

# Land north of Stevenage: Landscape Sensitivity Study

Final report to  
North Hertfordshire District Council  
Prepared by  
Land Use Consultants

February 2010



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**LAND NORTH OF STEVENAGE:  
LANDSCAPE SENSITIVITY  
STUDY – FINAL REPORT**

**Prepared for North Hertfordshire  
District Council  
by  
Land Use Consultants**

**February 2010**



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### **Acknowledgements**

This study was steered by officers from North Hertfordshire District Council – John Ironside (Strategic Sites and Allocations Manager), Helen Leitch (Landscape Architect and Urban Designer) and Karen Allen (Senior Planning Officer), with input from Nigel Smith of Stevenage Borough Council. The study was produced by LUC in consultation with the steering group. LUC's team comprised Kate Ahern, Andrew Tempany and Rowan Longhurst, with graphic support from Graham Savage and Tom Ginnett.



# I. INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

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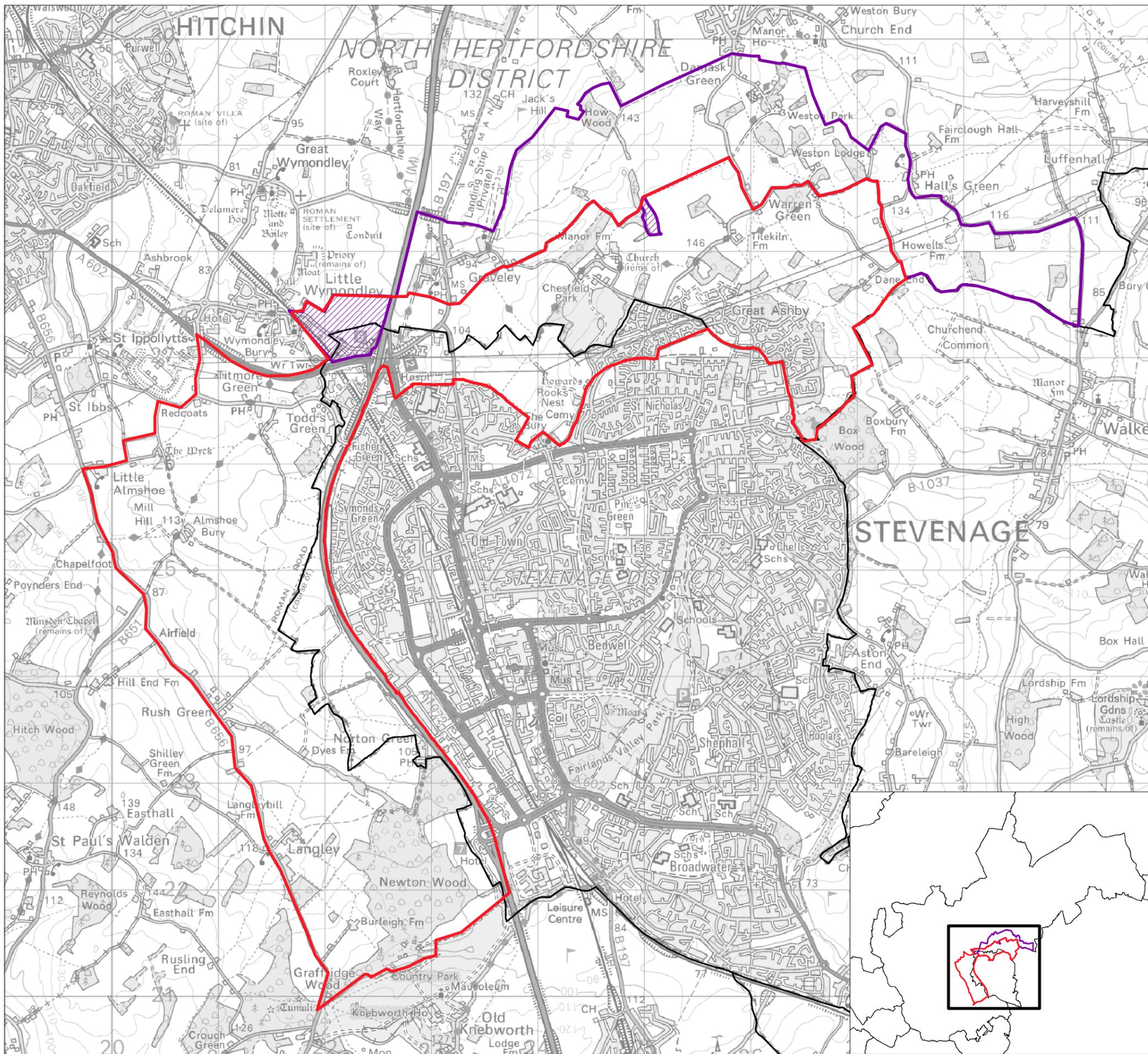
- 1.1. Land Use Consultants (LUC) was commissioned in November 2009 by North Hertfordshire District Council (NHDC) to undertake a landscape sensitivity analysis in relation to land north of Stevenage, within the green belt, and to the north of the Stevenage and North Hertfordshire Action Plan (SNAP) area.
- 1.2. This study has been commissioned in response to the identification of Stevenage as Key Centre for Development and Change through the Government's Growth Points programme. The area to the north of Stevenage is to be a location for significant change in the period to 2026, with approximately 8,500 dwellings on land to the north of the town within the SNAP area. This study addresses land to the north of the SNAP area, in light of potential residential development pressures in the period from 2026-2031. It evaluates the sensitivity of the local landscape to that type and scale of change and offers guidance on how to focus the change most positively with respect to landscape character, sense of place and local distinctiveness.
- 1.3. The work is to be used to inform the development of preferred options within the Local Development Framework Core Strategy (and future site allocations), in relation to the SNAP area.

