extensive cropmarks are recorded in the north and south of the zone, many relating to previous field boundaries. At least two ring ditches are known in the zone and a possible extant barrow has been reported to the north of Copford Hall. A number of the cropmarks form enclosures which may be of prehistoric or Roman date. At least three possible Roman roads lie within the zone, including that of Stane Street which forms the northern boundary. Some lie under existing roads, others are visible as cropmarks. The church of St Michael and All Angels at Copford has a great quantity of re-used Roman material in its fabric and Roman finds have been reported from the churchyard. Historically the settlement pattern was highly dispersed and sparse, comprising church/hall complexes, farms and cottages. Several of the buildings on these sites are now listed and surviving archaeological deposits of medieval and later periods can be anticipated. Copford Hall was the site of a former residence of the Bishops of London. It sits within landscaped grounds including lake.



• Diversity of historic environment assets	Cropmarks, prehistoric and Roman settlement, Roman roads, medieval settlement and landscape pattern	2
• Survival	Settlement pattern and cropmarks	2
• Documentation	HER data, NMP, historic mapping	2
• Group Value Association	Cropmarks, Roman roads	2
• Potential	Potential for below ground deposits	2
• Sensitivity to change	Historic landscape, listed buildings, and below ground deposits sensitive to significant change	2
• Amenity Value	Settlement pattern, rural landscape can be promoted with other zones	2

### 5.12.2 HECZ 12.2: Stanway Quarries

**Summary:** This zone comprises current and former gravel and sand quarries in Standway. The landscape of the zone has been transformed by mineral extraction which has revealed important archaeological remains of prehistoric and Roman date. The geology of the zone is dominated by Kesgrave Sands and Gravels overlain by glacial outwash.

**Historic Landscape Character:** With the exception of Warren Lane, which runs down the centre of the zones southern half and Church Lane which runs across the northern part of the zone, the historic landscape of the zone has been almost completely removed. The landscape now comprises current and former workings including waterfilled pits, landfill and associated machinery. Former quarries in the north of the zone have been redeveloped as a modern housing estate.

**Archaeological Character:** Excavations ahead of gravel extraction have revealed a Middle Iron Age enclosure and a series of remarkable high status burials from the late Iron Age/Early Roman period that were previously known from cropmark evidence. The funerary site at Stanway lay outside the defences of Camulodunum to

the east and the scheduled earthwork of Gryme's Dyke forms the eastern boundary of the zone.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Few remaining assets	1
• Survival	Archaeological resource and historic landscape removed by gravel extraction	1
• Documentation	HER data, NMP, excavation report	2
• Group Value Association	Enclosures, Grymes Dyke	1
• Potential	Low potential for surviving archaeology	1
• Sensitivity to change	Low sensitivity to change	1
• Amenity Value	Potential for interpretation of discoveries within the zone in association with adjacent zone 12.4 to the east	1

### **5.12.3 HECZ 12.3: Fiveways Fruit Farms**

**Summary:** This zone comprises an area of farmland largely consisting of fruit trees and 'Christmas' trees with some arable fields. The archaeology of the zone is dominated by below ground remains of prehistoric activity. The zone includes former heathland that was enclosed during the post medieval period. The geology of the zone is dominated by Kesgrave Sands and Gravels overlain by glacial outwash.

**Historic Landscape Character:** The zone is characterised by fields of fruit trees, Christmas trees and arable fields separated by tall windbreaks of Poplar trees. The zone was formerly part of Stanway Heath but was enclosed during the post medieval period. Further field boundaries were added during the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The zone is bordered to the east by the scheduled earthwork of Gryme's Dyke, to the west by Warren Lane and is dissected by Dyers Lane. There are a number of individual properties along the western side of the zone and buildings and temporary caravans associated with Fiveways Fruit Farm in the north east corner.

**Archaeological Character:** Prior to recent evaluation the only archaeological finds from the zone was a single Roman coin. However, archaeological evaluation ahead of proposed gravel extraction has revealed Iron Age ditches, forming one or more enclosures. particularly towards the southern half of the zone. Cropmarks in the adjacent zone to the south (HECZ 12.2) appear to extend into the zone but were not identified during the evaluation.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Post medieval field boundaries, buried archaeological remains	1
• Survival	Below ground archaeological remains surviving	2
• Documentation	HER data, evaluation report, historic mapping	2
• Group Value Association	Iron Age ditches/enclosures	1
• Potential	Good potential for surviving archaeology	2
• Sensitivity to change	Below ground archaeological remains sensitive to change	2
• Amenity Value	Potential for interpretation of discoveries within the zone in association with adjacent zone 12.2 to the south	1

#### **5.12.4 HECZ 12.4: Gosbecks**

**Summary:** This zone comprises a largely rural landscape on the urban fringe of southern Colchester. The zone includes arable farmland and the open grassland of Gosbecks Archaeological Park. The archaeology of the zone is dominated by a dense concentration of late Iron Age and Roman cropmarks. The earthwork of Gryme's Dyke is a significant historic landscape feature. The drift geology comprises Kesgrave Sands and Gravels overlain by glacial outwash.

**Historic Landscape Character:** The fieldscape in the majority of the zone comprises irregular fields that are probably medieval or earlier in origin and which have been affected in places by later enclosure and 20<sup>th</sup> century boundary loss. Post 1950's boundary loss can be characterised as moderate to high. The bank and ditch earthwork of Gyrme's Dyke is a significant historic landscape feature along the western edge of the zone. Historically the settlement pattern was highly dispersed and sparse, comprising isolated farms and cottages. Only limited modern development has occurred with a small business park at Gosbecks Farm and individual houses along the Maldon Road and Oliver's Lane. To the south the zone extends down into the Roman River Valley (HECZ 12.5).

**Archaeological Character:** The archaeology of the zone is dominated by a remarkably dense concentration of cropmarks which have been recorded across almost the entire zone. A number of ring ditches are known on the eastern side of the zone indicating Bronze Age funerary activity. Gosbecks has a complex history of use through the late Iron Age and Roman period. During the late Iron Age, it was a native tribal centre with an enclosed farmstead connected to a network of droveways and fields protected by a series of dykes. After the Roman invasion the site saw the addition of an auxiliary fortress, Romano-Celtic temple complex, Roman road, fields and other major buildings including a theatre. Surviving earthworks include the late Iron Age or early Roman Gryme's Dyke and the Roman theatre. The majority of the zone is designated as a Scheduled Monument and much of it is protected beneath grassland within Gosbecks Archaeological Park.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Cropmarks of prehistoric and Roman settlement, religious/funerary sites, fields, defensive dykes and transport links.	3
• Survival	Good survival of below ground archaeology and earthworks	3
• Documentation	HER data, NMP, historic mapping, research excavation, geophysics	3
• Group Value Association	Iron Age farmstead, dykes, field systems	3

	Roman temple, theatre, road, auxiliary fortress	
• Potential	Good potential for below ground deposits	3
• Sensitivity to change	Below ground deposits, upstanding earthworks sensitive to change	3
• Amenity Value	Potential for increased and enhanced interpretation of remains at Gosbecks and associated features in the wider landscape.	3

### **5.12.5 HECZ 12.5: Roman River Valley**

**Summary:** This zone comprises the river valley landscape to the south of Colchester, between Heckfordbirdge in the west and Rowhedge in the east. The historic landscape includes a dispersed settlement pattern and significant areas of Ancient Woodland and former heath. The archaeology of the zone is characterised by multi-period cropmarks and earthworks. Parts of the zone are managed for nature reserve conservation and Friday Woods is designated as SSSI. The MOD also use Friday Woods for troop training. The geology comprises Kesgrave sands and gravels with head and exposure of London Clay on the valley sides and varying bands of alluvium on the valley floor.

**Historic Landscape Character:** Settlement in the area was historically dispersed comprising the small riverside village of Rowhedge, located at the junction of the Roman River and the River Colne, which has medieval origins, the nucleated village of Layer de la Haye and hamlets at Heckfordbridge and Birch, with the remainder consisting of church / hall complexes, and individual farms and cottages. The fieldscape in the majority of the zone comprises irregular fields that are probably medieval or earlier in origin. There are also fragments of enclosed meadow pasture surviving along the valley bottom, particularly towards the eastern end of the zone, and ancient woodland on the valley sides. The zone once contained extensive areas of heath at Layer de la Haye and Blackheath that were enclosed during the post

medieval period and subjected to modern housing development. A medieval Deer Park is recorded near Heckford bridge and elements of 18<sup>th</sup>/19<sup>th</sup> century landscaping survive around the Round estate at Birch Hall, including a sizeable lake. There is a significant quantity of 20<sup>th</sup> century woodland planting in the zone. The second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century witnessed losses of historic boundaries but also the creation of new boundaries in the valley. Significant 20<sup>th</sup> century development includes the growth of Layer de la Haye, gravel extraction south of Rowhedge and the construction of Colchester Zoo around a church/hall complex in Stanway.

**Archaeological Character:** The archaeology of the zone is characterised by cropmarks ranging from prehistoric ring ditches and ditched enclosures to field boundaries, WWII practice trenches and anti-landing ditches. A Bronze Age round barrow survives as a scheduled earthwork at East Donyland Hall. The Ancient Woodland in the zone contains woodland bank and ditches and the scheduled earthworks of several of Colchester’s Iron Age dykes are significant features within Chest Wood, Butchers Wood and Friday Woods. Other linear earthworks survive in Boundstead Grove, Walk Wood, both hollow ways and Gol Grove, a suspected Roman road. Medieval earthworks include a moat and fishponds at East Donyland Hall and fishponds at Oliver’s. Areas of ‘stetch’ cultivation survive as slight earthworks within one or more fields on the valley sides. St Michael’s Church in the south of the zone is 15<sup>th</sup> or 16<sup>th</sup> century in date but may have earlier deposits associated with it. There are also a number of ruined medieval churches in the zone including St Mary’s at Little Birch, St Lawrence near Donyland Hall and All Saints at Stanway Zoo. Excavations of the graveyard at All Saints have provided an indication of the density of burials likely to be found at these sites. The site of a Baymill is known in the valley bottom to the south of Butchers Wood. Listed buildings in the zone are concentrated at Heckfordbridge, Layer de la Haye, Birch and at individual halls and farms. Some of these are likely to be medieval in origin and will have associated below ground remains. The area has potential for palaeoenvironmental remains within waterlogged deposits in the valley bottom.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Diversity of historic environment assets</li> </ul>	Multi-period cropmarks, linear earthworks, ruined churches, listed buildings, fishponds	3
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• Survival	Good survival of below ground archaeology and earthworks	3
• Documentation	HER data, NMP, historic mapping, research excavation	3
• Group Value Association	Medieval churches, fishponds, listed buildings; Iron Age dykes	3
• Potential	Good potential for below ground deposits	3
• Sensitivity to change	Historic landscape, below ground deposits, upstanding earthworks sensitive to change	3
• Amenity Value	Potential for interpretation of medieval landscape linked to nature conservation in the valley and for increased and enhanced interpretation of Iron Age dykes linked to Gosbecks Archaeological Park	2

### **5.12.6 HECZ 12.6: Middle Wick Ranges**

**Summary:** This zone comprises the MOD rifle ranges and an area of adjacent farmland at Middlewick, to the south of Colchester. The historic landscape of the zone is dominated by the 19<sup>th</sup> century firing range. The archaeology of the zone is characterised by multi-period cropmarks and stray finds of prehistoric flint artefacts. There is no settlement in the zone. The geology comprises Kesgrave sands and gravels and glacial outwash.

**Historic Landscape Character:** The fieldscape in the south of the zone comprises irregular fields that are probably medieval or earlier in origin. Birch Brook, which dissects the middle of the zone, formerly contained enclosed meadow pasture along the valley bottom but has been subjected to later tree planting. To the north of Birch Brook, the historic field pattern has been largely removed by the 19<sup>th</sup> century firing. The range contains large earthwork firing butts, which are a significant feature in the landscape.

**Archaeological Character:** A number of stray finds of flint artefacts including barbed and tanged arrowheads and a tranchet axe have been recovered from the zone. In addition, the archaeology of the zone is characterised by multi period cropmarks including prehistoric ring ditches and trackways, field boundaries and enclosures identified in the south of the zone and a WWII anti-tank ditch which runs east to west across the northern part of the zone. This formed part of a Defence line to the south and west of Colchester. These defences also incorporated a pill box and two Home Guard spigot mortars, which survive.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Multi-period cropmarks, flint artefacts, firing range, WWII defences	2
• Survival	Survival of below ground remains	2
• Documentation	HER data, NMP	1
• Group Value Association	Multi-period cropmarks and flint artefacts; firing range and WWII defences	2
• Potential	Good potential for below ground deposits	2
• Sensitivity to change	Historic landscape of firing range and below ground deposits sensitive to change	2
• Amenity Value	Potential for interpretation of Colchester's military and defence heritage in association with other zones	2

### **5.12.7 HECZ 12.7: Rowhedge**

**Summary:** This zone comprises the historic riverside village of Rowhedge and farmland on the slopes of the Colne Valley to the north. The historic landscape includes the nucleated village of Rowhedge and a individual farms. The archaeology of the zone includes cropmarks and industrial remains associated with former brickworks. The geology comprises Kesgrave sands and gravels with exposure of London Clay on the valley sides.



