



Basildon Borough Historic Environment Characterisation Project

2010-2011

Basildon Council
BASILDON • BILLERICAY • WICKFORD



Essex County Council

Front Cover: St. Margarets Church, Bowers Gifford

Acknowledgements

Thanks go to Gordon Humphries at Basildon Council for help in compiling this report. The Basildon Historic Environment Characterisation Project report was prepared by Essex County Council Historic Environment Branch during 2010 and 2011. The project team comprised Nigel Brown, Adam Garwood, Richard Havis, Maria Medlycott and Teresa O'Connor. Mapping of individual Character Zone maps were by Sally Gale.

How to use this report and maps

The project report looks at:

- a) how the historic environment of Basildon Borough developed from about 500,000 years ago to the present day.
- b) Broad historic environment character areas drawing together information on the historic landscape character, archaeological character, and historic urban character.
- c) More detailed character zones, with more information on the character of these zones including the diversity of historic environment assets, their survival and documentation, group value association, potential and sensitivity to change, and amenity value.
- d) Individual character zone maps, These maps provide a level of detail not found in most Historic Environment Characterisation Reports.

The individual Character Zone maps show the location of features in the Borough listed on the Essex Historic Environment Record, and their proximity to each other on the ground. Obviously they show what is known at a point in time, and it should be remembered that new features are being identified and subsequently added to the Record.

This report will be useful to developers, planners and interested members of the public and schools. To learn more about any of the historic environment assets and the potential use of the zones etc you are advised to contact Essex County Council Historic Environment Branch. Contact details are on the last page of this report.

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**SINGLE CHARACTER ZONE MAPS WITH HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT RECORD SITES
INCLUDING KEY TO MAP SYMBOLS**

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Abbreviations

ACA	Archaeological Character Area
CBA	Chris Blandford Associates
c.	Circa
ECC	Essex County Council
GIS	Geographical Information system
Ha	Hectares
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
VDS	Village Design Statement

Basildon 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 Basildon 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 Borough's environmental infrastructure, the historic environment has a major role to play in Basildon's future. At the same time it is sensitive to change and it needs to be properly understood before change is planned. This is 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 Basildon 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. The Thames Gateway study was followed by work commissioned by other Councils which looked in greater detail at the Historic

Environment and carried out or managed by Essex County Council. This included a refinement of the Chris Blandford document creating a more in depth study of the Historic Environment across the Essex Thames Gateway Area (although this did not include Southend). The current study defines a Basildon-specific Historic Environment Characterisation Project which is intended to inform the creation of the Local Development Framework, but should also be useful for a range of other purposes e.g. as in 1.1 below.

The Historic Environment has been assessed using character assessments of the historic urban, historic landscape and archaeological resource of Basildon.

The Historic Environment Character Areas originally created in the Chris Blandford Document (2004) have been updated and divided into more specific and more detailed Historic Environment Character Zones which are more suitable for informing strategic planning, and master planning activity within Basildon.

Alongside this report a series of free standing maps have been produced for the Borough identifying the main historic environment sites throughout the District. These include an overall District map and separate single zone maps. For more detailed information from the Historic Environment Record please contact the Historic Environment Branch at Essex County Council.

1.1 Purpose of the project

This project has been developed to primarily serve as a tool for Basildon 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 area. The report should facilitate the development of positive approaches to the integration of historic environment objectives into spatial planning for the Authority.

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 Basildon.**

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 Supplementary Planning Documents.

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

The report will provide developers and 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 could be affected, leading to informed conservation or enhancement, and effective communication and co-ordination between developers and 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), Community Neighbourhood Plans and even the Community Strategy.

2 The Historic Environment of Basildon

2.1 Topography

Basildon Borough is located in the south of Essex, the southern part of the Borough overlooking the Thames Estuary. The topography of Basildon is diverse; the north-western part of the Borough around the town of Billericay (Billericay is on the highest point here at 96m Ordnance Datum) comprises a higher plateau with significant areas of ancient landscape dropping down steeply to the south into the valley of the River Crouch. The central belt comprises the Crouch valley and a broad expanse of level, low-lying land (much of it now built over). To the south of this the land rises to a range of gently rolling hills, the highest point being the Langdon Hills (114m OD) which in turn drop steeply away to an extensive area of marshland and creeks fringing the north shore of the Thames estuary.

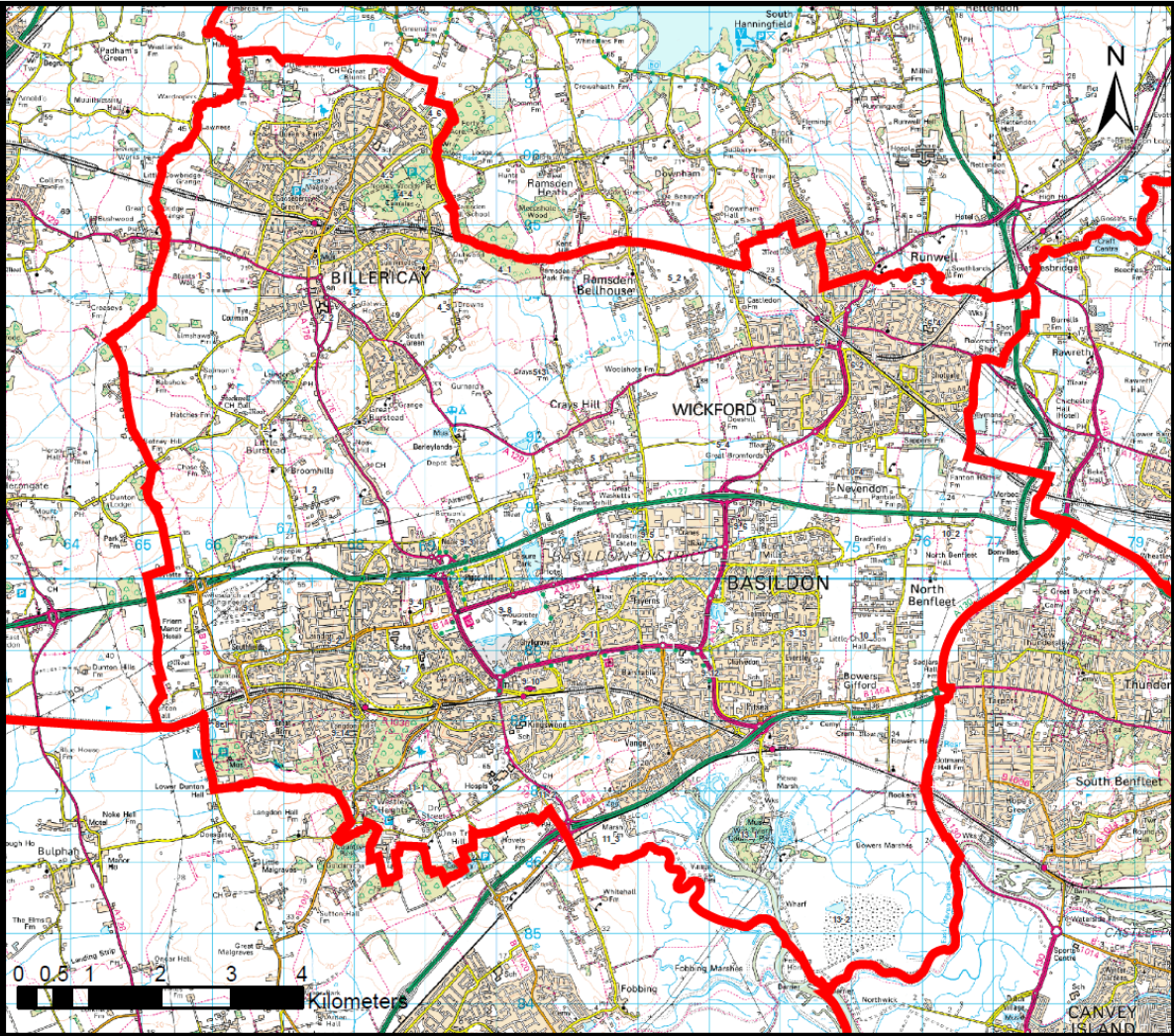


Fig. 1 Basildon Borough

The geology of the area largely comprises London Clay with patches of Claygate clays and Bagshot Formation sands and gravels forming the higher points within the Borough. The valley-floor of the Crouch and its tributaries is alluvial in nature and the marshes are made up of tidal flat deposits.

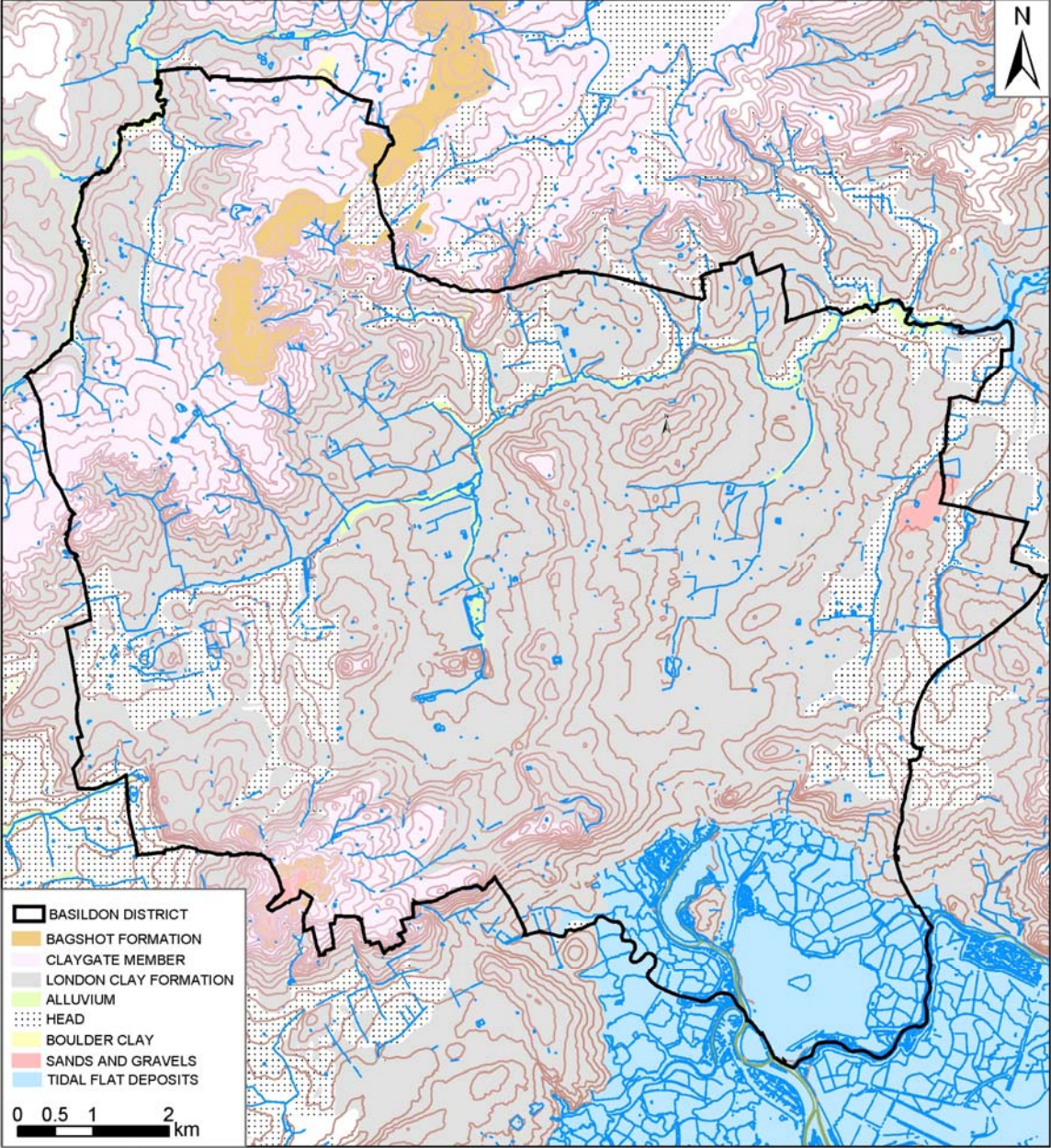


Fig. 2 The geology and topography of Basildon Borough

2.2 The Palaeolithic Period (500,000-10,000 BC)

For most of this period Britain was joined to Continental Europe. The whole period is characterised by fluctuating temperatures, with successive Ice Ages succeeded by periods of warmth. Originally the Thames followed a more northerly course through East Anglia, discharging into the North Sea. In about 450,000 BC, during the period of maximum glaciation it was gradually forced southwards by the advancing ice-sheet, eventually reaching its present course. The terraces of gravel which mark the former course of the river became favoured areas for settlement by early humans. The evidence for these early inhabitants is in the form of flint tools. These people were wandering hunters and foragers, living in conditions that varied from the sub-arctic to the pleasantly warm. When conditions became too cold, they and their prey, which included the mammoth, retreated back to continental Europe, returning when the ice sheets receded again. The earliest biologically modern humans, *Homo sapiens*, arrived in Britain around 40,000 BC. The last Ice Age lasted from 26,000-13,000 BC, at which point Britain began to warm up and sea levels to rise.

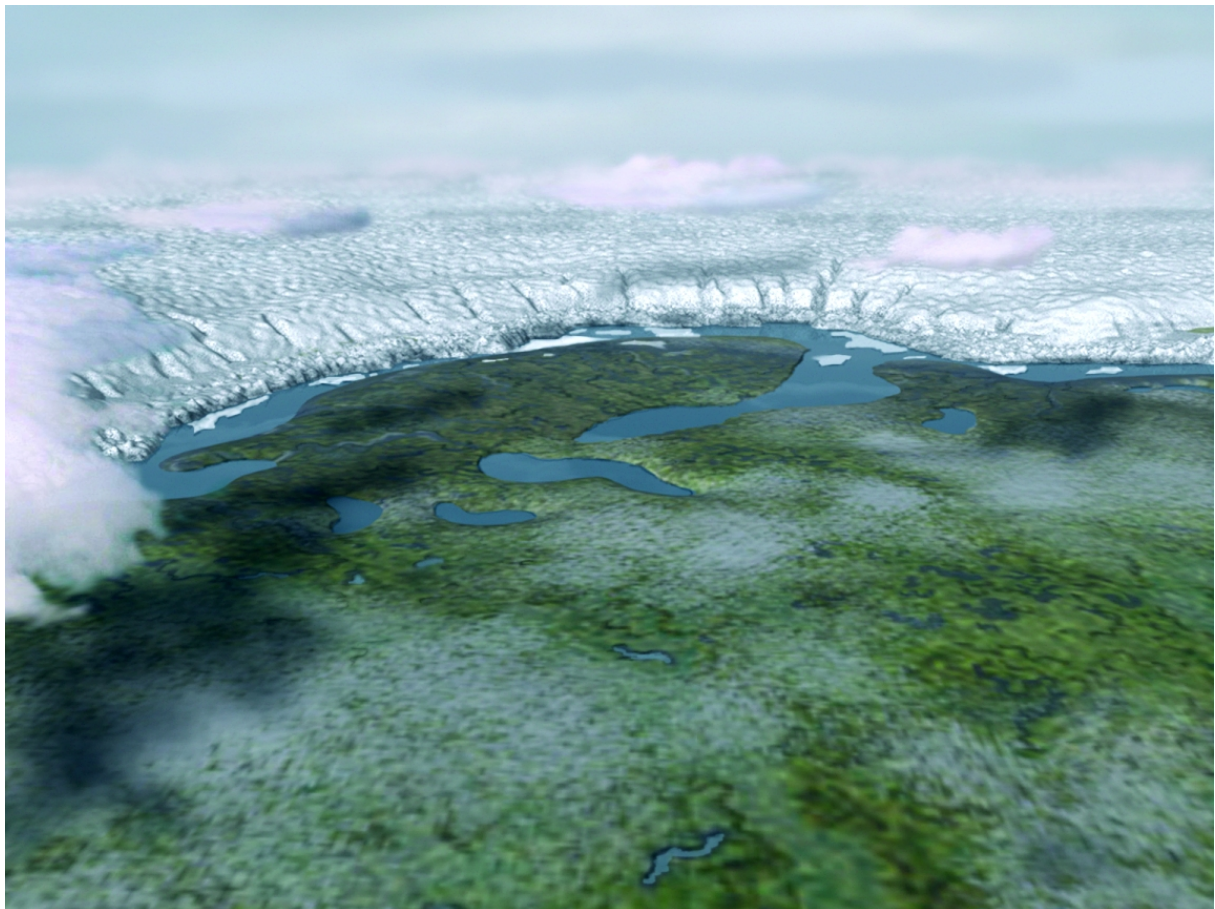


Fig. 3 Computer generated image of the southern edge of the ice sheet with the viewpoint being located above Billericay.

There is evidence in the form of chance discoveries of flint tools, particularly flint hand-axes, for human occupation in the Palaeolithic period in the Basildon Borough. The current evidence would suggest that they favoured the north of the Borough, particularly the valley of the River Crouch.



Fig. 4 Palaeolithic find-spots in Basildon Borough

2.3 The Mesolithic Period (10,000 – 4,000 BC)

The Mesolithic period is marked by rapid climatic change. The earlier steppe/tundra environment was replaced by pine and birch forest and the larger animals (such as the mammoth) being replaced by more familiar types such as the reindeer and horse. Rising sea-levels derived from the melting glaciers submerged the low-lying land that had linked Britain to the continent, forming the English Channel. However by the end of the period the high tide mark lay roughly 30m below its present level. The Thames occupied roughly its present course, but was initially a much wider, more braided stream, bordered by sand and gravel banks and marshes. By around 7,500 BC the area was probably covered by a mixed deciduous forest, largely of oak, lime and elm. This was inhabited by mobile groups of hunters and foragers, hunting red deer, elk and wild cattle (aurochs) in the woods and fish and birds in the marshes as well as gathering fruit, roots and nuts.

There is evidence for the Mesolithic period in Basildon Borough, comprising a scatter of find-spots and a number of possible settlement sites. Of these the most significant is the Nevendon Washlands site where excavation has recovered a considerable number of flint flakes and tools of Mesolithic date, possibly related to a buried land surface. This site is located close to a tributary of the River Crouch and on the dryland between two areas prone to intermittent flooding, a location probably chosen for the wide range of natural habitats in the immediate vicinity. There are also a significant number of finds from Langdon Hills Park, enough to suggest another settlement site. The Norsey Wood area also seems to have been another focus for Mesolithic activity.



Fig. 5 Mesolithic sites and find-spots

2.4 The Neolithic Period (4,000 – 2,200 BC)

The Neolithic period marks the change from a hunting and foraging life-style to a more settled farming economy. This was accompanied by the introduction of new animal and plant species (domestic cattle and sheep, wheat and barley), pottery and new types of tools, including the polished flint axe. The introduction of farming led to the clearance of some areas of woodland to make fields and meadows. Sea-levels were still rising as sea levels rose, and in the early Neolithic in Essex estuary levels were equivalent to their current low water mark. Although some previously usable low-lying land was now flooded and peat formation had begun in other areas, large areas of alluvium-rich land were still available. The marshes however continued to expand, as water levels rose, swallowing earlier settlements and woodland, and by about 2,200 BC the tidal head of the Thames had reached the Isle of Dogs. Stumps of trees from the later Neolithic forest, of mixed woodland often with surprisingly large numbers of yew, can be found along the Thames foreshore as at Purfleet in Thurrock, and at various places from Southwark to Erith on the south bank. In the area of the south Essex marshes the Neolithic landscape is now deeply buried by later alluvium.

There is only slight evidence for Neolithic activity in Basildon Borough, although this is a reflection of the general lack of archaeological fieldwork in the area and poor cropmark formation on the London Clay soils rather than necessarily a genuine absence. Certainly the excavations during the construction of the A130 recovered Neolithic pottery and possibly features from the Doublegate Lane and Shotgate farm sites. There are also a number of find-spots, mostly of axe-heads, from the northern part of the Borough, around what is now Billericay. These include a possible settlement site represented by flint flakes and burnt flint revealed in the upcast from a badger's sett on the Mill Meadows Nature Reserve.



Fig. 6 Neolithic sites and find-spots

2.5 The Bronze Age (2,200 – 700 BC)

The Bronze Age is characterised by the use of first copper and then bronze tools and weapons and of gold for jewellery. It was a period of great change, for both people and the environment. By the Late Bronze Age the original forests had been quite extensively cleared for farming, with large-scale field-systems marking a major re-organisation of the landscape. Large scale trading exchange networks with mainland Europe brought the materials for bronze working into the south and east of England and south Essex has a particularly large concentration of metalwork finds. Sea-level rise continued, and this combined with increased run-off due to the clearance of the woodland, led to the rising water-levels in the Thames and flood-plain expansion. In addition the climate was becoming increasingly cooler and wetter, encouraging peat formation. A range of later Bronze age causeways, wooden trackways and timber platforms have been recorded in the estuarine marshes further up the Thames and examples may have also been present in the Crouch estuary or in the lower Thames (although here they would now be very deeply buried). These appear to date to the later Bronze Age and represent attempts to maintain routes from the dryland onto the marshes and to the river itself.

The evidence for Bronze Age activity in the Borough is clustered in three distinct groups, in the northern part of the Borough centred on Billericay and Norsey Wood, in the west of the Borough, around Wickford and North Benfleet and in the south at Vange. It is probable however that this distribution reflects the distribution of fieldwork within the Borough rather than the original distribution of Bronze Age sites. There is a possible Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age settlement site comprising flint flakes and burnt flint at Mill Meadows Nature Reserve, as well as two Bronze Age barrows in Norsey Wood, which were excavated in 1865. One contained a cremation burial and seven burial urns dating to the Middle Bronze Age, the other had three Middle Bronze Age burial urns with ashes and cremated bone in them. A Late Bronze Age hoard of bronze artefacts including nine socketed axe heads was recovered from Billericay and a further two bronze items from Frithwood to the south of Billericay.



Fig. 7 Bronze Age sites and find-spots

In the south of the Borough, construction work at the Swan Mead School, Vange in 1953 uncovered a large Late Bronze Age hoard of axes, spearheads and other bronze fragments. In the eastern part of the Borough a Bronze Age metalworkers hoard was discovered near Runwell in 1957 during excavations for the Hanningfield reservoir aqueduct. Another possible hoard, consisting of a tip of a Late Bronze Age socketed axe and a disc-shaped object of similar date, were found during the cutting of a pipe-trench in the Wickford Memorial Park. To the south-east of these excavations on the Beauchamps Farm housing estate in Wickford revealed traces of earlier pits and ditches underlying the Roman settlement, together with a quantity of Late Bronze Age pottery, a perforated clay slab fragment and part of a bronze axe. Further to the south-west, excavations on the Nevendon Washlands site have revealed one definite and one possible timber circle (probably with a ceremonial function) of probable Early Bronze Age date, as well as a trackway and associated field-system and a number of possible timber-built houses. Two further hoards of bronze artefacts are recorded from Great Wasketts to the west. To the east of Wickford excavations during the construction of the A130 recorded Bronze Age features and finds at Shotgate Farm, Doublegate Lane and Monument Borrow Pit, these included a number of cremation burials from the latter site.



Fig. 8 View of the excavations at Nevendon Washlands with digitally-added posts in the postholes of the timber circle

2.6 The Iron Age (700 BC – 43 AD)

The Iron Age is distinguished by the use of iron as the main metal for tools and weapons, the use of bronze rapidly became confined to jewellery and other decorative uses. Whilst some sites and traditions appear to have continued unchanged, and some of the major social, economic, technological and political developments of the Iron Age had their origins in the Bronze Age, many sites occupied in the Bronze Age were abandoned. Southern Britain in the Late Iron Age was in regular contact and trade with France and the Roman Empire and in 55/54BC Julius Caesar led an unsuccessful invasion of the country. Basildon would have been within the territory of the Trinovantes tribe, whose capital was at Colchester.

There is considerable evidence for the Iron Age period in Basildon Borough, in the form of settlement sites, burials and field systems. There appears to have been a large and wealthy settlement in the vicinity of Norsey Wood with a number of rich burials being recovered from the gravel-pits at either end of the wood in the 19th century. Approximately 2km to the south there was a second settlement, roughly centred on the present Billericay School, part of which has been excavated by the Billericay Archaeological and Historical Society. Burials, pits and ditches as well as pottery were recovered. The evidence covers a total area of about 25 hectares and it is possible that it comprises more than one farm. There is another probable settlement and burial site close by at Little Burstead. In the east of the Borough traces of an extensive Early Iron Age settlement were excavated at Beauchamps Farm, Wickford. Features included pits, post holes and ditches as well as a small polygonal structure that may have been a shrine. The settlement was interpreted as a farmstead. The site continued to be occupied into the Middle Iron Age when a ditched enclosure was constructed around the farmstead. The settlement appears to have grown considerably in the Late Iron Age, with successive enclosures, hut-circles and associated pits and ditches, as well as gravelled floors and wells.



Fig. 9 Iron Age sites and find-spots

A large amount of handmade and wheel-thrown pottery was recovered as well as bronze, and gold coins. This settlement appears to have been destroyed by fire. In addition part of a large cemetery was uncovered, with some 40 cremations excavated. The Nevendon Washlands site was occupied in the Iron Age, but the old Bronze Age field-system was replaced by a new system of parallel strip fields laid out on a different alignment to their predecessors. The excavations in advance of the A130 revealed ditches, each with a single horse head placed at their terminal as probable votive offerings, which have been attributed a Middle Iron Age date. There is also Late Iron Age settlement evidence, in the form of rectangular field-systems or enclosure, pottery and loom weights from Monument Borrow Pit. There is a scatter of coin and pottery-sherds from the southern part of the Borough, enough to attest to there having been once widespread settlement in the area. On Bowers marsh there are Red Hills or salt-making sites, the remains of which are a characteristic site of the Later Iron Age/Roman period in Essex.

2.7 The Roman Period (43-410 AD)

The Roman period begins with the conquest of Britain by the Emperor Claudius in 43 AD, Colchester in north-east Essex was a principle target of the invasion and became the first capital of the Roman province. Soon after the conquest a trading centre began to develop at London, a convenient point for crossing the Thames. The London-Colchester road (now the A118/A12) formed the principal highway eastwards out of Roman London, and it was probably down this routeway that Boudicca and the massed tribesmen of the Iceni and Trinovantes came from the sacking of Colchester to burn the first trading centre at London to the ground in AD 60/61. After the rebellion London and Colchester were rebuilt. In the following decades London rose to prominence as the largest and most important town in Britain replacing Colchester as the provincial capital of the province with the Thames providing the link to the rest of the Roman Empire and beyond.