## CONTEXT AND SCOPE

### Site location and context

- 1.4. The study area is located immediately to the north of the northern part of the SNAP area, between Stevenage and small rural outlying villages such as Weston and Graveley. The study area comprises a rich and diverse rural landscape mosaic including gently sloping chalk plateaux around Weston Park, areas of historic parkland, distinctive ancient broadleaf woodland and wooded skylines, and landscapes with significant cultural associations (EM Forster – Howard's End and 'Forster Country). The local landscape is crossed by a network of narrow winding, often sunken lanes, which impart an intimate spatial character and which connect small, historic villages such as Weston and Graveley. The location and context of the study area is shown on **Figure 1.1**. Further information on landscape character is provided in **section 3**.

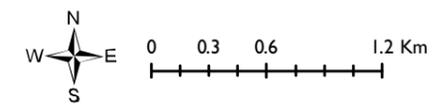




**Stevenage Landscape Sensitivity Study**  
**Figure I.1: Site Location and Context**

**Key**

-  Study area
-  Sites within SNAP for Landscape Sensitivity Study
-  SNAP boundary
-  Local Authority boundaries



Source: North Herts

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## **Key study objectives**

1.5. Key objectives of this study are as follows:

- To review earlier landscape sensitivity analysis undertaken by the Council in relation to the settlement fringes of the principal North Hertfordshire towns and Stevenage, refining and developing the methodology to reflect recent developments and best practice (including a brief review of 15% of the sites previously visited, with particular reference to Forster Country and the associated green lung to the north of Stevenage);
- To assess the sensitivity of the landscape of the study area to large scale residential development, and to provide sensitivity judgments, to inform future spatial planning and preferred options within the Local Development Framework Core Strategy;
- To provide guidance to focus change in the most positive terms, for parts of the study area which are judged to have a lower landscape sensitivity to the change proposed.

## **Relationship to other studies**

1.6. Account has been taken of the Stevenage and North Hertfordshire Landscape Character Assessment (LCA)<sup>1</sup> and the North Hertfordshire District Green Infrastructure Plan<sup>2</sup>.

