



# East of England Regional Landscape Framework

Urban Landscape Typology Final Report

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## East of England Regional Urban Landscape

### 1.0 Method statement

#### Aim:

The aim of developing a regional urban landscape typology for the East of England is to articulate the broad variety of towns/cities found within the region and the character of the landscape within the urban fabric of each settlement. The purpose of the exercise is to provide an overview of landscape character in settlements which can be used as a starting point to informing future assessments such as Green Infrastructure (GI) strategies and decision making on growth, both in terms of the extension to existing settlements as well as the creation of new settlements. It should be noted that the scope of this work is limited and that the typology descriptions which have been developed are succinct and brief and do not replace the need for more detailed townscape assessment. Importantly this work has focused principally on the landscape character of settlements however it is openly acknowledged that these settlements have an important built character and that the combination of built and landscape elements leads to an overall understanding of a settlement's sense of place.

#### Approach:

A total of 28 settlements were initially identified for study. These were first selected based on the urban areas identified when mapping LDUs for the regional landscape framework. These settlements were then cross referenced with the RSS and any further settlements which were missed, and likely to experience change, were also identified for study. In general major settlement centres from ports and new towns through to smaller market towns were selected for study. A full list is provided in the table below. These settlements descriptions were consulted on and as a result the number of settlements identified for study grew to 33.

These settlements were grouped into 10 settlement types depending on their historic evolution and present day predominant character:

Port  
 Roman Town  
 University City  
 Cathedral City  
 Garden City  
 New Town  
 London Overspill Town  
 Rural Market Town  
 Industrial Town  
 Seaside Resort

In some instances settlements justifiably fell into two types where one was more dominant than another but both encapsulated and influenced the special character of the settlement. To reflect this each settlement has been allocated a broad type which is most dominant and also (where relevant) a sub-type which is still evident but less strong an influence on overall existing townscape character today.

Each settlement was then analysed using current OS maps, existing townscape studies<sup>1</sup> and publicly available literature to classify the main components of the settlement and to summarise the defining characteristics as a series of bullet points. The purpose of these descriptive bullet points is to encapsulate the special qualities of the settlement, its key characteristics and therefore its local sense of place. In future there is scope for these descriptions to be developed more fully with the aim of informing future decision making and development change. For example further information could be added on the built character of a settlement, predominant townscape types, vernacular architecture as well as the nature and character of the urban edge and peri-urban areas.

In order to structure the descriptive text for each settlement in a consistent manner the following headings were used. Succinct text was prepared under each:

1. Broad settlement type and physical urban form/structure this creates
2. Green corridors – nature and type and how they penetrate the settlement
3. Nature of core area of settlement – historic or otherwise
4. Character, type and distribution of public open space
5. Extent and type of tree cover
6. Ease of pedestrian and cycle movement and main barriers
7. Landscape setting – reference to landscape character types that the settlement lies within
8. Key landmarks (man-made or natural) and notable views

## 2.0 Settlements Studied

The following settlements were considered:

County/UA	Settlement	Broad Type	Sub Type
Norfolk	Kings Lynn	Market town	Port
	Norwich	Cathedral city	University town
	Great Yarmouth	Port	Seaside resort
	Derham		
	Wymondham		
	Thetford	London overspill	Market town
Suffolk	Bury St Edmunds	Market town	Cathedral Town
	Ipswich	Port	University Town
	Stowmarket	Market town	Industrial town
	Lowestoft	Port	
	Felixstowe	Port	
	Haverhill	Market town	London overspill
	Sudbury	Market town	London overspill
	Newmarket	Market town	
Essex	Colchester	Roman town	Market town
	Chelmsford	Market town	University town
	Harlow	New Town	London overspill
	Basildon	New town	London overspill
South-end-sea	Southend-on-Sea	Port	Market town
Hertfordshire	Stevenage	New town	London overspill town

<sup>1</sup> It was beyond the scope of this study to consult the extensive urban surveys available for many of the settlements or historic maps or GI strategies. It is acknowledged however that in taking this work forward in the future information from these studies could be integrated.