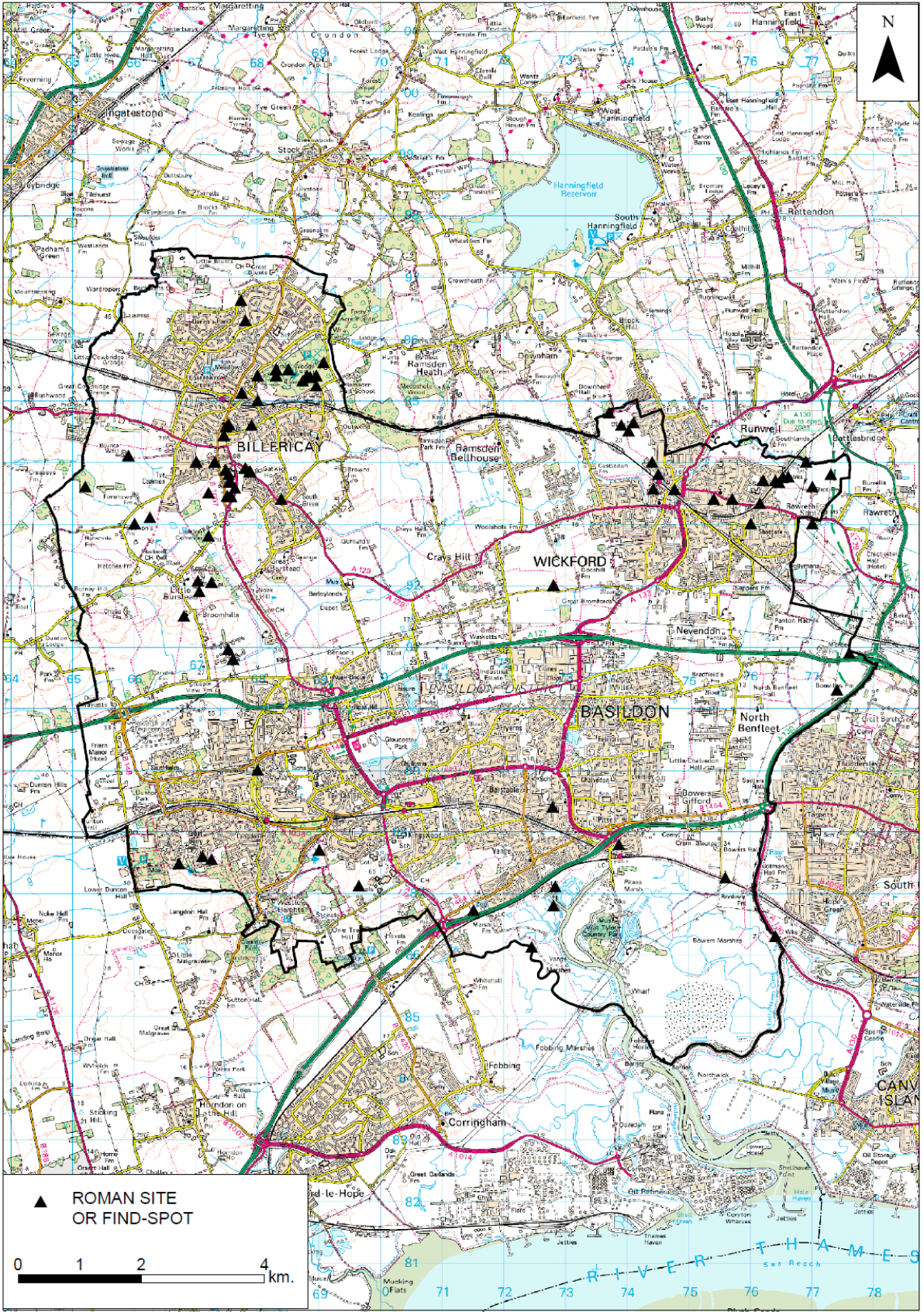


Fig. 10 Roman sites and find-spots

There is a considerable amount of evidence for the Roman period in Basildon Borough. The principal settlement appears to have been at Billericay, centred on the present Billericay School and its playing-fields, covering a total area of c. 27 hectares. The excavation area suggests that the settlement comprised a series of timber-framed buildings set in individual building-plots demarcated by boundary ditches, with accompanying paddocks and small fields. Crossing the site was an east-west gravelled track. Scattered over the area were rubbish-pits, wells and a corn-drier. On the outskirts of the settlement there was an industrial area where a pottery kiln was sited and there are antiquarian reports of other possible kilns or driers from the vicinity. Numerous burials have been excavated, some of which were placed within the boundary ditches, whilst others were located on the edges of the settlement area. Overall the impression is that Billericay comprised a rather sprawling, loosely-knit village site.



Fig. 11 Glass ointment jars of the 2nd century AD from a grave in Billericay

To the north the Norsey Wood settlement was still occupied, with excavations in the 1880s revealing evidence not only for settlement but also burials and pottery kilns. There are two possible villa/farm sites recorded from Little Burstead parish, one at Wiggins Lane and one under the present village. Some 8km to the east of Billericay is the group of sites which marks the settlement at Beauchamps Farm, Wickford, currently interpreted as a large, sprawling villa and estate, superimposed on a possible early Roman fort. It has been suggested that part of the rectilinear field pattern around Wickford might be Roman in origin. Another possible villa site is located at Barn Hall, Wickford. The antiquarian discovery of a stone coffin at Woolshot's Farm, Ramsden Bellhouse, raises the possibility of another relatively high-status settlement such as a villa in the vicinity. There is also settlement evidence from the top of Langdon Hills and from the Lee Chapel Reservoir site. There is a scattering of Red Hill salt working sites along the marsh/dryland edge and it is probable that the marshes were also used for grazing, particularly of sheep.



Fig. 12 Computer reconstruction of Red hills on the Essex coast

2.8 The Saxon Period (410-1066 AD)

When the official Roman administration of Britain collapsed Britain had already been under attack from across the North Sea, with raids and then settlement by the Saxons, Angles, Friesian and Jutish peoples. It was the Saxons who eventually gave Essex its name, the land of the East Saxons. By the end of the 6th century the kingdom of the East Saxons had emerged as a political force, encompassing what was to become Essex, Middlesex, London and Surrey. In London a new trading settlement and port developed at *Lundenwic* (London), to the west of the old Roman city, during the 7th century. The historian Bede, writing of the 7th century, described London as the capital of the East Saxons and 'a trading centre for many nations who visit by land and sea'. However the East Saxons were to lose Middlesex, London and Surrey to Mercia (a kingdom centred on the Midlands) in the 8th century and their boundaries retreated to approximately that of the historic county of Essex. During the 9th century the kingdom became a province of the kingdom of Wessex.

There is widespread early settlement for this period across most of south Essex, reflecting its proximity to the Thames estuary and the old trading/raiding routes to northern Europe. In Basildon Borough however the evidence is rather sparser, perhaps reflecting the lack of fieldwork and cropmarks in the area. However there is evidence for a number of early fifth century buildings of post, turf and rubble construction on the Beauchamps Farm site in Wickford. Finds included a late Roman brooch, part of an Early Saxon amber glass bead, Early Saxon grass-tempered pottery and numerous animal bones trodden into the floor. The widely distributed finds of Early Saxon pottery throughout this large site would suggest that occupation of the site in that period was extensive but had become almost completely obliterated by ploughing.



Fig. 13 Saxon sites and find-spots

The early Saxon settlers were pagan. The place name Thundersley reflects this, the name is derived from the 'woodland clearing dedicated to Thunor (Thor)'. In the 7th century the Saxons were converted to Christianity. The organisation of the Saxon church was based on Minster churches, which served large areas, these were later split up into smaller parishes. The Minster church at Upminster may well have administered at least part of Basildon Borough. It is likely that many of the medieval churches in Basildon had their origins in the late Saxon period. A royal *vill* may have been located at North Benfleet.

In the later Saxon period the Thames and the other creeks and estuaries of the Essex coast gave easy access to Viking invaders. In the 9th century the Vikings used Shoebury and South Benfleet as bases for their raiding parties, before being defeated in a major battle at South Benfleet.

The pattern of land-holding in the late Saxon period can be reconstructed from the Domesday Book of 1086. This records the Basildon area as falling within the Hundred of Barstable. It was subdivided into numerous small manors, often the only possession of the manorial lord. Where several manors were held by one owner they were often widely scattered and even land held by a single manor could be dispersed. Judging by the medieval period, it is probable that what was happening was that a manor might have its main centre on the London Clay, but also hold outlying portions of land on the coastal marshes and on the wooded Rayleigh and Langdon hills, thus maximising access to valuable woodland and marsh pasture resources. Each manor would have had its own tenants, thus Vange in 1066 had in addition to the manorial lord, 6 villagers, 9 smallholders and 1 slave, each of whom would have had families. The site of one of these small-holdings may be identified from the discovery of group of late Saxon metalwork, including spurs and coins, from a field next to Vange marsh. It is thought that the some of the rectilinear field-systems that are characteristic of the South and East Essex landscape had their origins in the middle-late Saxon period.

2.9 The Medieval Period (1066-1537)

The medieval period begins within the Norman Conquest of 1066. In the immediate aftermath England was parcelled out amongst the Norman barons and knights. This is reflected in the Domesday book records for Basildon Borough, where many of the old manors are recorded as having new landowners. Thus William the Conqueror held the Benfleets, his half-brother Odo, the Bishop of Bayeux had the Bursteads and Count Eustace of Boulogne held part of Horndon-on-the-Hill. The exception was Swein of Essex, who was one of the largest landowners in Britain, and one of the few pre-Conquest landowners who kept their land. He ruled his south Essex fiefdom from his base at Rayleigh Castle. The other large land-owner was the church, with Westminster Abbey, St. Paul's Cathedral and the Abbey of Barking holding large estates in the Basildon area. The Domesday book also gives a good indication of the condition of the Basildon area in 1066 and 1086. It remained a sparsely populated area, with only 5-10 households per square mile, largely in scattered farms or church and hall complexes. The land was used for a mix of arable and pastoral agriculture, with large flocks of sheep being kept on the coastal marshes, primarily for their milk. There were numerous patches of small woodland, with concentrations on the Rayleigh and Langdon Hills. The importance of the woodlands and marshes as a resource is highlighted by the number of inland parishes holding detached areas of wood and marsh in other parishes.

As Fig. 14 demonstrates there are numerous medieval sites and find-spots within Basildon Borough. These include 42 Listed Buildings that are medieval in origin, with the oldest structures being invariably the parish churches. Of these two are Listed Grade I; the Parish Church of St Nicholas, Laindon and the Parish Church of St Mary Magdalene, Great Burstead. Two moated sites are Scheduled, at Botelers in the Fryerns area of Basildon and Basildon Hall. Norsey Wood has surviving earthworks dating to the medieval period, including much of the original deer-bank which enclosed the wood, the site is now a Scheduled Monument. There has been limited archaeological fieldwork within the Borough, however part of a toft (house-site) was excavated on the Nevendon Washlands site and a string of small-scale medieval sites were excavated when the new A130 was constructed.

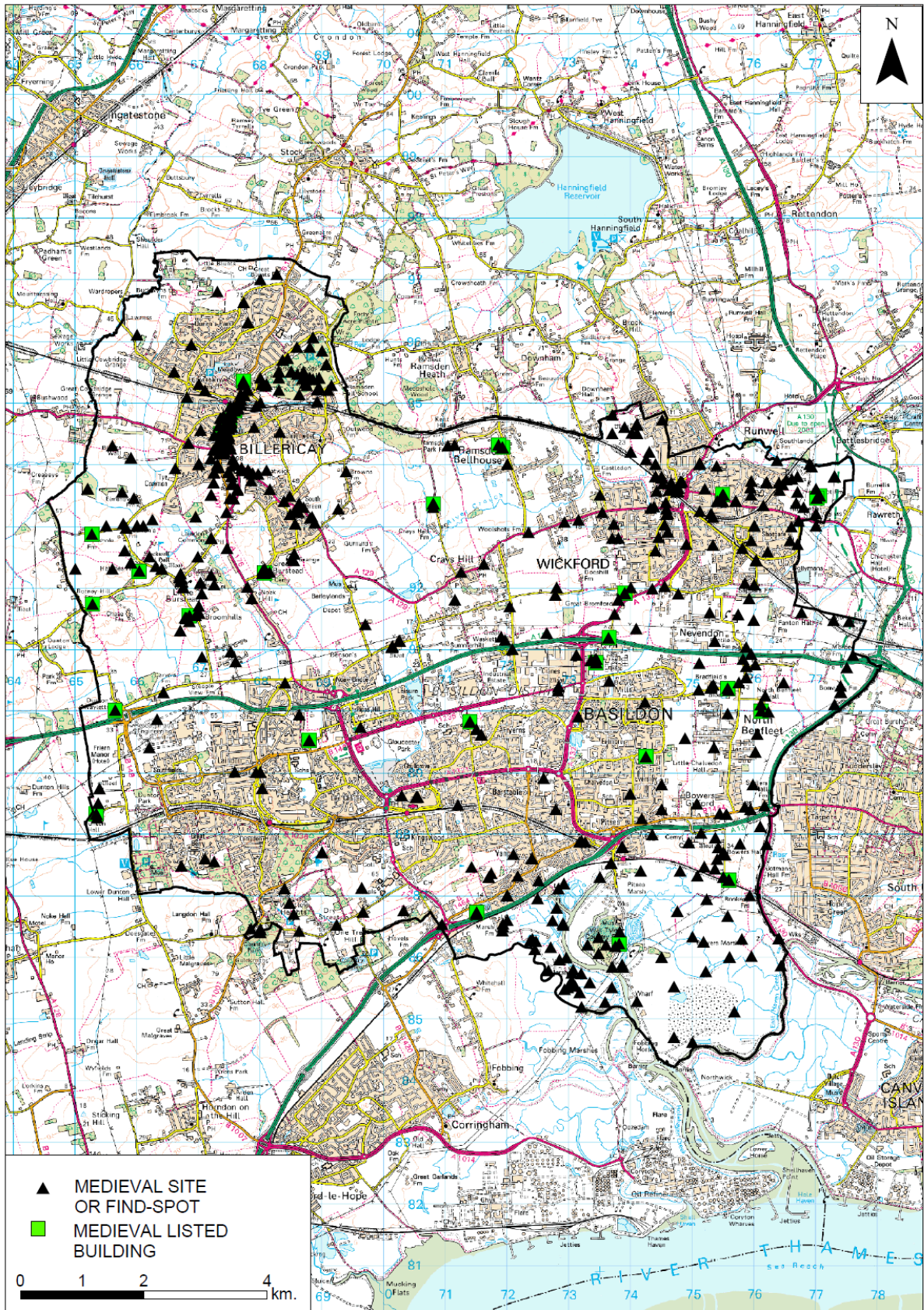


Fig. 14 Medieval sites and find-spots

Specialist study has established that the 1777 Chapman and André map of Essex gives a reasonable impression of the late medieval landscape, at least in terms of lanes, distribution of settlement and location of manors areas marsh, heath and to some extent woodland. Using the 1777 map it is possible to speculatively reconstruct the landscape of the Borough at the end of the medieval period. The landscape was crossed by numerous small roads, running either north-south or east-west, forming a rough grid pattern. This grid-pattern is continued on into the field pattern, elements of which may well have been many centuries old. The settlement is both sparse and widely spaced, with the only settlement of any size being the medieval town of Billericay. The remainder comprises churches, manorial sites, moated sites, farms and cottages. The northern part of the Borough had a number of areas of heathland, most notably at Ramsden Heath and Little Burstead. In the south of the county the settlement, in particular the churches, favoured the higher areas of land, this is particularly evident at Pitsea Church and Vange Church. The amount of woodland shown is quite low, and is largely concentrated either in the Norsey Wood area or on the Langdon Hills.

Medieval Billericay was a 13th century creation of the monks of Stratford Langthorne Abbey and the only town in the Borough. The name 'Billericay' is not recorded until 1291, although there may well have been a market on the site since 1253. Billericay was built on waste-land, where the Mountnessing and Great Burstead parish boundaries met. In 1345 a chapel was built in Billericay. The parochial division down the High Street between Mountnessing and Great Burstead parishes helps explain the town's medieval topography. The town occupied the area between the junction of Western Road and Norsey Road with the High Street and the curve in the High Street opposite the Red Lion Inn. Two distinct morphological units can be identified; the eastern High Street/Chapel Street block and the western High Street/Western Road block.



Fig. 15 Chapman and André map of 1777 showing the landscape of Basildon Borough.

The Listed Building evidence suggests that the western side of the town is the oldest, with the eastern side representing later development. The Chapel in Billericay is the only major 15th century brick ecclesiastic building in the county, although much (except the tower) is now 19th century replacement or extension. There are a number of other notable buildings, including 6-10 Norsey Road which is a good example of a 15th century 'in-line' hall house, and The Red Lion pub which has a remarkable late 15th century roof of non-vernacular character, maybe built by a 'church carpenter', suggesting a high status owner. The town is typical of the type of

medieval new town that grew in an organic manner due to the stimulus of trade, rather than because of official patronage.

2.10 The Post-Medieval Period (1538-1900)

The beginning of the post-medieval period is marked by the Reformation and the Dissolution of the Monasteries. As a consequence many of the estates in Basildon that had been held by large religious institutions, such as Westminster Abbey, St. Paul's Cathedral and Barking Abbey, passed into the hands of prominent secular families. The rise of non-conformism in the 17th -19th centuries is demonstrated by the appearance of non-conformist chapels in the landscape, these included Baptist, Methodist and Presbyterian chapels as well as those associated with the local sect of The Church of the Peculiar People. In the 15th and 16th centuries brick became a fashionable building material. It was widely used in Essex, which lacked suitable building stone but had plentiful supplies of clay for brick production. There were a number of brick kilns and clay pits within the Basildon area.

In Billericay further expansion took the form of ribbon development and infilling along the existing medieval streets. The town extended as far south as the Sun Street junction; Sun Street itself is a 19th century addition, the row of artisans cottages along the northern side of it date to that period. The two prosperous periods of Billericay's past, the Tudor and Georgian periods, are well represented in the surviving buildings. Those dating to before the 18th century are all timber-framed, some with later brick facades. The 18th and 19th century buildings are largely of brick construction.



Fig. 16 1st ed. Ordnance Survey map, 1881

Comparison between the 1777 Chapman and André map and the 1881 1st edition Ordnance Survey map shows that there was little overall change to rural Basildon

during the post-medieval period. It was still a landscape of rectilinear fields set within a grid-system of roads, with relatively sparse settlement. The woodland is still concentrated around Norsey Wood and Langdon Hills. To the south the marshes have been embanked to form grazing-marsh and there are a number of new farms on the marsh exploiting this new landscape. In the late 19th century the British Explosives Syndicate manufactured nitro-glycerine based explosives in what is now Wat Tyler Country Park. Some buildings and earthworks remain as evidence of this important industry. In the north of the county the heaths and commons were enclosed in the early 19th century. Possibly the change that was going to have the greatest impact on the subsequent history of the Borough however was the coming of the railway, with the opening of the first part of the London-Southend line in 1854 and the construction of a second London to Southend line in 1889 passing through Billericay.

2.11 Modern (1900 to the present day)

At the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th-century, agricultural depression meant that many Essex farms were semi-derelict or derelict and abandoned, particularly on the heavy clay lands of south Essex which are harder to work. Entrepreneurs bought up these farms at rock-bottom prices and split them into individual plots or 'Plotlands'. Each plotland averaged 20ft wide by 160-180ft long. They were advertised as an opportunity to live in an arcadian paradise with good transport links to London, and were often promoted with the offer of cheap rail excursions to view the site and free food and drink. The plotlands were to prove very attractive to people living in the cramped slum conditions of London's East End and to soldiers returning from the First World War with gratuities to spend on housing within commuting distance of London. As a consequence of the unregulated nature of the developments there was little in the way of services, with the unmade roads degenerating into quagmires in the winter, and many of the houses built on them were little more than shacks, with limited access to sanitation, water or lighting. The high-point of plotland development came between the First and Second World Wars, with a major concentration in the Basildon area. A surviving plotland bungalow, The Haven at Dunton, forms the basis of the Plotland Museum.



Fig. 17 Reconstruction painting of a typical Basildon plotland scene by Frank Gardiner, showing the unmade road, and a mix of occupied and abandoned plots, and the homemade nature of the buildings

In the 1920s the explosives factory within the Wat Tyler Country Park was taken over by the Nobel Explosives Company, and protective blast barriers dating to this phase of use, can still be found scattered throughout the Park. During the Second World War the area of the Park was owned by the Ministry of Defence and buildings still survive now as evidence of a Naval Depot. The General Headquarters line, Britain's most important defensive line, began in the area of the Wat Tyler Country Park before running up through Basildon to Chelmsford and beyond. Evidence of the line can still be seen both in the park and along the line of the A130 in the form of pill boxes and anti-tank ditches and blocks. A large area of marshes to the east of Pitsea Creek was used as land-fill for London rubbish, this practice began during World War II.

Basildon was the largest of the Mark 1 New Towns created in the post-War period to absorb the expanding population of London. In 1949 the designated area covered 7,818 acres (3164 Hectares) and incorporated some 8,700 dwellings, of which 5,500 were considered to be substandard accommodation. The New Town was to incorporate the existing settlements of Laindon, Langdon Hills, Pitsea and Vange. Basildon's layout adheres closely to the ideals and principles of New Town planning. Industry is concentrated on the northern side of the town close to the A127 and the town centre is surrounded by self-contained residential neighbourhoods, most with their own shopping centre, church, primary school and playing-fields, linked by footpaths and cycleways to the town centre. The chief architect and planner for 1949-58 was Noel Tweddell, who had previously worked on the New Town at Harlow. The town centre was started in 1956, and despite some re-modelling, has retained much of its original conception of a pedestrian shopping precinct lying within an inner ring-road, with peripheral car-parks.



Fig. 18 Basildon Town centre c.1965

Modern Basildon Borough is now largely urban in character, being dominated by Basildon New Town, and the towns of Billericay and Wickford. However there are still extensive areas of open landscape. The northern part of the Borough is the most rural, and here the ancient rectilinear field pattern can still be discerned, albeit with superimposed areas of former plotlands and post-1950s field boundary loss. To the south of Basildon New Town are the Langdon Hills, still well wooded with a mix of

ancient woodland and secondary woodland on abandoned plotlands. The south-east corner of the Borough is still characterised by grazing marsh and former grazing marsh on the Thames flood-plain, much of which is now being taken into conservation ownership as part of the Thames Gateway initiative which will help conserve the remarkable historic and natural environment and provide a large area of publicly accessible green space.

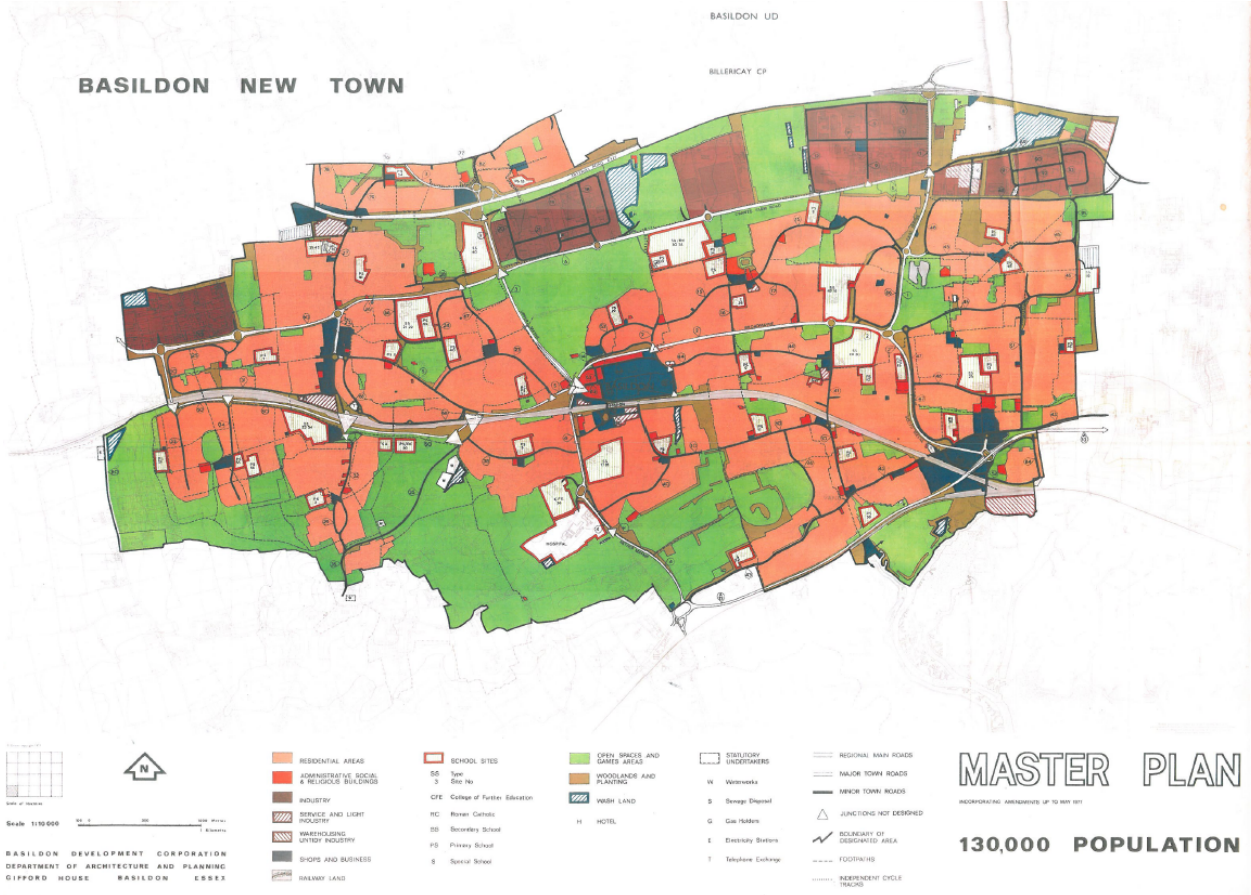


Fig. 19 Historic Basildon Master Plan

3 Characterisation of the Historic Environment

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 work undertaken for the other Historic Environment Characterisation Projects undertaken 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 Historic Environment Character Areas descriptions are presented within section 4 of this report.

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, varied subjects and style, the characterisation work undertaken for this and the previous projects is novel and challenging.

4 Historic Environment Character Area descriptions

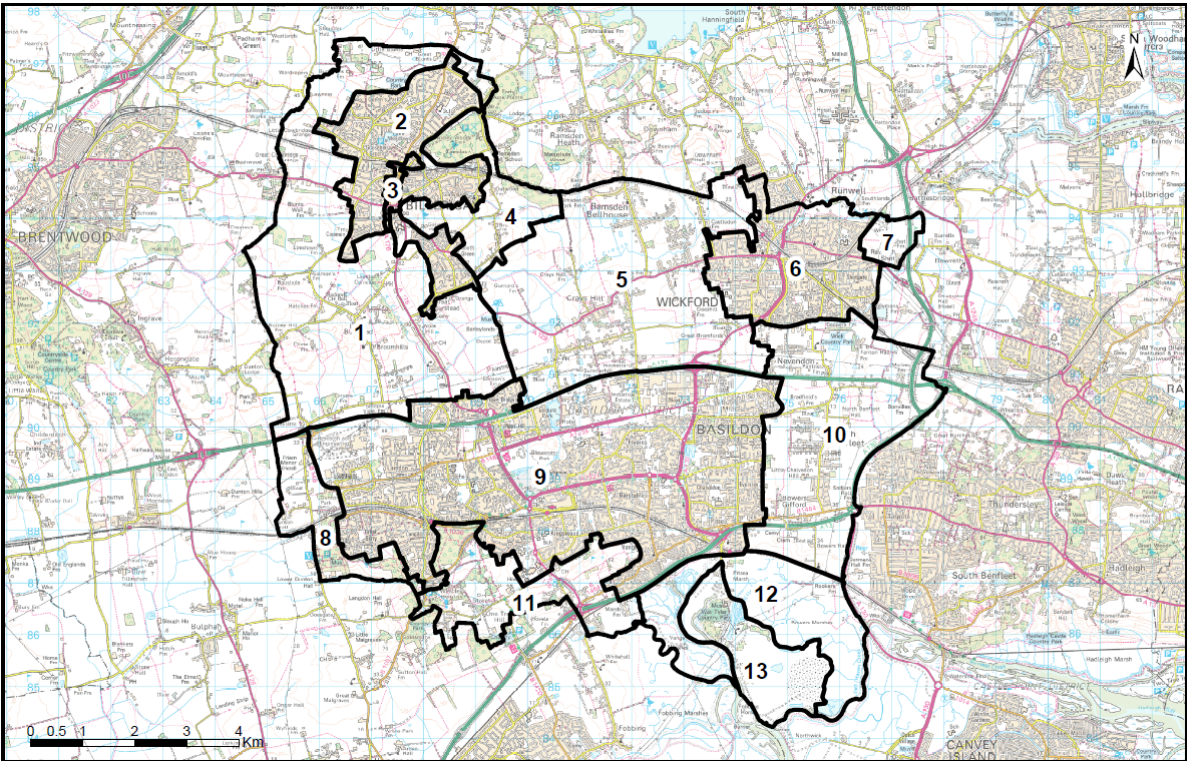


Fig. 20 Historic Environment Character Areas

4.1 HECA: 1 Little Burstead and The Land To The West Of Billericay

Summary

Predominately rural in character this area retains many of its historical landscape features relating to the rural environment especially ancient woodland sites. Medieval moated sites and other medieval and post-medieval settlement dominates the archaeological record for this area. The low levels of recorded archaeology reflect a lack of work and not necessarily a lack of archaeology.

Historic Landscape Character: This area has a gently undulating topography drained by small streams. The southern boundary drops into the valley of the River Crouch. Significant boundary loss has created large-scale fields, though many small discrete blocks of irregular and regular fields do still survive, these probably have their origins in the medieval period. There are a number of small blocks of woodland.

There are a number of areas of surviving common in the Little Burstead area, remnants of a once more extensive system. The historic settlement pattern was both sparse and very dispersed with church and hall complexes and scattered farmstead sites. This has been supplemented by linear roadside development and some plotland development particularly in the south and east.

Archaeological Context: This area of clay and other drift deposits forms a complex series of hill slopes incised with small river valleys with areas of ancient woodland. However there are a number of known archaeological sites, including cropmarks, largely of former field-boundaries, woodland banks associated with ancient woodland management and find-spots ranging in date from the prehistoric to the post-medieval period. The Roman and medieval periods are particularly well-represented in the archaeological record. There are a number of Listed Buildings within the area, largely comprising historic farms. The lack of extensive recent development has reduced opportunities for the identification of archaeological sites and deposits but the potential for the presence of archaeological remains is high.

4.2 HECA: 2 Modern Billericay

Summary

Twentieth century residential housing is the dominant characteristic for this area. The area includes the site of the Late Iron Age Roman settlement located under and around Billericay School.