### ***Stevenage and North Hertfordshire Landscape Character Assessment***

1.7. A detailed 1:10,000 scale district wide LCA (based on Landscape Description Units or LDUs) provides a suite of strategic landscape design and management guidance in relation to the landscape character areas. This is reflected as appropriate in this sensitivity analysis and the supporting guidance.

### ***Green Infrastructure Plan***

1.8. The North Hertfordshire District Green Infrastructure Plan provides a strategic framework and supporting design principles for the SNAP area and for the wider landscape. This articulates a landscape character led approach to green infrastructure planning and ensure that development planned in parallel with green infrastructure responds to local distinctiveness and the place-making agenda.

1.9. Appropriate account has been taken of the green infrastructure proposals and supporting design principles in the sensitivity analysis and landscape guidance.

## **REVIEW OF EARLIER SENSITIVITY ANALYSIS WORK**

1.10. The earlier draft Landscape Sensitivity Study produced by NHDC provides a useful starting point. It was developed using approaches discussed in the former

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<sup>1</sup> Babbie Group, 2004 **North Hertfordshire and Stevenage Landscape Character Assessment**

<sup>2</sup> LUC, 2009 **North Hertfordshire District Green Infrastructure Plan**

Countryside Agency's Topic Paper 6<sup>3</sup>. The earlier study identifies a number of factors, which contribute to landscape character as a whole, such as cultural and ecological factors, as a basis for the sensitivity analysis. Factors are evaluated using a three point scale (fed into a matrix), which presents a robust, transparent approach, in accordance with recommendations made in Topic Paper 6. In terms of land units, the study is very fine grained, using individual land parcels or small aggregations thereof.

- 1.11. In reviewing previous work and in developing the method for this study, regard has been given to a number of recent developments in landscape sensitivity analysis. The thinking regarding this subject is constantly evolving, and account has been taken of the Regional Landscape Sensitivity Method currently being developed for the East of England Region.
- 1.12. The North Hertfordshire and Stevenage Landscape Character Assessment provides a good basis for the study, with some sub divisions to reflect the more local scale of this study. We have used this to develop the study, as distinct from considering sensitivity of individual small scale land parcels (the approach adopted by the previous landscape sensitivity study in relation to the edges of the four towns within the district, produced by NHDC). Whilst the approach adopted in the previous NHDC study is thorough, it may lead to the danger of considering units in isolation. Therefore within the landscape character units defined for this study we have instead identified smaller areas of local variation or particular distinctiveness within the units, in undertaking the sensitivity analysis.
- 1.13. As requested by the brief, the method developed for this study was piloted on a 15% sample of landscape units surveyed as part of the earlier study (focussing on the 'green lung' north of Forster Country). Findings from this exercise are summarised at **Appendix 2**. The method was also applied to two additional sites within the SNAP area (hatched purple on **Figure 1.1**).

## REPORT STRUCTURE

- 1.14. The remainder of this report is structured as follows:
  - Section 2: Study methodology
  - Section 3: Study area – landscape and environmental context
  - Section 4: Landscape sensitivity analysis and guidance
  - Section 5: Conclusions and recommendations in relation to the SNAP boundary, additional area of search and 'developable areas'.

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<sup>3</sup> Former Countryside Agency/Scottish Natural Heritage, 2002 **Topic Paper 6 : Techniques and criteria for judging sensitivity and capacity**

## 2. STUDY METHODOLOGY

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2.1. This sets out the method used in undertaking the study. The key stages were as follows:

- Desk study and data review
- Landscape classification
- Criteria definition
- Field survey
- Sensitivity analysis
- Landscape guidance

### DESK STUDY AND DATA REVIEW

2.2. This involved review of the earlier landscape sensitivity study method and the landscape character context for the study area (presented in section 3), to focus both method development and an understanding of landscape issues to inform selection of sensitivity criteria to test through fieldwork.

### LANDSCAPE CLASSIFICATION

2.3. The existing district landscape character areas were sub divided into smaller scale landscape units for the purposes of the study (presented at section 4). Sub divisions were made after reviewing a variety of GIS data, such as Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC), heritage designations and the nature conservation context of the study area.