**Historic Landscape Character:** The historic settlement pattern in the area comprises the small riverside village of Rowhedge, located at the junction of the Roman River and the River Colne, in the south of the zone and a number of individual farms. Rowhedge is medieval in origin, has a number of later listed buildings along the High Street and much of the river frontage and Victorian core are designated as a conservation area. The fieldscape in the north of the zone comprises irregular fields that are also probably medieval, or earlier in origin. There has been a moderate degree of 20<sup>th</sup> century field boundary loss. There is an areas of 20<sup>th</sup> century woodland planting on the site of the 19<sup>th</sup> century brickworks at Cleveland's Farm. Earthworks of another extraction site are evident in the north of the zone around the site of Place Farm.

**Archaeological Character:** The archaeology of the zone is characterised by a number of cropmarks including trackways, pits, field boundaries and a possible WWII anti-tank ditch running north from Rowhedge, towards the Hythe. Rowhedge may have archaeological deposits associated with its medieval origins and activities linked to its riverside location such as boat building, and there may be below ground deposits associated with predecessors of the current farmsteads like Battleswick, which is recorded in the medieval period. Archaeological remains associated with industrial activity in the north of the zone may also survive at the brickworks site near Cleveland's Farm and Park Farm.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Multi-period cropmarks, listed buildings, industrial remains	2
• Survival	Below ground archaeology and listed buildings	2
• Documentation	HER data, NMP, historic mapping	2
• Group Value Association	Listed buildings, historic street layout	1
• Potential	Potential for below ground deposits	1
• Sensitivity to change	Historic core of village and valley side landscape sensitive to change	2
• Amenity Value	Potential for interpretation of boat building heritage of Rowhedge	2

## **5.13 HECA 13: Abberton area**

### **5.13.1 HECZ 13.1: Birch and the Layers**

**Summary:** An area of very gently undulating, open landscape to the south of Colchester, comprising most of the parishes of Layer Marney, Layer Breton, Layer de la Haye and part of Birch. It is bounded by the valley of the Roman River to the north and Abberton Reservoir to the south. The range of archaeological sites includes prehistoric settlement evidence, a possible Roman villa and numerous medieval and post-medieval settlement and landscape features.

**Historic Landscape Character:** The geology is predominately London Clay, with very small patches of Kesgrave sands and gravels, head deposits and Lowestoft Formation tills, with alluvium in the stream valleys. The field pattern is very varied, ranging from irregular fields (these are probably medieval or earlier in origin) in the north-west of the zone, to a more co-axial rectilinear system (also medieval in origin) in the remainder of the zone, with dispersed areas of later piecemeal enclosure. Some of this later enclosure dates to the later medieval or post-medieval period, whilst the remainder, particularly on the former Layer Heath dates to the early 19th century. Post 1950's boundary loss can be described as moderate, rising to severe on some farms; the latter is particularly the case in the centre of the zone. Within the valley of a tributary of the Roman River there are areas of enclosed meadow pasture. There are a few small patches of ancient woodland in the Roman River area and on the southern boundary of the zone, and more modern woodland planting fringing the reservoir. Historically the settlement is highly dispersed, comprising isolated church/hall complexes, manors, farms, cottages and hamlets bordering small greens and Birch Heath. The early 20<sup>th</sup> century garden at Layer Marney Tower is set within a medieval deer-park, and is a Registered Park and Garden.

**Archaeological Character:** The range of archaeological sites includes prehistoric enclosures and ring-ditches, a possible Roman villa and sites related to the medieval and post-medieval settlement of the area. There are numerous Listed Buildings, including the Grade I Listed 16<sup>th</sup> century gatehouse at Layer Marney Tower. The London Clay is not conducive to crop-mark formation, and as a consequence the few

cropmarks in the zone are concentrated on the gravels in the north. These include a number of enclosures that maybe prehistoric in date, however the majority appear to largely relate to medieval and post-medieval settlement, including one moated site, and landscape features. Further remains relating to the historic dispersed settlement pattern can be anticipated in the remainder of the area. More recent periods are represented by a number of industrial structures, including the Layer-de-la-Haye treatment works, an important example of a 1930s waterworks built in the International Modern Movement architectural style.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Prehistoric settlement and burial, cropmarks, Roman and medieval settlement, Layer Marney church/hall complex and park, modern waterworks	3
• Survival	Good below-ground survival, historic landscape suffered considerable boundary-loss	2
• Documentation	HER, NMP, cartographic and documentary sources	2
• Group Value Association	Medieval settlement pattern, Layer Marney church/hall complex and park,	2
• Potential	High potential for below-ground deposits	2
• Sensitivity to change	Below-ground deposits and Layer Marney complex sensitive to change	2
• Amenity Value	Layer Marney complex can be promoted within its landscape setting	3

### 5.13.2 HECZ 13.2: *Abberton Reservoir*

**Summary:** This zone comprises the 1930s Abberton Reservoir and associated structures.

**Historic Landscape Character:** The geology is London Clay. Prior to the construction of the reservoir the zone comprised a shallow, marshy valley, drained by the Layer Brook. The area was prone to seasonal flooding. The historic field-pattern was irregular in form, with a band of enclosed meadow-pasture along both sides of the stream. The historic settlement comprised a number of isolated farms and a couple of cottages. The reservoir was constructed in 1935-9 by South Essex Waterworks Co. The pump house is in International Modern Movement style and is concrete with a flat roof and tall metal framed windows.

**Archaeological Character:** Little is known of the archaeological character of this zone as no fieldwork was undertaken prior to the construction of the reservoir. However the construction methodology comprised damming and inundating the valley, rather than excavation. When the water levels drop during times of drought it is evident that the ditch lines and settlement sites survive beneath the water. Field-walking on the Reservoir edge has recovered pottery dating from the Roman period onwards and it is possible that features and finds survive below-ground within the area of the reservoir itself.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Limited to the farms depicted on 1 <sup>st</sup> edn. OS, 1930s reservoir	1
• Survival	Good survival of below-ground deposits and some historic landscape features below reservoir	2
• Documentation	Cartographic sources, Waterworks records	1
• Group Value Association	Minimal	1
• Potential	Potential for good survival below	2

	reservoir	
• Sensitivity to change	Limited	1
• Amenity Value	Can be promoted along with the waterworks and the history of the reservoir	2

### **5.13.3 HECZ 13.3: The Wigboroughs**

**Summary:** An area of very gently undulating, open landscape to the south of Colchester, bounded by Abberton Reservoir to the north and the coastal marshes to the south.

**Historic Landscape Character:** The geology is London Clay, sloping gently down to the coastal marsh. The field pattern is of a co-axial rectilinear system, probably medieval or earlier in origin. Historically the settlement was highly dispersed, comprising church/hall complexes at Great and Little Wigborough and Peldon, as well as isolated manors, farms, cottages and hamlets bordering small greens. The settlement at Salcott-cum-Virley is unusual in that it originally comprised two separate, though adjacent settlements. Salcott consisted of a short row of houses on either side of Salcott Street with the 14<sup>th</sup> century at the seaward end of the village. On the other side of the Salcott Creek was the church//hall complex at Virley. Post 1950's boundary loss can be described as moderate in the Great Wigborough area, rising to high in the area between Little Wigborough and Peldon and to the west of Great Wigborough. There is one small area of ancient woodland at Copthall Grove.

**Archaeological Character:** The London Clay is not particularly conducive to crop-mark formation, however a group of Red Hills (salterns) along the former shoreline adjacent to the Ray Channel are visible as soil-marks. There are three Scheduled Monuments in the zone, a barrow/mill-mound at Raynes Farm, the Neolithic henge at Great Wigborough and the medieval church at Virley. The range of archaeological sites includes prehistoric sites and finds, a possible Roman road or settlement, Iron Age/Roman Red Hills and sites related to the medieval and post-medieval settlement of the area. There are numerous Listed Buildings and a couple of moated sites.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Prehistoric sites and finds including a Neolithic henge, Iron Age/Roman red hills and settlement, medieval and post-medieval settlement pattern and landscape, crop- and soil-marks	3
• Survival	Good survival of below-ground deposits and some historic landscape features	2
• Documentation	HER, NMP, cartographic sources, Scheduling	2
• Group Value Association	Red Hills, prehistoric sites and finds, medieval settlement and landscape	2
• Potential	Potential for good survival below-ground	2
• Sensitivity to change	Below-ground and Scheduled Monuments highly sensitive	3
• Amenity Value	Settlement and landscape history could be promoted	2

#### **5.13.4 HECZ 13.4: *Abberton and Langenhoe***

**Summary:** An area of very gently undulating, open landscape, bounded by the valley of the Roman River to the north, Abberton Reservoir to the west and the coastal marshes to the east. There has been little archaeological work in the zone, but prehistoric, Roman and medieval sites are known to be present, these include Red Hills on the marshland boundary and the church/hall complexes of Abberton and Langenhoe. The military ranges at Fingringhoe Camp form an important modern component of the landscape.

**Historic Landscape Character:** The geology is predominately London Clay, with alluvium in the Roman River valley. There has been extensive quarrying of the sands and gravels around Fingringhoe. The field pattern is very varied, comprising irregular fields (these are probably medieval or earlier in origin) with patches of a more co-axial rectilinear system (also medieval in origin). In addition there were a

number of greens and small heaths, particularly between Abberton and Langenhoe. The enclosure of these began in the later medieval or post-medieval period, and was completed in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Within the Roman River valley there are areas of enclosed meadow pasture and one small area of ancient woodland at Man Wood in the Roman River area. Post 1950's boundary loss varies from moderate around Abberton and in Fingringhoe parish to severe to the south of Langenhoe. Historically the settlement was highly dispersed, comprising isolated church/hall complexes, manors, farms and cottages, often spaced out around the edges of the greens and heaths. The only modern additions to this pattern is the infilling of The Green at Abberton and the ribbon development along the road to Fingringhoe. The military ranges at Fingringhoe Camp form an important component of the recent landscape history of the area.

**Archaeological Character:** The range of archaeological sites includes prehistoric and Roman finds and features and sites related to the medieval and post-medieval settlement of the area. The London Clay is not conducive to good crop-mark formation. Along the boundary between this zone and the coastal marshes Red Hills (salt-making sites or Iron Age or Roman date) are recorded. There are numerous Listed Buildings, including the church/hall complexes of Abberton and Langenhoe. There is the potential for surviving palaeo-environmental deposits in the valley of the Roman River.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Prehistoric, Roman and medieval sites and finds, medieval and post-medieval settlement pattern and landscape, Fingringhoe camp	2
• Survival	Good survival of below-ground deposits and some historic landscape features	2
• Documentation	HER and cartographic sources,	2
• Group Value Association	Red Hills, prehistoric and Roman sites and finds, medieval settlement and landscape	2
• Potential	Potential for good survival below-ground	2

• Sensitivity to change	Below-ground remains highly sensitive	2
• Amenity Value	Settlement and landscape history could be promoted	2

### 5.13.5 HECZ 13.5: *Fingringhoe*

**Summary:** An area of very gently undulating, open landscape, bounded by the valley of the Roman River to the north and the coastal marshes to the east. There were areas of multi-period cropmarks, which included evidence for prehistoric settlement and burial. These largely coincided with the areas of sands and gravels, and have been extensively quarried, although pockets of potential archaeology still survive. The historic settlement was highly dispersed with a church/hall complex at Fingringhoe.

**Historic Landscape Character:** The geology is predominately of Kesgrave sands and gravels with alluvium in the Roman River valley. The field pattern comprises a co-axial rectilinear system (medieval in origin) with patches of irregular fields (these are probably medieval or earlier in origin). In addition there were a number of greens and small heaths. The enclosure of these began in the later medieval or post-medieval period, and was completed in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Within the Roman River valley there are areas of enclosed meadow pasture. Post 1950's boundary loss is moderate except in the areas of the quarries where the disturbance has been more extensive. Historically the settlement was highly dispersed, comprising a church/hall complex at Fingringhoe, and isolated manors, farms and cottages, often spaced out around the edges of the greens and heaths. The only modern additions to this pattern is the infilling of part of Fingringhoe Common. There has been extensive quarrying of the sands and gravels across the zone.