Historic Urban Character: The area remained rural until the first half of the 20th century with the settlement pattern comprising dispersed farmsteads and cottages. Between 1920 and 1938 new streets and plotland style developments were constructed. These were incorporated into the post-War development of the area and the open areas infilled. The building stock largely comprises suburban two-storey detached or semi-detached houses and bungalows. There is a small industrial estate centred on Radford Way. There are a few areas of open space, largely comprising school playing-fields or recreation grounds.

Archaeological Context; The area includes a Late Iron Age and Roman settlement under what is now the Billericay School (HECZ 2.2). There are a number of other finds-spots from the remainder of the area that suggest occupation from the Palaeolithic period onwards. The medieval period is particularly well-represented in the finds record, and it is possible using this and the cartographic evidence to reconstruct a former landscape of isolated farms, cottages bordering the roads and greens, ancient woodland and small greens. Archaeological work has been confined to the area of the Roman settlement, largely in response to development pressures in the area in the 1970's. This has demonstrated the survival of archaeological features and finds within the built-up area.

4.3 HECA: 3 Historic Billericay

Summary

The historic core of Billericay forms the centre of this area, which lies within the Conservation area boundaries. The archaeology evidence for the area is predominately associated with the development of the town in the medieval and post-medieval periods.

Historic Urban Character : This area covers the historic core of Billericay. The area has retained its historic street pattern and much of its fabric, although modern development has taken place. This medieval and post-medieval urban centre of Billericay, focussed on the High Street and Chapel Street area. Within this area are a number of Listed Buildings, reflecting the towns Tudor and Georgian heydays. The medieval town appears to have its origins in the 13th century as an organic development on wasteland on the borders of the parishes of Great Burstead and Mountnessing. The street pattern still marks the original layout of the town, with the triangular area between the High Street and Chapel Street defining the original marketplace.

Archaeological Context : The known archaeology of the area is dominated by medieval and post-medieval settlement and archaeological finds and structures associated with the medieval town. A number of buildings are protected as listed structures within the town. A detailed assessment of the historic core was

undertaken as part of the Historic Town assessments of Essex (Medlycott 1999). Limited archaeological work has been completed within the town since this date.

4.4 HECA: 4 Rural Landscape to the East of Billericay

Summary

A large area of historic landscape comprised predominantly of irregular fields and woodland, together with the nationally important medieval deer park of Norsey Wood. Extensive archaeological remains are known to exist within Norsey Wood which is a Scheduled Monument.

Historic Landscape Character: A small area of rolling topography with many blocks of irregular fields and historic woodland. This area includes the important medieval deer-park of Norsey Wood, which contains a series of surviving earthworks as well as below-ground remains. The western edge of the park has been developed with a row of substantial houses with large gardens.

Archaeological Context : This area of clay and other drift deposits forms a complex series of hill slopes incised with small river valleys with large areas of ancient woodland. Evidence of Bronze Age occupation is present within Norsey Wood in the form of burial mounds. In the north of the area there was an Iron Age/Roman settlement and burial mounds, parts of which survive as earthworks within the medieval woodland and deer-park of Norsey Wood. The medieval woodland boundary survives as a substantial earthwork. Before the 1930s, these surrounded the whole wood. Today, owing to residential development along Norsey Road, which also destroyed one of the Bronze Age burial mounds, the Deer bank is fragmented. Little archaeological work has been undertaken on the remainder of the area.

4.5 HECA: 5 The Ramsdens

Summary

A largely rural area of gentle topography with a number of distinct blocks of former plotlands. The urban edge influences the character of the area. Medieval Moated

sites can be found in the area and represent an earlier pattern of dispersed settlement common to the period and region.

Historic Landscape Character : An area of gentle topography around the valley of the upper Crouch. There is a strong rectilinear pattern of field boundaries of medieval or earlier origin, the dominant grid for all the fieldscape is however broadly North to South with little woodland. The historic settlement pattern was dispersed with church and hall complexes, scattered farmsteads and moated sites. This pattern survives with the addition of areas of roadside settlement and blocks of former early 20th century plotlands. There are strong urban edge influences in many places.

Archaeological Context : Concentrations of archaeology have been identified in and around historic settlements and where archaeological fieldwork has taken place, as at the Nevendon Washland site in the south of the area which revealed occupation from the Mesolithic, Bronze Age and medieval periods. There is evidence for occupation of the area from the Palaeolithic period onwards, largely in the form of stray finds. Medieval moated sites are relatively common across the wider area and represent a pattern of dispersed settlement common to the period and region. The relatively low density of archaeological material in the rest of the area, are therefore thought to reflect a lack of fieldwork rather than necessarily a lack of archaeology. There are pockets of development in the area and these are likely to have damaged / truncated archaeological deposits.

4.6 HECA: 6 Wickford

Summary

The area encompasses the historic core of the town of Wickford and surrounding modern urban expansion. The historic core was always very small and little now survives. Findspots and a possible Roman villa indicate archaeological activity in the area from the prehistoric period onwards.

Historic Urban Character: This area encompasses the current town of Wickford, which broadly corresponds to the historic core of the town and the wider area of modern urban Wickford. There is also a zone of open space in the north-east of the

area comprising the Memorial Park. The historic core was always very small and the rural settlement pattern both sparse and highly dispersed. Consequently there are no significant concentrations of listed buildings or Conservation areas, reflecting the lack of a strong historic character. Nevertheless the historic road layout has been largely preserved, although the modern road network has altered the arrangement in places. Surrounding the core are large expanses of modern and post-World War II (WWII) housing development, which replaced large-scale informal "plot land" development prior to WWII. Some aspects of the street pattern of the pre-WWII layout have been retained. In addition there is modern industrial development alongside the railway.

Archaeological Context: There are frequent find spots of prehistoric, Roman and Saxon material with particular concentrations in the Beauchamps Farm area. Rescue excavations in the 1960s at Beauchamps Farm revealed Late Bronze Age activity as well as an extensive Iron Age, Roman and Saxon settlement site. The distribution of finds across the remainder of the area would suggest a widespread, if not particularly dense, pattern of settlement from the prehistoric period onwards. It is probable that the extensive urban development will have damaged or truncated archaeological deposits. There is the possibility however of surviving archaeology in the less built-up areas and in areas of open ground.

4.7 HECA: 7 Shotgate

Summary

A very small area in the north-east of the Borough, comprising the southern bank of the River Crouch. It links to wider areas across the boundary in Chelmsford and Rochford. The historic settlement comprised Shot Farm. Archaeological excavation and stray finds has established that the area has a rich history of occupation.

Historic Landscape Character: This small area comprises the gently sloping valley of the Crouch estuary. The co-axial, rectilinear field pattern is characteristic of south Essex and possibly Middle Saxon in origin. It has however had a degree of boundary loss, although the grid structure persists in the area on a broad north-south axis. The historic farmstead of Shot Farm was located in the centre of the area. The

area is crossed by the A130 and there are a number of small areas of modern development, including a sewage farm.

Archaeological Context: There is a large amount of archaeological information from this area, dating from the prehistoric to the post-medieval period. The Iron Age and Roman settlement at Beauchamps farm to the west of the zone is thought to extend into this zone and the development of the A130 by-pass revealed a 12-16th century farmstead at Shotgate Farm indicative of the dispersed settlement pattern of Basildon. Other stray finds include an urned cremation found during the construction of the sewage farm. There are small pockets of development in the area and these are likely to have damaged or truncated archaeological deposits, otherwise the area is archaeologically rich. There is the potential for palaeoenvironmental deposits associated with the River Crouch.

4.8 HECA: 8 Langdon Hills and west of Laindon

Summary

The area retains some of its historical features with much of the area's fieldscape being medieval or earlier in origin. Historically the settlement was both highly dispersed and rather sparse, there is however a church and hall complex at Dunton Hall. The Langdon Hills Nature Reserve, which comprises former plotlands, occupies the southern half of the area.

Historic Landscape Character: The land here rises to the south to the form the Langdon Hills, which are not in themselves very high (85m OD), but in contrast to the remainder of the local landscape form a conspicuous local landmark with extensive views out across the Thames estuary. The geology consists of a mix of head deposits and London Clay, with a small area of gravels on the very top of Langdon Hills. This area has a distinctive grid-like grain to its layout, derived from the medieval or earlier rectilinear co-axial field system typical of south Essex. Historically settlement was both sparse and highly dispersed. There was an area of early 20th century plotlands in the southern half of the area, it is now a nature reserve.

Archaeological Context: The church and hall complex at Dunton Hall is medieval in origin. There is otherwise little archaeological evidence from the area, but this is more probably a reflection of the absence of archaeological fieldwork rather than a true indicator of an absence of archaeology. The soil-type is conducive to the survival of faunal and ceramic remains, but not for the formation of cropmarks which are best seen on well drained soils.

4.9 HECA: 9 Basildon New Town

Summary

This area covers the Basildon New Town developed in the middle of the 20th century. The area contains a few historic buildings, largely consisting of church and hall complexes. Archaeological material is sparse and few sites have been identified. Roman and medieval material has been recovered which suggests that activity and occupation areas may lie in the vicinity.

Historic Urban Character: The area encompasses the bulk of Basildon New Town. It consists of a series of planned and interrelated post-WWII housing developments with two discrete areas of modern industrial/commercial development that supplanted the earlier rural and plot land landscape. The road network of the area is virtually all post-WWII in date, although a few roads do follow earlier alignments. The development of the area resulted in the virtual eradication of the all pre-existing buildings, although one or two historic buildings survive that make the location of former farmsteads or moated sites. One area, Noak Bridge, has been partially designated as a Conservation area despite its recent age, due to its particular character. The retail and civic core of Basildon dates from the mid 20th century. To the west of the area there are two discrete areas of residential development broadly representing the surviving extent of the pre-WWII development of Laindon. The linear nature and form of the housing is in contrast to the more irregular form of the later New Town.

Archaeological Context: Most of the area is situated on an undulating area of clay deposits with small areas of head, steep slopes to the south, which developed in the late 20th century through Basildon's growth as a New Town. Few archaeological

sites have been identified in the area, possibly reflecting the lack of archaeological work that accompanied the early development of the New Town. However, Roman remains have been identified in the area, perhaps indicating exploitation of the area during that time. The new town includes a number of Medieval church and hall complexes, the name of which are still evident in the various neighbourhood areas, and some elements of the extensive early 20th century plot land.

4.10 HECA: 10 North Benfleet and Bowers Gifford

Summary

A large rural landscape on the urban edge, containing several major road corridors running both North-South and East-West, and an East-West railway line. The area is well settled, with scattered farmhouses, localised plotland development and roadside settlement. Earlier settlement of the zone is represented by a number of moated sites and the historic settlement of Bowers Gifford. The zone contains few known archaeological sites, which probably reflects a lack of archaeological investigation rather than a known absence of archaeology.

Historic Landscape Character: This is a large area of urban edge landscape, containing several large-scale modern road corridors running both N-S and E-W, and an E-W railway line. Several lines of power pylons ‘march’ across the landscape in all directions. Historically the settlement was sparse and highly dispersed, set within a rectilinear field system of ancient origin, possibly Middle Saxon, origin. The exception to this was a small area of roadside settlement at Bowers Gifford. The area includes remnants of pre-WWII plotland developments at North Benfleet and Nevendon. This type of settlement was once a characteristic feature of this part of Essex, but has now been largely superseded elsewhere by modern housing developments. The alignment of earlier field boundaries survive within the plotland layout.

Archaeological Character: A wide, generally flat, plain, the geology largely consists of London Clay, overlain in places by head deposits. The clay land is unconducive to cropmark formation. Excavations along the eastern boundary of the area in advance of the construction of the new A130 have demonstrated settlement of the area from

the Bronze Age onwards. North Benfleet was a Saxon Royal Vill as identified in the Domesday Book. In addition, the remainder of the area has a number of findspots and archaeological sites of prehistoric, Romano-British and medieval date, including moated sites. Together these demonstrate the archaeological potential of the area. There are also the remains of a series of WWII pillboxes (of different types), anti-tank ditch and other military structures such as anti tank blocks and road barriers which would have formed part of the overall General Headquarters Line of defence. The relative sparseness of the archaeological record reflects a lack of fieldwork in the area rather than necessarily a lack of archaeology. Some of the modern development in the area is likely to have damaged or truncated archaeological deposits, however there are significant areas of open ground where archaeology can be anticipated to have survived.

4.11 HECA: 11 Westley Heights To Vange Area

Summary

The area has rounded sand and gravel hills and ridges that create a varied topography that rises steeply to the Westley Heights. The area has a varied and complex character and morphology reflecting the complex history of human interaction within the area. There is evidence of Medieval and Post Medieval exploitation and earlier prehistoric sites including earthworks.

Historic Landscape Character: The rounded sand and gravel hills and ridges create a varied topography that rises steeply to Westley Heights. There is a strong leisure use, with the Langdon Hills Country Park and Marks Hill Nature Reserve. The area is well wooded, with both ancient woodland and secondary wood developed on abandoned plotland. There is a strong surviving patchwork of pasture field bounded by thick hedgerows. The relatively dense settlement pattern appears to have been one of medieval dispersed farmsteads, supplemented by plotland development set in blocks around the hillside. Discrete areas of both regular and irregular fields of historic origins survive between the settlement and woodland. The area has a varied and complex character and morphology, reflecting human interaction with a topography that differs significantly to that of the flatter plain to the north and the marshes to the south.

Archaeological Character: The topographic form of the area, with its distinctive hill-top location overlooking the surrounding lowlands, is likely to have attracted a variety of uses and activities through prehistory and history. Only a few archaeological sites have been identified in the area, which is, however, a reflection of low levels of development and modern archaeological investigation rather than an absence of archaeology.

4.12 HECA: 12 The Marshes

Summary

This large area of present and former historic grazing marsh, creek and inter-tidal mud lies on the northern bank of the Thames. It contains significant archaeological/palaeo-environmental deposits both within the marsh and in the intertidal zone of the creeks and estuaries.

Historic Landscape Character: It is an area of grazing marsh, divided into blocks of regular and irregular fields. The fields are bounded by drains and interspersed with several marshy creeks, the boundaries are mainly of medieval/post medieval origin resulting from the creation of grazing marsh, some elements of the earlier salt marsh can be discerned such as old creeks. There are a wide range of archaeological features including earthwork counter walls, and flood defences. Significant areas of this zone are being incorporated into the new RSPB reserve developed in south Essex as part of the Thames Gateway initiative. Settlement, which is very sparse, is confined largely to the marsh edge.

Archaeological Character: The underlying bedrock of the area, mostly deeply buried by alluvium, consists mainly of London Clay. These are overlain by Holocene beach and tidal flat deposits. This area of present and former grazing marsh contains significant archaeological / palaeo-environmental deposits. Detailed survey work has been undertaken to inform the creation of RSPB reserves. These have established the presence of post-medieval farmsteads and associated cultivation earthworks, livestock enclosures and several phases of embankment. Excavation and field survey has also established the presence of Late Iron Age and Roman Red

Hills and other mounds that maybe associated with salt production as well as medieval activity along the marsh edge. Anti-glider ditches dating to World War II criss-cross the marshes.

4.13 HECA: 13 Wat Tyler Country Park And Pitsea Landfill

Summary

This area of former grazing marsh has been extensively redeveloped and landscaped. The northern half of the area comprises the London Clay island known as Pitsea Hall Island, which became the site of a cordite and explosives factory in the late 19th century (now Wat Tyler Country Park). To the south of this 20th century land-fill may have sealed archaeological/ palaeo-environmental deposits below the then ground surface, but may have also involved significant ground disturbance, truncating deposits.

Historic Landscape Character: The northern part of this area comprised a natural island of London Clay, flanked by extensive marshes to the west and south. The island served as a focus for activity, most particularly in the 19th and 20th centuries when it became the site of an explosives factory, and then part of the WWII GHQ defence line. There are extensive remains relating to this industrial and military past surviving within the secondary scrub woodland that now covers much of the island. The island is now Wat Tyler County Park, and there is an active management programme in place to preserve and enhance the historic and natural landscape of the site. The former marshes to the south and west were used as land-fill sites and any evidence relating to former landscape uses, such as sea-walls, field boundaries and oyster-pits are now largely lost or buried.

Archaeological Character: An area of former historic grazing marsh. Pitsea Hall Island (now Wat Tyler Country Park) is a raised area of London clay within the marsh, bounded by Pitseahall Fleet and Timberman's Creek. As a slightly higher area of land within the encircling marsh it is likely that it would have formed the focus for both prehistoric and historic activity within the area. In the late 19th century a cordite and explosive's factory was constructed here, extensive remains of which still

survive within the secondary woodland and scrub that largely covers the site. The area then became part of the World War II GHQ defence line, and there are a number of surviving pill-boxes relating to this period. The surrounding grazing-marsh has been used as a tip for domestic and trade refuse in the late 20th century. This may have sealed archaeological/palaeo-environmental deposits below the then ground surface, although the tipping may have also involved significant ground disturbance, truncating deposits. Furthermore there is potential for buried environmental deposits and remains associated with the use of the creeks and fleets, these include a number of World War I gunpowder hulks (Obsolete ship used for storage of gunpowder).

5 Creation of Historic Environment Character Zones

5.1 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 Basildon.

5.2 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.

5.3 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.

5.3.1 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

5.3.2 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.

5.3.3 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.

5.3.4 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.

5.3.5 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.

5.3.6 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.

5.3.7 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, military and industrial sites 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.

6 Basildon Historic Environment Characterisation Zones

6.1 Historic Environment Area 1: Little Burstead and the Land to the West of Billericay

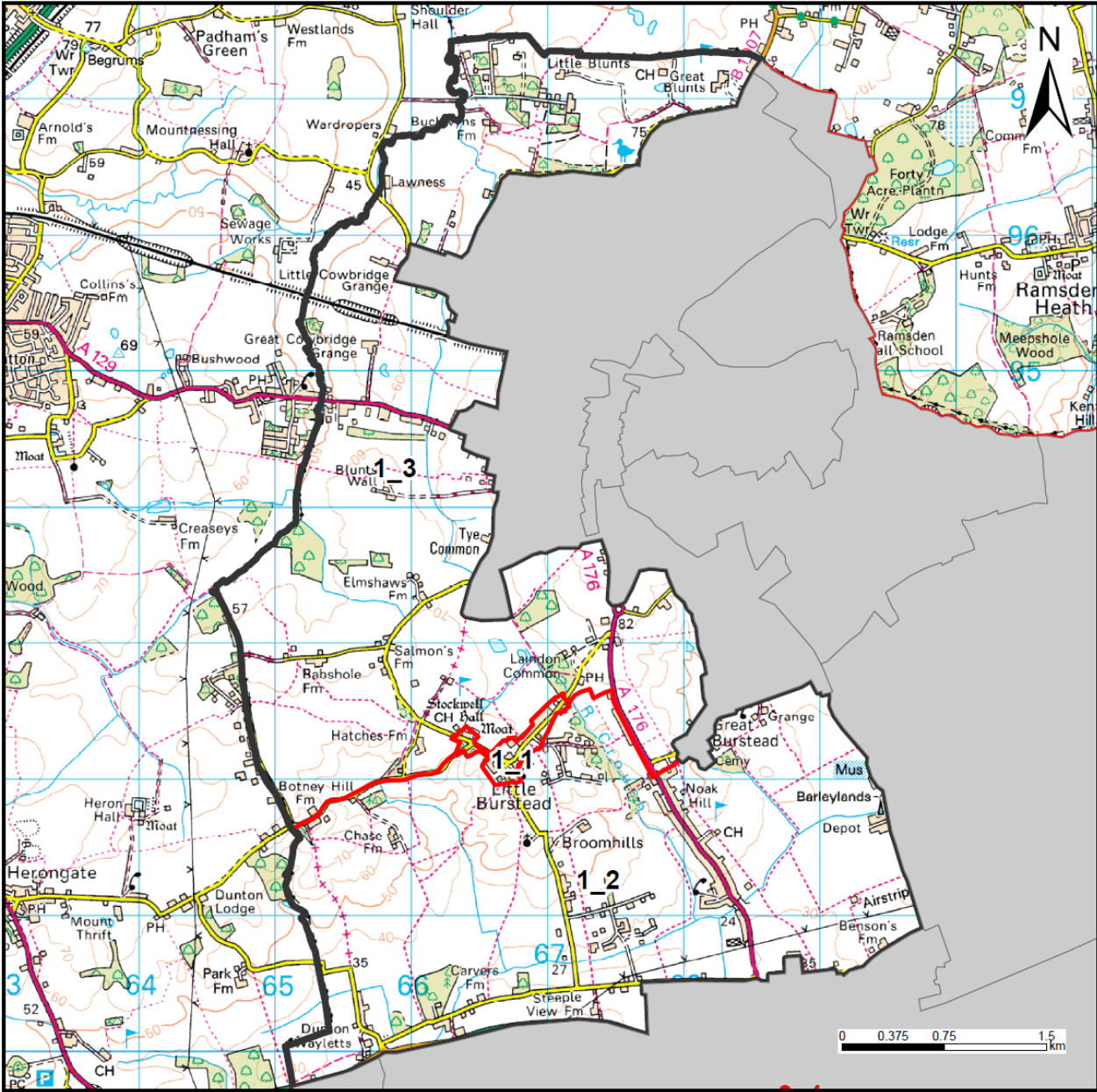


Fig. 21 Historic Environment Character Area 1 showing division into zones

HECZ 1.1 Little Burstead Conservation Area

Summary:

The zone comprises the conservation area around the settlement core of Little Burstead which is located at an ancient road junction with occupation dating from the medieval period.

Historic Landscape Character: The zone follows the boundary of the conservation area which contains 4 Listed Buildings including a Listed K6 telephone kiosk. The settlement of Little Burstead is shown on the Chapman and André map (1777) as a small cluster of dwellings at a road junction, only limited infilling has occurred within the zone. The settlement probably originated as a small group of farmsteads around the crossroads, a small focal point in a wider pattern of dispersed settlement. The church and hall complex is located to the south of the present village, at the Church of St. Mary (in HECZ 1.2), forming another focal point.

Archaeological character: The zone is characterised by settlement dating from the medieval period. Within the conservation area two moats survive, important elements in the early settlement pattern. Building recording at Jacksons Farm has identified a 15th century in-line hall house subsumed within a later structure. Although little archaeological work has been undertaken within the zone, there is clearly the potential for occupation deposits from at least the medieval period and probably earlier. The geology of this zone comprises clay with patches of head deposits and is conducive to the survival of faunal and ceramic remains.

• Diversity of known historic environment assets	Listed buildings, moated sites, other non-listed structures	2
• Survival	High potential for survival, little modern disturbance or development	3
• Documentation	Cartographic evidence, and HER	1
• Group Value Association	Historic buildings, moated sites, forming a small focal point in a wider pattern of dispersed settlement.	2
• Potential	Below ground archaeological deposits representing, Medieval and post medieval occupation	2
• Sensitivity to change	Zone highly sensitive	3
• Amenity Value	History of conservation area, moated sites etc have the potential to be promoted	2

HECZ 1.2 South of Little Burstead

Summary:

The zone comprise a rectilinear field system and occasional small areas of woodland. A church and hall complex lies in the centre of the zone with other individual farmstead part of a historic pattern of dispersed settlement. There was early 20th century plotland development within the rectilinear field system.

Historic Landscape Character: The topography is one of undulating hills, which slope south down to the headwaters of the river Crouch. The Ordnance Survey 1st Edition (1881) shows a rectilinear field system typical of south Essex and of ancient, possibly middle Saxon, origin. There are occasional small areas of woodland, some of which are ancient. Although there has been late 20th century boundary loss, the general rectilinear grain to the field-system still survives. The church of St Mary's, the present building dating from the 12th century, developed as a church and hall

complex together with Broomhills, which lies to the east of the church. Plotland development took place in the years between 1920 and the Second World War, particularly along Noak Hill Road and Rectory Road. These form the basis of the modern settlement of Noak Hill.

Archaeological Character: Prehistoric material including a flint axe has been recovered from the zone indicating early prehistoric occupation in the area. Occupation of Roman date is attested by Roman building material reused within the structure of the 12th century church and by chance finds made in the fields around the church. Roman occupation is also indicated by a possible cemetery to the south of Broomhills where a burial urn has been recorded. Saxon pottery has been found during investigations close to the church. The zone was occupied throughout the medieval period with a dispersed settlement pattern comprising a church/hall complex and dispersed farmsteads. There are probably below ground archaeological remains relating to this dispersed settlement pattern. The geology comprises a mix of head deposits on the higher ground, overlying claygate beds and London Clay, with alluvial deposits in the floor of the Crouch valley. It is conducive to the survival of faunal and ceramic remains, and there is the potential for palaeoenvironmental evidence in the alluvial deposits.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Range of archaeological deposits from the prehistoric period. Surviving medieval church and hall complex. Surviving historic landscape	2
• Survival	Survival of church and hall complex and historic landscape	2
• Documentation	HER data, historic maps and archaeological finds.	2
• Group Value Association	Despite some 20 th century boundary loss, the historic field system and settlement pattern is well preserved containing an area of plotland development.	3
• Potential	High potential for surviving below ground deposits	2
• Sensitivity to change	The overall historic landscape pattern and particular landscape features sensitive to change, any below ground archaeological deposits will also be sensitive	2
• Amenity Value	Potential for exploring and explaining the historic settlement pattern and field system in conjunction with HECZ 1.1	2

HECZ 1.3 West of Billericay

Summary:

A large zone on the western side of Billericay, comprising a well preserved historic landscape. The evidence for earlier occupation is highlighted by the many Iron Age and Roman artifacts found. During the medieval and post-medieval period the settlement pattern within the zone comprised dispersed farmsteads and moats.

Historic Landscape Character: The topography is relatively flat dissected by the gently sloping valleys of the River Wid and one its tributary streams. A large zone comprising an irregular field pattern to the south and west of Billericay is shown on the OS 1st edition giving way to a more regular coaxial pattern to the east and north of the zone, both of these are of medieval or earlier origin. The overall grain of this pattern survives, although there has been considerable field boundary loss throughout the zone. The historic settlement pattern comprises dispersed farmsteads. Areas of ancient woodland and commons, including Laindon Common, survive within the zone.

Archaeological Character: Despite the fact that little archaeological work has been undertaken due to the low levels of modern development in the zone there is a wide range of archaeological evidence. Throughout the zone there are records of Late Iron Age and Romano-British finds which almost certainly relate to rural settlements of those dates. Earthworks in Bluntshall Wood may be Roman in origin but are more likely to be associated with medieval woodland management. The zone contains a dispersed medieval settlement pattern and there may well be below-ground archaeological remains associated with that. A post-medieval pottery kiln site also lies to the south of Billericay School, this seems to have been a branch of the pottery industry at Stock. A series of enclosures are recorded from aerial photographic evidence. Although difficult to date these are possibly of Iron Age origin. After the Second World War a Cold War anti-aircraft site was constructed at Elmshaws Farm. The geology is a complex mix of boulder clay, claygate beds and London Clay, with alluvial deposits in the valley floor of the Wid. It is conducive to the survival of faunal and ceramic remains, and there is the potential for palaeoenvironmental evidence to survive in the alluvial deposits.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Finds of multi-period date, settlement pattern, landscape features, archaeological sites and deposits	3
• Survival	Survival of below ground deposits likely to be good. Dispersed settlement pattern survives well. Historic field pattern suffered considerable boundary loss	2
• Documentation	HER data, historic maps	2
• Group Value Association	Dispersed settlement pattern, and historic landscape including Ancient woodland,	2
• Potential	Good potential for surviving below ground archaeological deposits throughout the zone	2
• Sensitivity to change	Landscape and below ground deposits sensitive to change	2
• Amenity Value	Potential for exploring and explaining the historic settlement pattern and field system in conjunction with HECZ 1.1 and other neighbouring zones	2

6.2 Historic Environment Area 2: Modern Billericay



Fig. 22 Historic Environment Character Area 2 showing division into zones

HECZ 2.1 Modern residential development on the western side of Billericay

Summary

This zone comprises the modern housing estates on the western side of Billericay. This zone formerly comprised a mix of farmland, small woods and Tye Common. The common had been largely built-on by the mid to late 19th century. The railway was constructed through this zone at the end of the 19th century. No significant further development took place until the early-mid 20th century when plotland

development took place in the areas of Queen Park and Western Road. The zone did not become fully built-up until the later 20th century.

Historic Urban Character: This zone comprises modern development on the western side of historic Billericay. No urban development took place in this zone until the early-mid 20th century when the Western Road and Queen Park areas were subdivided into plotlands. However, even these areas did not become fully built-up until the later 20th century. The modern street pattern in the Western Road area still retains part of its original plotland layout, but that of the Queen Park area has been obliterated under the late 20th century housing estate. Several phases of housing estate are present in this zone, dating from the 1960/70s and the 1980/90s. Lake Meadows recreation ground forms an important open area within this otherwise densely settled landscape. There are two Listed Buildings, Hill House and Hill House Cottages, both located on Stock Road close to the historic urban core of Billericay.