	Welwyn Garden City	Garden city	London Overspill town
	Hatfield	Market town	London Overspill town
	Hemel Hempstead	Garden city	London Overspill town
	Watford	Market town	
Bedfordshire	Luton	Industrial town	Market town
	Leighton Buzzard	Market town	
	Bedford	Market town	
	Dunstable	Market town	Roman town
Cambridgeshire	Cambridge	University town	Market town
	Huntingdon	Market town	London overspill
	St Neots	Market town	
	Ely	Cathedral city	Market town
Peterborough	Peterborough	Roman town	Cathedral city
Total	33 no		

### 3.0 Consultation

A total of 50 individuals/organisations within the region were consulted on the draft settlement list and descriptions. A total of 16 replies were received. Comments covered three main areas. Firstly concerns were raised over describing the landscape aspects of towns with little to no reference to urban form or linkage to existing historic townscape assessments, secondly comments were received regarding the list of settlements selected for study and finally detailed comments were also provided on the settlement descriptions. Few or no comments were received for a number of settlements in Cambridgeshire, Peterborough, Southend on Sea and Essex.

All comments have been taken into account as far as it is possible within the scope of this work. The settlements of Derham, Wymondham, Haverhill, Sudbury, Newmarket and Dunstable were added following consultation and the settlement of Swaffham removed bringing the total number of settlements considered to 33. Where information on these settlements was provided during consultation (as was the case for Haverhill, Sudbury and Newmarket) it has been used in the write up, however for the settlements of Derham, Wymondham and Dunstable it has not been possible to complete descriptions within the scope of this work. Similarly it has not been possible to consult other data sources such as existing historic townscape assessments, although clearly this could be done as part of follow up work, along with specific site assessment, in order to develop and expand the settlement descriptions and fill in any gaps.

## 4.0 Settlement Descriptions

### Kings Lynn

- Medieval market town with port on River Great Ouse with strong Victorian suburbs and more recent industrial and port related development
- There are few green corridors and the waterfront comprises mostly hard landscape
- This settlement retains its historic character particularly its medieval and post-medieval core centred around the Saturday market square
- The Walks is a recently restored public park and the Purfleet Quay forms another significant open space within the town
- Overall there is poor tree cover
- Pedestrians and cyclists face barriers to movement across the main roads
- Landscape setting is one of contrast and comprises Planned Marsh across the river valley with open expansive views and Forested Estate Sandlands offering a 'heathy' and sometimes more enclosed undulating landscape
- There are open views across the river to West Lynn and towards the sea, wide views across the Tuesday Market Place and framed views of the River Quay glimpsed down medieval alleys

### Norwich

- Cathedral city located in the River Wensum, with network of medieval streets in core and significant medieval buildings e.g. Castle, modern development with university campus in suburbs
- Green corridors penetrate the city along the Wensum River valley, including Wensum Park and Whitlingham Country Park; and along the Yare to the south/southwest, including Earlham Park. The riverside walk in the city is largely edged with industrial development and housing
- The medieval core area is defined by a concentration of historic buildings, medieval city walls, and narrow streets and alleys and the market place, tombland and cathedral close. There are also a large number of medieval churches and use of flint in buildings is common
- Key public open spaces the Forum which is a modern civic amenity; Gentleman's Walk and Chaplefield Gardens
- Tree cover moderate on Castle Meadow, Wensum Park & Mousehold Heath elsewhere it is average to good
- Pedestrian and cycle movement in the town core is good
- City is located within the River Wensum surrounded by hills. Wooded Fen occurs in the river valleys with Forested Estate Sandlands and Lowland Settled Farmland landscape types on the surrounding hills
- The varied topography of the town enables memorable views to the cathedral, castle, The Forum, and up narrow medieval streets such as Elm Hill. There are also views from Mousehold heath down into the city

### Great Yarmouth

- Historic harbour town located along the River Yare with elegant merchants' housing and quayside and market place set back and separated from quay by narrow alleys or 'rows'. Town expanded across the Denes towards the sea as it developed as a coastal resort during the 19<sup>th</sup> century
- An important green corridor lies to the north along the expanse of grazing marshes to the Broads