**Archaeological Character:** The range of archaeological sites included prehistoric enclosures and ring-ditches, Roman finds and features, including the excavation of a Roman cemetery, and sites related to the medieval and post-medieval settlement of the area. The cropmarks in the zone are concentrated on the gravels, where



trackways, field-systems, enclosures and ring-barrows are visible. Quarrying in this area has however removed many of these features. There are a number of Listed Buildings, including the church/hall complex at Fingringhoe. There are also a number of industrial sites, relating to the brick-making and mineral extraction industries. There is the potential for surviving palaeo-environmental deposits in the valley of the Roman River.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Prehistoric and Roman sites and finds medieval and post-medieval settlement pattern, crop-marks	2
• Survival	Good survival of below-ground deposits in areas not quarried.	2
• Documentation	HER, NMP, cartographic sources, excavation reports	2
• Group Value Association	Cropmarks, medieval settlement	1
• Potential	Potential for good survival below-ground in unquarried areas	2
• Sensitivity to change	Surviving below-ground remains and church/hall complex	1
• Amenity Value	Settlement and landscape history could be promoted	1

## **5.14 HECA 14 Colne Estuary**

### **5.14.1 HECZ 14.1 Mersea Flats**

**Summary:** This zone comprises a large continuous area of mud flats, sands and gravels within the Colne Estuary south of Mersea Island, which are covered over at high water. The zone has a range of archaeological remains throughout including well preserved timber structures, hulks, and WWII defences. The zone is highly important in terms of the natural environment; the entire zone is designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Special Area of Conservation (SPC), and falls within the Essex Coast Special Protection Area (SPA), Colne Estuary Ramsar site and Colne Estuary National Nature Reserve. The zone is important for leisure activities. Historically the zone had a close relationship with the adjacent dryland zones of Mersea Island (HECZ 15.2, 15.3 and 14.9). The geology is estuarine alluvium deposits predominantly composed of fine silts.

**Historic Landscape Character:** The broad expanse of mudflats has been a source of fish, shell fish and wildfowl, for millennia. The zone is now mainly used by leisure craft and managed for nature conservation. At East Mersea a polder scheme has been constructed on the mudflats using brushwood breakwaters in an attempt to slow down processes of erosion. There is no settlement within the zone.

**Archaeological Character:** The Mersea flats have been shown to contain well preserved archaeological deposits and remains associated with the exploitation of its resources and the use of the estuary for transport. In the east of the zone at Cudmore Grover there is a nationally important geological exposure containing important warm climate organic deposits with fossil content, beneath gravels which are attributed to the Thames-Medway system. Stray finds in the zone include a Palaeolithic hand-axe. A prehistoric buried land surface has been identified at a number of locations along the beach and foreshore, visible as a peaty bed containing bone fragments, tree stumps, pyritized wood and flint scatters indicating possible habitation sites of Mesolithic or Neolithic date. Stray finds from the zone include a flint knife, barbed and tanged arrowhead, quantities of prehistoric pottery and a late bronze age sword. Late Iron and Roman objects including coinage, briquetage and

ceramics and a number of Red Hills, indicate the importance of the zone for salt manufacturing and a series of pits have been tentatively identified as possible oyster storage pools of Roman date. Several large timber alignments are known which form fish weirs of probable Anglo Saxon origin; these may well be one or more of the three fisheries mentioned as existing at Mersea Island in the Domesday Book. Excavation of timber and brushwood structures to the south of Mersea Stone revealed a jetty associated with the Tudor blockhouse located in HECZ 14.8 and the timbers of a number of hulks have been recorded elsewhere in the zone. The zone is also characterised by WWII defensive structures, including anti tank obstacles and WWII pill boxes, some of which have been destroyed through natural erosion of the cliffs at Cudmore Grove.

The potential for palaeoenvironmental remains and deposits in this area is high and there are significant possibilities of archaeological remains directly related to these deposits including further timber structures.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Range of archaeological features, buried land surface	2
• Survival	Moderate to good survival	2
• Documentation	HER data, Hullbridge Survey (research project), NMP data, research excavation	2
• Group Value Association	Features related to coastal/marine exploitation including timber fish traps, salterns, oyster pits, jetties, hulks	3
• Potential	Good potential for surviving deposits.	2
• Sensitivity to change	Landscape and archaeological deposits sensitive to change.	2
• Amenity Value	Potential for promoting the coastal heritage of Colchester in conjunction with other zones, particularly in relation to access to ports within and beyond the district. .	2

#### **5.14.2 HECZ 14.2**

#### ***Former Marshes of Salcott and Strood Channel***

**Summary:** This zone comprises fragments of current and former coastal grazing marsh around the Salcott Channel and Strood Channel. The archaeological character of the zone is dominated by Late Iron Age and Roman red hills. Sea walls are the dominant historic landscape feature. The zone is highly important in terms of the natural environment; the entire zone is designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Special Area of Conservation (SPC), and falls within the Essex Coast Special Protection Area (SPA), Colne Estuary Ramsar site and Colne Estuary National Nature Reserve. Much of the zone is in conservation ownership. The geology is estuarine alluvium deposits predominantly composed of fine silts.

**Historic Landscape Character:** The natural saltings that formerly existed in the zone began to be enclosed within seawalls during the medieval period. The process of reclamation was largely complete by the time the Chapman and Andre map of Essex was published in 1777. Fragments of grazing marsh survive in the zone, containing fossilised fleets and other natural depressions which are evidence of former creeks and saltmarsh before the seawall was built. The zone is more generally characterised by its open and flat aspect and arable cultivation. Field boundaries are mainly dykes and drainage ditches, some following the sinuous course of former creeks and sea walls. There has been significant boundary loss since the 1<sup>st</sup> edition OS map (c1876), most probably as a result of post 1950 rationalisation. The sea walls and occasional counter walls survive as earthworks and are the dominant historic landscape feature in the zone. Historically, the zone had a close relationship with adjacent dryland zones (HECZ 13.3 and 13.4) and the Colne Estuary (HECZ 14.8). Much of the zone is in conservation ownership (Essex Wildlife Trust and National Trust). At Abbots Hall, the Essex Wildlife Trust has undertaken a large managed realignment scheme.

**Archaeological Character:** The archaeology of the zone is dominated by a dense concentration of Late Iron and Roman Red Hills and associated finds, indicating the importance of the zone, within the sheltered waters behind Mersea Island, for salt manufacturing. Many of the Red Hills have been identified on aerial photographs, identifiable by areas of red or burnt earth and briquetage. Investigations ahead of a habitat creation scheme at Abbots Hall, revealed multi-period finds and structures including prehistoric and roman pottery, red hills and a number of timber post structures of indeterminate date and medieval midden deposits. The zone is also characterised by WWII defensive structures, including pill boxes built into the sea wall overlooking the Strood causeway to Mersea Island. The soil-type, comprising extensive alluvium and marsh deposits are conducive to good palaeoenvironmental survival.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Red Hills, Sea and Counter walls	1
• Survival	Moderate to good survival particularly below ground deposits	2
• Documentation	HER data, NMP data, archaeological evaluation	2
• Group Value Association	Features relating to marshland and coastal zone exploitation including Red Hills, counter and sea walls, timber structures	2
• Potential	Good potential for surviving deposits including important palaeoenvironmental remains	2
• Sensitivity to change	Relict grazing marsh and archaeological deposits sensitive to change.	2
• Amenity Value	Potential for promotion, in conjunction with other zones, of the history of marshland and coastal zone exploitation in Colchester District.	2

### **5.14.3 HECZ 14.3 *Langenhoe Marshes and Wick Marsh***

**Summary:** This zone comprises current and former coastal grazing marsh adjacent to the Pyefleet Channel and North Geedon Creek. The archaeological character of the zone is dominated by Late Iron Age and Roman red hills. Sea walls are the dominant historic landscape feature. The zone is highly important in terms of the natural environment; the entire zone is designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Special Area of Conservation (SPC), and falls within the Essex Coast Special Protection Area (SPA), Colne Estuary Ramsar site and Colne Estuary National Nature Reserve. A portion of the zone is owned by the MOD and managed as part of the Fingringhoe Ranges. The geology is estuarine alluvium deposits predominantly composed of fine silts.

**Historic Landscape Character:** The natural saltings that formerly existed in the zone probably began to be enclosed within seawalls during the medieval period. The process of reclamation was certainly complete by the time the Chapman and Andre map of Essex was published in 1777. The fleets and other natural depressions in the grassland are evidence of former creeks and saltmarsh before the seawall was built. Historically the marsh provided grazing for livestock and there is historic documentation of sheep grazing on Langenhoe Marsh during the medieval period. Field boundaries in the zone are mainly dykes and drainage ditches, many following the sinuous course of former creeks, together with modern post and wire fences. A number of the counter walls have scrub growth on them but the zone is generally characterised by its open and flat aspect. The dominant historic landscape feature within the zone is the sea wall but other significant features include low linear earthworks which are likely to be either counter walls or raised sheep walks/trackways. Other earthworks include the mounds of red hills and banks and ditches of sub circular livestock enclosures. There has been little boundary loss and change of land use other than in the northern portion of the zone which now forms part of the MOD's Fingringhoe Ranges.

**Archaeological Character:** The archaeology of the zone is dominated by Late Iron and Roman Red Hills, some of which survive as significant earthworks, indicating the importance of the zone, within the sheltered waters behind Mersea Island, for salt

manufacturing. Some of these may have been altered and re-used as livestock refuges/enclosures during the medieval period. The sea walls and counter walls/raised sheep walks are likely to be medieval in origin and will retain evidence for date and construction. The zone has potential for a further wide range of below ground archaeological deposits although military activity and cultivation on Wick marsh may have reduced the level of survival in a limited area. The soil-type, comprising extensive alluvium and marsh deposits is conducive to good palaeoenvironmental survival.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Red Hills, Sea and Counter walls, stetch	2
• Survival	Moderate to good survival particularly below ground deposits	2
• Documentation	HER data, NMP data, documentary evidence including historic mapping	2
• Group Value Association	Features relating to coastal and marshland exploitation including sea walls, raised walkways, stetch, red hills,	3
• Potential	Good potential for surviving deposits including important palaeoenvironmental remains	2
• Sensitivity to change	Landscape of relict grazing marsh and archaeological deposits highly sensitive to change.	3
• Amenity Value	Potential for promotion, in conjunction with other zones, of the history of marshland and coastal zone exploitation in Colchester District.	2

#### 5.14.4 HECZ 14.4 *Fingringhoe Marsh*

**Summary:** This zone comprises former coastal grazing marsh, which has reverted to salt marsh, located between South Geedon Creek and North Geedon Creek. The archaeological character of the zone is largely unknown but potential is likely to be high. Sea walls are the dominant historic landscape feature. The zone is highly important in terms of the natural environment; the entire zone is designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Special Area of Conservation (SPC), and falls within the Essex Coast Special Protection Area (SPA), Colne Estuary Ramsar site and Colne Estuary National Nature Reserve. The zone is managed by the MOD as part of the Fingringhoe Ranges. The geology is estuarine alluvium deposits predominantly composed of fine silts.

**Historic Landscape Character:** The zone is generally characterised by its open and flat aspect. The zone probably began to be enclosed within seawalls during the medieval period. The process of reclamation was certainly complete by the time the Chapman and Andre map of Essex was published in 1777. Historically the marsh provided grazing for livestock. Field boundaries in the zone are mainly dykes and drainage ditches, mostly following the sinuous course of former creeks. An area of 'stetch' in the south west corner of the marsh provides evidence of former cultivation. The dominant historic landscape feature within the zone is the sea wall and a number of counter walls. During the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the sea walls were allowed to breach and the grazing marsh has reverted back to tidal creeks and saltmarsh vegetation.

**Archaeological Character:** The archaeology of the zone is largely unknown but has potential for a wide range of below ground archaeological deposits and the soil-type, comprising extensive alluvium and marsh deposits is conducive to good palaeoenvironmental survival. The sea and counter walls will retain evidence for date and function.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Sea and Counter walls, stetch cultivation	1
• Survival	Moderate to good survival particularly below ground deposits	2



• Documentation	Historic mapping	1
• Group Value Association	Sea and counter walls	1
• Potential	Good potential for surviving deposits including important palaeoenvironmental remains	2
• Sensitivity to change	Landscape and archaeological deposits highly sensitive to change.	3
• Amenity Value	Potential for promotion, in conjunction with other zones, of the history of marshland and coastal zone exploitation in Colchester District.	2

#### **5.14.5 HECZ 14.5 River Colne Marshes**

**Summary:** This zone comprises grazing marsh situated along the banks of the tidal River Colne and at its confluence with the Roman River. The archaeological character of the zone is largely unknown but potential is likely to be high. Sea walls are the dominant historic landscape feature. The zone is highly important in terms of the natural environment; much of the zone is designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and County Wildlife Site. The geology is estuarine alluvium deposits predominantly composed of fine silts.