Archaeological Character: No below-ground archaeological work has been undertaken within the zone. The only archaeological remains recorded from the area are industrial in nature, comprising the Marconi Electrical Engineering Works at Gooseberry Green and an adjoining quarry. There are however a number of find-spots dating from the Iron Age, Roman and medieval periods. Cartographic evidence suggest, in common with most of the neighbouring zones, suggest a settled landscape of dispersed farms and isolated cottages, this settlement pattern together with Tye Common and a number of small woods are probably of medieval origin. The rectilinear field-system which used to predominate here may have had its origins in the middle Saxon period. The paucity of known archaeological sites is thus more a reflection of absence of field-work than an absence of archaeology. The geology comprises claygate beds and London Clay, with patches of sands and gravels along the eastern boundary of the zone. The clay soils are conducive to good faunal and ceramic survival.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Limited to plotlands	1
• Survival	Modern disturbance has resulted in minimal survival	1
• Documentation	Limited	1
• Group Value Association	No Group Value	1
• Potential	Limited due to modern development	1
• Sensitivity to change	Limited sensitivity	1
• Amenity Value	None	1

HECZ 2.2 Roman Billericay

Summary

This zone comprises the area of the Late Iron Age and Roman settlement of Billericay. A large part of the zone was developed for residential and educational use in the early 1970s leading to a series of rescue excavations by the Billericay Archaeological and Historical Society.

Historic Urban Character: This zone is located at the end of a low ridge of gravels commanding views across the Crouch valley. The current built-up area is late 20th century in origin. Noak Hill Road, Bell Hill housing estate and much of Billericay School all date to the 1970s. Large parts of the zone from the school southwards remain undeveloped with a field pattern of irregular enclosure, probably of ancient origin, largely situated between two modern roads. It is not clear whether the Roman settlement at Billericay was urban in character, current thinking tends towards an interpretation of it as a sprawling village-type settlement. Following the Roman period, the area then reverted to farmland with only a few scattered cottages and a post mill spread out along the roads, a dispersed pattern typical of the historic character of settlement in much of Basildon Borough.

Archaeological character: Roman material has been recovered from an area of c. 8 ha. to the south of the modern town. The rescue excavations in advance of construction in and around Billericay School in the 1970s revealed Late Iron Age and Roman settlement, on both sides of a Roman road that curved east-west to the south

of the school. The settlement probably originated as a ditched enclosure of Late Iron Age date and grew into a village, in the Roman period. It appears to have been centred on the point where the east-west Roman road crossed the ridge. There is some suggestion that there was a second routeway which ran north-south, to the west of the school. The settlement evidence included features such as pits and gullies, two corn-dryers, a possible pond and cremations. Cobbled areas which adjoined the road may be Roman house sites. There are antiquarian reports of two possible masonry structures, one with a cement floor and one with a hypocaust, to the north of the school.

Cremation burials were found throughout the area, but the main cemetery focus appears to have been around the edges of the settlement, to the north-east and south. The burials to the north-east at Windmill Hill are reported as being grouped in threes or fours, suggesting family groupings within the cemetery itself, one cemetery to the south may have been enclosed. Other features include post-holes, gullies, ditches and gravel spreads, and it is probable that some of these at least represent timber dwellings. Two, possibly three, pottery kilns and two corn-dryers have been found, in the grounds of the present school providing evidence for the local economy.

There has been a degree of disturbance to the archaeological deposits, due both to the modern developments in the area and to piecemeal 18th century gravel and brickearth extraction. Excavation has however established that areas of undisturbed archaeology survive, particularly in the area of the school playing-fields and farm.

A Historic Town Assessment Report has been prepared for Billericay Historic Town (Medlycott 1999), which includes an account.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Range of archaeological elements relating to the Roman settlement	2
• Survival	There is potential for survival of below ground deposits relating to the Roman town especially in the area of the Billericay school and to the south of the school	2
• Documentation	HER data, Historic town assessment, excavation data and published reports	3
• Group Value Association	Range of assets associated with the Roman settlement	3
• Potential	High potential for surviving deposits in undeveloped areas including gardens, playing-fields and fields to the south of built up area	2
• Sensitivity to change	Archaeological deposits sensitive to change.	3
• Amenity Value	Potential for interpretation and promotion of the Roman settlement	2

HECZ 2.3 Modern development on the eastern side of Billericay

Summary

This zone comprises the modern housing estates on the eastern side of Billericay, it formerly comprised farmland and the open area of Outwood Common. No significant housing development took place until the first half of the 20th century when the Sunnymede area was sub-divided into streets and housing. The zone did not become fully built-up until the later 20th century.

Historic Urban Character: This zone comprises modern development on the eastern side of historic Billericay. The Chapman and André map of 1777 depicts Outwood Common, as well as a small hamlet at Outwood Farm. The common had been largely enclosed by the mid to late 19th century. The railway was constructed through this zone at the end of the 19th century. No urban development took place in this area until the mid 20th century when the Sunnymede area was sub-divided into streets and housing, possibly plotland in character. However unlike the classic

plotland developments to the south, the existing irregular field-pattern imposed an irregular plan on the street layout, possibly caused by the development of the area on a field by field basis. The zone did not become fully built-up until the later 20th century, the later developments paid no attention to the underlying field-pattern. The modern street pattern in the Sunnymede area retains its original layout. There is one Listed Building, the 17th century Hurlocks Farmhouse and other unlisted structures that were present on the Chapman and Andre maps of 1777.

Archaeological Character: No archaeological fieldwork has been undertaken within the zone and only a few archaeological find-spots are recorded from the area, these include a pair of prehistoric flint knives, possibly Palaeolithic in date. This scarcity of archaeological evidence is more a reflection of absence of field-work than absence of archaeology. There are numerous Late Iron Age and Roman finds from Norsey Wood immediately to the north and it is probable that the activity represented there extended into this zone. The geology consists of Claygate Beds, London Clay, with head deposits in the valley of a tributary of the Crouch. The geology is conducive to the good survival of faunal and ceramic remains.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Very limited, some Late Iron Age and Roman to the north	1
• Survival	Large parts of the zone destroyed by modern housing. However potential survival on the northern edge	2
• Documentation	Very limited documentation	1
• Group Value Association	Minimal group value	1
• Potential	Some potential in the undeveloped northern part of the zone	2
• Sensitivity to change	Some sensitivity in the undeveloped northern part of the zone	1
• Amenity Value	Very limited as little work has been undertaken in the zone	1

HECZ 2.4 Modern South Green

Summary

This zone comprises the modern settlement of South Green, and was formerly a large rectangular green with a scattering of properties along its edges, surrounded by farmland. The zone did not become fully built-up until the later part of the 20th century.

Historic Urban Character: This zone comprises the modern residential development of South Green, consisting of a later 20th century housing estate. The Chapman and André map of 1777 depicts the green and cottages, as well as the small hamlet of Slicesgate or 'Slysted Street' and the Slysted Turnpike which was located at the southern end of the green. The green had been subdivided into rectangular fields and house-plots by the mid to late 19th century. Further buildings were added during the first half of the 20th century, both in the green area and as ribbon development along Kennel Lane. Neither the original green-edge or the field boundaries can be discerned within the late 20th century housing development. There are a number of Listed Buildings surviving within the urban area, which date to the 18th century.

Archaeological character: No below-ground archaeological work has been undertaken within the zone, although there is one Roman find-spot. The geology is a mix of London Clays and Claygate Beds. A thematic survey of milestones (Pratt 2002) and boundary stones in Essex has identified a number of examples within South Green, relating to the turnpike road, now a single mile stone survives in the north of the zone. The paucity of archaeological remains is more reflective of the absence of archaeological fieldwork than an absence of archaeological sites and deposits. However, modern development has probably destroyed any archaeology that survived.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Limited diversity due to development	1
• Survival	Limited survival in gardens and open areas	1
• Documentation	Survey of milestones and boundary stones, HER	1
• Group Value Association	Milestones	1
• Potential	Very limited potential due to modern development	1
• Sensitivity to change	Modern development has resulted in minimal sensitivity	1
• Amenity Value	Limited, the former nature of the historic landscape could be explored and explained in conjunction with neighbouring zones within HECA 2	2

HECZ 2.5 Great Burstead

Summary

This very small zone comprises the Conservation Area of Great Burstead. Historic Great Burstead consists of the Listed Grade I Church of St. Mary Magdalene and a cluster of weather-boarded cottages, the vicarage and Well Farm. This zone has a high potential for surviving archaeological deposits of medieval and later date.

Historic Urban Character: This zone comprises the historic settlement and conservation area of Great Burstead, a small cluster of weather-boarded buildings and cottages which formed a small nucleated settlement around the Grade I listed church of St. Mary Magdalene, in an otherwise dispersed settlement pattern. The earliest part of the present church dates to the 11th century, whilst the other Listed Buildings are 16th or 17th century in origin, the extent of the nucleated settlement is shown on the Chapman and Andre map of 1777.



Fig.23 Church of St Mary Magdalene at Great Burstead

Archaeological character: No archaeological fieldwork has been undertaken within the zone, however features and deposits relating to the development of the medieval and post-medieval settlement can be anticipated to survive. The present Church of St. Mary Magdalene is 11th century in origin. The soil-types, comprising London Clay and Claygate Beds are conducive to good faunal and ceramic survival.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Range of historic buildings, the church and probable below-ground archaeological deposits	3
• Survival	Survival in gardens and open areas, built environment survives well	3
• Documentation	Limited information available	1
• Group Value Association	Conservation Area	3
• Potential	High potential for below-ground relating to the development of the historic settlement	3
• Sensitivity to change	Highly sensitive to change both below and above ground	3
• Amenity Value	Visually appealing with good historic character, good potential to explore and explain the historic environment of this zone in conjunction with neighbouring zones within HECA 2	3

6.3 Historic Environment Character Area 3: Historic Billericay



Fig.24 Historic Environment Character Area 3 showing division into zones

HECZ 3.1 Historic Core of Billericay

Summary

This zone comprises the medieval and post-medieval historic core of Billericay. The basic framework of the medieval built-up area was created in the 13th century, the medieval town developed along the present High Street. The historic core is now a Conservation Area.

Historic Urban Character: Medieval Billericay was a thirteenth century creation of the monks of Stratford Langthorne Abbey. The name itself is not recorded until 1291, although there may well have been a market on the site since 1253. Billericay was built on waste-land, where the Mountnessing and Great Burstead parish boundaries met and included parts of several manors. In 1345 a chapel was built in Billericay, and subsequently the area belonging to Mountnessing parish within the town was transferred to Great Burstead parish so that the Mountnessing parishioners could attend the chapel.

The parochial division down the High Street between Mountnessing and Great Burstead parishes helps explain the town's medieval topography. The town occupied the area between the junction of Western road and Norsey Road with the High Street and the curve in the High Street opposite the Red Lion Inn. Two distinct morphological units can be identified; the eastern High Street/Chapel Street block and the western High Street/ Western Road block. The oldest buildings are all on the western side of the High Street and it is suggested that this is the original settlement. With Western Road (formerly Back Street) formed a tangential back lane to the properties fronting the High Street. The market place would have been sited in what is now the eastern High Street/Chapel Street block, with the Chapel sited at its northern limit and Chapel Street forming its eastern boundary. The oldest house on the eastern side of the High Street is 16th century, suggesting that the infilling of the market place had begun by then. The infilled area shows an element in planning in the organisation of regular strips of varying sizes. The post-medieval built-up area consisted of ribbon development and infilling along the existing medieval streets. The town extended as far south as the Sun Street junction; Sun Street itself is a 19th

century addition, the row of artisans cottages along the northern side of it date to that period.



Fig.25 6-10 Norsey Road, Billericay (in-line Hall)

The two most prosperous periods of Billericay's past, the Tudor and Georgian periods, are well represented in the surviving buildings. The buildings dating to before the 18th century are all timber-framed, some with later brick facades. The 18th and 19th century buildings are largely of brick construction. A few of the buildings are of particular interest in themselves: St. Mary Magdalene Church (on the site of Billericay Chapel) is the only major 15th century brick church in the county, unusually its late 18th century interior has survived virtually intact. The Red Lion has a remarkable late 15th century roof of non-vernacular character, this may have been built by a 'church carpenter', suggesting a high status owner.

The historic core is now a Conservation Area, there are 35 Listed Buildings in the conservation area as well as a number of protected trees and a Listed telephone box.

Archaeological character: Fieldwork undertaken within the medieval town has largely proved disappointing to date, principally because the areas of development has led to a concentration of archaeological investigation on the areas to the rear of properties rather than the street frontage. However features and deposits relating to the historic development of the urban area can be anticipated within this zone. The geology comprises sands and gravels.

A Historic Town Assessment has been prepared for Billericay Historic Town (Medlycott 1999).

• Diversity of historic environment assets	At present largely comprises the historic street pattern and built heritage, with a range of buildings of various dates	2
• Survival	Historic built environment survives well and there is potential for survival of below ground deposits	2
• Documentation	HER data, Historic town assessment, excavation data	3
• Group Value Association	Historic buildings, street layout and potential archaeological deposits	3
• Potential	Potential for surviving deposits in undeveloped areas including gardens and yard areas	2
• Sensitivity to change	Historic built environment and archaeological deposits sensitive to change	3
• Amenity Value	Historic identity of this zone has a high promotional value. Good potential for interpretation and promotion of the below ground and built heritage which will help explain the evolution of the town	3

HECZ 3.2 Billericay Hospital Area

Summary

During the late 19th century and 20th century urban expansion occurred with the initial development of the Workhouse and railway station. The zone contains a number of records of Late Iron Age and Roman finds, indicative of settlement. .

Historic Urban Character: The urban character of this area has its origins in the late 19th century with the construction of the Billericay Union Workhouse, now Billericay Hospital (Listed Grade II) and Billericay railway and station. The workhouse was erected in c.1840 to plans by George Gilbert Scott, following an Elizabethan-Tudor style. All of the unlisted elements of the hospital were recorded prior to their demolition and development as a modern residential estate with the workhouse converted to apartments. The coming of the railway in 1889 placing Billericay on the line between London and Southend-on-Sea increased the town's importance, the station is still predominately 19th century in date. The remainder of the area was largely under allotment gardens until the second half of the 20th century. It now comprises the hospital, station, modern housing-estate and a nursery-garden.

Archaeological character: Late Iron Age and Roman material has been recovered from the zone. This included a series of cremations and a pottery kiln from the vicinity of the hospital and Roman material from the railway cutting. There has been a considerable degree of disturbance to the archaeological deposits, due both to the 19th century and modern development of the area and to piecemeal 18th century gravel and brickearth extraction.

This zone was included in the Historic Town Assessment for Billericay (Medlycott 1999).

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Diversity of historic environment assets 	Range of built heritage related to the hospital/workhouse, Roman and Iron Age occupation in the form of burials and industrial occupation	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survival 	There is limited potential for survival of below ground deposits in undeveloped areas	2

• Documentation	Industrial survey reports, excavation data, historic town report	3
• Group Value Association	Hospital and railway buildings	2
• Potential	Potential for surviving deposits in undeveloped areas including gardens	2
• Sensitivity to change	Archaeological deposits sensitive to change, and surviving historic elements of the hospital and station	1
• Amenity Value	Potential for interpretation and promotion of the industrial heritage of the zone and the below ground heritage in association with the Roman town to the south	2

6.4 Historic Environment Character Area 4: Rural landscape to the East of Billericay

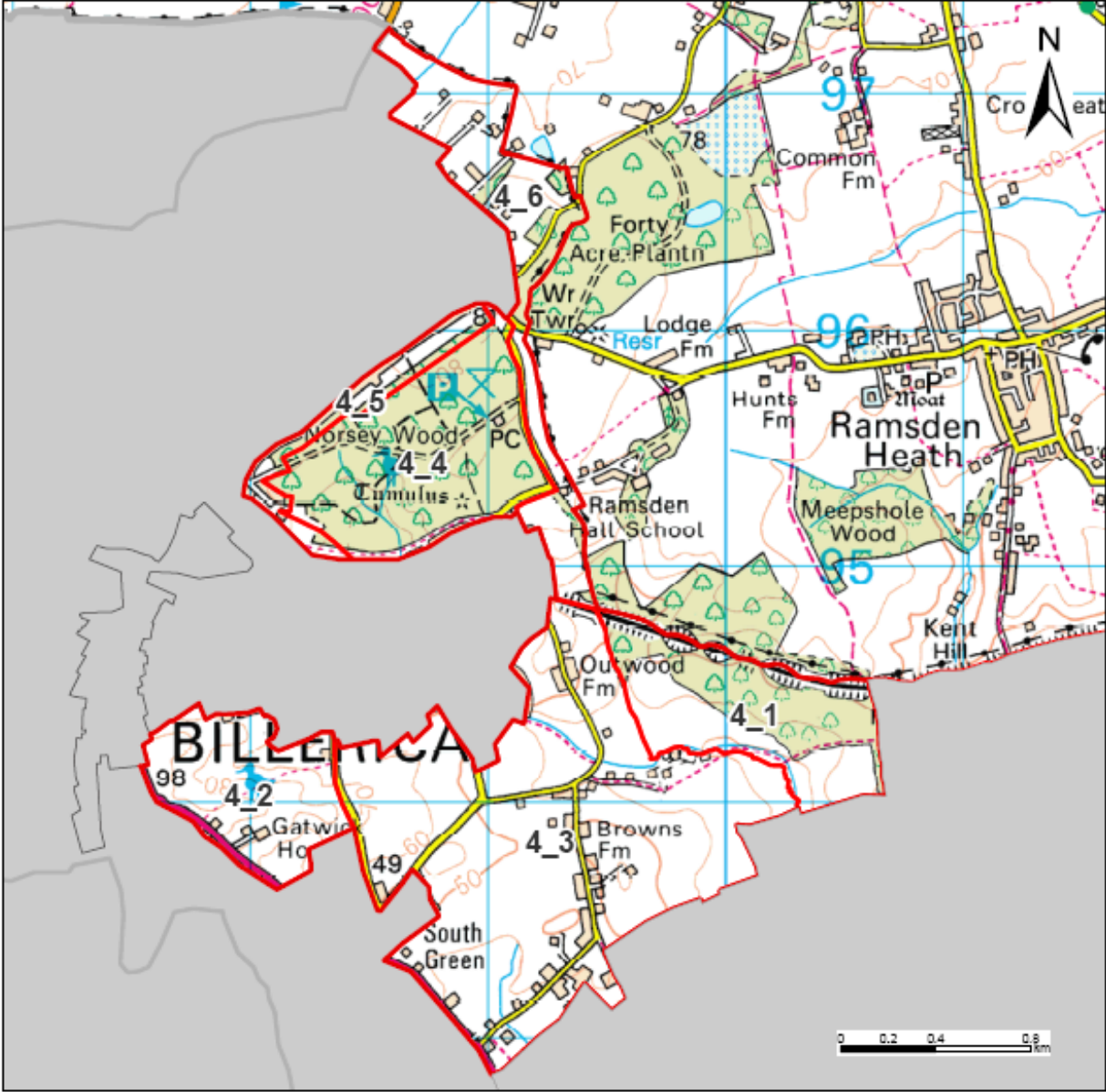


Fig.26 Historic Environment Character Area 4 showing division into zones

HECZ 4.1: Crays Woods

Summary

A small zone situated to the south of the railway line, much of the zone is ancient woodland. The ancient woodland has the potential for protecting earthworks from the

medieval or earlier periods. The field system is also of probable medieval or earlier origin. The landscape is typical of the wooded hills in the adjacent parts of Chelmsford District to the north.

Historic Landscape Character: The field pattern comprises irregular enclosure, of medieval or earlier origin, much of which survives today. Ancient woodland covers much of this zone, there is the possibility that these contain surviving earthworks, relating either to the management of the woodland itself or to earlier periods. The nature of the woodland layout would strongly indicate utilisation to supply wood and timber and also for hunting and recreational purposes in the medieval and post medieval period. Remains of the former rides or droves within the woods survive in places as bridleways and paths. A railway line, which is late 19th century in origin, forms the northern boundary of this zone.

Archaeological Character: The underlying bedrock of the zone consists mainly of London Clay with an area of its upper sandy Claygate Beds in the north. There are small patches of overlying colluvial head deposits with alluvium within small stream valleys. Many springs emerge from within the woods and flow south to join the River Crouch. The archaeology of the zone is largely unknown. However the aspect and natural resources found within it would have proved favourable for early settlers and evidence for prehistoric occupation is indicated by chance finds to the north of the zone. There is a suggestion that a Roman road may run through the zone from Norsey Wood to the north. The relatively undisturbed nature of much of the zone means that there is the potential for archaeological deposits relating to occupation sites and landscape management.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	fields, woodland earthworks, landscape features	2
• Survival	Landscape and below ground deposits survive well	3
• Documentation	HER data and cartographic evidence	1
• Group Value Association	Medieval and post-medieval landscape, woodland and earthworks	2
• Potential	Historic landscape and woodland survives with earthworks, Below ground archaeological deposits are likely to be present	3
• Sensitivity to change	Historic landscape and below ground deposits highly sensitive	3
• Amenity Value	Those bits of the historic woods that are publicly accessible have the potential for promotion in conjunction with Norsey Wood (Display boards, leaflets trails etc)	2

HECZ 4.2: Mill Hill, South of Billericay

Summary

This small zone, between urban Billericay to the north and the smaller urban area of South Green, is predominantly rural and retains much of its historic landscape pattern. Both windmills and pottery kilns were located here in the 18th century and possibly earlier. There are a number of springs along a springline in the south of the zone.

Historic Landscape Character: The field pattern comprises pre-18th century irregular enclosure, much of which survives today. The area of Mill Meadows had a long history of farming and was once part of a larger estate dating back to medieval times. In the recent past the land was generally used for grazing, although some areas were ploughed during wartime. Today it is managed as a SSSI and local nature reserve. Two mills were located along the Southend Road dating to the 18th/19th century but only Mill Cottages survive. The landscape also supported other

small scale industrial activities associated with its edge of town location including pottery kilns and gravel workings.



Fig. 27 Billericay post mill c. 1900 (Billericay Times – Images of the 20th Century – Ted Wright 1999 Cater Museum)

Archaeological Character: The underlying bedrock of the zone consists mainly of the upper sandy Bagshot and Claygate Beds of the London Clay Formation. There are small patches of overlying colluvial head deposits within the small valleys. This geological variation has resulted in an emergence of natural springs along a springline in the south of the zone. Little archaeological investigation has taken place within the zone, however, localised concentrations of archaeological deposits and sites are known and indicate prehistoric, Romano-British and medieval settlement activity in this zone. Small scale excavation at Windmill Hill revealed an

important Roman cemetery, containing rich grave goods including a mirror. The route of Southend Road itself is considered to be of Roman origin. The relatively undisturbed nature of much of the zone means that there is the potential that archaeological deposits relating to occupation sites and landscape management have remained undisturbed.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Roman extra-mural settlement, mill buildings, fields, meadows etc	2
• Survival	Landscape and below ground deposits survive well, little development in zone	3
• Documentation	HER data	1
• Group Value Association	Roman road and cemetery; fields and meadow.	2
• Potential	Historic landscape survives, below ground deposits may survive well	3
• Sensitivity to change	Historic landscape and below ground deposits highly sensitive	3
• Amenity Value	Range of historic environment assets which have the potential for promotion	2

HECZ 4.3: East and West of Coxes Farm Road

Summary

This is a predominantly rural zone, of rolling hills dissected by small streams arising from springs, retains much of its historic landscape. The dispersed settlement pattern in the zone and the field system of rectilinear enclosures are of ancient origin.

Historic Landscape Character: The zone is largely rural in character and although there has been some recent boundary loss, large areas of both regular and irregular fields, of medieval or earlier origin survive. There are a number of timber-framed farmhouses and barns of 16th-18th century date reflecting the historic pattern of roadside settlement. The few modern developments include a school in the south of the zone and sewage works in the east. The little modern housing development which has taken place has maintained the historic roadside settlement pattern

without tipping over into ribbon development, and is possibly due to the greenbelt legislation limiting expansion.

Archaeological Character: The underlying bedrock of the zone consists mainly of London Clay outcropping along the lower valley sides with isolated patches of Claygate Beds capping the hilltops. There are small patches of overlying colluvial head deposits and alluvial sediments within the valley bottoms. The clay land is unconducive to cropmark formation and there has been little development led excavation. Isolated finds indicate prehistoric settlement activity in this zone. As noted above the field system is clearly one of medieval or earlier origin and indicates the long history of occupation and landuse. The relatively undisturbed nature of much of the zone means that there is the potential for archaeological deposits relating to occupation sites and landscape management to survive. The soil type is conducive to the survival of faunal and ceramic materials.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Diversity of historic environment assets 	Possible prehistoric, historic landscape features and settlement pattern	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survival 	Good potential survival of archaeological deposits. Historic landscape survives well	3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Documentation 	HER data, historic mapping	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Group Value Association 	Historic field and settlement pattern	3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Archaeological Potential 	Good potential for discovering archaeological a deposits	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sensitivity to change 	Rural landscape is highly sensitive to development and change	3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Amenity Value 	Potential to use the historic landscape and settlement pattern to enhance appreciation of the historic development of the zone in association with other zones in HECA 4	2

HECZ 4.4 Norsey Wood

Summary

This zone contains an exceptionally well preserved example of a medieval deer park, dating back to at least 1250AD. The woodland not only contains large woodland earthworks but also contains a wide range of significant archaeological deposits and features dating from the Bronze Age through to the medieval period. The whole zone is protected as a Scheduled Monument.

Historic Landscape Character: References for Norsey Wood go back to 1250AD when it was owned by Stratford-Langthorne Abbey and would have been economically important for the production of wood and timber and as a protected deer park. A map of 1593 shows the extent of the wood occupying much the same area as today although there has been some housing encroachment along its northern edge. The wood retains substantial elements of its original bank and ditch which served to enclose and protect the valuable timber and animal resource (deer and pig) within. The wood is ancient semi-natural coppice wood and is divided by 'rides' into 6 parts covering an area of 66 hectares. This division was established at least as early as the 16th century.

Archaeological Character: In addition to the surviving lengths of bank and ditch which are of significant archaeological interest, the enclosed area of Norsey Wood contains numerous other archaeological features including two burial mounds of Bronze Age date, one of which when excavated produced several Middle Bronze Age burial urns. Records of a large number of further urns being found during gravel extraction within the woods indicate the potential of a large cemetery within this zone. The woods have been the subject of much antiquarian interest and finds noted include Iron Age pottery and small finds, an Iron Age cemetery, Roman cremation burials, and evidence for Roman industrial activity in the form of kilns and furnaces. Roman building material discovered is suggestive of settlement. In addition to the clear evidence for the sites importance in the prehistoric, Roman and medieval

periods, other features such as World War I and World War II entrenchments and shelters are known. Norsey Wood is protected as a Scheduled Monument.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Wide range of multi-period archaeological sites, extensive woodland earthworks	3
• Survival	Significant survival of both landscape and below ground assets throughout the zone	3
• Documentation	HER data, Historic town assessment, excavation data, historic maps, scheduling description	3
• Group Value Association	Bronze Age burials, later burials, Roman occupation, medieval woodland and earthworks	3
• Potential	High potential for surviving below ground deposits of multi-period date as well as earthworks within the woodland	3
• Sensitivity to change	Whole zone sensitive to change	3
• Amenity Value	High potential for interpretation and promotion	3

HECZ 4.5 Norsey Wood, Northern Boundary

Summary

This zone was formerly within the deer-park, now developed by a strip of 20th century housing and some quarrying. The zone retains limited archaeological potential within the gardens of the houses on the road front.

Historic Landscape Character: Lying within the enclosure of the original deerpark, this zone was developed with residential housing largely in the 1950’s with substantial gardens backing onto the scheduled area. The deerbank itself has been

extensively damaged by the creation of access to the housing but survives in a fragmentary condition. Quarrying has also taken place within this zone.

Archaeological Character: The main feature of the zone is the remains of the deerbank. A burial mound of Middle Bronze Age date was excavated within the zone but is now under housing. Roman burials indicative of a cemetery were found during gravel extraction at the southern end of the zone. Undisturbed garden areas are likely to retain archaeological potential, especially for burials. The southern undeveloped area of this zone, lying outside the deerbank, is wooded and has the potential to retain archaeological deposits both related to the original woodland as well as earlier occupation. The geology comprises sands and gravels in the south of the zone and Claygate Beds in the north.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Deerbank, Roman burials, Bronze Age ring ditch	2
• Survival	Survival of below ground archaeological deposits likely in undeveloped areas. Deerbank potentially survives in small areas	2
• Documentation	HER data, historic maps, scheduling description	2
• Group Value Association	Multi-period burials	1
• Potential	Moderate potential for surviving deposits in undeveloped garden areas	2
• Sensitivity to change	Archaeological deposits sensitive to change where surviving.	2
• Amenity Value	Significant potential for promotion of the zone in association with zone 4.4	3

HECZ 4.6: Land to the North East of Billericay

Summary

This is a semi-rural zone, which retains some of its historic landscape. The central part of the zone has been developed in the second half of the 20th century with large detached properties.