### CRITERIA DEFINITION

2.4. With reference to the emerging work being undertaken by LUC on behalf of Landscape East in developing a Regional Landscape Sensitivity Method, and to the North Hertfordshire District Landscape Character Assessment, a series of criteria have been defined to focus the analysis. These have also been informed by our knowledge of the area through the Green Infrastructure Plan. The criteria are presented, with explanation, in three separate sections, below. These are:

- Analysis criteria – identifying landscape attributes.
- Development models for the analysis.
- Landscape sensitivity scale and definitions.

#### **Analysis criteria – identifying landscape attributes**

2.5. The following landscape attributes have been used to assess sensitivity to residential development:

### ***Landscape scale***

Whether human scale elements (e.g. built form and settlement, small scale landscape features, structure and pattern) are present within the landscape. Landscapes of large scale without a human scale presence generally have a **higher** sensitivity to residential development.

### ***Landform and topography***

Presence or absence of landform variation. For example, whilst rolling/undulating landforms may be more able to contain visual impact of development, they would have a **higher** sensitivity to residential development in landscape terms than flat landforms or those with comparatively little topographic variation.

### ***Landscape pattern, complexity***

Level of landscape structure and field pattern variation. For example a 'mosaic' landscape comprising a complex array of different landscape elements will have a **higher** sensitivity to residential development than will a simple landscape.

### ***Cultural pattern and time depth***

Indicators include aspects of the historic landscape/historic environment, such as parkland, historic processes which have shaped the landscape, and scheduled monuments and their setting. A landscape with a strong sense of 'time depth' (historic continuity) and intact cultural pattern will have a **higher** sensitivity to residential development than a landscape where cultural pattern is eroded or comparatively absent.

### ***Settlement pattern***

Consideration of settlement form, density and age/vernacular. Landscapes of 'unsettled' character or those displaying a small scale and traditional settlement character (e.g. nucleated or dispersed) will have a **higher** sensitivity to residential development than will landscapes characterised by modern settlement and settlement 'edge' influences.

### ***Skyline character***

Skylines defined by distinctive landforms, woodland or a lack of development will be **more** sensitive to residential development than those which are characterised by development.

### ***Perceptual qualities***

These include movement, tranquillity, sense of remoteness and aesthetic attributes such as interplay of colour, texture, light and reflection. Landscapes with a higher degree of remoteness and tranquillity will have a **higher** sensitivity to residential development.

## Development models used to inform the analysis

- 2.6. Given that development proposed is residential development as part of large scale potential future urban extension to Stevenage, a number of development models/densities have been defined to inform the landscape guidance produced as part of the analysis. Whilst the work has considered large scale residential development in a more general sense (in the context of medium to high density residential development) for the purpose of assessing landscape sensitivity, the following three models have informed thinking and the production of supporting guidance to focus change:
- ‘Aspirational’ or ‘parkland’ housing, to settlement edges – landscape and parkland interface of dispersed and low density character (max 2 storeys, approx 8-12 dwellings per hectare).
  - Medium to high density, PPS3 type scenario of 2-2.5 storey dwellings arranged at a density range of 30-50 dwellings per hectare.
  - High density ‘settlement core’/neighbourhood centre type housing including 3-4 storey townhouses and flats. Density in excess of 50 dwellings per hectare.
- 2.7. Reference has been made where appropriate to these specific models in the landscape guidance in relation to settlement edges for individual landscape character units, at Chapter 4.

## Landscape sensitivity scale and definitions

- 2.8. The following 5 point sensitivity scale was developed and applied to the landscape units in relation to the landscape attributes.