**Historic Landscape Character:** The zone is generally characterised by its open and flat aspect. During the early medieval period, Old Heath Marshes are thought to have been a landing place for vessels, prior to the construction of a quayside at the Hythe in the 12<sup>th</sup> century. Old Heath derives its name from the Old English *Ealdehythe* meaning old landing place. The zone probably began to be enclosed within seawalls during the medieval period. The process of reclamation was certainly complete by the time the Chapman and Andre map of Essex was published in 1777. A cut across the marshes in Wivenhoe parish opposite Old Heath was made after the parish boundary had been fixed but probably before the surviving borough records begin in the early 14<sup>th</sup> century. Historically the marsh provided grazing for livestock. Field boundaries in the zone are mainly dykes and drainage ditches, some following the

sinuous course of former creeks. Hythe Marshes preserve a fossilised former course of the River Colne. The dominant historic landscape features within the zone are the river walls and a number of counter walls. At the mouth of the Roman River, the walls have been allowed to breach and the marsh contains tidal creeks and saltmarsh vegetation.

**Archaeological Character:** The archaeology of the zone is largely unknown but has potential for a wide range of below ground archaeological deposits and the soil-type, comprising extensive alluvium and marsh deposits is conducive to good palaeoenvironmental survival. The sea and counter walls will retain evidence for date and function. A Red Hill is recorded in the marshes along the Roman River. WWII defences including anti-tank obstacles and Pill boxes are recorded along the river wall.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	River and Counter walls, red hill , WWII defences	1
• Survival	Moderate to good survival particularly below ground deposits	2
• Documentation	Historic mapping, HER data	1
• Group Value Association	River and counter walls	1
• Potential	Good potential for surviving deposits including important palaeoenvironmental remains	2
• Sensitivity to change	Landscape and archaeological deposits highly sensitive to change.	3
• Amenity Value	Potential for promotion, in conjunction with other zones, of the history of marshland and coastal zone exploitation in Colchester District.	2

#### **5.14.6 HECZ 14.6 Colne Estuary inter-tidal zone**

**Summary:** This zone comprises the Colne Estuary outside the sea walls and includes the main river channel, tidal creeks, extensive natural saltings and large expanses of mudflat covered over at high water. The zone encompasses the tidal River Colne and Colne estuary from the Hythe to Brightlingsea Reach. The zone has a range of archaeological remains throughout but with a particular focus on the saltings and between the low and high water mark. There is no settlement within the zone. The zone is highly important in terms of the natural environment; the entire zone is designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Special Area of Conservation (SPC), and falls within the Essex Coast Special Protection Area (SPA) and Colne Estuary Ramsar site. The river is important for both commercial and leisure activities. Part of the zone falls within the MODs Fingringhoe ranges and other areas such as Bonners Saltings and Ray Island are managed as Nature Reserves. Historically the zone had a close relationship with adjacent dryland zones, in particular through the port at the Hythe (HECZ **x**), Wivenhoe (HECZ 8.1) and Rowhedge (HECZ 12.7), but also via numerous small jetties, wharfs and docks. The geology is estuarine alluvium deposits predominantly composed of fine silts.

**Historic Landscape Character:** The broad expanse of the Colne estuary and its associated creeks has been a major artery for trade and transport, together with a source of fish, shell fish and wildfowl, for millennia. In the recent past particularly during the 19th century the estuary was a focus of the oyster industry as shown by the number of oyster pits within the Pyefleet and Strood and Salcott channels. Now mainly used by leisure craft the estuary still has limited commercial and fishing traffic together with some oyster beds. The Strood Causeway is a significant feature in the landscape, linking Mersea Island to the mainland, as is the nearby Ray Island.

**Archaeological Character:** The tidal waters of the Colne Estuary have been shown to contain some well preserved archaeological deposits and remains associated with the use of the estuary for transport and the exploitation of its resources. A Palaeolithic hand axe has been reported from the foreshore at Langenhoe Point but no prehistoric in situ features or land surfaces have been identified. Roman pottery and coins have been recovered from a number of locations including the saltings at

Cobmarsh Saltings and on Ray Island and there are a number of Red Hills recorded in the zone highlighting the importance of the estuary for salt manufacturing during the late Iron Age and Roman periods. A scheduled Red Hill to the east of the Strood causeway, survives as a substantial earthwork which saw later re-use, probably during the medieval period, with the addition of an enclosing bank and causeway linking it to the sea wall. The Strood Causeway contains evidence for its original construction and has been dated to the 7<sup>th</sup> century from preserved timbers on the site. The Colne estuary has had a chartered fishery since the 12<sup>th</sup> century and archaeological remains from this industry, in the form of timber fish traps, can be seen in the adjacent zone of Mersea Flats (HECZ 14.1). It is likely that additional timber structures survive within the zone. Finds of medieval pottery have been made from Cobmarsh Saltings and a Tudor blockhouse survives as an earthwork at Cudmore Grove. Principal archaeological remains from the post medieval period mainly relating to industry and transport are; numerous wrecks of hulks, timber jetties and oyster pits. The zone is also characterised by WWII defensive structures including anti tank obstacles and WWII pill boxes, some of which are destroyed.

The potential for palaeoenvironmental remains and deposits in this area is high and there are significant possibilities of archaeological remains directly related to these deposits including further timber structures.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Range of historic landscape and archaeological features	3
• Survival	Moderate to good survival	2
• Documentation	HER data, NMP data, historic mapping	2
• Group Value Association	Features related to coastal/marine exploitation including red hills, timbers, oyster pits, hulks	3
• Potential	Good potential for surviving deposits.	2
• Sensitivity to change	Landscape and archaeological deposits sensitive to change.	2
• Amenity Value	Potential for promoting and coastal	2

	heritage of Colchester in conjunction with other zones, particularly in relation to access to ports within and beyond the district. .	
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#### **5.14.7 HECZ 14.7 Mersea Island Marshes**

**Summary:** This zone comprises current and former coastal grazing marsh adjacent to the Pyefleet Channel on the north east side of Mersea Island including Maydays Marsh and Reeveshall Marsh. The archaeological character of the zone is dominated by Late Iron Age and Roman red hills. Sea walls are the dominant historic landscape feature. The eastern end of the zone is managed as part of the Cudmore Grove Country Park. The geology is estuarine alluvium deposits predominantly composed of fine silts.

**Historic Landscape Character:** The natural saltings that formerly existed in the zone probably began to be enclosed within seawalls during the medieval period. The process of reclamation was certainly complete by the time the Chapman and Andre map of Essex was published in 1777. The fleets and other natural depressions in the grassland at Cudmore Grove are evidence of former creeks and saltmarsh before the seawall was built. Historically the marsh provided grazing for livestock. Field boundaries in the zone are mainly dykes and drainage ditches, many following the sinuous course of former creeks. Several of these have got hedges and/or scrub growth along them but the zone is generally characterised by its open and flat aspect. The dominant historic landscape feature within the zone is the sea wall. There has been little boundary loss.

**Archaeological Character:** Prehistoric flints have been recovered from the Country Park at Cudmore Grove. The archaeology of the zone is dominated by Late Iron and Roman Red Hills, indicating the importance of the zone, within the sheltered waters behind Mersea Island, for salt manufacturing. Many of the Red Hills have been identified on aerial photographs, identifiable by areas of red or burnt earth and briquetage. The sea walls are likely to be medieval in origin and will retain evidence

for date and construction. Medieval midden deposits have been recovered from the edge of a former creek at Cudmore Grove Country Park. The site of a decoy pond is known from historic mapping. The zone has potential for a further wide range of below ground archaeological deposits. The soil-type, comprising extensive alluvium and marsh deposits is conducive to good palaeo-environmental survival.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Flint artefacts, Red Hills, Sea walls, midden deposits	2
• Survival	Moderate to good survival particularly below ground deposits	2
• Documentation	HER data, NMP, historic mapping	1
• Group Value Association	Features relating to coastal and marshland exploitation including sea walls and red hills, duck decoy	2
• Potential	Good potential for surviving deposits including important palaeoenvironmental remains	2
• Sensitivity to change	Landscape of relict grazing marsh and archaeological deposits sensitive to change.	2
• Amenity Value	Potential for promotion, in conjunction with other zones, of the history of marshland and coastal zone exploitation in Colchester District.	2

## **5.15 HECA 15: Mersea Island**

### **5.15.1 HECZ 15.1: Historic core of West Mersea**

**Summary:** This small zone comprises the historic core of West Mersea. This is focussed on the medieval parish church and Hall, which in turn overly the site of an extensive Roman villa complex. The church had its origins as a Saxon minster before becoming a Priory in 1064.

**Historic Urban Character:** The historic core comprises the area around the church and the junction of the southern end of the High Street, Church Road and the Coast Road. The church may have had its origins in the 7<sup>th</sup> century, becoming a minster church in the 10<sup>th</sup> century. In 1046 Edward the Confessor granted the manor and church at West Mersea to the Abbey of St. Ouen in France, in commemoration of the news of his succession to the throne whilst staying in Normandy. Mersea Hall is sited immediately to the south-east of the church; the current building is 16<sup>th</sup> century in origin. Other historic structures include Yew Tree House.

**Archaeological Character:** The geology of the area comprises sands and gravels, laid down by a former route of the Medway, these are known to contain faunal remains and have the potential to contain very early evidence for Palaeolithic activity. Antiquarian finds and excavations have revealed evidence for a substantial Roman villa complex, including mosaic floors, this appears to have been centred on the area of the present churchyard but extended as far as Yew Tree House and the Hall. There is the potential for below-ground deposits relating to the Saxon church and minster site. The medieval parish church incorporates the 11<sup>th</sup> century tower of the Priory, and further below-ground evidence relating to this structure can be anticipated.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Roman villa complex, Priory, church and hall	3
• Survival	Below-ground deposits, church and hall	3
• Documentation	HER, cartographic and documentary	2
• Group Value Association	Roman villa complex and Minster/priory complex	3
• Potential	Potential for below-ground deposits surviving in garden areas and churchyard	2
• Sensitivity to change	Below-ground deposits sensitive to further change	2
• Amenity Value	Potential for promotion of historic core and history of fishing on Mersea (with 15.2)	3

### **5.15.2 HECZ 15.2: Modern extent of West Mersea**

**Summary:** This zone comprises the modern urban area of West Mersea. The historic settlement comprised two small hamlets and a number of isolated farms and cottages. The archaeological evidence comprises a Red Hill and outlying elements of the Roman villa complex in the adjacent zone (HECZ 15.1). There are numerous surviving structures relating to the Second World War defence of the coastline.

**Historic Urban Character:** This zone was farmland until the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, with the settlement pattern comprising a small group of buildings on the shoreline adjacent to Shorehill Hard, a second group clustering around Mersea Windmill and one or two isolated farms and cottages. The area along the western shore is a Conservation Area. The field pattern was largely irregular in plan, possibly medieval or earlier in origin. In the years following the First World War, Mersea's role as a seaside resort grew, much of the zone was sub-divided by new roads and lanes, a line of beach huts was erected along the beach, and holiday chalets and bungalows were built. After the Second World War development resumed, with new housing estates built as well as infilling of plots between the existing structures.



**Archaeological Character:** The geology of the area comprises a mix of London Clay and Kesgrave sands and gravels. The gravels were laid down by a former route of the Medway, these are known to contain faunal remains and have the potential to contain very early evidence for Palaeolithic activity. Antiquarian finds and excavations have revealed Iron Age and Roman activity within the zone. In the south-east corner on the sea front a Red Hill (salt-making site) and an Iron Age burial were recorded. There is evidence for Roman occupation, including a brick-built tomb or mausoleum, these probably representing outlying elements of the villa complex in HECZ 15.1. The tomb is a Scheduled Monument. The zone is known to have fallen within the late Saxon and Medieval manor of West Mersea, and there is the possibility of surviving below-ground elements relating to this period in the few remaining areas of open space. The evidence for the post-medieval and modern development of the zone takes the form of a few finds, a water tower and the sites of a number of former brickworks, as well as the evidence for the fishing industry in the Conservation Area. During the Second World War Mersea was heavily defended, with an artillery battery, pill-boxes and gun emplacements along the sea-front, many of which survive. The less permanent elements such as mines and barbed wire have been removed.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Roman occupation, Palaeolithic deposits, fishing industry, WWII defences	3
• Survival	Extensive urban development has compromised survival except in gardens, Scheduled Monument, Conservation Area and the underlying Palaeolithic gravels.	2
• Documentation	HER, Scheduling, cartographic evidence	2
• Group Value Association	Roman occupation (together with HECZ 15.1), fishing industry, WWII defences (with HECZ 15.2)	3
• Potential	Potential for below-ground features in	2

	undeveloped areas as well as deeper geological deposits	
• Sensitivity to change	Limited due to urban development apart from in Conservation Area	1
• Amenity Value	In conjunction with 15.1	2

### **5.15.3 HECZ 15.3: Mersea Island**

**Summary:** The zone comprises the rural area of Mersea Island. The landscape consists of a mix of ancient field-patterns, interspersed with modern elements, including several large caravan parks. There is evidence for human activity from the Palaeolithic period onwards, including later prehistoric cemeteries and settlements and many defensive structures including a string of pill-boxes along the coastline.