Historic Landscape Character: The underlying bedrock of the zone consists mainly of London Clay outcropping along the lower valley sides with isolated patches of the Claygate sands and gravels capping the hilltops. The zone contains regular fields of medieval or earlier origin which survive in some parts, although there has been recent some boundary loss. The dispersed settlement pattern in the central part of the zone represents modern detached houses outside the urban expansion with large gardens which have retained but sub-divided up the original field pattern.

Archaeological Character: The clay land is not conducive to cropmark formation and there has been little development-led excavation. As noted above the field system is clearly one of medieval or earlier origin and indicates the long history of occupation and landuse. The relatively undisturbed nature of much of the zone means that there is the potential for archaeological deposits relating to occupation sites and landscape management to survive.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Historic field pattern	1
• Survival	Historic landscape survives well, little modern disturbance	2
• Documentation	HER data, historic mapping	1
• Group Value Association	Historic field system	1
• Archaeological Potential	Good potential for discovering archaeological deposits	2
• Sensitivity to change	Rural landscape is sensitive to development and change	2
• Amenity Value	Limited opportunities for promoting the zone	1

6.5 Historic Environment Character Area 5: The Ramsden's

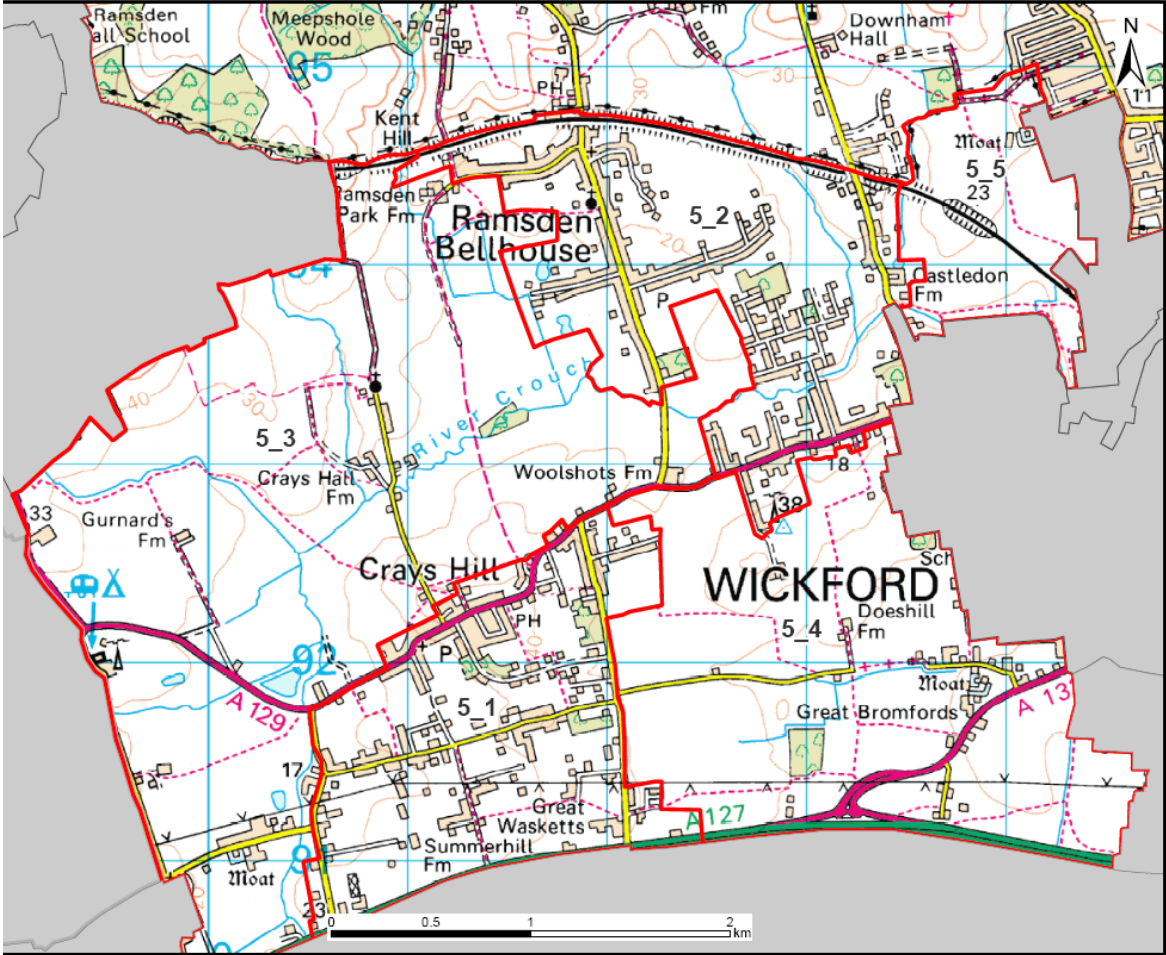


Fig. 28 Historic Environment Character Area 5 showing division into zones

HECZ 5.1: Ramsden Crays-Crays Hill

Summary:

This zone comprises surviving plotland development on what had been farmland to the north of Basildon New Town. The preceding dispersed settlement pattern in the area demonstrates a long history of occupation, with a small settlement at Crays Hill that may be medieval in origin with the presence of a moated enclosure, many of which have their origins in the 13th century.

Historic Landscape Character. The underlying bedrock of the zone consists of London Clay with Crays Hill capped by sandy Claygate Beds. These are overlain in

places by colluvial head deposits on the lower slopes. The fieldscape comprised the grid-like system characteristic of south-east Essex, which is thought to be middle Saxon in origin, a number of the roads still follow the original fieldscape pattern. The 15th/16th century building and ponds at Great Wasketts Farm, as well as a couple of other possible moated sites at Great Barns and Crayhill Farm reflect the earlier dispersed settlement pattern of the zone. The farms were sub-divided into plotlands by 1920, with further plots being added prior to 1938. Despite this, the landscape has retained much of its historic field system of rectilinear enclosures, although suffering some boundary loss. The zone still contains a strong element of the extensive early 20th century enclosed plotlands with the occasional older farmsteads.

Archaeological Character: The clay soils are not conducive to cropmark formation and there has been little development-led excavation. Few archaeological sites have been identified in the zone, reflecting the lack of archaeological investigation accompanying the early development of the zone. However, isolated findspots of archaeological deposits indicate potential prehistoric settlement activity in this zone. Most significant there are two Bronze Age hoards recovered from the Great Wasketts area (one in this zone, the other from HECZ 5.4) indicating the potential for later Bronze Age occupation. There were also two probable medieval moated sites within the zone. The relatively undisturbed nature of much of the zone means that there is the potential for archaeological deposits relating to occupation sites and landscape management will survive well.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Historic field system, archaeological finds moated sites, and plotlands	3
• Survival	Landscape and below ground deposits survive reasonably well	2
• Documentation	HER data, historic mapping, publications	2
• Group Value Association	Historic field system and 20 th century plotlands	2
• Archaeological Potential	Historic landscape survives reasonably well, potential for below ground deposits outside developed areas	2
• Sensitivity to change	Historic landscape and below ground deposits are sensitive to change	2
• Amenity Value	Potential to use the surviving elements of the historic landscape and settlement pattern to enhance appreciation of the historic development of the zone	2

HECZ 5.2: Ramsden Bellhouse and West Wickford

Summary:

A zone comprising very regular plotland development, set within a historic field pattern, surrounding a medieval church and hall settlement. The historic field pattern survives well within the plotland development.

Historic Landscape Character: This zone consists of undulating ground dissected by the upper Crouch and its tributary streams. The underlying bedrock of the zone consists of London Clay which outcrops over much of the area. This is overlain in few places by colluvial head deposits on the lower slopes. The fieldscape comprised the grid-like system, characteristic of much of south and east Essex, this is thought to be middle Saxon in origin survives at Ramsden Bellhouse. A surviving church and hall

complex of medieval, or possibly even late Saxon origin, formed a focal point in a rural landscape of enclosed fields. The fields had been sub-divided into plotlands by 1920, with further plots being added prior to 1938. The settlement enlarged along the existing road layout in a very regular linear pattern, gradually extending up to the railway line, which forms the northern boundary of this zone. Despite this, the landscape has retained much of its historic field system of rectilinear enclosures, although with some boundary loss and the plotland development reflects the broadly rectangular pattern of the historic fields and tracks.

Archaeological Character: The clay soils are not conducive to cropmark formation and there has been little development-led excavation. Few archaeological sites have been identified in the zone, reflecting the lack of archaeological investigation accompanying the early 20th century development of the area, rather than a lack of early settlement. However the stray find of a Palaeolithic hand-axe hints at very early occupation of the zone. An isolated find of medieval pottery, exists from the edge of this zone with a number of Bronze Age find spots of metalwork both to the north-east and south-east of the zone. The 15th century church and later medieval hall of Ramsden Bellhouse survive, the medieval settlement pattern is likely to have been dispersed and archaeological deposits relating to it may be present.

The relatively undisturbed nature of much of the zone means that there is the potential for archaeological deposits relating to occupation sites and landscape management. In addition the alluvial deposits adjoining the River Crouch have the potential for palaeo-environmental evidence.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Historic field system, church/hall complex, and plotlands	2
• Survival	Landscape and below ground deposits survive well, plotlands survive	3
• Documentation	HER data, historic mapping	1
• Group Value Association	Historic field system and 20 th century plotlands	3
• Archaeological Potential	Potential for surviving archaeological deposits in relatively undeveloped zone	2
• Sensitivity to change	Below ground deposits, field pattern and plotland layout highly sensitive	3
• Amenity Value	Potential to use the surviving elements of the historic landscape and settlement pattern to enhance appreciation of the zone	2

HECZ 5.3: Ramsden Bellhouse and the River Crouch

Summary:

This zone contains a dispersed settlement pattern which has a long history of occupation from at least the medieval period, comprising scattered farmhouses some being moated, and a church and hall complex, set within a rectilinear field system of ancient origin. Although suffering some boundary loss the basic structure of the field system has survived. Meadow pasture survives along part of the River Crouch.

Historic Landscape Character. This zone consists of a section of the Crouch valley, the valley slopes are dissected by a series of small tributary streams. The fieldscape comprised a strikingly rectilinear pattern characteristic of much of south and east Essex, which is of ancient, possibly Middle Saxon origin. A surviving church and hall complex of medieval, possibly late Saxon, origin at Crays Hall formed one of a number of focal points in a highly dispersed settlement pattern, and the few roads still

follow early alignments. Though some boundary loss has occurred, the landscape has retained much of its historic field system of rectilinear enclosures, as well as important enclosed meadow pasture along the Crouch valley.

Archaeological Character: The underlying bedrock of the zone consists of London Clay with sandy Claygate deposits capping the hills. This is overlain along the lower slopes of existing and now dry valleys by colluvial head deposits. Alluvial sediments fill the valley of the River Crouch, and have the potential to contain important palaeo-environmental remains. The clayland landscape is not conducive to cropmark survey, and little archaeological work has been undertaken within this zone and the relative sparseness of the archaeological record reflects this. The structure of the medieval landscape and evidence of its settlement pattern survives well. Medieval settlement is represented by a number of moated sites and a manorial hall along with the 15th century church of St. Mary located at Parsonage Farm.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Historic field system, moated and church and hall sites	2
• Survival	Landscape and below ground deposits are likely to survive well due to little modern development	2
• Documentation	HER data, historic mapping,	1
• Group Value Association	Medieval dispersed settlement pattern	2
• Archaeological Potential	Historic landscape elements survives, high potential of below ground deposits surviving particularly relating to the historically dispersed settlement pattern	3
• Sensitivity to change	Below ground deposits and surviving landscape features sensitive	3
• Amenity Value	Potential to use the surviving elements of the historic landscape and settlement pattern to enhance	2

HECZ 5.4: Land west of Wickford**Summary:**

The zone comprises land to the west of the modern settlement of Wickford. The landscape has retained much of its medieval or earlier rectilinear field system and dispersed settlement pattern. Archaeological investigations have revealed multi-period occupation in the southern part of the zone including settlement, activity and burial sites. Occupation has been identified from the Mesolithic to the Iron Age with large scale excavations at Nevendon.

Historic Landscape Character: The underlying bedrock of the zone consists of London Clay with sandy Claygate deposits capping isolated hills. Although there has however been some boundary loss the landscape has retained much of its medieval or earlier field system of rectilinear enclosures. Small patches of ancient woodland survive. During the medieval period there was a dispersed settlement pattern in this zone comprising scattered farmhouses and a moated site at Little Bromfords, this pattern of settlement is still dominant within the zone.



Fig.29 Flint artifacts recovered from the Nevendon excavations

Archaeological Character: The zone contains some of the earliest evidence of prehistoric occupation in the Basildon area. Archaeological excavation has identified numerous Mesolithic artefacts from the Nevendon Washlands site, indicating occupation of this zone at this period. There is considerable evidence for Bronze Age occupation on the Nevendon Washlands site in the form of fields and possible timber circles. There are two Late Bronze Age metalwork hoards from the Great Wasketts area (one from this zone and one from HECZ 5.1). A moated site and an earlier manorial hall survive at Little Bromfords, with a range of historic buildings dating from the 16th to 18th century. A medieval toft was excavated on the Nevendon Washlands site. Given the lack of recent development the probability is that further archaeological sites can be anticipated to survive within the zone.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Prehistoric activity, historic field system, moated and manorial site	2
• Survival	Landscape and below ground deposits survive well, little modern development	3
• Documentation	HER data, historic mapping, fieldwork reports	3
• Group Value Association	Field systems, landscape features and below ground medieval remains	s
• Archaeological Potential	Historic landscape elements survives	2
• Sensitivity to change	Below ground deposits and structure of historic landscape highly sensitive	3
• Amenity Value	Potential to use the surviving archaeological evidence along with the historic landscape to enhance appreciation of zone	2

HECZ 5.5 North-west of Wickford

Summary:

A largely undisturbed zone to the north-west of modern Wickford comprising agricultural land. The historic field and settlement pattern survives well across the zone with the only disturbance being the 19th century railway line. Archaeological evidence indicates a high potential for multi-period archaeological deposits across the zone.

Historic Landscape Character: The zone contains a rectilinear field system of ancient, possibly Middle Saxon, origin characteristic of south Essex. Much of the field pattern survives within the modern landscape. The settlement pattern is dispersed with the medieval moated site of Berne Hall the only surviving farmstead within the zone. Cartographic evidence indicates this complex once had a post medieval/early modern (18th – 19th century) model farm building complex to the west of the moat, now destroyed. The zone is bisected by the railway line.

Archaeological Character: Discoveries of a Bronze Age metalwork hoard and Iron Age and Roman ceramics to the north of the railway line suggest multi period activity in an area which is unlikely to have been significantly disturbed. Some of these may relate to settlements associated with the route of a Roman Road which is thought to be aligned across the zone. During the medieval period the settlement and administrative focus was at the Berne Hall moated site. The area south of the railway line contains no noted finds but is likely to have similar potential. A brickworks is shown on the 3rd Edition Ordnance Survey map (1924). The zone also contains the well preserved medieval moat at Berne Hall and has significant potential for surviving below ground archaeology.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Bronze Age finds, Iron Age and Roman finds, Medieval moat, landscape features	2
• Survival	Limited development and presence of known deposits indicate good survival	2
• Documentation	HER data, historic maps	2
• Group Value Association	Historic Landscape and moat	2
• Potential	High potential for below ground deposits	2
• Sensitivity to change	Zone highly sensitive to change with both landscape and below ground deposits	3
• Amenity Value	At present low amenity value but there is the possibility of promoting the landscape and settlement pattern in association with other immediately adjacent zones	2

6.6 Historic Environment Character Area 6: Wickford

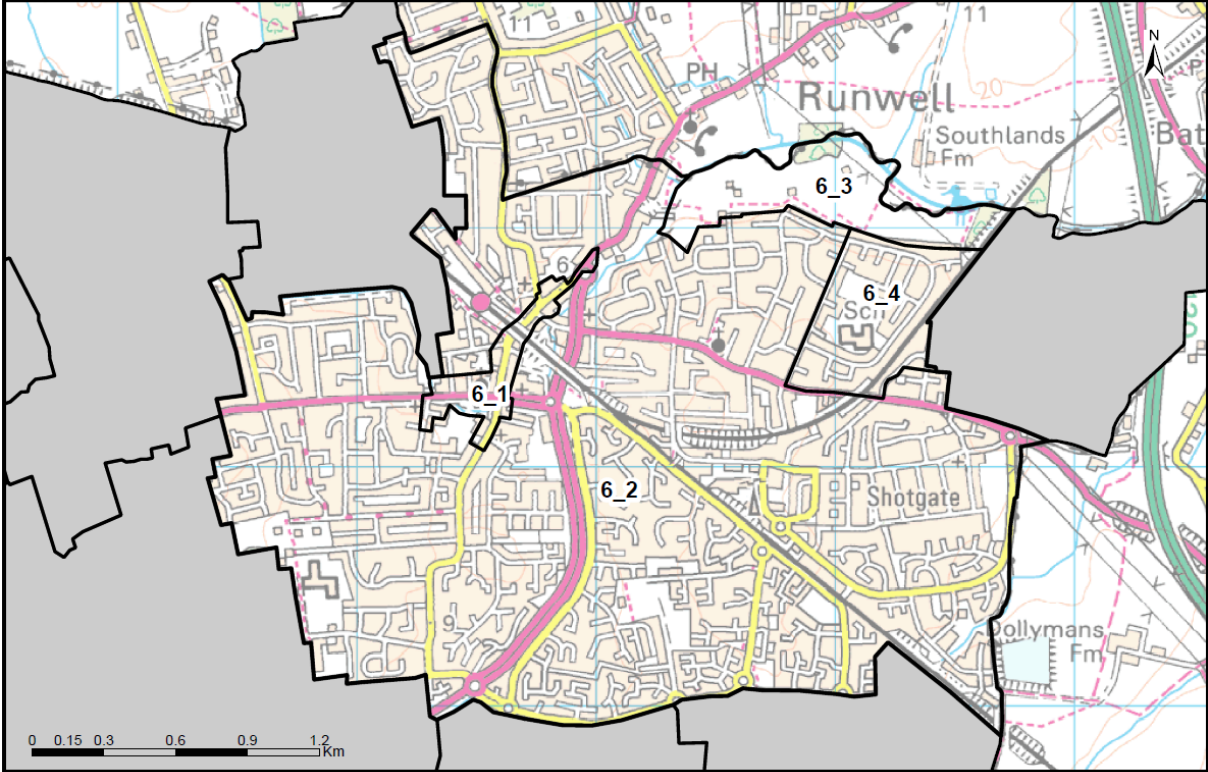


Fig. 30 Historic Environment Character Area 6 showing division into zones

HECZ 6.1 Historic Core of Wickford

Summary:

This zone comprises historic settlement Wickford as shown on the Chapman and André map of 1777. At that date it was a small settlement, probably less than 20 properties, located around ‘The Castle Public House’. The properties are shown clustered around two road junctions. Expansion of the settlement occurred relatively slowly after the arrival of the railway in the late 19th century with the town assuming its present character only after World War II.

Historic Urban Character: Historic Wickford developed around two very small foci, one centred on the crossing-point of the River Crouch and at the road junction of London Road and Nevendon Road. In the late 19th and early 20th century there was a

process of slow but steady growth, with most development concentrated along the High Street and north of the railway line. A boys and girls school of 19th century date is shown on the 1st edition. The greatest expansion of Wickford has occurred since WWII largely due to its railway links with London and growth as an ‘overspill population’ and commuter town. There has been significant infill of previously undeveloped land with housing and commercial properties. The zone contains two listed buildings.

Archaeological character: The underlying bedrock of the zone consists of London Clay with sandy Claygate deposits capping isolated hills. The Domesday Book records Wickford in 1066 and 1086. Little structured archaeological fieldwork has been undertaken within the historic core of Wickford. A small assemblage of post-medieval pottery and occasional small finds have been made as chance discoveries and observations have suggested the possibility of a Roman road running through the present town which may have served the known settlement at Beauchamps Farm. Small rural settlement foci had existed in the general area of the High Street and the historic core since the medieval period and evidence for these may survive beneath the more modern development. The soil-type is conducive to the survival of faunal and ceramic remains.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Possible Roman and medieval occupation on the High Street	2
• Survival	Archaeological survival will be limited to open areas and any survival beneath later buildings	1
• Documentation	Very little documentation	1
• Group Value Association	Historic buildings	1
• Potential	Low potential for surviving deposits in the zone	1
• Sensitivity to change	Little sensitivity due to modern development	1
• Amenity Value	At present there is limited potential for promoting the Heritage of the zone	1

HECZ 6.2 Modern Wickford

Summary:

This zone comprises the modern expansion of Wickford. There are a number of prehistoric and Roman find spots throughout the modern area. The church and hall complex and the historically associated farm at Wickford Hall are of medieval, or possibly late Saxon origin. A range of World War II defences were constructed in the zone, none of which survive. The urban landscape originated in plotland development which began between the two World Wars.

Historic Landscape Character: The underlying bedrock of the zone consists of London Clay with sandy Claygate deposits capping isolated hills. Prior to expansion of the town in the 20th century the landscape comprised mainly coaxial field systems of possible Middle Saxon origin typical of south Essex. The historic settlement pattern comprised dispersed settlement with farms and a church and hall complex. Expansion of the town since World War II has effectively linked the previously existing settlement elements. The modern expansion of Wickford began with a range of plotland development throughout much of the area of the modern town. Parts of the plotland road pattern still survive to the west of Shotgate.

Archaeological Character: The zone contains a range of archaeological deposits identified from finds and features ranging in date from the Bronze Age through to the post medieval period. The church (St. Catherines) hall complex and associated farm at Wickford Hall are of medieval, or possibly late Saxon origin, although only the church survives today. A significant number of World War II defences were located in the zone, protecting the railway line and station as well as the core of Wickford comprising road barriers, pill boxes, camps and search light sites. Most of these were destroyed as Wickford expanded. The zone is heavily developed but archaeological deposits may survive in pockets of undisturbed land. A spur of the Southminster line was very shortlived, being constructed at the end of the 19th century and being closed before 1920.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Roman find spots, second world war sites	2
• Survival	Limited survival due to modern development	1
• Documentation	HER data, historic maps, Survey of World War II defences	2
• Group Value Association	Second World War defences	2
• Potential	Very limited due to modern development. Some potential in undeveloped areas	1
• Sensitivity to change	Low sensitivity to change. The road layout relating to the plotlands is well preserved and is sensitive	1
• Amenity Value	History of the settlement of Wickford both in relation to medieval, plotland and second World War heritage assets have the potential for promotion possibly as a booklet on the development of the town	2

HECZ 6.3 North East Wickford

Summary:

This zone comprises the Wickford Memorial Park, formerly riverside meadows and co-axial fields with earlier evidence for Bronze Age activity. The fieldscape has largely been lost to the modern development of the Wickford Memorial Park and changes in agricultural practice.

Historic Landscape Character: The small area comprises the gently sloping valley of the Crouch estuary, with alluvial deposits next to the river and head deposits overlying London Clay. Historically the zone comprised riverside meadows and a co-axial field system of possible ancient origin typical of south Essex. The zone is currently under playing fields and arable production with most of the original field system lost. The historic meandering course of the Crouch has been severely

altered by the straightening of the river in the 2nd half of the 20th century, and now flows within a concrete channel.

Archaeological Character: There is evidence for Bronze Age activity within this zone in the form of a possible dispersed hoard comprising a axe fragment and a bronze disc. It is possible that below ground deposits dating from the Iron Age to Saxon period related to those identified at Beauchamps Farm (Zone 6.4) may also extend into this zone. Where surviving, any deposits may be relatively well preserved and include the possibility of palaeoenvironmental sequences associated with the former course of the Crouch. Second World War defences were located close to the river but have been demolished.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Find spots of material	1
• Survival	Good potential for below ground archaeological deposits	2
• Documentation	HER data, historic maps	2
• Group Value Association	None	1
• Potential	Good potential for below ground deposits	2
• Sensitivity to change	Below ground archaeological deposits sensitive due to lack of development in zone	2
• Amenity Value	Low amenity value within the zone	1

HECZ 6.4 Beauchamps Farm

Summary:

Prior to urban development in the mid-20th century, this zone comprised a rectilinear field pattern and excavation has shown multi-period occupation from the Late Iron Age through to the fifth-century. The zone is now modern urban development centred around a school.

Historic Urban Character: The zones present character is dominated by the 1960s and 70's development of residential properties and a centrally placed school. Prior to development the farmstead at Beauchamps Farm lay in the south western corner of the zone and potentially dated back to the medieval period. The existence of the farm at least as far back as the 18th century is indicated by the Chapman and Andre map (1777) with the place name Belchamps. The farm was set within a landscape of co-axial fields of medieval or earlier origin. Some of the field boundaries survive around the edge of the school playing fields and along some property boundaries.

Archaeological Character: The zone is known to have contained multi-period occupation dating from the Iron Age through to the post medieval period. Rescue excavations in the 1960's and 1970's have demonstrated the existence of an extensive multi-period rural settlement. Traces of an Early Iron Age farmstead were excavated in the immediate vicinity of the school, the excavations also produced some pieces of Late Bronze Age metalwork. The site continued to be occupied into the Middle Iron Age when a ditched enclosure was constructed around the farmstead. The settlement appears to have grown considerably in the Late Iron Age, with successive enclosures, hut-circles and associated pits and ditches, as well as gravelled floors and wells, in addition part of a large cemetery was uncovered. The earliest Roman occupation is represented by a possible mid-1st century military marching camp (Planned regular enclosure). The site however quickly reverted to civilian use, in the form of either a large sprawling villa-complex or possibly a village. Below-ground features survived well on the site, these included pits, cess pits, underground tanks, wells, hearths and ditches. The remains of two possible post-Roman fifth century buildings were found and the finds evidence suggests that fifth-century occupation of the site was extensive but had become damaged by modern

agriculture. Further discoveries of 11th century pottery suggest an unbroken span of occupation into the medieval period. The main area of excavation lies in the north east of the zone and there is high potential that the school playing fields would have preserved archaeological deposits. Pockets of historic environment remains may survive elsewhere within the zone in any previously undisturbed land.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Multi-period rural settlement	2
• Survival	High survival in the area of the school and undeveloped plots with the remainder likely to have limited survival	2
• Documentation	Draft excavation report	3
• Group Value Association	rural settlement	1
• Potential	Potential for surviving deposits in undeveloped areas	2
• Sensitivity to change	Archaeological deposits sensitive to change where they survive	2
• Amenity Value	High amenity value could be realised particularly through the promotion of the archaeological excavation via the school	3

6.7 Historic Environment Character Area 7: Shotgate

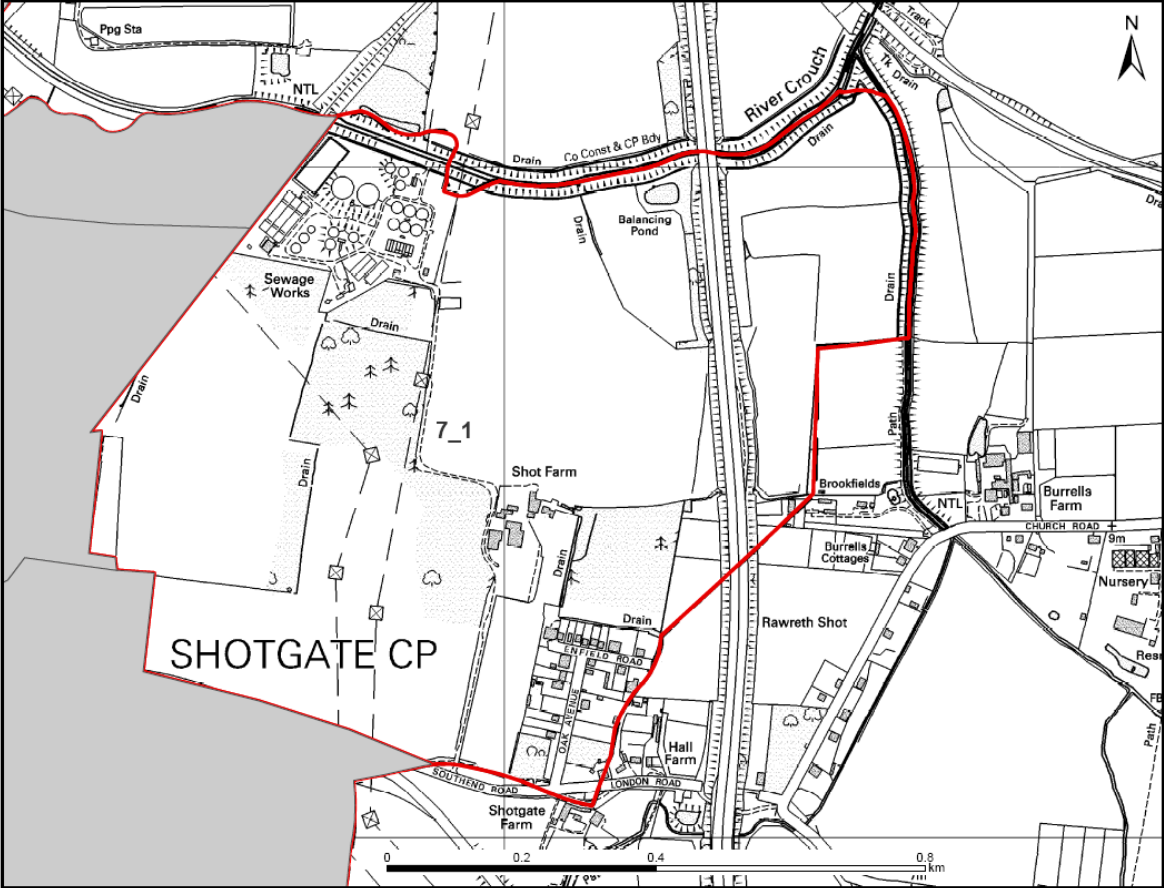


Fig.31 Historic Environment Character Area 7 showing division into zones

HECZ 7.1: Shot Farm area

Summary

A small zone in the north-east of the Borough, comprising the southern bank of the River Crouch. Archaeological excavation and stray finds have established that the zone has a history of occupation from the prehistoric period onwards. The surviving historic settlement comprises Shot Farm. There is some modern development, including the new A130 by-pass and a sewage farm.