- This is an historic medieval town with a distinctive planned layout to the core area which also contains many distinctive vernacular buildings
- Small good public spaces include the market place, South Quay & St George's Victorian park (newly restored) and seafront and the beach
- Generally this settlement has poor tree cover
- Pedestrian movement generally good except crossing the main ring road and there is poor cycling provision
- Landscape setting comprises Coastal Levels comprising the Broadland marshes and Lowland Settled Farmlands landscape types
- The following form important built landmarks -Town Hall, Nelson's Monument, St George's Chapel, town walls, old fishermens' alleys to South Quay, quayside merchants homes such as Elizabethan House, St Nicholas Parish Church. Key landmarks are also associated with the seaside development including piers, hotels, winter gardens and hippodrome. There are also good views along the quayside and seafront

#### **Derham – to be completed at a later date**

#### **Wymondham – to be completed at a later date**

#### **Thetford**

- Thetford is a Saxon and Medieval town (seat of the East Anglian bishopric at Domesday), with industrial additions, located at the confluence of the River Thet and Little Ouse. It saw significant expansion in the 1950's when it became a London overspill town
- Green corridors along the two river corridors, and Thetford Forest on the edge of the town
- Medieval core with some flint walled buildings but substantial areas of modern infill development
- Public open spaces include Castle Hill, Butten Island and Spring Walk
- Tree cover is good on the edges of the settlement
- Road crossing can be difficult and there are few footpath links in river valleys
- Landscape setting comprises the Forested Estate Sandlands landscape type which gives rise to a well treed and often enclosed landscape setting
- Landmarks along river include the Culniac Priory, Red Castle, Priory of the Holy Sepulchre, Castle Hill (motte and bailey) and the Nunnery.

#### **Bury St Edmunds**

- Compact market town and former abbey precinct with more recent housing to the north and west and retail development close to the centre. The town lies at the confluence of the rivers Lark and Linnet
- Abbey Gardens with ruins of great Benedictine abbey. Parish church or St James elevated to a cathedral in 20<sup>th</sup> century
- Early Norman grid street plan with numerous medieval and Tudor timber-framed buildings disguised behind Victorian and Georgian facades.
- Public open spaces include Angel Hill and Abbey Gardens, St Mary's Square, Cornhill and Butter Market
- Average tree cover
- Good central area pedestrian circulation, some barriers on edge of town
- Landscape setting comprises the valley sides of the rivers Lark and Linnet with the elevated land of Plateau Estate Farmlands, Wooded Village

Farmlands and Wooded Plateau Farmlands forming rural and wooded skylines to the town

- From the valley sides there are views across the town and abbey to the wider landscape. Also memorable views to the Cathedral and Abbey Gate while the 20<sup>th</sup> century Sugar beet factory on the edge of the town is also a key landmark.

### **Ipswich**

- Port town since Saxon times, located at the point where the river Gipping widens out to be the tidal River Orwell. It has an oval medieval core surrounded by large housing suburbs including redeveloped docks
- Significant green corridor along River Orwell
- Medieval core stretching from riverside quays through the Buttermarket & to Christchurch Park
- Christchurch Park is the town's key public open space. Smaller parks to the southeast include Alexandra and Holywells Parks; to the northwest include Whitehouse, Sherrington and Broomhills Parks; and to the west include Gippeswyk and Chantry parks. Rushmere Heath lies on the eastern edge and is used as a golf course
- Good tree cover downstream but poor in town
- Poor pedestrian links especially to station but good in historic core
- Landscape setting comprises the valley sides of the rivers Gipping and Orwell (Valley Settled Farmlands) while the higher plateau landscapes (Wooded Plateau Claylands and Wooded Plateau Farmlands) form the skyline
- Historic buildings act as landmarks including Christchurch Mansion, numerous medieval churches (St Lawrence's, St Margaret, St Mary at the Quay, St Mary at Elms, St Nicholas, St Peter, St Stephen), Wolsey's Gate, Custom House, Salthouse Hotel and former flour mill buildings on the Quayside. The glass-walled Willis Faber Building by Norman Foster has an international reputation. Marina masts on river Orwell and the new UCS Waterfront Building are also notable and add to local distinctiveness