**Historic Landscape Character:** The geology comprises London Clay with isolated patches of sand and gravel, the latter largely in the centre off the island. It differs from the other coastal islands of Essex in that there are numerous fresh-water springs. The fieldscape largely comprises irregular fields, probably of medieval origin. The post 1950s boundary loss can be described as moderate to high. There is only one small area of ancient woodland, although there are a number of areas of secondary scrub. The primary focus of settlement, both historic and modern was at the western end of the island (HECZ 15.1 and 15.2). There was however a line of more dispersed settlement along the spine of the island, modern development has given this a ribbon-development appearance. The church/hall complex of East Mersea is sited in the eastern half of the island. On the southern side of the island are a number of areas set aside for recreational use, these include youth camps, caravan parks and the Cudmore Grove Country Park.

**Archaeological Character:** There is evidence in the form of worked flints for Palaeolithic, Mesolithic and Neolithic activity on the island. There is also evidence for later prehistoric occupation, in the form of cropmarks of enclosures, trackways and a ring-ditch cemetery. Roman finds have been found over the entire island, suggesting

a widespread pattern of settlement and activity, and some of the cropmarks may date to this period. The Roman evidence includes the extant burial mound of Mersea Mount, which is a Scheduled Monument. The island was occupied throughout the Saxon period, and briefly formed a defensive encampment for the Danes, although no archaeological features relating to this period have yet been found. Elements relating to the historic settlement pattern may survive below-ground, particularly in the vicinity of the church/hall complex at East Mersea. The island was heavily fortified against invasion during the Second World War and there is a string of pill-boxes along the coast.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Early prehistoric flintwork, later Prehistoric settlement, Roman settlement and burial sites, Medieval settlement pattern, WWII defensive line	3
• Survival	Below-ground deposits and historic settlement pattern survives well	2
• Documentation	HER, NMP, cartographic and documentary, Scheduling, WWII defences report	2
• Group Value Association	WWII defences	2
• Potential	Below-ground deposits	2
• Sensitivity to change	Below-ground deposits and historic settlement pattern and landscape	2
• Amenity Value	In conjunction with other zones in HECAs 14 and 15 the overall history of Mersea can be promoted	3



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## **Appendices**

### **1 Historic Environment Character Area Methodology**

The development of the Historic Environment Character Areas (HECAs) involved an initial 3 stage process:

Analysis and creation of Historic Landscape areas,

Analysis and creation of Urban Character areas

Analysis and creation of Archaeological Character areas;

#### ***1.1 Creation of Historic Landscape Character areas***

##### ***1.1.1 General Background***

The rural landscape of Essex is a much treasured resource whose form and character reflects millennia of human activity and underlying topographical and geological influences. It has been well-researched but still has surprises and new findings to offer. It is a living, dynamic and changing entity that alters in response to natural factors, e.g. climate change, as well as human intervention e.g. 20th century farming practices. The landscape of an area has many qualities and values including its visual character, biodiversity, recreational uses and economic value to those who farm and own it. It is also an important historical resource that catalogues the activities and lifestyles of past communities and its structure, character and form have long been studied as a pathway into the past.

Colchester encompasses large areas of rural and some urban landscapes from a range of periods. This assessment has confined itself to examining the historic rural landscape of the region, the urban areas are addressed in the built heritage section. However, these two elements are closely related and where necessary themes and findings are transferred between the two sections. This section and the results of the characterisation presented should be read in conjunction with the broad overview of the area's historical development.

Colchester has a highly varied historic landscape reflecting a range of influences and patterns. Some of the key human and cultural drivers behind the development of the landscape include:

- The emergence, seemingly in the late prehistoric period, of an agricultural economy;
- The development in the late prehistoric period of large-scale landscape organisation and field systems which along with the patterns of transhumance have had a strong influence on the grain of the landscape;
- The prehistoric / Roman development of the major road corridors, and route ways and settlement;
- The development of a distinctive pattern of dispersed settlement across Colchester Borough;
- The use of the marshes and estuary throughout history as a key resource for agriculture, fishing and industry;
- 20th century urban expansion.

### **1.1.2 Methodology**

Through a combination of analysing and simplifying the regional Historic Landscape Characterisation data, drawing in other key datasets such as Ancient Woodland, historic mapping, historic parks and gardens and secondary sources, it was possible to develop a series of character areas that reflected distinct combinations of Historic Landscape Character types and landscape character attributes.

Once the initial area had been digitised the descriptions for each area were prepared. The descriptions drew on a range of sources and attempted to reflect the reasoning behind the definition of an area and, where possible, relate that area to its wider historic context. The descriptions sought to highlight the key characteristics and HLC types in an area and identify any particular significant features or assets. The process of preparing the descriptions was also a part of the process of defining the areas.

### **1.1.3 Outline of Results**

Figure 34 shows the location and extent of the Historic Landscape Character Areas. Each of these areas is accompanied by a short description (see Appendix 2). This data is also available in the accompanying GIS and an example of the descriptions is provided below:

#### **HLCA 12 Marshes between the Blackwater and Colne estuaries**

- Extensive areas of mudflats, fleets and creeks, saltmarsh and present and former grazing marsh located between the mouths of the Blackwater and Colne estuaries, these include the marshes along the northern side of Mersea Island.
- The geology comprises tidal flat and estuarine deposits.
- The area includes tracts of grazing marsh and former grazing marsh.
- The field boundaries are large drainage ditches, mainly without banks or hedges, some following the sinuous course of the former creeks. There is practically no post 1950s boundary loss in this area.
- The MOD Fingringhoe Ranges are sited in the northern part of this area
- Much of the area is a SSSI and in conservation ownership with large areas owned and managed by the National Trust, the RSPB and the Essex Wildlife Trust.
- The settlement is both highly dispersed and sparse, comprising isolated farms; the older of these are located on the boundary between the former dryland and the marsh, whilst those of 18th and 19th century origin are sited on the reclaimed land.

The nature of the study has led to the development of descriptions and mapping that is broad and general in nature. The characterisation has highlighted the time depth of the structure of the landscape and the role that this structure has played in shaping the development of communities in the region; perhaps indicating that there is a future role for these structures in the implementation of the sustainable communities plan.



## **1.2 Creation of Urban Character areas for Colchester**

As a detailed urban characterisation assessment had already been produced by CBA for Colchester, this data set was used for this project.

## **1.3 Creation of Archaeological Character Areas in Colchester**

### **1.3.1 General Background**

As described in the overview of the historic environment the archaeological resource of Colchester is complex and varied. It represents evidence of human / hominid activity from the Palaeolithic period and encompasses every aspect of life from settlement and farming; to religion and ritual; and industry and commerce.

Our knowledge of this resource is also highly varied and while many places have a long history of archaeological investigation other areas have been subject to little or no research. In recent years our understanding of the archaeological resource has been enhanced by extensive archaeological research, e.g. the Historic Town survey and the National Mapping Programme. It has also been improved by the considerable range of archaeological investigations undertaken in advance of development under the aegis of PPG16.

### **1.3.2 Approach to the Analysis**

The Archaeological Character Analysis has sought to respond to this situation not by characterising the archaeological resource itself (because so much of it – perhaps the majority - remains unknown), but by characterising our current *understanding and knowledge* of the archaeological resource. This has been done through the definition of discrete geographical areas that are likely, based on current knowledge, to be distinctly different in terms of the nature, type and survival of archaeological resources contained within them.

The Archaeological Character Analysis does not seek to present a comprehensive and new understanding of the archaeological resource, nor does it attempt to predict the location of individual archaeological sites. It has sought to present our

understanding of the archaeological resource in a manner that is compatible with the approaches used for the historic landscape characterisation and urban characterisation as well as being understandable to specialists and non-specialists alike.

### ***1.3.3 Outline of Approach and Methodology***

Key to these approaches is the definition of generalised areas that share definable and distinctive characteristics. This generally relies on the analysis of consistent datasets, something that it's not always possible with pure archaeological data as this has historically tended to be collected on a site-by-site basis rather than as the result of systematic and comprehensive survey.

A number of factors were examined in an attempt to determine the boundaries of character areas. These included historic settlement pattern; extent of modern development; topography; geology; known archaeological sites and find spots; and secondary source analysis. Because the analysis was seeking to address complex patterns of survival, visibility of archaeology (in the broadest sense), past exploration and current knowledge, it was decided that patterns of modern and historic development were key to developing the extents of areas, as these have influenced both the deposition and survival of archaeological deposits.

Other consistent datasets relating to past human activity, including topography and geology, also formed part of the basis of the analysis. The methodology reflects the concept that the geology and topography of an area influences the visibility and survival of archaeological deposits and the broad types of activity that may have occurred in an area at different times.

The archaeological character of each of these identified areas was then explored through an analysis of available data including Historic Environment Record data, Scheduled Monument data, various secondary sources, historic mapping and other available digital datasets. The work also involved a considerable body of professional

judgement. Through this process some character area boundaries were revised and edited, some amalgamated and new areas created.

#### **1.3.4 Description and Review**

This was perhaps the key stage of the process where the results of the broad-brush characterisation were subject to more detailed scrutiny and examination. This involved examining a broad range of data sources including:

- Historic Environment Record Data;
- National Mapping Programme (NMP) cropmark plots;
- Historic Town and Settlement Assessment reports;
- Roman roads;
- Selected Secondary sources:

Each of the preliminary areas was then analysed and described using a combination of this data and the background geology / topographical and historic development information. This led to the creation of a number of new areas and the identification of key sites and deposits, particularly within the historic core of the urban areas. The boundaries of many areas were also revised and edited.

#### **1.3.5 Outline of Results**

Figure 37 shows the location and extent of the identified Archaeological Context Areas. Each of these areas is accompanied by a short description of the archaeological context (see Appendix 4). This data is also available in the accompanying GIS. An example of one area is provided below:

##### **ACA 12 – Mud and Marsh**

- The area comprises the coastal marshes and former marshes along the Colne Estuary and its associated tidal creeks, saltings and islands including the

Salcott, Strood and Pyefleet Channels. The surface geology is alluvium overlying bedrock of London Clay.

- Traditional farming would have been largely limited to sheep/cattle grazing but former grazing marshes have been converted for arable production.
- The area has an extremely high archaeological potential. Numerous red hills and finds of Roman ceramics indicate a concentration of Iron Age and Roman salt manufacturing in the area.
- The medieval and post medieval periods are represented by earthworks associated with sheep grazing and marshland reclamation i.e. sea walls, raised causeways and enclosures on the marshes. There are also structures associated with Oyster fisheries.
- 20<sup>th</sup> century military activity in the area is represented by the firing ranges at Fingringhoe Marshes. WWII defensive structures are also recorded, with pill boxes located along the sea walls.
- Archaeological deposits are likely to be very well preserved with good survival of organic artefacts and environmental deposits within the salt marsh and intertidal mud flats.
- In addition to arable farming and sheep grazing, modern land use includes nature conservation such as at Ray Island, Abbot's Hall and Copt Hall.

The descriptions aim to give a broad indication of the nature of the known archaeology of the area as well as identifying factors that may have influenced the survival and preservation of that archaeological resource. The data is presented in a standard bullet-point format and is designed to give a summary of the character area.

## **1.4 Creation of Historic Environment Character Areas**

The three independent sets of boundaries were overlain on a single drawing. This produced a series of boundaries, some of which corresponded, some of which remained isolated. Areas where Historic Landscape Character Areas and Archaeological Context Areas, and Urban Character Areas and Archaeology Context Areas, coincided were quickly highlighted and these formed the basic structure for the combined areas.

Where area boundaries did not correspond, decisions were made as to the relative primacy of different themes. For the most part the historic landscape boundaries dominated in the rural areas and urban boundaries dominated in urban areas as these reflect visible and recognisable boundaries; their edges also often tend to be more absolute than the archaeological boundaries. However there were some instances where the difference in the archaeological context between parts of the emerging HECAs was strong enough to warrant sub-division or the refinement of a boundary.

### **1.4.1 Description**

These descriptions for these draft areas were then rapidly compiled by drawing on the relevant elements of each of the themes in a single description.

Each of the character areas was then described using a standard format:

- *Summary*. Outlines key messages and general character.
- *Historic Landscape Character*. Presents the historic landscape characterisation of the area. This includes broad information on settlement pattern in rural areas. In urban areas this section is omitted.
- *Urban Character*. This presents the urban character of the area drawing on the urban characterisation. In rural areas this section is omitted.
- *Archaeological Character*. Presents a summary of the area's archaeological context based on the archaeological context analysis.