Historic Landscape Character: The small zone comprises the gently sloping valley of the Crouch, with alluvial deposits next to the river and head deposits overlying London Clay further south. The co-axial, rectilinear field pattern in this zone is characteristic of much of south and East Essex and is possibly Middle Saxon in origin. There has been a degree of boundary loss, although the broad rectilinear grid structure persists. The historic farmstead of Shot Farm, which has two surviving 16th century buildings, is located in the centre of the zone. The area is crossed by the A130 and there are a number of small areas of modern development, including a sewage farm.

Archaeological Character: There is a large amount of archaeological information from this area, dating from the prehistoric to the post-medieval period. The Iron Age and Roman settlement at Beauchamps Farm (HECZ 6.4) is thought to extend into the western side of the zone, and field-systems and trackways associated with that settlement can be anticipated to be present. Archaeological investigation in advance of the development of the A130 by-pass revealed a 12-16th century farmstead at Shotgun Farm, with some evidence for earlier prehistoric activity. Other finds include an urned cremation found during the construction of the sewage farm. There are small pockets of development in the zone and these are likely to have damaged or truncated archaeological deposits, otherwise the area is archaeologically rich. There is also the potential for palaeoenvironmental deposits associated with the River Crouch.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Historic farm complexes, both surviving and belowground, Roman and Iron Age assets	3
• Survival	Good survival with relatively little modern development	3
• Documentation	HER data, site reports	3
• Group Value Association	Medieval dispersed farmstead	2
• Potential	Has high potential for wide range of surviving deposits with relatively little modern disturbance	3
• Sensitivity to change	Surviving elements of the historic landscape and below ground deposits sensitive to change	3
• Amenity Value	Diverse range of features and historic countryside give potential, at present largely latent, for promotion in conjunction with other zones such as 6.4	2

6.8 Historic Environment Character Area 8: Langdon Hills and West of Basildon

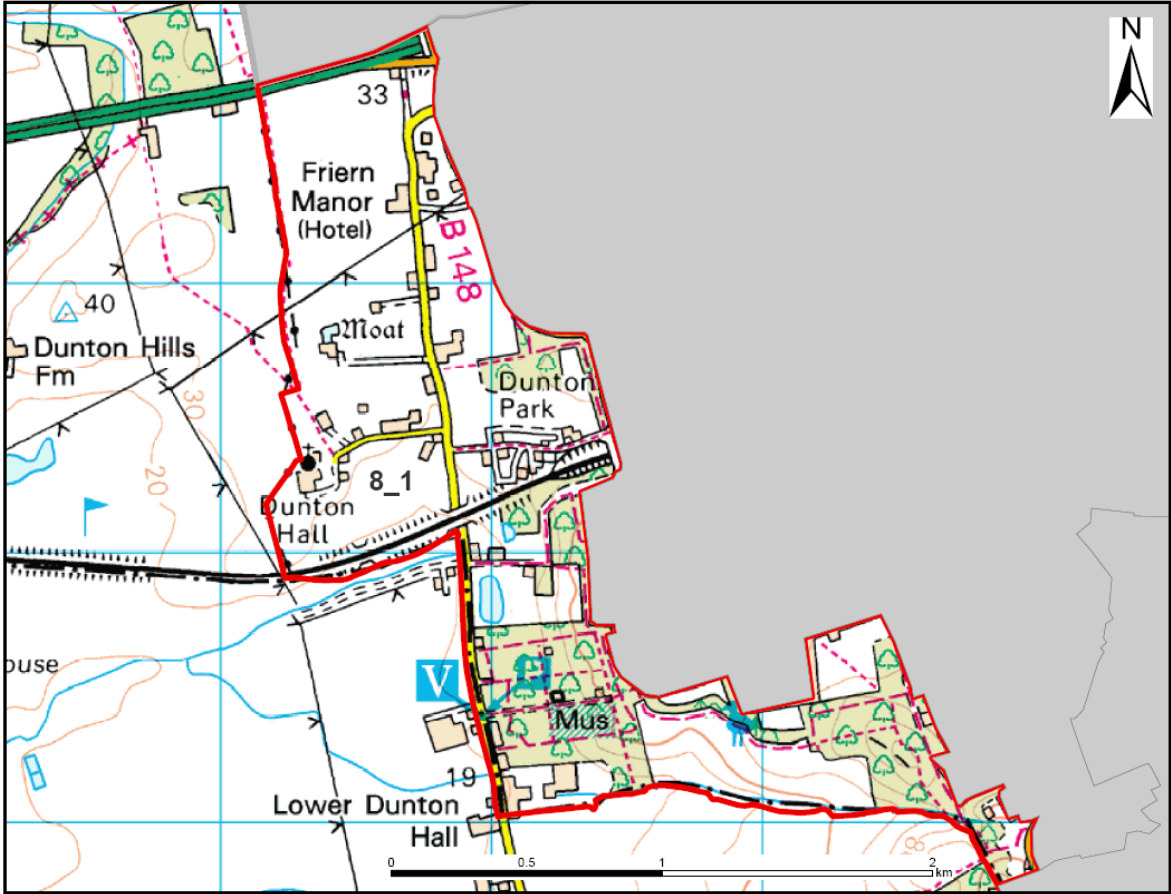


Fig.32 Historic Environment Character Area 8

HECZ: 8.1 Langdon Hills and west of Laindon

Summary:

A largely rural zone, which retains a range of historical features, including the fieldscape, a church and hall complex, and the former plotlands at Langdon Hills. The Langdon Hills Nature Reserve, which comprises former plotlands, is located in the southern part of the zone. There has been only limited modern development resulting in little archaeological research.

Historic Landscape Character: The land here rises to the south to the form the Langdon Hills, which form a conspicuous local landmark with extensive views out across the Thames estuary. The geology consists of a mix of head deposits and London Clay, with a small area of gravels on the very top of Langdon Hills. The zone

has a distinctive grid-like grain to its layout, derived from the rectilinear field system typical of south Essex and east Essex. This field-system maybe Middle Saxon in origin. Historically the settlement of the zone was both sparse and highly dispersed, with the church and hall complex at Dunton Hall forming a small foci within the zone. There is one small area of ancient woodland, Lince Wood, in the south of the zone. There was an area of early 20th century plotlands in the southern half of the zone. The woodland, together with the former plotlands (which are now under secondary woodland), are now a nature reserve. Modern development is limited to some roadside settlement and a caravan park.

Archaeological Character: The church and hall complex at Dunton Hall is medieval in origin. The Old Rectory is a medieval moated site. There has been little archaeological work undertaken in the zone, but this is more probably a reflection of the absence of development rather than a true indicator of an absence of archaeology. The soil-type is conducive to the survival of faunal and ceramic remains, but not for the formation of cropmarks. The Haven Plotland Museum at Langdon Hills is a rare example of an original plotland dwelling and the Langdon Hills Nature Reserve preserves elements of the plotland layout.



Fig. 33 Haven Plotland Museum

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Medieval dispersed settlement, plotlands	3
• Survival	Good survival of archaeological deposits, Historic landscape survives well	2
• Documentation	HER data, historic mapping, secondary sources	3
• Group Value Association	Historic field and settlement pattern, former plot-lands	3
• Archaeological Potential	Good potential for discovering archaeological deposits	2
• Sensitivity to change	Rural landscape is highly sensitive to development and change	2
• Amenity Value	Potential to use the surviving elements of the historic landscape and settlement pattern to enhance appreciation of the historic in conjunction with the museum	3

6.9 Historic Environment Character Area 9: Basildon New Town

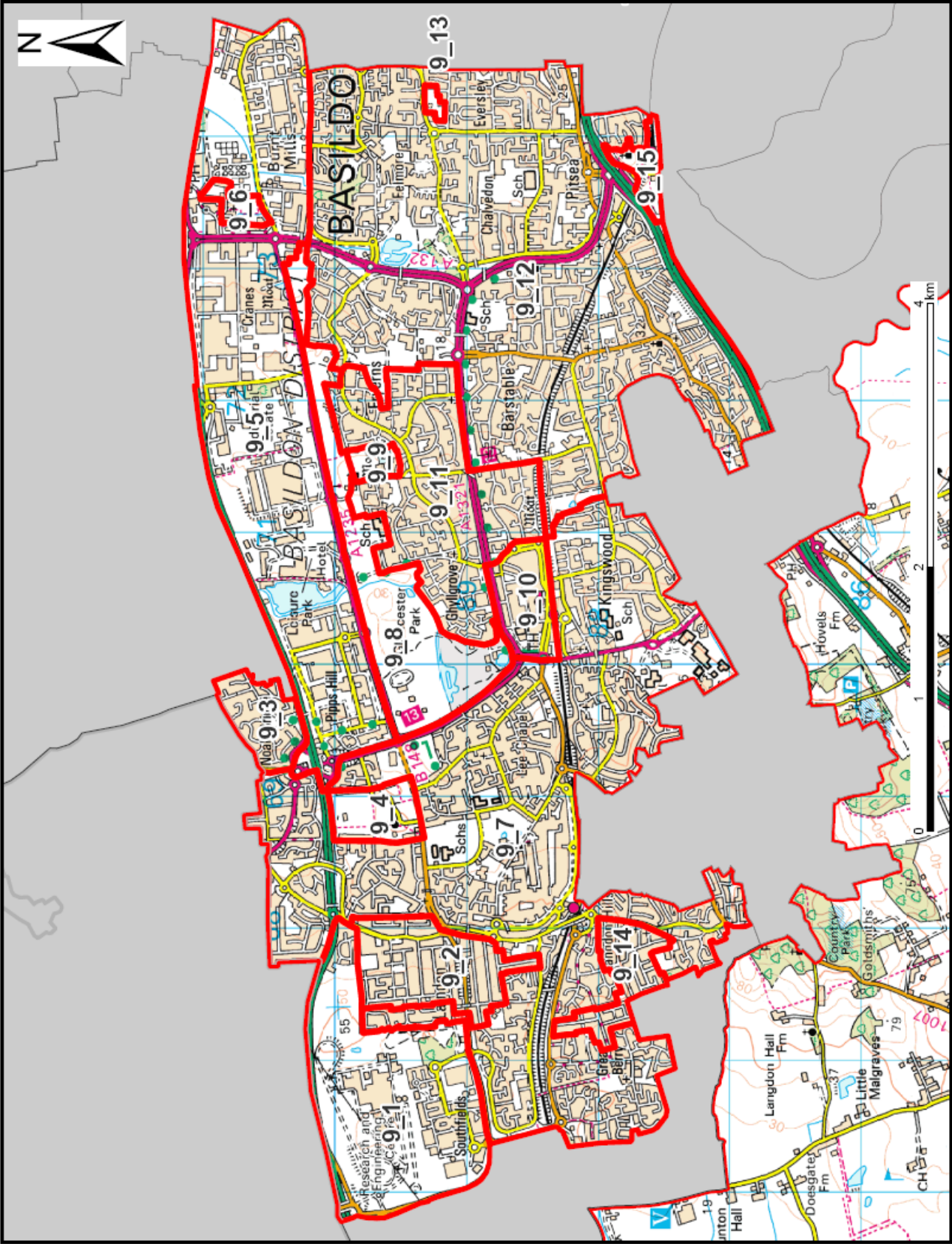


Fig.34 Historic Environment Character Area 9 showing division into zones

HECZ: 9.1 Southfields, Laindon

Summary:

Historically, this zone was largely rural; it is now largely developed for commercial use, although it retains a small number of historic field boundaries. The southern part of the zone developed as plotlands in the inter-war period but this has now been redeveloped for commercial use.

Historic Landscape Character: The geology consists of a mix of head deposits and London Clay. Historically the zone had a distinctive grid-like rectilinear co-axial field system typical of much of south and east Essex and thought to be of Saxon origin. Historically settlement was highly dispersed with only two properties recorded on the Second Edition Ordnance Survey of 1920. During the inter-war years an area of plotland development was established in the southern half of the zone. This was redeveloped in the later part of the 20th century and replaced by a business park and a car research centre as part of the development of town of Basildon.

Archaeological Character: There has been little archaeological work undertaken in the zone. Modern industrial development and extensive landscaping associated with the construction of the car centre test track will have destroyed much of the surviving deposits. Evidence of the historic dispersed settlement pattern may survive within areas of undisturbed ground.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Remains of dispersed settlement, rectilinear field system, plotlands	2
• Survival	Limited survival	1
• Documentation	HER data, historic mapping	1
• Group Value Association	Historic field and settlement pattern	1
• Archaeological Potential	Potential for archaeological deposits in undeveloped areas	2
• Sensitivity to change	Limited sensitivity	1
• Amenity Value	Little amenity value unless linking plotlands and settlement pattern to other zones	1

HECZ: 9.2 Plotlands, Laindon

Summary:

This zone comprises residential development established during the second half of the 20th century within a plotland layout. The plotlands, a sparse loosely knit shack development which initially developed during the interwar period within a rural area characterised by rectilinear fields, unmade roads and dispersed settlements including Dunton, Laindon, Langdon Hills and Lee Chapel.

Historic Landscape Character: The geology consists of a mix of head deposits and London Clay. Historically the zone has a distinctive grid-like grain to its layout, derived from the rectilinear field system typical of south Essex, it is thought to be of Saxon origin. Historically settlement was highly dispersed with two moated farmsteads of Gubbions Farm and Gubbions Cottage within the area, neither of which survives. Elements of the moat at Gubbions Farm survive. During the inter war years the zone developed as plotlands but these areas were redeveloped along more conventional lines with new housing during the mid to later part of the 20th century, some of it may be pre-New Town in date.

Archaeological Character: There has been little archaeological work undertaken within the zone, and it is thought that the residential development of the area would have destroyed much of the surviving archaeological deposits. Evidence of medieval or post medieval settlement associated with Gubbions Farm may survive within the playing fields to the south of West Mayne.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Medieval dispersed settlement, plotlands	2
• Survival	Limited survival	1
• Documentation	HER data, historic mapping	1
• Group Value Association	Historic field and settlement pattern	1
• Archaeological Potential	Potential for discovering archaeological deposits in undeveloped areas	1
• Sensitivity to change	Limited sensitivity	1
• Amenity Value	Little amenity value unless linking plotlands and historic settlement pattern to other zones	1

HECZ 9.3: Noak Bridge- Basildon New Town

Summary:

This small zone comprises the Conservation Area of Noak Bridge and a small area of housing to the east, situated on the north-eastern limit of Basildon New Town. It is distinguished by its irregular street pattern, open spaces and architectural house styles which were designed to reflect a typical Essex village vernacular style.

Historic Urban Character: A couple of surviving buildings on Wash Road mark the location of a former farmstead that occupied a landscape of enclosed fields, while a single road which still follows its original alignment remains within the development. However, late 20th century development on the edge of the new town has virtually eradicated this earlier historic landscape, to the point where no trace of the early 20th century enclosed plotlands survives. The zone contains the youngest collection of buildings to be designated conservation area status in the Borough and represents one of the final phases of Basildon New Town to be built outside the main urban area to the north of the A127 in the late 1970s and early 80s. The housing within this zone is markedly different from the rest of Basildon, with the intention being to reproduce a traditional English village using a variety of housing styles and vernacular

architecture features and to a limited extent the housing east of the Conservation Area.



Fig. 35 Part of the Noak Bridge Conservation Area showing the variety of housing styles and vernacular architecture features

Archaeological Character: The underlying geology of the zone consists of London Clay and is conducive to the survival of faunal and ceramic remains. Few archaeological sites have been identified in the zone, reflecting the small size of the zone itself as well as the lack of archaeological investigation carried out during the development of the New Town. There are not many open areas within and around the zone that may contain surviving archaeological deposits and it is thought the scale and intensity of development will have had a negative impact on any surviving archaeology.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	New Town, diverse architectural styles	2
• Survival	Limited survival of archaeological deposits, Housing styles important to the conservation area	2
• Documentation	historic mapping	1
• Group Value Association	20 th century urban developments	2
• Archaeological Potential	Limited potential	1
• Sensitivity to change	Nature of the built heritage within the conservation area is sensitive to change especially alterations to the buildings	2
• Amenity Value	Potential for presentation and interpretation of social and economic development of the town in the 20 th century	2

HECZ 9.4: Church Hill, Laindon

Summary:

This small zone comprises an open area of fields and woodland on the north-western side of Basildon, containing the church/hall complex of Laindon Hall and St. Nicholas Church. The present church dates back to the 14th century and it is possible the Hall had similar origins. The southern part of the zone had been divided up into plotlands during the interwar years but few plots were ever developed. It retains some historic field boundaries.

Historic Landscape Character: The historic fieldscape comprised the grid-like system characteristic of much of south and east Essex, which is of ancient, possibly Middle Saxon, origin. The church of St Nicholas and the now demolished 15th century hall complex of Laindon Hall formed a focal point within a sparsely populated rural landscape. There was some plotland development within the zone, of which the stretch which fronted Pound Road was regularised as part of the new town. The

landscape has retained some of its historic field system of rectilinear enclosures and former plot-land lanes, although much is now secondary woodland. It is maintained as public open space.



Fig.36 St. Nicholas Church, Laindon

Archaeological Character: The geology consists of a mix of head deposits and London Clay and is conducive to the survival of faunal and ceramic remains. Few archaeological sites have been identified in the zone, reflecting the small size of the zone itself as well as the lack of archaeological investigation. Laindon Church is 14th century in date with an attached 17th century annexe known as the Priest's House, the church was a replacement of a Norman predecessor. Laindon Hall was architecturally 15th century in date, but may have been a Tudor replacement of an earlier predecessor, the hall was burnt down in 1960. The historic cartographic evidence shows a number of other buildings located between the church and hall,

these have all also been demolished and the area is now under secondary woodland. The site has commanding views to the south and would have provided a natural focus for settlement in earlier periods. Below-ground archaeological features and deposits can be anticipated to survive, particularly on the site of the hall and Laindon hamlet.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Church/hall complex, field system, plotlands	2
• Survival	Church	1
• Documentation	Historic mapping, HER	1
• Group Value Association	Church / hall complex, associated buildings	2
• Archaeological Potential	High potential especially in area of church/hall complex	3
• Sensitivity to change	Area around Church/Hall complex highly sensitive	2
• Amenity Value	Potential for promotion of historic church/hall complex	2

HECZ: 9.5 Pipp's Hill/Burnt Mill Commercial Areas Basildon

Summary:

Historically, this zone was largely rural, it is now all developed with commercial/light industrial premises apart from the central sector which incorporates a number of sports pitches/facilities. The zone originally had a rectilinear field system thought to be of Saxon origin and typical of the south Essex landscape. A single moated site was located at Cranes Farm, now largely lost.

Historic Urban Character: Historically the zone has a distinctive rectilinear field system typical of much of south and east Essex and thought to be of Saxon origin. Historically settlement was dispersed with widely spaced farms, two areas of interwar plotland development were situated at Nevendon Villas and Hovesfield. All of the former plotlands have now been lost to the redevelopment of the zone for

commercial use as part of the development of the New Town, although small areas of residential development have been established around Nevendon Church.

Archaeological Character: The geology consists of a mix of head deposits and London Clay. There has been little archaeological work undertaken in the zone, and it is thought very likely the modern industrial/commercial development of the area would have destroyed much of the surviving deposits. Evidence of the historic dispersed settlement pattern may survive as below ground deposits. Part of the moated site at Cranes Farm survives as a pond.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Medieval dispersed settlement, plotlands	2
• Survival	Limited survival	1
• Documentation	HER data, historic mapping	1
• Group Value Association	The Group value is low	1
• Archaeological Potential	Some potential for discovering archaeological deposits in undeveloped areas	2
• Sensitivity to change	Limited sensitivity except around church.	1
• Amenity Value	Potential amenity value linking, historic settlement pattern and plotlands to other zones	1

HECZ 9.6: Nevendon Hall and Church complex

Summary:

This small zone comprises an open area of fields and woodland on the northern side of Basildon within the commercial area of the town. The zone contains the church and hall complex of Nevendon Hall and St. Peters Church. The church dates back to the 13th century and it is probable the hall may also be of medieval origin. The zone retains some of the historic field boundaries in its southern half.

Historic Landscape Character: The historic fieldscape comprised the rectilinear system characteristic of much of south and east Essex, which is of ancient, possibly Middle Saxon, origin. A surviving church and hall complex of medieval origin at Nevendon Hall formed a focal point in a sparsely populated rural landscape. Frampton's Farm with its 16th century farmhouse, Nevendon Hall, built c. 1800 and a 17th century barn to the north-east of the Hall, form a small group of associated historic houses adjacent to the church. The landscape has retained some of its historic field system of rectilinear enclosures although much of the northern half of the zone is now secondary woodland.

Archaeological Character: The geology consists largely of head deposits. Few archaeological sites have been identified in the zone, reflecting the small size of the zone itself as well as the lack of archaeological investigation. Cartographic evidence shows the presence of Nevendon Hall to the north of the Church which is likely to have developed alongside and share similar origins to the church. A Frampton's Farm to the east is shown on the Chapman and Andre maps of 1777 but bearing in mind the 16th date of the farmhouse, the site is likely to have much earlier origins. There is therefore the potential for the survival of below ground remains relating to a focal point of medieval settlement around the church.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Church/hall complex, field system, farm, demolished rectory	2
• Survival	Survival of archaeological deposits will be good	2
• Documentation	historic mapping, HER	2
• Group Value Association	Church / hall complex, associated buildings, farm	2
• Archaeological Potential	High potential especially in area of church/hall complex	3
• Sensitivity to change	Area around Church Hall complex highly sensitive	2
• Amenity Value	Potential for promotion of historic church/hall complex	2

HECZ 9.7 Laindon, Lee Chapel South and Great Berry, Basildon

Summary:

This large zone mainly comprises extensive modern housing developments built during the 1950s and 60s. During the inter-war period a large part of the zone had already been developed as plotlands in the 1920s and 30s, although little evidence of this remains.

Historic Landscape Character: The zone contains extensive modern housing developments dating to the 1950s and 60s. The zone includes a large and distinctive scheme of two-storey houses set around linked courtyards located between the Laindon Link and Laindon Station. Much of the modern housing was built over pre-existing inter-war plotland development. The historic fieldscape typically comprised the rectilinear system characteristic of much of south and east Essex, which is of ancient, possibly Middle Saxon, origin. The historic settlement pattern prior to the plotland developments of the early 20th century consisted of widely dispersed farmsteads.

Archaeological Character: The geology consists of a mix of head deposits and London Clay. Few archaeological sites have been identified in the zone, reflecting the lack of archaeological investigation at the time of the New Town development. Cartographic evidence shows the presence of a number of small farms within a rectilinear field system. The plotlands developed from the 1920's however, little of its original layout has been preserved within the modern housing estates.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	field system, farms, plotlands	2
• Survival	Very limited survival	1
• Documentation	historic mapping, HER	1
• Group Value Association	field systems, plotlands	1
• Archaeological Potential	Low due to the level of modern development	1
• Sensitivity to change	Little sensitivity due to modern development	1
• Amenity Value	history of plotland could be promoted in association with other zones	1

HECZ 9.8: Open land to the south of Cranes Farm Road, Basildon

Summary:

This zone comprises recreational land to the south of Cranes Farm Road. Prior to the development of Basildon New Town this zone had a historic fieldscape typical of the rectilinear pattern, characteristic of much of south and east Essex, and a highly dispersed settlement pattern.

Historic Landscape Character: The zone comprises recreational land in the form of sports grounds, a running track and allotments. The historic fieldscape comprised the grid-like system characteristic of south and east Essex, which is of ancient, possibly Middle Saxon, origin; all of the old field boundaries have been removed by 20th century development. The historic settlement pattern prior to the early part of the 20th century consisted of widely dispersed farmsteads, one of which was moated at Great Spenders.

Archaeological Character: The geology consists of a mix of head deposits and London Clay. Only a few archaeological sites have been identified in the zone, reflecting the lack of archaeological investigation at the time of the New Town development. Cartographic evidence shows the presence of two farms, one of which is moated situated within a rectilinear field system. A recent archaeological

evaluation for a new sports facility within the zone uncovered no evidence of surviving archaeological deposits.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Field system, farm, moat	2
• Survival	Limited above ground survival	1
• Documentation	Historic mapping, HER	1
• Group Value Association	Settlement pattern	1
• Archaeological Potential	Medium due to lack of development. High in the area of the moated site.	2
• Sensitivity to change	Little sensitivity due to modern development	1
• Amenity Value	Limited amenity value apart from association with the development of the New Town	1

HECZ 9.9: Fryerns and Botelers Hall and Church complex

Summary:

This small zone comprises an open area of playing fields and a medieval church and hall complex situated within the New Town. The surviving moated site is designated as a scheduled monument.

Historic Landscape Character: The historic fieldscape comprised a rectilinear field between the church and moated site at Botelers, it is now used as a recreation ground. The south western corner of the zone has been developed for residential housing. An area adjacent to the moated site was formerly used as a school but is presently in the process of being demolished and replaced by a residential development.

Archaeological Character: The geology consists of a mix of head deposits and London Clay, these are conducive to the survival of faunal and ceramic remains. Both the church and moated site are probably contemporary and are likely to be of 14th century or earlier date, forming a church and hall complex. The moated

enclosure survives well although the original building has been lost from the platform. Outside the moat circuit cartographic sources depict a large farm complex, located partially beneath the present school. The farm is likely to be of medieval origin expanding in the post medieval period. A range of fish ponds, thought to be medieval in date, are depicted on the 1881 Ordnance Survey map in the south eastern corner of the zone. There is likely to be extensive archaeological remains surviving within this zone relating to the medieval and later occupation of the church/hall complex and its environs.