### **Stowmarket**

- Historic market town located at the confluence of two rivers and on the major route of the A14 through central Suffolk. Industrial growth and modern extensions to the northwest, northeast and south influence its character and form
- Rattlesden River and River Gipping form green corridors penetrating the town
- Historic core centred around the Market Place and medieval church of St Mary and St Peter, with former manorial centres to the west and east at Abbot's Hall and Thorney Hall. More recent industrial development as a result of the railway is concentrated along the River Gipping and mainly comprised the malting but is now mixed
- Areas of open space include Abbot's Hall grounds (now part of the rural life museum) and school playing fields, allotments and cemetery which are scattered within the urban form but concentrated mainly to the north and west
- Tree cover most significant in Victorian parts of the town (along roads and in private gardens), less common in modern housing areas
- Landscape setting comprises Valley Meadowlands and Valley Settled Farmlands with the elevated plateau landscapes (Wooded Plateau Claylands and Wooded Plateau Farmlands) resulting in a distinctive skyline which frames the town
- Memorable views to the wider landscape setting and church towers

### Lowestoft

- Port with distinctive Victorian seafront development creating a town of two halves separated by Lake Lothing and joined by Bascule Bridge. To the north is the fishing port with distinctive lanes called 'scores' running at right angles to the beach, to the south is the seafront development with a beach and Claremont Pier
- Green corridor to the west through Lake Lothing to Oulton Broad
- The settlement's core comprises a mix of historic buildings with large areas of 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century growth with quays along the lake and in Waveney Dock and Hamilton Dock
- The Triangle, with its 'Eastern Sails' market canopies, is a compact 29<sup>th</sup> century town 'square' and central meeting point
- Poor tree cover across the settlement
- Poor pedestrian and cycle facilities within the town but good connection to longer distant routes - Gorleston to Lowestoft cycle route. However cycle travel plan pilot funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund is in place
- Landscape setting comprises Lowland Settled Farmland, Forested Estate Sandlands and Valley Broads landscape types
- The riverside and port vessels are distinctive and memorable features while there are key views to the cliff-top Victorian terraces

### Felixstowe

- Settlement is dominated by modern port development which originated in the Roman period. 19<sup>th</sup>/20<sup>th</sup> century resort development on the cliff with a notable seafront and areas of more recent housing development are also characteristic of the town today
- No major green corridors, but Landguard Nature Reserve forms green wedge into the sea
- The core of the town comprises Victorian & Edwardian houses particularly along the cliff front facing the sea
- Public open space comprises the sea frontage as well as some small 'greens'
- Few trees across the settlement
- Pedestrian & cycle facilities are generally poor
- Landscape setting comprises Harwich Harbour and open coast. Inland ridges of higher land extend off the Wooded Plateau Farmlands to the west to form the skyline setting while to the north the setting comprises the Forested Estate Sandlands landscape type
- Landguard Fort and the Martello Towers, the High Lighthouse, Spa Pavillion, port containers and quayside cranes are notable landmarks and add to the distinctiveness of the town

### Haverhill

- Medieval market town situated on the Stour Brook and enlarged with the arrival of the railway in the 1860s and through London overspill from the 1950s resulting in significant areas of residential development and factories inc. textiles, metallic fabrications and chemicals/biotech
- The main green corridor penetrating the town is that of Stour Brook although it is not a dominant or expansive corridor
- Historic core comprises the central retail area and high street although this has seen significant change
- Public open space comprises mainly sports playing fields



- Heavy clay subsoils result in a below average tree cover across the town
- Pedestrian and cycle facilities and movement – not known
- The setting of the town comprises the shallow valley of the Stour Brook surrounded by the rolling topography of the Wooded Village Farmlands landscape type
- Landmarks and views include the watertower located on the slopes above the town to the southwest and the church towers within the town centre