### **1.4.2 Results**

Figure 12 shows the location and extent of the Historic Environment Character Areas (HECAs). Each of these areas is accompanied by a short description and this data is available in section 3 of the main report and in the accompanying GIS.

2 Colchester: Historic Landscape Character Area Descriptions

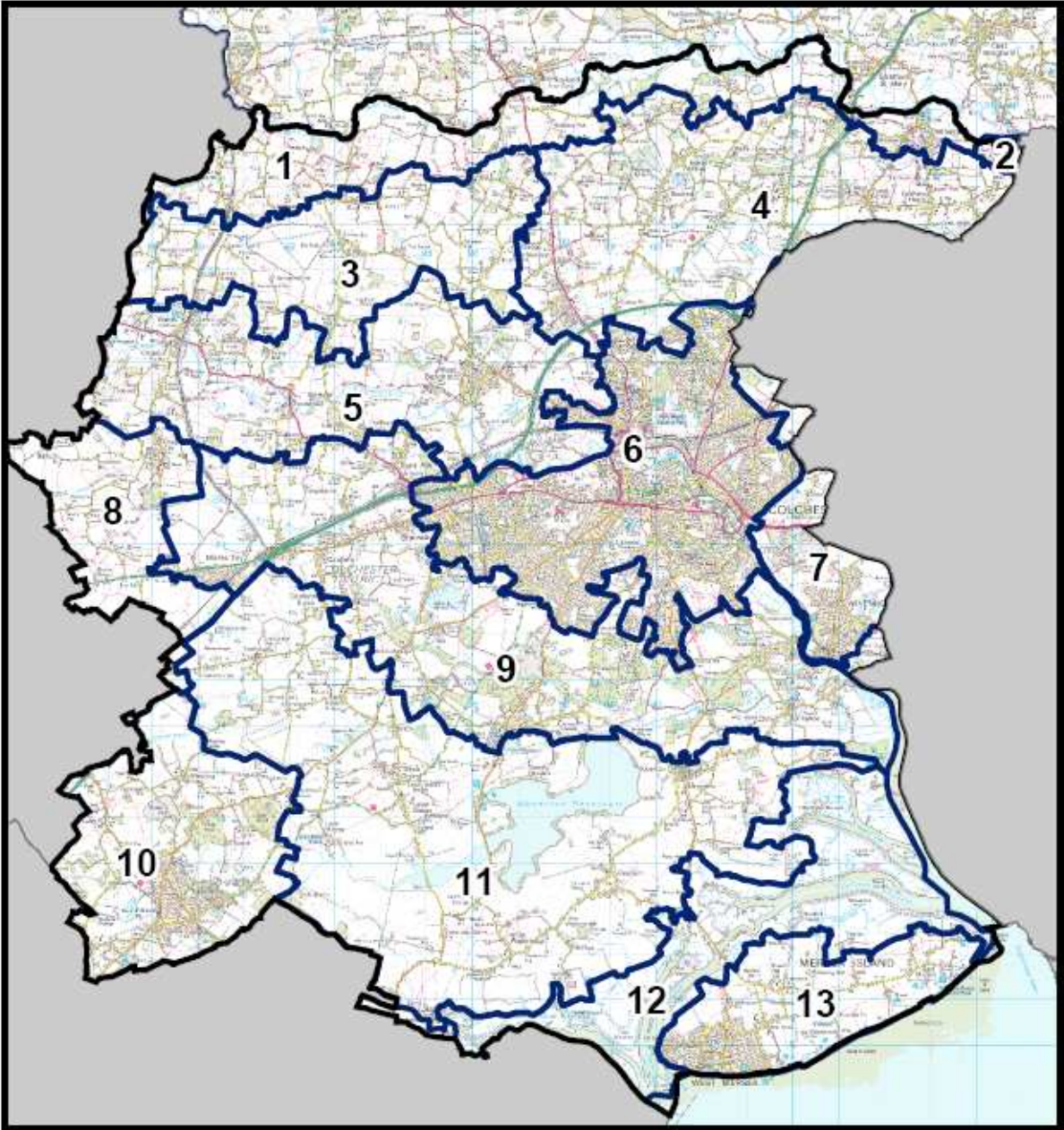


Fig. Historic Landscape Character Areas

## **2.1 HLCA 1. Lower Stour valley**

- This area comprises the valley floor and southern slopes of the River Stour, and includes the Dedham Vale area. The area extends upstream beyond Colchester District into Braintree District.
- The geology comprises a complex intertwining network of river alluviums, sand and gravel river terraces and London Clay, with areas of Boulder Clay along the crest of the valley.
- The valley landscape is characterised by extensive tracts of meadow pasture along the valley floor. The field boundaries on the meadows largely take the form of drainage channels with ancient willows spaced out along the banks of the river.
- The valley sides have a mix of 18th century or later enclosure, interspersed with the occasional area of pre-18th century irregular fields (these are probably of medieval origin and some maybe even older). The field boundaries echo the lie of the contours, with the long fields formed by the later enclosure running down the slope.
- There are a number of areas of ancient woodland, and some more recent woodland plantation, these are all located on the valley slope.
- There is limited settlement in this area, as historically the villages were located on the crest of the valley slope. The exception to this is the small market town of Dedham which lies just above the river flood-plain. There are also a number of isolated farms and structures associated with the river itself, most notably mills, in the valley bottom.
- Post 1950s boundary loss can be described as moderate, rising to high in a number of farms. Interestingly the result of this boundary loss has been to return those fields that were formed as a result of 18th century or later enclosure to their pre-enclosure dimensions.

## **2.2 HLCA 2. Marshes along the Stour estuary**

- This area comprises a small portion of a much larger long narrow strip of marshland along the southern bank of the Stour estuary. The Colchester portion comprises an area of reclaimed marsh at the head of the estuary.
- There has been little boundary loss in this area, the boundaries are all of the drainage ditch type. Sea walls are a dominant landscape feature.
- Lower Barn Farm on the edge of the dryland is the only settlement in this area.

## **2.3 HLCA 3. Colne-Stour watershed**

- This area comprises a narrow ridge of higher ground which forms the watershed between the Stour valley to the north and the Colne valley to the south.



- The geology is predominately Boulder Clay, with an outcrop of sand and gravel at the eastern limit of the area, and with London Clay, sand and gravel and alluvium in the tributary valleys that run down into the bordering valleys.
- The fieldscape largely comprises pre-18th century irregular fields (these are probably of medieval origin and some maybe even older), with some areas of later enclosure by agreement. Post 1950's boundary loss can be described as moderate, rising to high on a number of farms.
- The 1777 map shows a network of wide verges and roadside greens, but these had largely been enclosed by the date of the 1st edition OS map.
- The Second World War airfield at Wormingford forms a discrete unit in the centre of the area. There is one large park, at Westwood House, and a few small areas of 19th-20th century woodland plantation.
- The historic settlement pattern comprised dispersed settlement of church/hall complexes, manors, farms, cottages and hamlet. This pattern is largely preserved within the present landscape, although on the Wormingford to Fordham road infilling of the historic settlement has formed ribbon development.

#### **2.4 HLCA 4. *Boxted and Dedham Heath area***

- This area comprises a ridge of higher ground to the south of the Stour valley which lies within both Colchester Borough and Tendring District.
- The soil-type consists of boulder clay and head deposits on the higher ground with sands and gravels and London Clay revealed in the valley sides.
- The present landscape comprises a mixture of 18th century and later enclosure, pre-18th century irregular fields (these are probably of medieval origin and some maybe even older) and later enclosure by agreement. The first category largely but not entirely corresponds to the former heathlands at Dedham, Boxted, Horkesley and Mile End. Historically the heaths were used for rough pasture, they were enclosed in the early 19th century. Post 1950's boundary loss can be described as moderate. Boundary loss has largely concentrated on the areas of 18th century or later enclosure.
- There are tracts of enclosed meadow pasture in the valleys of the tributary streams feeding into the Stour.
- Along the northern edge of the area are a number of former parks, including Langham Hall and Rivers Hall. There are also a number of areas of woodland, mostly 18<sup>th</sup> or 19<sup>th</sup> century plantations, largely located in the northern half of the area.
- There were extensive orchards, particularly on the site of WWII airfield at Langham Moor, these have however been largely removed.
- The settlement is also largely concentrated along the northern ridge, and historically comprised dispersed settlement of church/hall complexes, manors, farms, cottages and hamlet, the latter two elements in particularly fringing the heath-edges.
- Modern ribbon development has now linked many of these sites.

## **2.5 HLCA 5. The Lower Colne valley**

- This area comprises the lower reaches of the River Colne between Wakes Colne and Colchester.
- The soil-type comprises a complex, intertwined mix of alluvium, London Clay, sands and gravels and head deposits and Boulder Clays.
- The fieldscape largely comprises pre-18th century irregular fields (these are probably of medieval origin and some maybe even older), interspersed with areas of later enclosure of common fields. This later enclosure largely occurred in the later medieval and early post-medieval period in Essex. Post 1950's boundary loss can be described as moderate, rising to severe in some areas.
- There are extensive tracts of enclosed meadow pasture along the valley floor.
- There are a number of areas of ancient woodland, as well as scattered small areas of 19th-20th century woodland plantation and some orchards.
- There was some former heathland to the north-east, but this has largely been developed and now lies under the modern village of West Bergholt.
- The historic settlement pattern comprised dispersed settlement of church/hall complexes, manors, farms, cottages and hamlet.

## **2.6 HLCA 6. Colchester urban area**

- The modern urban area of Colchester. This incorporates the Iron Age tribal centre of *Camulodunum*, the Roman town of Colchester, the medieval and post-medieval historic centre, 20<sup>th</sup> century suburban areas and the historic settlements of Mile End and Lexden as well as modern industrial estates to the north and west of the town.
- There is a surviving tract of woodland and open fields within High Woods Country Park, which is managed for wildlife and recreational purposes.
- Colchester Garrison and rifle ranges form an important area of open landscape that has been used for military purposes throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.
- There are areas of former enclosed meadow pasture and allotments along the floodplain of the Rivers Colne and the Bourne Brook.

## **2.7 HLCA 7 Ardleigh Heaths area**

- This area is largely located within Tendring District, however its south-western corner extends into Colchester District, where the Colne estuary forms its southern boundary.
- The geology of the Colchester portion of the area is largely Kesgrave sands and gravels with alluvium bordering the Colne estuary.
- The area is characterised by large areas of former heathland, including Wivenhoe Heath. Historically they were used for rough pasture but were enclosed in the early 19th century.

- The present landscape comprises a mixture of pre-18th century irregular fields (these are probably of medieval origin and some maybe even older) and later enclosure by agreement, the latter largely but not entirely corresponding to the former heathlands. Post 1950s boundary loss can be described as moderate, rising to high in a number of areas.
- There are a few patches of ancient woodland and there were also extensive orchards.
- The University of Essex, set in the former parkland of Wivenhoe Hall, forms a major component of this landscape.
- Historically settlement comprised the small port town of Wivenhoe and a dispersed scatter of manors, farms, cottages and small hamlets. This settlement pattern is still evident today.

## **2.8 HLCA 8. Little Tey area**

- An undulating landscape area which straddles the Braintree and Colchester District border.
- The principal geology is Boulder Clay, with some alluvium and gravels in the valley of the Roman River.
- The fieldscape is complex, comprising a mix of pre-18th century irregular fields (these are probably of medieval origin and some maybe even older) and pre-18th century co-axial fields (also of probable medieval origin), the latter in particular respond to the local topography. Post 1950s boundary loss can be described as moderate.
- The historic settlement pattern is dispersed, comprising isolated manors, church/hall complexes, farms, moated sites and hamlets.
- The Roman roads of Stane Street and the former A12 have also left their imprint on the modern landscape, influencing field alignment and settlement distribution.

## **2.9 HLCA 9. The Roman River valley**

- This area comprises the valley of the Roman River and its tributary streams.
- The geology is predominately sand and gravel, with London Clay and alluvium in the valley floor and Boulder Clay at its western end. There has been extensive quarrying of the sands and gravels, particularly in the Stanway and Fingringhoe areas.
- There are extensive areas of enclosed meadow pasture and ancient woodland of probable medieval or earlier origin in the valley floor.
- The field pattern largely consists of pre-18th century irregular fields (these are probably of medieval origin and some maybe even older). Post 1950's boundary loss can be described as moderate to high, rising to severe in some areas.
- Where the Roman River meets the Colne Estuary there are areas of reclaimed marshland, some retaining the sinuous outlines of the original creek system and some with the rectilinear pattern of later reclamation.