Sensitivity level	Definition
<b>High</b>	<b>Key characteristics</b> of the landscape are <b>highly vulnerable</b> to the type of change being assessed, with such change likely to result in a <b>significant change in character</b> .
<b>Moderate-high</b>	<b>Many</b> of the <b>key landscape characteristics</b> are <b>vulnerable</b> to the type of change being assessed, with such change likely to result in a <b>potentially significant change in character</b> . <b>Considerable</b> care will be needed in locating and designing change within the landscape.
<b>Moderate</b>	<b>Some</b> of the key characteristics of the landscape <b>may be vulnerable</b> to the type of change being assessed. Although the landscape may have <b>some ability to absorb change</b> , some <b>alteration in character may result</b> . <b>Considerable</b> care may be needed in locating and designing change within the landscape.
<b>Moderate-low</b>	The <b>majority</b> of the landscape characteristics are <b>less likely</b> to be adversely affected by change. Although change can <b>potentially be more easily</b> accommodated, <b>care would still be needed</b> in locating and designing change in the landscape. There is an opportunity to <b>create and plan for new character</b> .

Sensitivity level	Definition
<b>Low</b>	Key characteristics of the landscape are <b>less likely</b> to be <b>adversely affected</b> by change. Change can <b>potentially be more easily accommodated</b> without significantly altering character. <b>Sensitive design</b> would <b>still be needed</b> in relation to accommodating change in the landscape. There is an opportunity to <b>create</b> and <b>plan for new character</b> .

## FIELD SURVEY

- 2.9. The landscape attributes of the landscape units, and their sensitivities to the development models, were tested through field survey and recorded on a survey form (shown at **Appendix I**). The northern boundary of the SNAP area was also reviewed as part of the field survey analysis, noting potential boundary changes in light of the analysis. The site was visited in early December 2009 by qualified and experienced Landscape Architects including a Chartered Member of the Landscape Institute (CMLI). Field survey was undertaken from public vantage points, rights of way and public highways within and in the vicinity of the study area, supported by photographs, map annotations and sketches, as appropriate.

## SENSITIVITY ANALYSIS

- 2.10. With reference to the analysis criteria and 5 point sensitivity scale defined above, an overall landscape sensitivity judgement was defined for each landscape unit, supported by colour coded GIS mapping. The judgement included a narrative of what is sensitive, and why, to help inform guidance.

### A note on baseline for the sensitivity analysis

- 2.11. Given that the detailed form and density of proposed development within the SNAP area is still largely unknown and cannot be predicted until more detailed spatial proposals emerge, the baseline for the assessment has been taken as conditions on site in December 2009.

## LANDSCAPE GUIDANCE

- 2.12. The overall sensitivity judgement was used to identify whether development was appropriate, whether the boundary for the area of search should be reconsidered, and the form any future development should take with respect to landscape character and management, settlement and landscape interface and green infrastructure.

### 3. STUDY AREA: LANDSCAPE AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONTEXT

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- 3.1. This section sets out the landscape context of the study area in terms of landscape character and relevant environmental designations. In respect of landscape character, relevant information in relation to biodiversity and cultural pattern has been included, insofar as this relates to character.

#### LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

- 3.2. This summarises national, regional and local landscape character context. Landscape character context is shown at **Figure 3.1**.

#### National Character Context

- 3.3. The study area lies to the western edge of National Character Area 86- *South Suffolk and North Essex Clayland*, with a small proportion to the west falling within NCA 87- *East Anglian Chalk*. The key characteristics relevant to the study areas are as follows:

#### **NCA 86 South Suffolk and North Essex Clayland**

- 3.4. This is a broadly flat clay plateau frequently dissected by shallow river valleys creating a gently undulating landscape. Landcover is characterised by a largely arable landscape interspersed with pockets of woodland, and some pasture along valley floors. There is a sense of the historic landscape structure with irregular field patterns apparent (despite rationalisation) and areas of remnant Ancient Countryside.
- 3.5. Narrow, winding and often sunken roads form a network of green lanes which are often lined with hedgerows and wide verges, the impact of Dutch Elm disease is apparent.
- 3.6. Settlement pattern is characterised by small scattered farmsteads, hamlets and villages, often clustered around commons. Local vernacular consists of timber framed and colour-washed houses with the medieval street plan still apparent within larger villages. Here, grander Georgian houses and elaborate timberframed houses are also characteristic. Several large estates and associated buildings result in areas demonstrating strong parkland and estate influence.