### **Sudbury**

- Medieval market town expanded with the opening of the Stour Navigation in 1709, the arrival of the railway in 1849 and London overspill from the 1950s
- The town is located on the northern banks of the Stour River valley and its water meadows which forms the main green corridor along the settlements southern flank
- Medieval core with numerous timber-framed buildings on a promontory in a loop of the River Stour, 20<sup>th</sup>-century industrial expansion on the east side and residential expansion into Great Cornard to the south
- Public open space comprises the meadows of the Sudbury Common Lands on the west side of the town. The Croft amenity area stretching down to the river is also important
- Tree cover is good throughout the town
- Pedestrian and cycle facilities and movement – not known
- Landscape setting comprises the valley meadowlands of the Stour and the elevated plateau which surrounds them comprising Wooded Plateau Farmlands and Valley Settled Farmland landscape types
- Key landmarks include St Gregory's Church and St Peter's Church. The town was the home town of Thomas Gainsborough – statue in market place adds to local distinctiveness

### **Newmarket**

- Medieval market town with a specialised horse-racing aspect since the 17<sup>th</sup> century with more recent housing and industrial development on its north side adjacent to the A14
- The layout of the town and green corridors strongly relates to the importance of the settlement for horse racing. The town has special horse routes so the horses can reach the gallops safely. These gallops and routes penetrate the town as green corridors
- Historic core comprises the main high street
- Public open space the race course on its east side and exercising gallops on the west side
- Tree cover is relatively good throughout the town
- Pedestrian and cycle facilities and movement – not known
- Landscape setting is dominated by the gallops and areas of stud farming. Heath and chalk downland forms distinctive hills which define the setting of the town comprising Chalk Hills and Scarps and Lowland Village Chalklands landscape types
- Key landmarks include the Palace House (remains of Stuart royal pavilion), National Horse Racing Museum and Jockey Club

### **Colchester**

- Roman city core, market town, port and garrison town
- Green corridors include the River Colne which penetrates the centre of the town as well as High Woods Country Park with links to areas north and south

- Distinctive Roman and Medieval core
- Castle Park, Leydon Park along with Wivenhoe Park on the outskirts of Colchester form important public open spaces
- Average tree cover across the area but good on the roads near the County High School and in parks and corridors
- Landscape setting comprises the River Colne and Valley Meadowlands while the adjacent elevated land of Wooded Plateau Farmlands and Plateau Estate Farmlands form the skyline
- Colchester Town Hall, Grand Theatre, All Saints Church tower, East Street medieval buildings, castle (built around the ruins of the Temple of Claudius), 'Jumbo' Water Tower, town wall, St John's Abbey Gate

### **Chelmsford**

- Market town
- The Chelmer Valley and West Park create green corridors which penetrate into the settlement
- Historic core
- Parks such as West Park, Central Park and Oaklands Park form main areas of public open space
- Good tree cover across the town
- Pedestrian & cycle barriers and movement – not known
- Landscape setting comprises the valley of the River Chelmer framed by the more elevated land of the Wooded Plateau Farmlands and Wooded Hills and Ridges
- Views to Chelmsford Cathedral is a key landmark of the town

### **Harlow**

- Small historic settlements encapsulated by extensive new development as part of London overspill resulting in an overall planned character comprising a series of neighbourhoods
- Green corridors reflect historic routes and sites and the planned character of the town seeks to ensure residential areas are within easy reach of open space and countryside.
- Contains a number of historic cores reflecting earlier settlements including historic roads, woods and ponds
- Public open spaces – not known
- Layout of the settlement underpasses into the town centre are psychological barriers to movement
- Landscape setting comprises the valley sides of the Stort and Wooded Plateau Farmlands onto which the town has expanded
- Harlow Art Trust has invested in sculptures for public places for over 50 years and these have become key landmarks

### **Basildon**

- New town which developed in response to London overspill
- There are no notable green corridors
- Core of the settlement is planned as part of the new town with a 1960s town square
- Public green spaces comprise Gloucester Park and Northlands Park with statues by Elizabeth Frink and Henry Moore. There are also many small open greens
- Average tree cover
- Pedestrian and cycle movement and barriers – not known