- There are large tracts of 19th-20th century woodland plantation on the northern slopes of the valley, particularly on the former Black Heath in Berechurch parish.
- Modern recreational landscape features include a number of small parks, Colchester Zoo and the archaeological park of Gosbecks.
- The historic settlement pattern comprised dispersed settlement of church/hall complexes, manors, farms, cottages and hamlet, which have grown to form the settlements of Marks Tey, Stanway, Layer-de-la-Haye, Langenhoe, Rowhedge and Fingringhoe.

### **2.10 HLCA 10. Tiptree Heath**

- This area spans the Maldon and Colchester District boundary. It comprises a ridge of higher ground, sloping to the north-west to the Domsey Brook valley and to the south-east towards the Blackwater estuary.
- The geology comprises glacial sands and gravels overlying London Clay.
- Historically this area comprised Tiptree Heath, a huge area of common rough pasture and wood-pasture shared between several neighbouring parishes. Encroachment on this area began in a piecemeal fashion in the medieval period, but extensive open tracts still remained until the early 19th century when it was finally enclosed by Enclosure Act. Post 1950's boundary loss can be characterised as moderate to high, in many cases involving the removal of boundaries introduced in the early 19th century.
- Some areas of the original heath and wood-pasture survive, and there are large areas of ancient woodland at Pods Wood and Layer Wood.
- The valley of the Domsey Brook has enclosed meadow pasture along its floor.
- There is one large park, Messing Park, located in the centre of the area.
- Horticulture, linked to the Tiptree jam Factory, plays a very important role in the development of the 20<sup>th</sup> century landscape in this area.
- Historically settlement was very dispersed and sparse, comprising isolated church/hall complexes, manors, farms, cottages and small hamlets. The modern settlement of Tiptree largely dates to the 20th century.

### **2.11 HLCA 11. Abberton area**

- An undulating landscape, dominated by the man-made Abberton Reservoir in the shallow valley of the Layer Brook.
- The geology is predominately London Clay, with Kesgrave sands and gravels and Boulder Clay in the north-west corner.
- The field pattern is very varied, ranging from predominately pre-18th century irregular fields (these are probably medieval or earlier in origin) in the north-west of the area, to a more co-axial rectilinear system (also medieval in origin) in the remainder of the area, with dispersed areas of later piecemeal enclosure. Some of this later enclosure dates to the later medieval or post-medieval period, whilst the remainder, particularly on the former Layer Heath dates to the early 19th century.

- Historically the settlement is dispersed, comprising isolated church/hall complexes, manors, farms, cottages and hamlets bordering small greens.
- The WWII airfield at Birch and the military ranges at Fingringhoe Camp form important components of the recent landscape history of the area.
- Post 1950's boundary loss can be described as moderate, rising to high in some farms and total on the site of the reservoir.

### **2.12 HLCA 12. *Marshes between the Blackwater and Colne estuaries***

- Extensive areas of mudflats, fleets and creeks, saltmarsh and present and former grazing marsh located between the mouths of the Blackwater and Colne estuaries, these include the marshes along the northern side of Mersea Island.
- The geology comprises tidal flat and estuarine deposits.
- The area includes tracts of grazing marsh and former grazing marsh.
- The field boundaries are large drainage ditches, mainly without banks or hedges, some following the sinuous course of the former creeks. There is practically no post 1950s boundary loss in this area.
- The MOD Fingringhoe Ranges are sited in the northern part of this area
- Much of the area is a SSSI and in conservation ownership with large areas owned and managed by the National Trust, the RSPB and the Essex Wildlife Trust.
- The settlement is both highly dispersed and sparse, comprising isolated farms; the older of these are located on the boundary between the former dryland and the marsh, whilst those of 18th and 19th century origin are sited on the reclaimed land.

### **2.13 HLCA 13. *Mersea Island***

- A gently domed island of London Clay, with patches of Kesgrave sands and gravels.
- The landscape largely comprises pre-18th century irregular enclosure (these are probably of medieval origin and some maybe even older). The post 1950s boundary loss can be described as moderate to high.
- There is only one small area of ancient woodland, although there are a number of areas of secondary scrub.
- The primary focus of settlement, both historic and modern is at the western end of the island, there is also a line of more dispersed settlement along the spine of the island, modern development has given this a ribbon-development appearance.
- On the southern side of the island are a number of areas set aside for recreational use, these include youth camps, caravan parks and the Cudmore Grove Country Park.

### 3 Colchester – Archaeological Character Areas



Fig. Archaeological character Areas

#### 3.1 ACA 1: Stour Valley

- The area comprises the Stour Valley including valley bottom and sides. The surface geology consists of Lowestoft Formation Brickearths, London Clays and gravels exposed in the valley sides and river terrace gravel and alluvial deposits in the valley bottom.

- The settlement pattern of the area is historically dispersed, dominated by a number of small halls, farmsteads and cottages but including the small medieval market town of Dedham which has its origins in the Saxon period.
- There is a high potential for surviving palaeo-environmental deposits in the valley bottom and tributary streams.
- There are numerous cropmarks in the area with concentrations in the valley bottom including a diverse range of circular, sub rectangular, sub square and irregular ditched enclosures, ring ditch cemeteries, and frequent linear features representing many periods of field systems and trackways. Notable examples include complex ring ditch cemeteries to the east of Dedham and north of Langham, a Scheduled hengiform cropmark and multiple square enclosures to the east of Boxted Cross and ring ditch and enclosure complex to the west of Wormingford Mere. Many of the cropmarks relate to prehistoric activity but later periods are also represented and the ACA has clear potential for other periods with finds of Iron Age and Roman material as well as the medieval/post medieval settlement and landscape.
- Visible medieval features included the moated sites at Garnons Farm and Rivers Hall, fishponds at Little Horkesley, timber framed listed buildings and churches including Wormingford and Dedham.
- Post medieval mills are located at Wormingford Bridge, Boxted and Dedham. Other features associated with the River Stour Navigation include a disused lock to the west of Stratford St Mary, and a working lock at Dedham.

### **3.2 ACA 2 Wakes Colne and the Colne Valley**

- The area comprises the Colne valley and the area of Wakes Colne and Bures. The drift geology consists of Lowestoft formation with gravels exposed in the valley sides, and there are extensive alluvial deposits on the valley floor.
- The settlement of the area was historically dispersed, comprising the small settlements at Wakes Colne with the remainder comprising halls, moated sites, farms and cottages.
- In the valley of the River Colne (Southern part of the area) there is a high potential for surviving palaeo-environmental deposits.
- There are numerous cropmarks recorded within the south eastern area. The cropmarks include a diverse range of circular, sub rectangular, sub square and irregular ditched enclosures, as well as frequent linear features representing many periods of field-systems and trackways. Many of the cropmarks relate to prehistoric activity but other later periods are also represented and the ACA has clear potential for other periods with finds of Iron Age and Roman material as well as the medieval/post medieval settlement and landscape.
- Part of the Scheduled Colchester Dyke system bisects the eastern part of the zone.
- The northern part of the area contains the Scheduled monument of a Motte and Bailey at Mount Bures. A medieval moat in the eastern part of the area is also scheduled.
- The most prolific remains within this area comprise monuments related to the Second World War Eastern Command line of defence. This runs along the line

of the River Colne from Colchester before turning northwards running along the line of the Colne Valley Railway.

- The redundant railway also will contain a number of surviving monuments related to the railway industry (an industrial survey is under way at the time of writing).

### **3.3 ACA 3: Great Horksley Area**

- The area comprises the ridge of higher ground between the valleys of the Colne and the Stour. The drift geology consists of Lowestoft formation with gravels and London Clay exposed in the valley sides.
- The area contained a number of large heathlands, including Bergholt Heath, Boxted Heath and Mile-end Heath. The settlement of the area was historically dispersed, comprising a scatter of cottages and farms fringing the edges of the heaths, as well as halls, moated sites, farms and cottages in the remainder of the area.
- There are numerous cropmarks recorded within the area. The cropmarks include a diverse range of circular, sub rectangular, sub square and irregular ditched enclosures, as well as frequent linear features representing many periods of field-systems and trackways. Many of the cropmarks relate to prehistoric or Roman activity, as well as the medieval/post medieval settlement and landscape. Details of the World War II airfields at Bures and Boxted are also visible as cropmarks.
- In the centre of the area is the Scheduled monument of Pitchbury Ramparts, an Iron Age hillfort.
- The archaeological evidence is diverse, covering the entire spectrum of periods from the earlier prehistoric periods to the Second World War. Sites include Bronze Age ring-ditches, Iron Age enclosures, Roman finds, moated sites and numerous historic buildings, many of which are Listed.

### **3.4 ACA 4: Great Tey Area**

- The area comprises the Roman river valley and the area surrounding Great Tey. The drift geology consists of largely Lowestoft formation with gravels exposed in the valley sides, and alluvial deposits on the valley floor of the Roman river. There are also deposits deriving from a glacial meltwater lake.
- In the valley of the Roman River there is a high potential for surviving palaeo-environmental deposits.
- Prehistoric occupation is attested by the presence of a range of circular cropmarks indicative of Bronze Age burial mounds overlooking the Roman River valley.
- Further cropmarks complexes are recorded along the northern side of the Roman River and the eastern end of the area. The cropmarks include a range



of, sub rectangular, sub square and irregular ditched enclosures, as well as linear features representing many periods of field-systems and trackways.

- The southern boundary of the area is formed by the main Roman Road from Colchester to Braughing (Stane Street). The site of a Roman villa is recorded to the south of Great Tey which is scheduled.
- The settlement of the area was historically dispersed, comprising the small settlements at Great Tey with the remainder comprising church/hall complexes, some moats, farms and cottages. The heath at Fordham has a range of farms and cottages surrounding it.
- Brick works were located on the southern side of the Roman River with one of the brick kilns to the north of Marks Tey being scheduled.

### **3.5 ACA 5: Colchester Town**

- This area comprises the modern extent of urban Colchester including the walled town, later suburbs and the tidal limit of the River Colne. The surface geology is Kesgrave Sands and Gravels overlying London Clay, which is exposed in the valley sides, and alluvium on the floor of the Colne valley.
- Historically, settlement in the area was concentrated within the Roman town walls with extra mural areas outside the main west, north and east gates and a separate port and associated settlement at the Hythe during the medieval period. There were also a number of rural medieval parishes, such as Mile End, with a pattern of individual halls, farms and cottages, which have since been subsumed within Colchester's suburbs.
- Early prehistoric activity has been recorded scattered across the area, including: Neolithic features and deposits in Culver Street in the town centre; Bronze Age pits at Culver Street and St John's Abbey, stray metal work, and an urn burial in the west of the town and Bronze Age and Middle Iron Age activity to the south of the town centre.
- The area covers much of the land that formed the late Iron Age oppidum of Camulodunum, protected by a series of bank and ditch earthworks (dykes). It includes one of the main areas of activity, at Sheepen, which is designated as a Scheduled Monument. During the Iron Age it was a manufacturing area, including the coin mint of Cunobelin, defended by a dyke.
- After the Roman conquest industrial activity at Sheepen intensified and a legionary fortress was constructed on a nearby spur of land. The fortress was converted to the country's first colonia in AD49. Much of the fortress street grid was retained and used as the core of the new grid of the colonia and many military buildings were converted for civilian use. New buildings were also constructed including impressive town houses, the Temple of Claudius and a monumental arch at Balkerne Gate.
- The colonia was destroyed during the Boudican Revolt in AD 60/1 and evidence for destruction has been recorded across the colonia with a destruction horizon up to half a meter deep and good preservation of organic material, burnt daub and painted wall plaster.
- The re-foundation of the city after the Boudican revolt involved the resurrection of the street grid and the re-use of some pre-Boudican building plots. A town

wall was added during the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD, and large town houses and public buildings including a theatre were built.

- There were extra mural settlements outside the main gates into the town and large cemeteries are known in the area of Lexden and to the south at Butt Road and in Abbey Fields, where a Circus was also located.
- The town went into decline during the 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD. Anglo-Saxon activity is recorded from the 5<sup>th</sup> century with the construction of a number of 'sunken featured buildings'. The town was restored after its capture from the Danish army in 917AD, with re-planning of elements of the street pattern and construction of the tower of Holy Trinity church in the 11<sup>th</sup> century
- Following the Norman invasion, Colchester was chosen as the location for a massive Royal keep, built over the base of the Temple of Claudius. The town also witnessed construction of a number of important stone built houses, a stone Moot Hall, churches and significant religious foundations outside the town walls, including St Botolph's Priory and St John' Abbey and the medieval hospital of St Mary Magdalen's. Another important development was the establishment of the Hythe which was probably built in the 12<sup>th</sup> century. Settlement developed outside the town walls at Osborne Street, and along the road to East Gate. The later medieval period saw improvements to the town's defences and the construction of buildings with stone built undercrofts/cellars along the High Street and Head Street.
- A military garrison was established in the town during the Napoleonic wars and Colchester became a permanent garrison town from 1843 after the arrival of the railway. The rail and water transport system boosted agricultural-related industries like brewing, milling and grain exporting, a flourishing retail centre and the rise of factory production in engineering, footwear and clothing manufacture.
- Population growth resulted in the construction of extensive Victorian and 20<sup>th</sup> century suburbs.