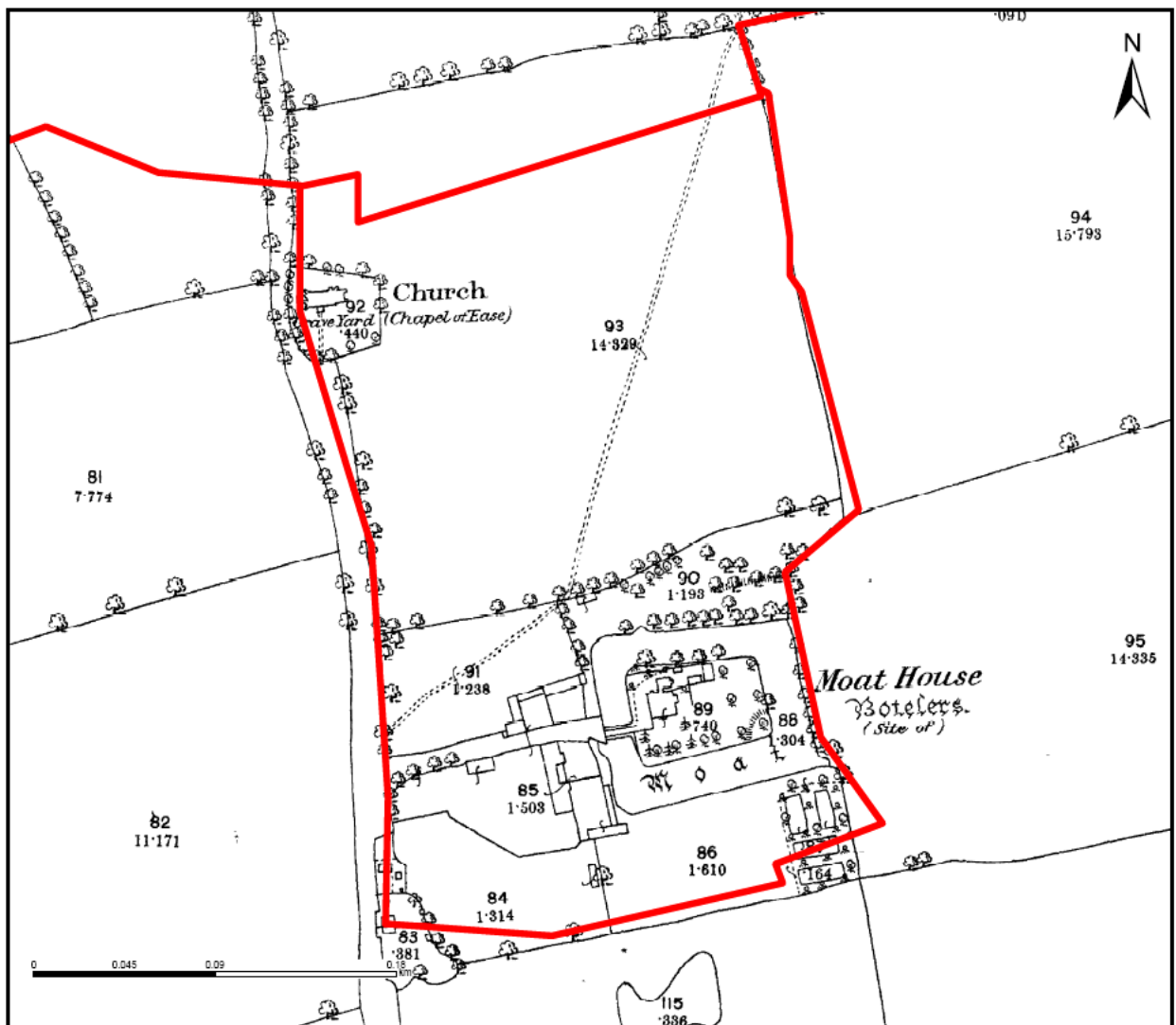


Fig.37 Botelers Moated site from the 1st Edition Ordnance Survey (1881)

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Church and hall complex, moat, fish ponds	2
• Survival	Survival of archaeological deposits will be good	3
• Documentation	Historic mapping, HER, scheduling	2
• Group Value Association	Church and hall complex, associated buildings, farm	2
• Archaeological Potential	High potential especially in area of church and hall complex	3
• Sensitivity to change	Area around Church and Hall complex highly sensitive.	2
• Amenity Value	Potential for promotion of historic church and hall complex	2

HECZ 9.10: Basildon Town Centre

Summary:

This zone comprises the modern town centre/shopping core of Basildon. This was built on an existing historic rectilinear agricultural field pattern incorporating a dispersed pattern of farms. The town centre has retained its original concept as a traffic-free pedestrian shopping precinct on two levels within an inner ring road, service access and peripheral car parking.

Historic Landscape Character: The zone contains extensive modern development comprising the Town centre of Basildon. The town centre occupies a 65 acre site designed by the Development Corporation, being started in 1956 and completed by 1962. Although some remodelling has taken place the zone has retained its original design concept of a traffic-free pedestrian shopping area lying within an inner ring road. It was designed by A.B. Davis working in consultation with Sir Basil Spence, the town centre is marked by Brooke House, a fourteen storey tower block, visible over much of the town and surrounding countryside. The historic fieldscape typically comprised the rectilinear system characteristic of much of south and east Essex, which is of ancient, possibly Middle Saxon origin. The historic settlement

pattern, prior to the 1920s, consisted of the single farmstead of Barstable Hall. This was replaced by plotlands, which were in turn replaced by the town centre.

Archaeological Character: The geology consists of London Clay. Cartographic evidence shows Barstable Hall located in the centre of this zone, Barstable Hall may also have been the central point or moot of Barstable Hundred, first recorded 1087, but probably Late Saxon in origin. The historic environment sites identified in the zone, all relate to the development of the New Town. The absence of earlier sites reflects the lack of archaeological investigation at the time of the New Town development, and it is considered that little will have survived the development.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	New Town centre	2
• Survival	Modern town centre remains true to its original design	2
• Documentation	Historic mapping, HER	1
• Group Value Association	Modern urban development	2
• Archaeological Potential	Low due to the level of modern development	1
• Sensitivity to change	Modern town centre	2
• Amenity Value	History of Basildon is being promoted through the Basildon Heritage trail	2

HECZ 9.11: Fryerns and Ghyllgrove modern residential, Basildon

Summary:

This large zone comprises extensive modern housing developments constructed during the 1950s and 60s as part of the initial new town development. Prior to this elements of the zone particularly toward the southern extent had been previously developed during the inter war period as plotlands. These distinctive developments replaced an earlier rectilinear field pattern characterised by widely dispersed settlement.

Historic Landscape Character: The zone contains extensive modern housing developments dating to the initial development of Basildon new town in the 1950s and '60s. The modern housing, which was laid out in the conventional open 'new town' style, replaced piecemeal plotland development built during the early 20th century. The historic fieldscape comprised the grid-like system characteristic of much of south and east Essex, which is of ancient, possibly Middle Saxon origin. This general framework of the landscape in turn influenced the layout of the plotlands, but was obliterated by the new town development. The historic settlement pattern prior to the plotland developments was widely dispersed.

Archaeological Character: The geology consists of a mix of head deposits and London Clay. Few archaeological sites have been identified in the zone, reflecting the lack of archaeological investigation at the time of the New Town development. Cartographic evidence shows the presence of a single Hall set within the rectilinear field system. The moated site (circuit and platform) around the hall (Basildon Hall) is designated a scheduled monument. Plotlands developed from the interwar period within the southern half of the zone however, little of their original layout has been preserved within the modern townscape.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Field system, hall, moat, plotlands	2
• Survival	Good survival only on moated site	2
• Documentation	Historic mapping, HER	1
• Group Value Association	Field systems, hall, moat	2
• Archaeological Potential	Low due to the level of modern development	1
• Sensitivity to change	Little sensitivity apart from the moat and its platform	1
• Amenity Value	Moated site could be managed and promoted as part of the development of the town	2

HECZ 9.12: Barstable, Felmore and Chalvedon residential areas, Basildon

Summary:

This large zone comprises extensive modern housing estates constructed in the 1950s and 60s, early in the New Towns development. Prior to this a large part of the zone, particularly in the area of the Felmore and Chalvedon Estates, had developed as plotlands in the 1920s and 30s. These had been built over an existing rectilinear agricultural field pattern incorporating a pattern of widely dispersed settlement.

Historic Landscape Character: The zone contains extensive modern housing developments, largely dating to the 1950s and 60s. These early neighbourhoods had conventional open 'new town' layout with considerable open space. Much of the modern housing replaced 1920s to 30s plotland development characterised by its rectilinear layout and shack-type housing. The earlier rectilinear fieldscape characteristic of much of south and east Essex was in part incorporated into the plotland layout but was swept away by the New Town development. The historic settlement pattern prior to the early 20th century had remained pattern of dispersed halls and farmsteads with settlement concentrated along the High Road in the southern part of the zone.

Archaeological Character: The geology consists of a mix of head deposits and London Clay. Few archaeological sites have been identified in the zone, reflecting the lack of archaeological investigation at the time of the New Town development. A large Late Bronze age hoard was recovered during the construction of the Swan Mead School in the 1950s. Cartographic evidence shows the presence of a single hall set within the rectilinear field system at Great Chalvedon Hall whilst a post-medieval windmill (Pitsea Windmill) is recorded on the eastern edge of the zone now destroyed. Several sites relating to World War II defences were recorded within the zone but have since been destroyed. There are pockets of surviving archaeology, and the potential for further sites to survive in the undeveloped open spaces.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Field system, hall , plotlands, windmills, listed building, World War II defences	2
• Survival	Good survival only on hall site	2
• Documentation	Historic mapping, HER, listed building description	1
• Group Value Association	Field systems, hall	2
• Archaeological Potential	Low due to the level of modern development, rising to medium in open areas	2
• Sensitivity to change	Little sensitivity	1
• Amenity Value	Limited apart form development of Basildon and plotlands with other zones	2

HECZ 9.13: Great Chalvedon Hall

Summary:

This small zone comprises Great Chalvedon Hall, an early 16th century timber framed house and associated green space. The site has a high potential for archaeological deposits as early cartographic evidence depict a range of former structures around the hall which are all now demolished. There is also the potential for earlier occupation on the site of the present Hall.

Historic Landscape Character: The zone comprises Great Chalvedon Hall and its associated grounds. The hall built in the 16th century to a T shaped plan is depicted lying close to a number of associated ancillary buildings, all of which have since been demolished. It is likely archaeological features/deposits relating to these buildings will survive well within the open area around the present hall.



Fig 38 : Great Chalvedon Hall (English Heritage)

Archaeological Character: The geology consists of London Clay, conducive to the survival of faunal and ceramic evidence. The present hall dates to the early 16th century, however there is a strong possibility that there would have been a predecessor or earlier phases of occupation which date back into the medieval period on the site; accordingly there is the potential for earlier occupation on the site of the present Hall. The cartographic evidence indicates gardens laid out to the east of the house and a significantly higher number of buildings present than that which survives today.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	hall complex, fish ponds	2
• Survival	Survival of archaeological deposits will be good	3
• Documentation	historic mapping, HER	2
• Group Value Association	hall complex, associated buildings	2
• Archaeological Potential	High potential for buildings associated with the hall	3
• Sensitivity to change	Area around Hall complex highly sensitive	2
• Amenity Value	Potential for promotion of historic hall complex	2

HECZ 9.14: Historic Plotlands, Great Berry, Basildon

Summary:

This zone comprises modern housing development within a plotland townscape first established during the interwar period. This regular layout of housing plots had been built on an pre-existing agricultural landscape of rectilinear fields and widely dispersed settlement.

Historic Landscape Character: The zone contains modern housing dating to the second half of the 20th century. This zone has a very mixed residential characteristic due to the infilling nature of the housing. Much of the modern housing was built within a regular 1920s to 30s century plotland layout resulting in many of the earlier plotland boundaries surviving as streets or boundaries within the modern developments. The earlier fieldscape had in parts survived within the rectilinear plotland layout but was changed during the infilling and redevelopment of the plotlands. The historic fieldscape comprised the rectilinear system characteristic of much of south and east Essex, which is of ancient, possibly Middle Saxon, origin.

The historic settlement prior to the early 20th century comprised a widely dispersed pattern with a single farm occupying the zone.

Archaeological Character: The geology consists of a mix of head deposits and London Clay. No archaeological sites have been identified in the zone, reflecting the lack of archaeological investigation at the time of the New Town development. Cartographic evidence shows the presence of a single farm set within the rectilinear field system.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Plotlands	2
• Survival	Survival of the plotland layout	2
• Documentation	Historic mapping	1
• Group Value Association	Plotlands	1
• Archaeological Potential	Low due to the level of modern development	1
• Sensitivity to change	Little sensitivity	1
• Amenity Value	Limited apart form development of Basildon and plotlands with other zones	2

HECZ 9.15: St Michaels Church area, Pitsea

Summary:

This small zone comprises the 16th century St. Michaels Church and surrounding open land. on an elevated location overlooking Pitsea Hall Fleet, Vange creek and the south Essex marshes and Thames estuary to the south. The church would have been associated with Pitsea Hall, a later 16th century timber framed manor house located in zone 13.1.

Historic Landscape Character: The zone comprises open land including the Church of St. Michaels, which occupies an elevated location overlooking Pitsea Hall Fleet, Vange creek and the south Essex marshes and Thames estuary to the south. The church is most likely associated with the moated site at Pitsea Hall in HECZ

13.1. The relationship between the church and Pitsea Hall has been compromised by the construction of the railway which physically segregate the hall from the church. The station opened in 1855 as part of the London Tilbury and Southend Railway. The current station building dates to 2005.

Archaeological Character: The geology consists of London Clay. The church dates to the 16th century or earlier with part of the church now surviving only as foundations, the tower dates to c.1500. It was restored in 1871 by Sir A. Blomfield. It is likely archaeological deposits will have survived within and around the church site, but those within the rail corridor would have been destroyed.



Fig. 39 St. Michaels, Pitsea

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diversity of historic environment assets 	church	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survival 	Survival of archaeological deposits will be good around the church	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documentation 	historic mapping, HER, listed building description	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group Value Association 	church and hall complex	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Archaeological Potential 	High potential in immediate vicinity of the church	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sensitivity to change 	Area around church highly sensitive.	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amenity Value 	Potential for promotion of historic church tied in with the history of Pitsea Hall	2

6.10 Historic Environment Character Area 10: North Benfleet and Bowers Gifford

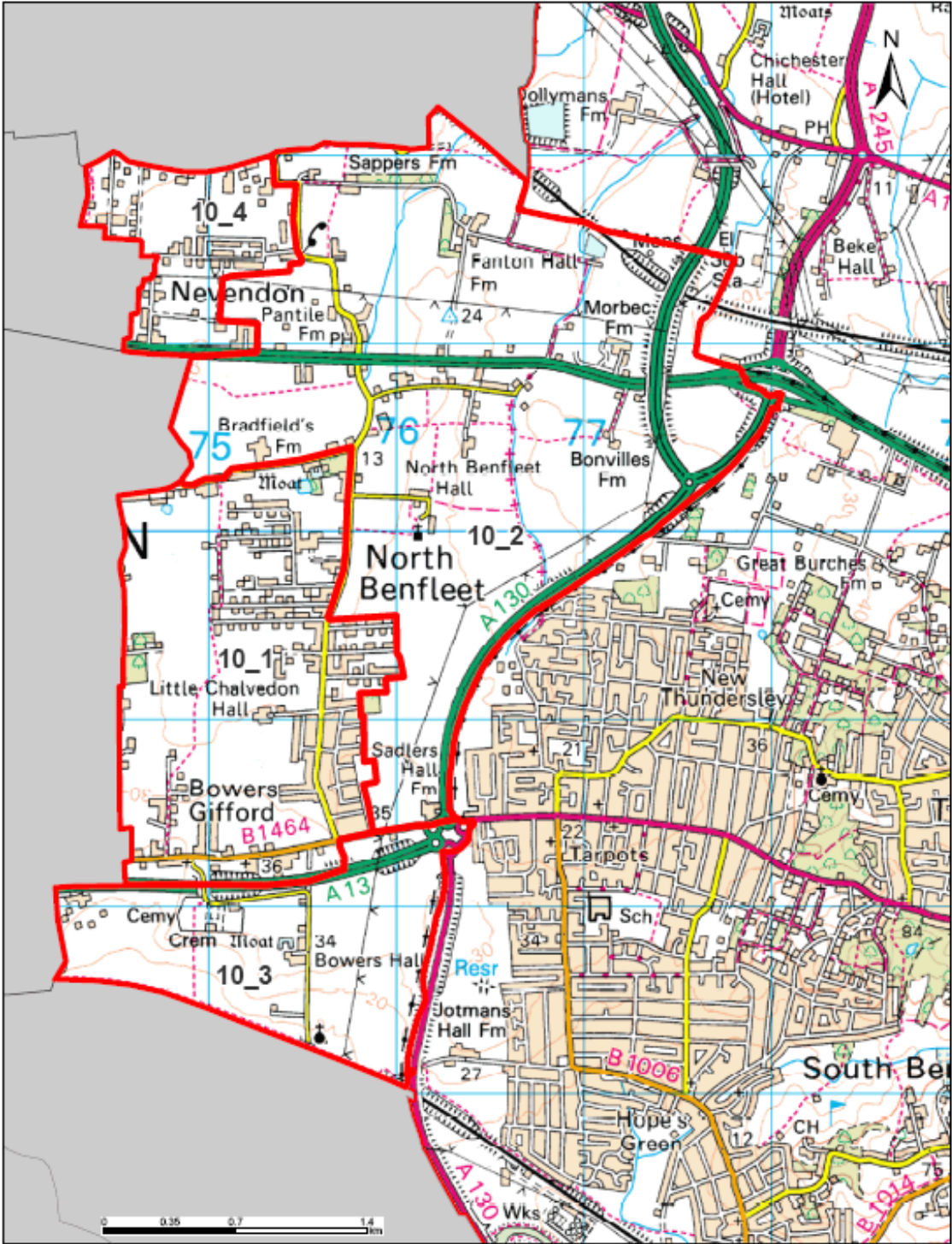


Fig. 40 Historic Environment Characterisation Area 10 showing division into zones

HECZ: 10.1 North Benfleet

Summary

The zone encompasses a remnant of pre-World War II plotland developments at North Benfleet. Earlier settlement of the zone is represented by a number of moated sites and the historic settlement of Bowers Gifford. The zone contains few known archaeological sites, which probably reflects a lack of archaeological investigation rather than a known absence of archaeology.

Historic landscape Character: Historically the settlement was sparse and highly dispersed, set within a rectilinear field system of ancient origin, possibly Middle Saxon, origin. The exception to this was a small area of roadside settlement at Bowers Gifford, which is depicted on the 1777 Chapman and André map. The eastern part of the zone encompasses a remnant of pre-World War II plotland developments at North Benfleet. This type of settlement was once a characteristic feature of this part of Essex, but has now been largely superseded by modern housing developments. The alignment of earlier field boundaries survives within the plotland layout. Within the south eastern part of the zone the plotland has been significantly infilled during the second half of the 20th century and now lacks the characteristic gaps between the individual buildings which are still present in the north-east of the zone; despite this the overall layout of the original plotland roads has survived.

Archaeological Character: The geology largely consists of London Clay, overlain in places by head deposits. The clay land is unconducive to cropmark formation and there has been little development led excavation within the zone. However, the zone has a number of findspots and archaeological sites of prehistoric, Romano-British and medieval date, including two medieval moated sites at Smilers and Smiths Farm. These finds give an indication of the archaeological potential of the zone. There are also the remains of a series of WWII pillbox and other military structures which would have formed part of the overall General Headquarters Line of defence. The relative

sparseness of the archaeological record reflects a lack of fieldwork in the area rather than necessarily a lack of archaeology.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Moated sites, World War II military defences, plotlands	2
• Survival	Good survival outside of 20th-century development	2
• Documentation	HER data, historic mapping, excavation data	2
• Group Value Association	Contemporary associations at moated sites, WW 2 defences, plotlands	2
• Archaeological Potential	Good potential for multi-period sites	2
• Sensitivity to change	Historic field system, character of plotlands and moated sites sensitive to change	2
• Amenity Value	Potential for the promotion and presentation of the historic environment assets	2

HECZ 10.2: North and west of North Benfleet

Summary:

A large zone historically comprising a landscape of scattered farmhouses, manors with focal points provided by a church and hall complex, and moated sites, set within a strongly rectilinear field-system of ancient origin. There is localised plotland development and settlement adjoining the A127. The construction of the new A130 led to extensive archaeological excavations in a north-south transect across the northern half of this zone, revealing sites dating from the Bronze Age onwards.

Historic Landscape Character. The historical settlement pattern was highly dispersed, of scattered farmsteads with a church and hall complex, moated sites and scattered farmsteads forming focal points. The field pattern has a strong north-south grid pattern of possible mid-late Saxon origin. Boundary loss has led to the

development of a very open landscape although the major lineaments of the ancient grid pattern are still retained, and in some places, such as North Benfleet, important groups of smaller fields and accompanying green lanes survive. The area is crossed by the A127 which runs east to west, the north-south A130, runs through the zone close to its eastern boundary and the north eastern corner of the zone is clipped by the route of the Southend to London Liverpool St. railway. Two major lines of power pylons march across the landscape.

Archaeological Character: The geology largely consists of London Clay, overlain in places by head deposits, alluvium and river terrace gravels. The soil-types in this area is not conducive to the development of cropmarks. However, it is clear that the area contains a range of archaeological sites and deposits. Excavations in advance of the construction of the new A130 have demonstrated occupation of the area from the Bronze Age onwards in the form of field boundaries and discreet features. More recent excavation on the widening of the A130 to the north of the Saddlers Farm roundabout have revealed evidence of a Roman rural landscape with a sequence of field ditches containing considerable quantities of pottery. North Benfleet was a Saxon Royal Vill. The medieval period is represented by a dispersed settlement pattern with a surviving church hall complex at North Benfleet Hall. The zone contains a large number of World War II military sites forming part of the General Headquarters defence line. The most significant feature is a major anti tank ditch (now only visible from the air) and a range of pill boxes.



Fig. 41 Pillbox West of Pound Lane, north Benfleet

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diversity of historic environment assets 	Good fieldscape, extensive multi-period sites, 2 nd World War military sites, built heritage assets	3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survival 	Good survival with little modern development	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documentation 	Excavation reports, survey work	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group Value Association 	Medieval settlement pattern, 2 nd World War military sites	3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential 	High potential for surviving archaeology and for conservation and enhancement of the historic landscape and settlement pattern	3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sensitivity to change 	Settlement pattern, World War II defences, and below-ground archaeology highly sensitive	3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amenity Value 	Potential to promote the GHQ line of defence via notice boards or leaflets	2

HECZ 10.3: South of Bowers Gifford

Summary:

A small zone comprising farmland adjoining the Bowers and Pitsea Marshes. There are two of medieval moated sites and farms as well as Bowers Hall/Church complex. The World War II General Headquarters defence line runs through the eastern part of the zone.

Historic Landscape Character. This zone comprises the ridge of agricultural land sloping down to the Bowers and Pitsea marshes, with the rectilinear field-system characteristic of south-east Essex, which is of possible Middle Saxon origin. The settlement is both sparse and dispersed, comprising the former Rectory (now a cemetery), Bowers Hall and the Church of St. Margaret. The Rectory and Bowers Hall were moated. The London Fenchurch St.-Southend railway forms the southern edge of this zone.

Archaeological Character. The geology largely consists of London Clay, overlain in places by head deposits. The soil-type is not conducive to the development of cropmarks and this has hampered identification of archaeological sites. The moated sites at Bowers Vicarage and Bowers Hall and St Margaret's Church are all medieval in origin, and given the zones proximity to the marsh edge and access to the Thames via Benfleet creek to the south-east and Pitsea Hall fleet to the south-west earlier activity in the area is also a distinct possibility. The World War II GHQ defence-line runs through this zone, surviving elements include the filled-in anti-tank ditch and a number of pill-boxes. Given the lack of modern development in the area the survival of archaeological features and deposits is likely to be good.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Medieval settlement pattern, World War II defences, marsh-edge location	3
• Survival	High potential for survival of multi-period deposits	3
• Documentation	World War II assessment, HER	2
• Group Value Association	Moated sites and other medieval settlement, Military sites	2

• Potential	High potential for below-ground deposits	3
• Sensitivity to change	Historic landscape, buildings and, potentially, below-ground archaeology are sensitive to change	3
• Amenity Value	High potential linked to associated zones comprising Wat Tyler Country park and the proposed RSPB marsh-land reserves for both settlement military history	3

HECZ 10.4: The Nevendon Plotlands

Summary:

A small zone comprising former plotland development on what originally had been farmland.

Historic Landscape Character. This zone contained two farms, Great Broomfields and Cranfields (Quakers), both of which are of early post-medieval or medieval origin. Their fieldscapes comprised the grid-like system characteristic of south-east Essex, which is of possible mid to late Saxon origin. The farms had been subdivided into plotlands by 1920, with further plots being added prior to 1938. The present landscape retains the original plotland layout, and comprises a mix of individual homes, small back-yard industrial sites and overgrown plots.

Archaeological Character. The geology largely consists of London Clay, overlain in places by head deposits. Neither the soil-type nor 20th century landuse in this zone are conducive to the development of cropmarks, and there is generally a lack of archaeological evidence from this zone, but this does not necessarily mean that it lacks archaeological sites and deposits. Excavations immediately adjoining this zone (HECZ 5.4) on the Nevendon Washlands site has revealed a complex history of activity in the area from the Mesolithic period onwards. There is one pill-box within the zone.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Plotlands, surviving field boundaries	2
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	incorporated into plot-lands	
• Survival	Good plot-land survival, potential for below-ground archaeology	2
• Documentation	HER	1
• Group Value Association	Plot-lands	2
• Potential	Potential for below-ground archaeology based on adjacent zones	2
• Sensitivity to change	Both below-ground archaeology and plot-lands are sensitive to change	2
• Amenity Value	Development of plot-lands linked to other zones	2

6.11 Historic Environment Character Area 11: Westley Heights to the Vange Area

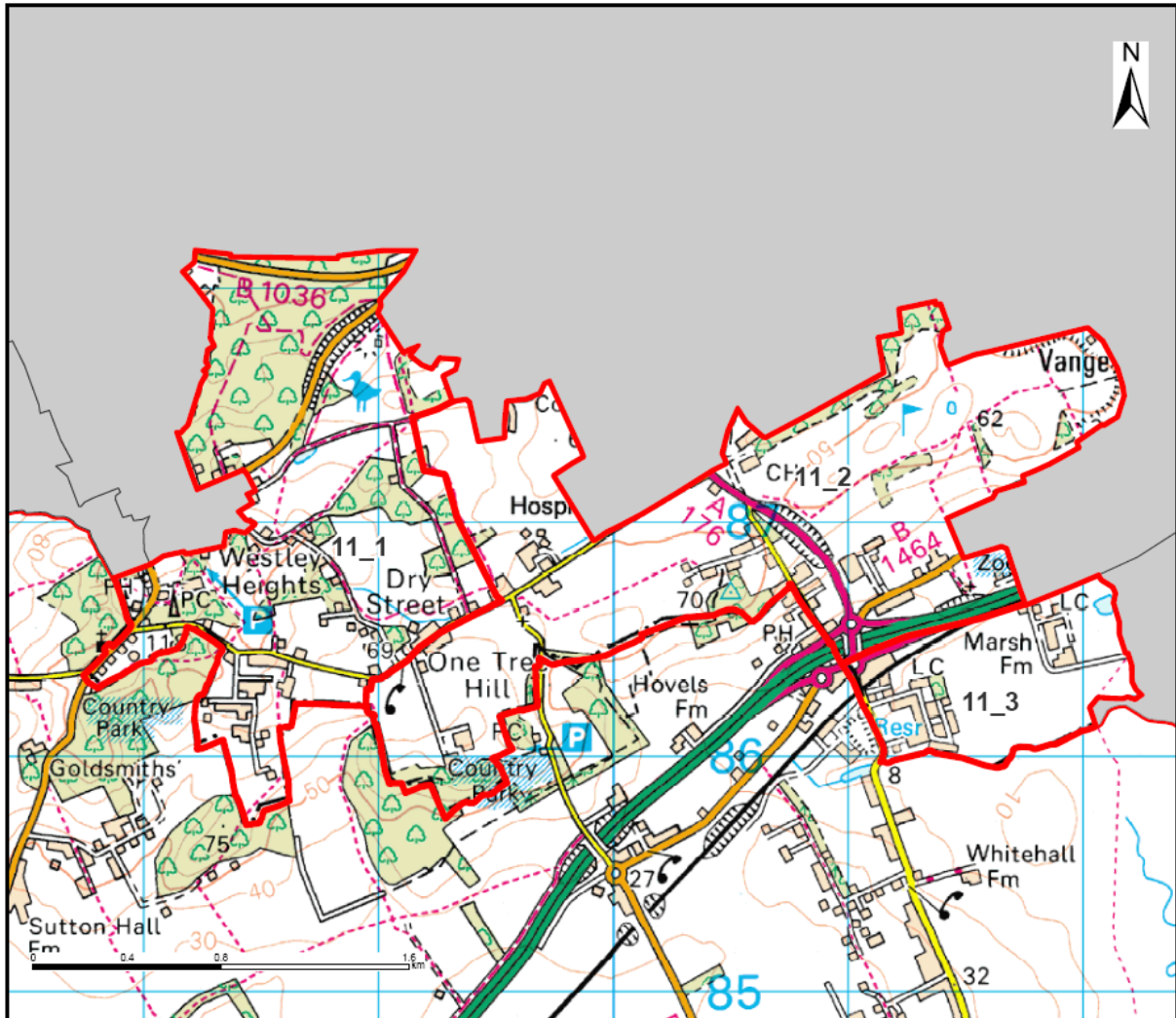


Fig. 42 Historic Environment Character Area showing division into zones

HECZ 11.1: Westley Heights

Summary:

The zone is well wooded, with a high proportion of this comprising secondary woodland on former plotlands. Much of the zone is in conservation ownership.