- Landscape setting comprises Lowland Settled Claylands and Wooded Hills and Ridges
- Town centre landmarks include Brooke House tower block and the statue mother & child in town square

### **Southend-on-sea**

- A Victorian and twentieth century seaside resort with suburban hinterland
- There are no notable green corridors
- The core of the town is modern
- Limited open space although beach and seafront, Pier Gardens on cliff overlooking the sea and some town centre squares e.g. Warrior Square contribute to the town
- Overall poor tree cover
- Pedestrian links up the cliff from the beach to the town are poor though the intervention on Pier Gardens will help, the Esplanade road also forms a barrier
- Landscape setting comprises the Thames Estuary to the south (Saltmarsh and Intertidal Flats) and Lowland Settled Farmlands and Wooded Hills and Ridges to the north
- Landmarks include Kursall, Pier, golden mile of amusement arcades and tower on pier Gardens

### **Stevenage**

- New town development, London overspill with land use zoning and distinctive neighbourhoods linked to phases of development
- Wide 'green' tree-fringed, landscape corridors, often on embankment or cutting created by main circulation routes and large grassland areas forming a network of green wedges
- The core of the town is mainly urban comprising the new 'town centre' and the Old Town High street – as such there is limited tree cover, shrubs or planters
- Town gardens and roundabout landscapes are common and extensive public open space includes Fairlands Valley Park
- Relatively high tree cover across the urban built form
- A comprehensive network of pedestrian and cycle routes although these are currently underused
- Landscape setting comprises Wooded Chalk Valleys and Wooded Plateau Farmlands landscape types
- Vistas to modern, typically medium scale, landmark features including the clock tower and the Joyride Statue

### **Welwyn Garden City**

- A Garden City founded in the 1920's and later developed as a New Town to deal with London overspill.
- River Lea and River Mimram create green corridors from east to west, while a smaller network of green corridors connect neighbourhoods and the wider surrounding countryside and are a defining quality of the Garden City.
- Core area set out as a modern garden city by Ebenezer Howard as a role model for lower-density urban development
- Scenic boulevard, named Parkway, penetrates the town centre, providing a setting to public buildings and shops (called the Campus)
- Good tree cover. Ebenezer Howard was said to have planted an apple tree in the garden of every original house

- Pedestrians and cyclists can move relatively easily
- Landscape setting comprises Lowland Settled Farmlands with Wooded Hills and Ridges to the north
- A notable view is from the White Bridge southwards down Parkway and a key landmark is the Welwyn viaduct, completed in 1850

### **Hatfield**

- Medieval market town now dominated by more recent expansion association with commercial development and new town for London overspill
- Small areas of linear open space exist throughout the town, particularly to the south. The disused railway, the Alban Way, is a key movement and wildlife corridor, linking the town with the surrounding countryside
- Medieval core dramatically expanded in 1930s with the arrival of the de Havilland aircraft company
- Public open spaces – Hatfield House and grounds form an important space for the town
- High tree cover throughout
- Relative ease of pedestrian & cycle movement
- Landscape setting comprises Lowland Settled Farmlands with Wooded Hills and Ridges to the east and south which form important treed backdrop to the town
- Key landmark includes Hatfield House and grounds

### **Hemel Hempstead**

- Market town and London overspill new town
- The Master Plan sought to use the river valleys as linear parks and to conceal the housing, behind tree belts. These elements now form important green corridors.
- The core of the town comprise the old High Street & market place which predate new town development
- Public open spaces includes the Watergardens constructed in 1962/3 and Lockers Park near the town centre area
- Good pedestrian routes between the town centre and Watergardens and reasonable cycling along the Nicky Line on the disused railway
- Landscape setting comprises Wooded Chalk Valleys and Wooded Plateau Farmlands
- Landmark features include the river bridges in the Watergardens, 'Magic roundabout'; Kodak House now apartment tower block

### **Watford**

- Market town
- River valley corridors and the canal through west side of the town provides green corridor the latter with substantial lakes and green space
- Mixed core of historic buildings and modern infill development
- Cassiobury Park in west of the town, the River Gade and the Grand Union canal run through the park. Oxney park at the southern edge helps separate town from settlement of Oxney, open fields to the east separate from Bushey
- The town has average tree cover
- Cycle paths include the Ebury Way (3-mile footpath and cycleway following the route of the old railway line). Part of National Cycle Route 6/61 from Slough to St Albans which provides a safe, off-road route passing through open country and wooded areas where there is abundant wildlife.