### **3.6 ACA 6: Wivenhoe area**

- The area comprises part of the eastern valley slope of the lower reaches of the Colne valley. The drift geology consists of Lowestoft formation clay and silts overlying mixed deposits of Kesgrave sands/gravels. London Clay is exposed in the valley sides, and there are extensive alluvial deposits on the valley floor. The area is drained by the River Colne and the Salary Brook.
- The area includes the historic town and port of Wivenhoe. A Historic Settlement Assessment Report has been written for this (Medlycott 1999). The settlement in the remainder of the area was historically dispersed, comprising the large estates and parks of Wivenhoe Hall and Wivenhoe Park and a few farms and cottages.
- There are numerous cropmarks recorded within the area, with particular concentrations in the south-eastern part of the area. The cropmarks include a diverse range of circular, sub rectangular, sub square and irregular ditched enclosures, as well as frequent linear features representing many periods of field-systems and trackways. Many of the cropmarks relate to prehistoric activity but other later periods are also represented and the ACA has clear

potential for other periods with finds of Iron Age and Roman material as well as the medieval/post medieval settlement and landscape.

- Part of the south-eastern corner of the area has been quarried for sand and gravel. In addition the site of a brick-making site and quarry is recorded on the HER in the northern half of the area.

### **3.7 ACA 7: Tiptree Heath and Messing area**

- The area comprises a low ridge of land in the southern half of the area, dipping to the north into the valley of the Domsey Brook. The geology consists of London Clay, overlain to the north by Boulder Clay and along the ridge by sands and gravels.
- Arable is now the predominant land use but formerly the southern half of the zone comprised part of the former extent of Tiptree Heath. This was largely an extensive area of 'waste' and common land used as rough pasture and pannage. It was enclosed in a 'piecemeal' fashion from the medieval period onwards. Some areas of heathland still remain.
- Cropmarks are scarce in this area. This may be a reflection of the geology or of limited exploitation of the area until fairly recently. Those that are visible largely comprise linear features, probably field boundaries and trackways of varying dates, and a number of enclosures, possibly later prehistoric in date.
- There are a number of Scheduled Monuments within the area. These comprise the possible barrow mound at Coneyfield Wood, and the earthen rampart at Haynes Green. The Roman road to Colchester forms the northern limit of this zone.
- The historic settlement pattern was highly dispersed comprising small hamlets situated at the edge of the heath with a small number of church/hall complexes and medieval moated sites.
- Part of the World War II airfield at Birch survives, the remainder is visible as cropmarks.

### **3.8 ACA 8 – Tiptree Urban area**

- Tiptree lies mainly on glaciofluvial deposits of Middle Pleistocene date. It also lies on the edge of a melt water lake of Hoxnian date 250,000 – 200,000 years ago.
- A number of Palaeolithic artifacts have been found in various locations across the urban area of Tiptree. These all comprise flint artifacts.
- During the Neolithic further flint artifacts have been recovered with a number of flint axes recovered.
- The Roman period is represented by a series of coins recovered as chance finds.
- The historic settlement pattern was very dispersed with historic Tiptree being a very small nucleated settlement surrounded by dispersed farms and cottages.

- In the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century in the southern part of the area the Wilkins jam factory was constructed along with its associated workers housing. The housing and the factory forms an important historic area within the settlement of Tiptree.
- Major urban expansion took place in Tiptree from the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

### **3.9 ACA 9: Stanway**

- This area comprises countryside to the south west of modern Colchester including the northern end of the Roman River Valley. The surface geology is Kesgrave Sands and Gravels with Head on the sides of the River Valley and alluvium on the narrow valley floor.
- The settlement of the area was historically dispersed comprising the roadside settlement at Stanway, greenside settlements including Stanway Green and Hardy's Green, small hamlets of Heckfordbridge and Birch with the remainder consisting of church / hall complexes, such as Copford Hall and Birch Hall, and individual farms.
- There are cropmarks across the area with the densest concentration around the scheduled site at Gosbecks. Gosbecks has a complex history of use through the late Iron Age and Roman period. During the late Iron Age, it was a native tribal centre with an enclosed farmstead connected to a network of droeways and fields protected by a series of dykes. After the Roman invasion the site saw the addition of an auxiliary fortress, Romano-Celtic temple complex and other major buildings including a theatre.
- The cropmarks also represent earlier and later periods including Bronze Age ring ditches east of Gosbecks and WWII anti-landing ditches north of Friday Woods.
- Elements of the scheduled late Iron Age and early Roman Colchester Dyke system survive as earthworks and bisect the western part of the zone running from Gosbecks and Stanway Green, down into the Roman River Valley. The areas northern boundary is marked by the line of the roman road from London to Colchester.
- The medieval period is represented by the scheduled churches of St Mary's, Birch and All Saints, Stanway and the site of a mill dam and motte and bailey castle at Birch.
- There has been significant gravel and sand extraction south of Stanway, new housing to the north of Gosbecks and the construction of Colchester Zoo around Stanway Hall.

### **3.10 ACA 10: Rowhedge and Roman River**

- This area comprises countryside to the south east of modern Colchester including the eastern end of the Roman River Valley. The surface geology is

- Kesgrave Sands and Gravels with Head on the sides of the River Valley and alluvium on the narrow valley floor and marshes adjacent to the River Colne.
- The Hythe Marshes include a former course of the River Colne and may be the location of an early landing ground which preceded the establishment of the medieval port at the Hythe.
  - The settlement of the area was historically dispersed comprising the riverside settlement at Rowhedge, church / hall complexes, such as East Doneyland Hall, and individual farms.
  - A Bronze Age round barrow survives as a scheduled earthwork within the grounds of Doneyland Hall.
  - Cropmarks within Friday Woods and Doneyland Woods mark the location of military practice trenches. To the east of Roman Hill House there is a complex of enclosures and linear features.
  - The medieval period is represented by the moated site and fishponds of East Doneyland Hall and site of the demolished St Lawrence Church.
  - Post medieval activity included a brick works to the east of Doneyland Hall and mineral extraction which has left gravel pits and the remains of an associated timber wharf in the Roman River.

### **3.11 ACA 11 – The Abberton area**

- The area comprises the valley of the Layer Brook, now largely filled by Abberton reservoir, and the Langenhoe-Fingringhoe ridge which extends out to the Colne estuary. The geology is overwhelmingly London Clay with small patches of gravels exposed in the valley sides. The border of this area with the Colne Estuary is marked by estuarine silts and muds.
- The settlement of the area was historically highly dispersed, comprising church/hall complexes and isolated halls, farms and cottages. The area of Abberton Reservoir was particularly sparsely settled, probably due to its marshy nature.
- There is the potential for surviving palaeo-environmental deposits in the valley of the Layer Brook.
- The few cropmarks in the area are concentrated on the gravels in the north, there are a number of enclosures that maybe prehistoric in date, however the majority appear to largely relate to medieval and post-medieval settlement and landscape features.
- There are three Scheduled Monuments: comprising the mill mound and church site at Virley and the Great Wigborough cropmark of a henge.
- The range of archaeological sites includes prehistoric enclosures and ring-ditches, a possible Roman villa and sites related to the medieval and post-medieval settlement of the area. There are numerous Listed Buildings, including the outstanding 16<sup>th</sup> century gatehouse at Layer Marney Tower.

### **3.12 ACA 12 – Mud and Marsh**

- The area comprises the coastal marshes and former marshes along the Colne Estuary and its associated tidal creeks, saltings and islands including the Salcott, Strood and Pyefleet Channels. The surface geology is alluvium overlying bedrock of London Clay.
- Traditional farming would have been largely limited to sheep/cattle grazing but former grazing marshes have been converted for arable production.
- The area has an extremely high archaeological potential. Numerous red hills and finds of Roman ceramics indicate a concentration of Iron Age and Roman salt manufacturing in the area.
- The medieval and post medieval periods are represented by earthworks associated with sheep grazing and marshland reclamation i.e. sea walls, raised causeways and enclosures on the marshes. There are also structures associated with Oyster fisheries.
- 20<sup>th</sup> century military activity in the area is represented by the firing ranges at Fingringhoe Marshes. WWII defensive structures are also recorded, with pill boxes located along the sea walls.
- Archaeological deposits are likely to be very well preserved with good survival of organic artefacts and environmental deposits within the salt marsh and intertidal mud flats.
- In addition to arable farming and sheep grazing, modern land use includes nature conservation such as at Ray Island, Abbot's Hall and Copt Hall.

### **3.13 ACA 13 Mersea Island**

- The area comprises the dry-land area of Mersea Island. The geology comprises London Clay with isolated patches of sand and gravel, the latter largely in the centre off the island. It differs from the other coastal islands of Essex in that there are numerous fresh-water springs.
- There is evidence in the form of worked flints for Palaeolithic, Mesolithic and Neolithic activity on the island. There is also evidence for later Prehistoric occupation in Mersea.
- The discovery of Roman finds in the vicinity of the King's Hard on the western tip of the Island and of a road of probable Roman date leading to this area, suggests that it may have functioned as a Hard in the Roman period also. A Roman villa complex and tombs were sited in the vicinity of West Mersea Church, and Roman finds have been found over the entire island, suggesting a widespread pattern of settlement and activity.
- The island was occupied throughout the Saxon periods, and briefly formed a defensive encampment for the Danes.
- The historic settlement pattern for the medieval and post-medieval period comprised the small village and Hard at West Mersea, the church/hall complex at East Mersea and dispersed farms and cottages.

- In the years following the First World War Mersea developed as a seaside resort and there are numerous surviving elements of this role including beach huts, holiday chalets were built, a Boating Lake off the Esplanade and a Golf Course.
- The island was heavily fortified against invasion during the Second World War and there is a string of pill-boxes along the coast.

### **3.14 ACA 14 Foreshore and inter-tidal area on the southern side of**

#### ***Mersea Island***

- The area comprises the inter-tidal area on the southern side of Mersea Island, consisting of a sandy beach immediately adjacent to the dryland and extensive mud-flats to the seaward side.
- The area is of considerable significance because of its geological and Palaeolithic deposits. The cliffs at Cudmore Grove contain important evidence for the evolution of the Thames/Medway river system in the Hoxnian inter-glacial period, comprising a fossil-bearing channel deposit containing beaver, bear and monkey bones. Beneath the modern beach is a channel filled with Ipswichian interglacial sediments associated with an earlier River Blackwater containing the rare remains of hippopotamus and hyena. These are occasionally exposed amongst the mud-flats.
- A number of Palaeolithic flints, demonstrating the presence of early man in the area have been recovered from the gravels in the cliff and from the foreshore at the base of the cliff.
- Other archaeological features include a range of timber-structures, some associated with fishing, others enabled access from the dryland to the mud-flats, whilst others comprise erosion prevention measures, such as groynes. There is also a probable wharf associated with the 16<sup>th</sup> century blockhouse at East Mersea.
- The fish-trap of probable Saxon date at the western end of this area is a Scheduled Ancient Monument. Comparisons can be drawn with other fish-traps found on the opposite side of the Blackwater estuary.
- More modern elements include the rows of traditional beach-huts at West Mersea and the remnants of World War II defences that have collapsed on to the beach.

#### **Glossary of Terms Used**

**Bronze Age:** The period from about 2,000 BC, when bronze-working first began in Britain, until about 700BC when the use of iron begins.

**Cropmarks:** Variations in the sub-soil caused by buried archaeological features results in different crop growth visible from the air.

**Iron Age:** The period from about 700 BC when iron-working arrived in Britain until the Roman invasion of 43 AD.

**Medieval:** This is the period between the Norman Conquest of England in 1066 and the dissolution of the monasteries in 1538.

**Mesolithic:** The period following the end of the last ice age and prior to the introduction of farming in the Neolithic.

**Neolithic:** The period from about 4000BC when farming and pottery manufacture began in Britain, until about 2000BC when metalworking began.

**Paleolithic:** The Palaeolithic period covers the time span from the initial colonisation of Britain, c. 700,000 years ago to the end of the last ice age c 10,000 years ago.

**Post-medieval:** The period from 1538-1900

**Red Hill:** A Late Iron Age or Roman salt making site.

**Roman:** The period of Roman occupation from 43AD through to 410AD.

**Saxon:** The period of Saxon occupation from 410 to 1066.

**Scheduled Monument:** (Formerly Scheduled Ancient Monument): A site of nationally archaeological importance protected under the 1979 Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act.