Historic Landscape Character: This zone consists of a prominent range of hills dissected by shallow valleys which command wide views of the Thames Estuary. The

geology largely comprises sandy Claygate Beds overlain by a lens (layer of soil) of Stanmore Gravel which forms Westley heights. Historically the settlement pattern was one of dispersed individual farmsteads and halls. The fieldscape here differs from the remainder of Basildon Borough in that they are much more irregular and curvilinear in form, and they may have originated as a result of piecemeal assarting (clearance) of woodland in the medieval period. Much of the area was re-laid out in the early 20th century as plotlands, unusually this did not follow a regular grid-pattern, but instead incorporated curving roads and a central circus. Most of these plots are now abandoned. The zone is well wooded with both ancient and secondary woodland which has developed on abandoned plotlands. The woods contain a number of earthworks, including boundary banks of probable medieval origin as well as those relating to the plotlands. The zone now includes the Langdon Hills (West) Country Park and the Marks Hill Nature Reserve.

Archaeological Character: The location of this zone, on the higher ground overlooking the Thames Estuary would have made it a probable focus for settlement in the prehistoric, Roman and Saxon periods. A watching-brief on the Basildon New Water Reservoir recovered Late Iron Age and Roman material, possibly derived from a settlement site that had been destroyed by the works. There is evidence for the medieval and post-medieval settlement of the zone, with a number of the surviving buildings being Listed. The medieval site of Lee Chapel is sited on the Chapman and Andre map of 1777 on the eastern edge of the zone and is referenced in the Domesday Book. A World War II prisoner-of-war camp was located on Westley Heights. The relatively undisturbed nature of much of the zone means that there is the potential for archaeological deposits of multi-period date.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diversity of historic environment assets 	Multi-period occupation, ancient and secondary woodland	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survival 	Little development in this zone suggests good survival	3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documentation 	HER data, historic mapping, documentary sources	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group Value Association 	Ancient and secondary woodland and associated earthworks and landscape features	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Archaeological Potential 	High potential in most areas of surviving multi-period below ground deposits and upstanding earthworks	3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sensitivity to change 	Landscape and below ground deposits are highly sensitive to development and change	3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amenity Value 	Potential for protection, promotion and interpretation of the historic landscape linked to the type of work and presentation within the nature reserves	3

HECZ 11.2: One Tree Hill

Summary:

This zone consists of a line of higher ground dissected by shallow valleys, it forms the south-eastern side of the Langdon Hills which commands wide views of the Thames Estuary. This zone contains evidence for the survival of complex multi-period archaeology.

Historic Landscape Character: This area of higher ground forms the south-eastern side of the Langdon Hills, there are wide views over the Thames Estuary. The geology comprises sandy Claygate Beds which form the higher areas, overlying London Clay. Historically the settlement pattern comprised individual dispersed halls, farmsteads and the occasional cottage. The fields pattern is rectilinear and are ancient, possibly middle Saxon, in origin. Some plotland development took place in the first half of the 20th century, particularly in the area to the west of Vange Hall. A golf course forms a large component of the modern landscape of the zone, and there are a number of areas of secondary woodland on former plotlands.

Archaeological Character: The relatively undisturbed nature of much of the zone means that there has been little archaeological fieldwork within the zone, conversely however there is the potential for the survival of archaeological deposits. Certainly the location on the higher ground overlooking the estuary would have made it a favoured location in the prehistoric and early historic periods. Clear evidence for multi-period occupation has been identified during recent archaeological evaluation in the Dry Street area. Here there was sporadic activity in the Neolithic and Bronze Age, in the Iron Age, the landscape was parcelled up by the creation of a ditched system of rectilinear fields which continued in use and was adapted in the Roman period. The site was also occupied in the early Anglo-Saxon period, possibly using the existing Roman field system. The medieval and post-medieval settlement pattern was sparse and highly dispersed. All Saints Church, Vange is prominently located on the escarpment above the river and is recorded as having a deserted medieval village around it. There are a number of other Listed Buildings in the zone. A 19th-early 20th century brickworks is recorded at Vange.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Multi-period occupation, surviving historic landscape features, historic buildings	2
• Survival	Good survival of archaeological deposits	2
• Documentation	HER data, historic mapping, documentary sources	2
• Group Value Association	Field systems, dispersed settlement pattern	2
• Archaeological Potential	High potential in most areas of surviving multi-period deposits	3
• Sensitivity to change	Landscape and below ground deposits are sensitive to development and change	3
• Amenity Value	Potential for protection, promotion and interpretation of the historic landscape	2

HECZ 11.3: Land south of Langdon Hills

Summary:

A very small zone comprising the dry land which slopes down from the escarpment down to the marsh edge. Part of the site was exploited as brickworks in the late 19th century and then became a military zone during the World War II with a large anti aircraft battery and associated buildings followed in the Cold War by an ‘anti-nuclear’ Anti-Aircraft Operations Room.

Historic Landscape Character: A very small zone comprising the dry land area sandwiched between the A13 and the railway and the marsh. The geology is London Clay, with some alluvium along the stream which drains the zone. Historically it was sparsely settled, with Marsh Farm forming the principal occupation site. The fieldscape is rectilinear in plan, and ancient in origin. From the end of the 19th century the north-eastern part of the zone was developed as a brick making site. A

block of plotland development characteristic of the Basildon landscape between the wars developed in the south-west corner of the zone.

Archaeological Character: There has been little archaeological fieldwork in the zone, however the location may well have attracted marsh-side activity over the millennia. In the late 19th century part of the zone developed as brickworks, with a tramway bisecting the zone connecting the railway and Vange Creek. There is however a considerable amount of evidence relating to WWII and Cold War defences. This includes cropmarks of anti-glider ditches across the fields and the construction of four gun emplacements, the Command Post, Officers Mess, Sergeants Mess, Gun Stores, Operations Room, Barrack Block, Radar Hut, Engine Room, Cooking and Dining Block, Ablutions, Pump House, etc. (around 23 buildings) as well as two pillboxes, at Marsh Farm in World War II. Probably between October 1948 and August 1951 the site was upgraded with the addition of a very large "anti-nuclear" Anti-Aircraft Operations Room, and a Standby Anti-Aircraft Operations Room. Around 12 buildings and structures survive from both periods, plus the gun emplacements and Command Post beneath the mounds, and the two pillboxes.



Fig. 43 The Cold War Anti-Aircraft Operation Room at Marsh Farm

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diversity of historic environment assets 	Field system and dispersed settlement pattern, brickworks, plotlands. World War II and Cold War remains	3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survival 	Good survival	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documentation 	HER data, historic mapping, NMP	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group Value Association 	Field system and dispersed settlement pattern. Important complex of military buildings. Critical relationship of boundaries east of the zone linking to the marshland	3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Archaeological Potential 	Good potential for below ground deposits	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sensitivity to change 	Historic landscape patterns and military buildings are sensitive to change	3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amenity Value 	Promote and interpret the military structures	3

6.12 Historic Environment Character Area 12: The Marshes

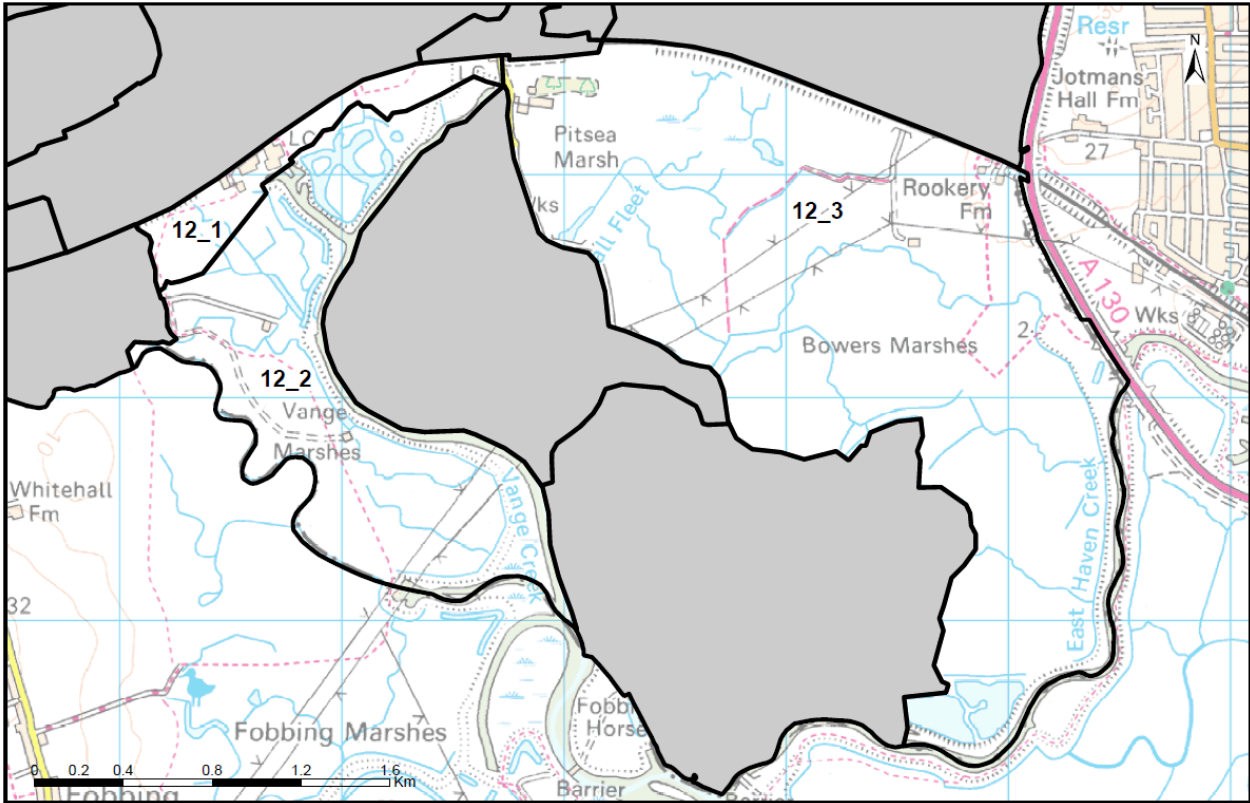


Fig. 44 Historic Environment Characterisation Area 12 showing division into zones

HECZ 12.1: Vange Wharf

Summary:

This zone consists mostly of unenclosed marshland and creeks. Excavation has shown the presence of Roman salt making taking place on the edge of the marshland. Land at the east has yielded evidence for medieval occupation and land-use, and there has been an industrial site in the centre of the zone since the 19th century. Pitsea Hall is located in the north-east corner of the zone.

Historic Landscape Character: This zone consists mostly of unenclosed marshland and shallow creeks leading down to Pitsea Creek. The geology is primarily London Clay, overlain at the south by colluvial head deposits and along the south-east edge of the zone by tidal flat deposits. It is bounded to the north by a road skirting the built-up area of Kingswood, which is part of the Basildon conurbation. There was a WWII anti-aircraft battery located in the west of the zone. Apart from the Vange Wharf industrial site the zone retains a relatively open landscape. Pitsea Hall is a moated site which probably had its origins in the medieval period. Significant areas of this zone are being incorporated into the new RSPB reserve developed in south Essex as part of the Thames Gateway initiative.

Archaeological Character: Exploitation of the marshland environment has been identified from the Roman period to the present day. Excavation has revealed evidence of salt production of Roman date on the marsh edge, located at the interface between this zone and HECZ 12.2. Medieval activity again on the marsh edge is shown by the presence of an occupation surface buried within the marsh. There is a moated site at Pitsea Hall and a medieval pottery scatter to the immediate east, demonstrating medieval exploitation of the marshland, and giving an indication of the archaeological potential of this largely undeveloped zone. There is also the potential for palaeo-environmental deposits surviving throughout the zone.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Roman, Medieval and post medieval land-use and occupation, and World War II site	3
• Survival	Good survival including waterlogged deposits	3
• Documentation	HER data, historic mapping, NMP, Assessment reports	3
• Group Value Association	Exploitation of the marsh land environment	2
• Archaeological Potential	Potential for evidence of multi-period land-use and occupation as well as Palaeo-environmental deposits	3
• Sensitivity to change	The zone is sensitive to change outside industrial area	2
• Amenity Value	Potential for promotion and interpretation of the marshland exploitation linked to the creation of the RSPB reserve in conjunction with neighbouring zones	2

HECZ 12.2: Vange Marshes

Summary:

This zone consists of land to the west of Hole Haven and Vange Creeks and north of Fobbing Marsh. Historically the predominant landuse was as grazing marsh, there is evidence for salt-working in the zone comprising red hills in the Roman period. Survey work has shown this zone to contain extensive surviving historic environment assets relating to the exploitation of the marshland environment.

Historic Landscape Character: This zone comprising Vange Marsh north and Vange Wick, is bounded by Vange Creek to the east and Fobbing marshes to the south, consists mostly of marshland, with mudflats along the creek waterfront. The underlying bedrock of the zone, deeply buried by alluvium, consists mainly of London Clay. These are overlain by Holocene beach and tidal flat deposits. It is an area of grazing marsh, divided into blocks of regular and irregular fields. The fields are bounded by drains and interspersed with several marshy creeks, the boundaries are mainly of medieval/post medieval origin resulting from the creation of grazing marsh, some elements of the earlier salt marsh can be discerned. There are a wide range of archaeological features including earthwork counter walls (sea defences), and flood defences. Significant areas of this zone are being incorporated into the new RSPB reserve developed in south Essex as part of the Thames Gateway initiative.

Archaeological Character: Exploitation of the marshland environment has been identified from the Roman period to the present day. Excavation has revealed evidence of salt production of Roman date on the marsh edge, located at the interface between this zone and HECZ 12.1. Medieval activity again on the marsh edge is shown by the presence of an occupation surface buried within the marsh. There is evidence of stetch (low ridge and furrow designed to facilitate drainage for agricultural purposes), and further salt working sites indicating the zone's archaeological potential. Survey work, undertaken for the RSPB, have shown this marsh to contain extensive surviving historic environment assets relating to the exploitation of the marshland environment. In addition, there are remains of World War II landscape features in the form of anti-glider trenches and bomb craters in the reclaimed marshland. There is the potential for palaeo-environmental deposits surviving throughout the zone.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Diversity of historic environment assets 	Roman, medieval and post medieval land-use and occupation, and World War II sites	3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survival 	Good survival	3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Documentation 	HER data, historic mapping, NMP, Fieldwork reports/assessment reports arising from creation of RSPB reserves	3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Group Value Association 	Features associated with the exploitation of the marsh land environment	3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Archaeological Potential 	Potential for evidence of multi-period marshland exploitation as well as Palaeo-environmental deposits	3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sensitivity to change 	The zone is sensitive to change	3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Amenity Value 	Potential for promotion and interpretation of the marshland exploitation linked to the creation of the RSPB reserve	3

HECZ 12.3: Bowers Marsh

Summary:

This zone, south of Bowers Gifford contains a relatively undisturbed landscape of marshland that was enclosed as grazing marsh at a relatively early date, and which has retained much of its integrity and character due to the lack of development. Excavation and survey has revealed the presence, in parts of the zone, of extensive remains dating to the Late Iron Age/Roman period onwards.

Historic Landscape Character: This zone comprises Pitsea and Bowers marshes and is bounded to the north by the railway line, to the south-east by East Haven Creek and to the south and west by Pitsea Waste Disposal site and the Wat Tyler Country Park. The underlying bedrock of the zone consists of London Clay, which is

overlain by Holocene beach and tidal flat deposits. The zone consists mostly of present and former grazing marsh that is likely to have been reclaimed at an early date as it comprises small and irregular grazing enclosures, a field system which has been largely retained. There has been little development or settlement of the zone during the 20th century. The fields are bounded by drains with the boundaries being mainly of medieval/post medieval origin resulting from the creation of grazing marsh, some elements of the earlier salt marsh can be discerned. There are a wide range of archaeological features including earthwork counter walls, and flood defences. Much of this zone is being incorporated into the new RSPB reserve developed in south Essex as part of the Thames Gateway initiative.



Fig. 45 Historic Sea Wall on Bowers Marsh of late medieval or post medieval date with the sea to the right of the photograph

Archaeological Character: The archaeological character is defined by exploitation of the marshland environment which has been identified from the Late Iron Age period to the present day. There is evidence of stetch (low ridge and furrow designed to facilitate drainage for farming), and salt working sites indicating the zone's archaeological potential. In addition, there are remains of numerous World War II

landscape feature such as the anti-glider trenches. There is the potential for palaeoenvironmental deposits surviving throughout the zone.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Diversity of historic environment assets 	Iron Age, Roman, medieval and post medieval land-use and occupation, and World War II sites	3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survival 	Good survival	3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Documentation 	HER data, historic mapping, NMP, Assessment reports	3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Group Value Association 	Exploitation of the marsh land environment, sea walls	3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Archaeological Potential 	Potential for evidence of multi-period marshland exploitation as well as Palaeo-environmental deposits	3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sensitivity to change 	The zone is sensitive to change	3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Amenity Value 	Potential for promotion and interpretation of the marshland exploitation linked to the creation of the RSPB reserve	3

6.13 Historic Environment Character Area 13: WAt Tyler Country Park and Pitsea Landfill

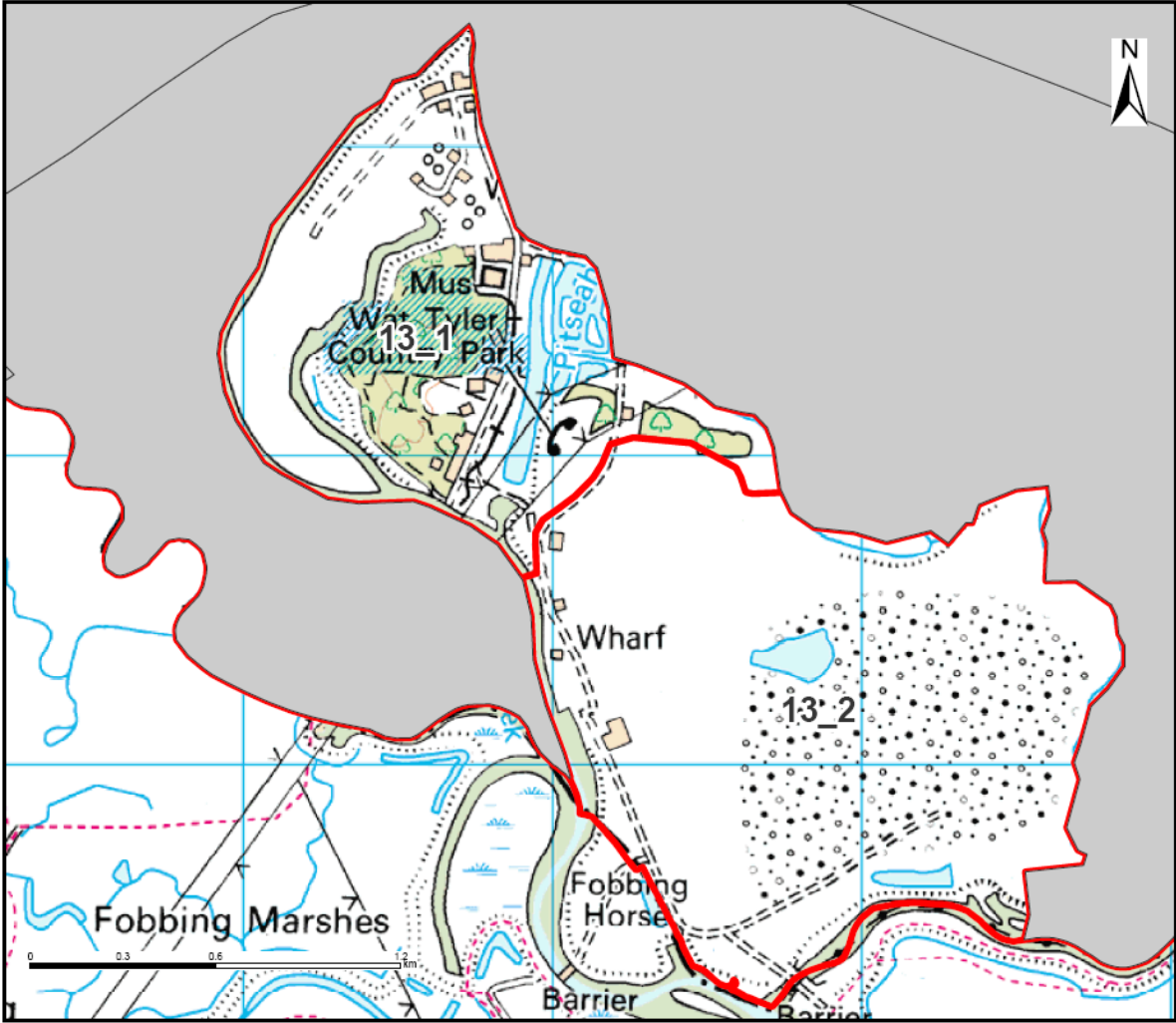


Fig. 46 Historic Environment Character Area 13 showing division into zones

HECZ 13.1: Wat Tyler Country Park

Summary:

Wat Tyler Country Park is located on an island of London Clay with Vange Marsh to the East and Pitsea Marsh to the North-East. Cartographic evidence indicates little landscape change until the nineteenth century when a cordite and explosives factory was constructed. The zone is now a Country Park.

Historic Landscape Character: A low island of London Clay, which is partly overlain by Holocene beach and tidal flat deposits. It is bordered by Pitseahall Fleet and Timberman’s Creek. The north-west of the zone is the former Vange Marshes

which now forms a low partly wooded hill. There are a few known historic environment features within the boundary of Wat Tyler Country park that predate the 19th century. Most significant are the surviving historic field boundaries and fields on the high ground and the sea walls, salt marsh and oyster pits within creeks along the edge of the park. The majority of the known historic environment features within the park relate to the late 19th and early 20th century industrial remains of the explosives factory, several buildings survive, including a remarkable series of substantial earth built structures and linking hollow-ways that were designed to contain the blast from any explosion that may have occurred within the individual processing buildings that stood on the site. The World War II defences within the park form the southern end of the single most important anti-invasion line in the country, the General Headquarters (GHQ) Line, the pill-boxes from this period survive. However the growth of dense scrub thickets during the last fifty years or more has obscured many of the historic features. The zone is now a Country Park, belonging to Basildon Borough Council, and a programme of scrub clearance and enhancement of the historic and natural landscape is underway. The area of former marsh and creeks in the west of the zone was a 20th century land-fill site, this is no longer in use and has been restored to grassland.



Fig. 47 Earthworks of the explosives factory surviving within Wat Tyler Park

Archaeological Character: Pitsea Hall Island (now Wat Tyler Country Park) is a raised area of London clay within the marsh. As a slightly higher area of land within the encircling marsh it is likely that it would have formed the focus for both prehistoric and historic activity within the area. In the late 19th century a cordite and explosive's factory was constructed here, extensive remains of which still survive within the secondary woodland and scrub that largely covers the park. There is potential for buried palaeo-environmental deposits close to the creeks. There is also potential for remains associate with earlier exploitation of the waterways. There are extensive remains and earthworks relating to the explosives factory together with a range of World War II features and defences. The 20th century land-fill on the west side of the zone may have sealed archaeological / palaeo-environmental deposits below the then ground surface, but may have also involved significant ground disturbance, truncating deposits.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Military and industrial remains, Palaeo-environmental deposits	2
• Survival	Extensive remains relating to military and industrial uses	3
• Documentation	HER data, historic mapping, NMP	2
• Group Value Association	Contemporary associations of military and industrial uses	2
• Archaeological Potential	High potential for military and industrial remains	2
• Sensitivity to change	Extensive survival of military and industrial remains are sensitive to change	3
• Amenity Value	Good potential as learning resource relating to military and industrial use and evolution of marshland related to neighbouring zones linked to the country park	3

HECZ 13.2: Pitsea landfill

Summary:

Extensive landfill site to the south of Wat Country Park and Bowers Marsh. Both the Historic Landscape and archaeological deposits been largely destroyed by the extraction industry.

Historic Landscape Character: An extensive operational landfill site bordered to the west by Vange Creek and to the South by East Haven Creek. The underlying bedrock of the zone consists of London Clay, which is overlain by Holocene beach and tidal flat deposits. The landscape was historic grazing-marsh with a number of scattered farms (largely post-medieval in origin) and earthworks relating to episodes of reclamation. After the Second World War it became a landfill site for domestic and trade refuse, and now forms an artificial hill south of the natural low hill occupied by the Wat Tyler country park. The waste disposal site is coming to the end of its life and will be incorporated into the reserves managed by the RSPB.

Archaeological Character: An area of former historic grazing marsh with associated settlement and earthworks. This has been buried underneath late 20th century landfill. There is the possibility that it may have sealed archaeological / palaeo-environmental deposits below the then ground surface, although the tipping may have also involved significant ground disturbance, truncating deposits. There is potential for buried environmental deposits and remains associated with the use of the creeks and fleets. However the great depth of waste material deposited here means that access is highly unlikely and preservation may be compromised.

• Diversity of historic environment assets	Low due to extensive destruction	1
• Survival	Low due to extensive destruction	1
• Documentation	HER data, historic mapping,	1
• Group Value Association	Low due to extensive destruction	1
• Archaeological Potential	Low due to extensive destruction	1
• Sensitivity to change	Low due to extensive destruction	1
• Amenity Value	Limited potential	1

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Glossary of Terms Used

Alluvium: soil or sediments deposited by a river or other running water. It is typically made up of a variety of materials, including fine particles of silt and clay and larger particles of sand and gravel.

Assarting: Is the act of clearing forested lands for use in agriculture or other purposes.

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.

Church and Hall complex: A group of buildings comprising the church cemetery and manorial hall.

Co-axial Fields: A coaxial field system is a group of fields (usually square or rectangular in plan) arranged on a single prevailing axis of orientation. Most of the field boundaries either follow this axis or run at right angles to it. These boundaries tend to be some of the oldest in Essex, dating to before the medieval period.

Colluvial: A loose deposit of rock debris accumulated through the action of gravity at the base of a cliff or slope

Cordite: is a family of smokeless propellants developed and produced in the United Kingdom from 1889 to replace gunpowder as a military propellant.

Corn Dryer: Found as T or Y shaped features lined with clay or stone with burning at one end. Consisted of a long flue through which hot air was passed above which a wooden floor was constructed which supported the grain.

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

Cursus: parallel lengths of banks with external ditches which are Neolithic structures and represent some of the oldest prehistoric monumental structures of Britain and are likely to have been of ceremonial function.

Deer Bank: Bank surrounding a park or woodland to retain deer within

Earthwork Counter Wall: former sea walls that no longer function as such as a new sea wall has been built to seaward of them. When new sea walls were built it was expressly forbidden to demolish the old wall since the 'counter walls' as they were called provided a second line of defence if the main wall was breached.

Fleet: is a saline waterway found in river marshes

Head Deposits: An unsorted deposits that forms during cold climate environments.

Holocene: Is a geological epoch which began approximately 12,000 years ago

Hypocaust: Is a Roman system of under floor heating

Faunal: Pertaining to animals

Gunpowder Hulk: A vessel for storing and issuing gunpowder – preferably moored at a safe distance from the dockyard to which it was attached

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

Lacustrine deposits: Sediments and deposits formed within an ancient lake.

Lowestoft Formation: The Lowestoft Formation forms an extensive sheet of chalky till, together with outwash sands and gravels, silts and clays.

Marching Camp: A temporary Roman fort set up by the army while on the move for overnight stops and short stop-overs.

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

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

Moot: an Old English language (Anglo-Saxon) term for meeting

Morphology: The study of the form and structure

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

Oyster Pits: Water filled pits for storing or raising oysters on the edge of the marsh/estuary.

Palaeoenvironmental: Material which provides evidence of an environment at a period in the past.

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 AD

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

Rides: Routeway

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

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

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

Tessellated pavement: Mosaic pavement made from small pieces of tile

Toft: A homestead

Trackway: A trackway is an ancient route of travel for people and/or animals.

Turnpike: A toll road

Vernacular: Is a term used to categorise methods of construction which use locally available resources and traditions to address local needs and circumstances.

Vill: Is a term used in English history to describe a land unit which might otherwise be described as a parish, manor

Walstonian glacial stage: The name for a middle Pleistocene stage that precedes the Ipswichian Stage and follows the Hoxnian Stage in the British Isles. It started 352,000 years ago and ended 130,000 years ago.

Waterlogging: In archaeology, the long-term exclusion of air by groundwater preserves perishable artifacts. Thus, in a site which has been waterlogged since the archaeological layer was deposited, exceptional insight may be obtained by study of artifacts of leather, wood, textile or similar materials.

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Essex County Council Historic Environment Branch
You can contact us in the following ways:

By Post:

Essex County Council
Historic Environment Branch
County Hall
Chelmsford, Essex CM1 1QH

By telephone:

0845 7430 430

By email:

heritage.conservation@essex.gov.uk

Visit our website:

www.essex.gov.uk

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