- Landscape setting is complex and well wooded comprising Wooded Chalk Valleys and Wooded Plateau Farmlands to the north and Wooded Hills and Ridges to the south
- Landmarks include Harlequin Shopping Centre, YMCA Tower and various residential newly built tower blocks

### **Luton**

- Industrial market town on river Lea with early 20<sup>th</sup> century growth based on the hatting industry and substantial post war expansion following the arrival of Vauxhall and development of the international airport. Town now closely linked with Dunstable and connected to London via major transport routes
- Substantial green corridor from the west, and in the south east. Wardown Park on the River Lea and Peoples Park link to a green corridor north through Apple Park, and north east to Stopsley Common Stockwood Park links south and south east to the wider countryside. Wauld's Bank and associated public open spaces area an important green corridor into the Marsh Farm Estate
- The core of the town has a mixed character with some old buildings including significant remains of the hatting industry, as well as new
- St George's Square provides an notable area of 'hard' urban open space
- Tree cover good in south, otherwise sparse reflecting chalk geology
- Cycle routes can be found around Marsh Farm although pedestrians and cyclists in the town have road and rail barriers.
- Landscape setting comprises Wooded Plateau Farmlands to the south and Chalk Hills and Scarps to the north (Chilterns AONB abuts the town to the north and east)
- Key landmarks include St Mary's Church, the Town Hall and Arndale Centre and hat factories around Bute Street and Guildford Street

### **Leighton Buzzard**

- Market town composed of two towns: Leighton Buzzard and Linslade (developed in 19<sup>th</sup> century), on either side of the Grand Union Canal.
- Green corridor existing along the river and extends into the centre although its water meadows are largely a hidden feature of the town
- Core of the settlement comprises the Market Square which is distinctive and the result of medieval town planning
- Informal green spaces include Tiddenfoot Waterside Park, the Ouzel Water Meadows and a number of woodlands north of the town on the Greensand Ridge
- Tree cover includes small woods including Knolls Wood, Linslade Wood, Bluebell Wood and areas along Heath Road, elsewhere tree cover is poor particularly on modern housing estates
- There are several difficult crossing points and barriers for pedestrians and cyclists
- Landscape setting comprises Lowland Village Farmlands with Wooded Sandstone Hills and Plateau Estate Farmlands to the north and west resulting in distinctive hills surrounding the town
- Landmarks include Moot Hall, Market Cross, All Saints Church and St Marys Church Old Linslade as well as the Grand Union Canal

### **Bedford**

- Historic market town which expanded with the coming of the railway in the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century and serviced the brick and iron industries. The Town

Bridge, High Street and St Mary's Church are the principal axis of the town, part of a street pattern with origin in the Saxon period

- The River Great Ouse runs through the town flowing west to east and bounds its northern side
- The historic core of Bedford is sited on both sides of the river although the northern side retains its historic character the southern side having been redeveloped
- The town has many attractive parks: Bedford Park, Embankment or Russell Park, Priory Country Park, Jubilee Park and all are close to the town centre. There is also informal greenspace in the river corridor
- Tree cover around the castle mound and along embankment to Russell Park is good, also around Bedford Park, Priory Country Park, Bedford Cemetery and river corridors. Street trees include London plane, limes and oaks. In places urban residential street planting is poor
- There are many cycle routes around Bedford including off road cycling paths and marked paths along roads although they be disjointed or poorly signed. Barriers to movements along heavily trafficked routes such as Bromham Road/Goldington Road and lack of east west routes from the railway station
- Landscape setting comprises Lowland Settled Farmland with heavy influence of the brick pits of Marston Vale and Wooded Plateau Farmlands to the north comprising a distinctive greensand ridge
- Views from the town bridge and from the adjoining river embankment are memorable. Landmarks include Elstow Abbey, St Paul's Church, the Suspension Bridge and Bedford Castle

#### **Dunstable – to be completed at a later date**

##### **Cambridge**

- Historic university town with limited modern development historically in satellite villages
- Green wedges of meadow landscape and open space penetrate city centre along the River Cam
- Historic urban core focused on university colleges and departments, narrow streets and vernacular buildings with areas of open space with restricted access
- Urban parks, grazed fen along the river, mown grassland areas, playing fields associated with schools/colleges
- High density of tree cover in open spaces and along major roads (concentrations of species along certain routes is a characteristic)
- Good segregated pedestrian and cycle network
- Landscape setting comprises Lowland Village Farmlands to the north and west and Lowland Village Chalklands and Chalk Hills and Scarps to the south and east
- Views to colleges and Addenbrooke's hospital are key landmarks

##### **Huntingdon**

- Historic medieval town situated on the north bank of the Great Ouse which grew significantly post war partly through planned town expansion to accommodate London over-spill
- Great Ouse river forms an important green corridor through the town
- Historic core has been fragmented by modern infill development and road infrastructure especially the central one way ring road

- Few public open spaces within the town although Hinchingsbrooke Country Park forms an important resource on the edge of the town
- Good tree cover west of the town, otherwise average to poor
- Pedestrian and cycle routes across town are poor although routes out to further afield i.e. Cambridge and Peterborough are improving
- Landscape setting comprises Valley Meadowlands, Lowland Village Farmlands and Wooded Village Farmlands
- Key landmarks include market square with Oliver Cromwell's and Samuel Pepys' old school

### **St Neots**

- St Neots is an historic market town established on the banks of the River Great Ouse along with a number of other small village communities including East Socon, Eaton Ford, Eynesbury and Little Paxton.
- The River Great Ouse acts as a linear park through the centre of the town – a landscape and leisure corridor that, conceptually unites the town
- Historic cores include the town centre and villages at Eynesbury and The Eatons
- Large areas of open space including the River Great Ouse, Hen Brook and Priory Hill Park permeate the urban fabric
- Tree cover is average through the river corridor, poor elsewhere
- The riverside does not seem accessible or inviting and cycle routes are not well developed
- Landscape setting comprises Valley Meadowlands, Lowland Village Farmlands and Wooded Plateau Farmlands to the west
- Landmarks and views: Parish church, Oast House by Priory Centre

### **Ely**

- Compact historic cathedral city with more recent housing development to the north and west
- River Great Ouse forms green corridor to the east of the city
- Historic core centred around the cathedral, main street and market square
- Public open space in central areas of the town associated with Cathedral, public park and riverside with playing fields to the north and west
- Tree cover is moderate to poor in more recent extensions to the town but good in the area around the Cathedral
- Reasonable cycle network connecting to longer distant countryside routes
- Railway, river and A10 create barriers to pedestrian and cycle movement
- Landscape setting comprises Lowland Village Farmlands and Planned Fen
- Elevated views out of the town across the fen landscape are characteristic as are memorable and numerous views to the Cathedral

### **Peterborough**

- Historic cathedral city expanded as a new town development which grew rapidly in the 1970s and 1980s amalgamating earlier villages with a second major phase of growth in the 1990's
- River Nene flows through the City extending a green wedge from Nene Valley park
- Central core is one of contrasts - historic core associated with Cathedral and Minster Precincts and modern indoor shopping centre with altered historic street layout
- Public open space comprises a mixture of playing fields and, urban parks
- Tree cover is moderate to poor

- Main road network or parkways form physical barriers to pedestrians and cyclists. However the Green Wheel cycle network provides over 45 miles of continuous sustainable routes around the city
- Landscape setting comprises Planned Fen to the east and Wooded Limestone Wolds to the west
- Key views to Cathedral are distinctive although not numerous