#### **NCA 87 East Anglian Chalk**

- 3.7. Directly adjacent to the study area lies the National Character area 87- *East Anglian Chalk*. The character of this NCA has a direct and noticeable influence on the landscape character of the study area and key characteristics are summarised below:
- 3.8. A large scale rolling downland landscape largely under arable cultivation and muted in colour. The underlying chalk geology results in distinctive white soils and is evident in building materials. Woodland cover is largely characterised by clumps which scatter hilltops and distinctive beech lined roads, which are often long and straight, a legacy of Roman settlement.

- 3.9. Settlements are often located along valley floors and demonstrate the local vernacular of white or yellow brick. This is a largely rural landscape with few towns and villages retaining their traditional character.

### **Regional landscape framework**

- 3.10. Within the East of England Regional Landscape Framework, four landscape character types occur throughout the study area, they are as follows:

#### ***Lowland Village Farmlands***

- 3.11. This character type is defined by large scale arable fields on open ridges bisected by a series of valleys. Scattered blocks of woodland result in significant woodland cover, reinforced by well trimmed hedgerows. Long distance views are limited due to the screening effect of woodland cover and landform. Settlement pattern is characterised by dispersed historic villages with little modern development.

#### ***Chalk Slopes and Ridges***

- 3.12. Steep scarp slopes are overlain with shallow chalky soils and covered by a mix of vegetation types including mixed woodland and scrub, chalk grassland and open arable farmland. Views are often panoramic from open, elevated positions due to the exposed character, contrasting with wooded areas which are more intimate. There is a general absence of settlement on the higher scarp although some residential and recreational development occurs on lower scarp slopes.

#### ***Wooded Plateau Farmlands***

- 3.13. This is a gently undulating well wooded landscape overlain by heavy clay soils. Land cover is dominated by large scale arable irregular fields and is interspersed with small historic villages and hamlets. There is a strong cultural and historic character associated with the medieval layout of winding roads and lanes.

#### ***Wooded Chalk Valleys***

- 3.14. Steep sided undulating valleys, with tributary valleys forming gentle combs of distinctive downland character. Valleys are either winterbournes or associated with permanent water channels. Species rich hedgerows define a varied enclosure pattern, complemented by fragmented ancient woodlands, creating a well wooded, intimate landscape character. The landscape is settled in character with a dispersed pattern of villages, hamlets and larger settlements, with the valleys often forming transport corridors.

### **Local landscape character**

- 3.15. The North Hertfordshire and Stevenage Landscape Character Assessment has been used as a source of baseline information on the landscape character of the study area. The landscape character areas affecting the study area are as follows:
- 39 *Middle Beane Valley*
  - 215 *Wymondley - Titmore Green*

- 216 *Arlesey- Great Wymondley*
- 219 *Baldock Gap*
- 220 *Weston Park*
- 221 *Upper Beane Valley Tributaries*

3.16. The following descriptions highlight the key aspects of the character of the local landscape.

#### **Area 39 Middle Beane Valley**

- 3.17. This is an open undulating landscape characterised by medium to large scale arable fields. Vegetation cover is dominated by small grouped woodlands along the tributary valley heads and on the upper slopes adjacent to Stevenage, linked by hedges. Mature and semi mature woodland effectively screens the built edge of Stevenage.
- 3.18. Views are expansive from the edges of the Beane Valley and, despite its proximity to Stevenage, there is a strong sense of remoteness with few settlements.

#### **Area 215 Wymondley – Titmore Green**

- 3.19. This is a rolling chalk landscape, often of intimate scale, with a historic settlement pattern linked by winding lanes, in close proximity to strategic transport corridors such as the A1(M) and A602. A settled character is created by small scattered hamlets and farmsteads often using traditional vernacular materials.

#### **Area 216 Arlesey-Great Wymondley**

- 3.20. This is a rolling arable landscape characterised by large scale fields with occasional scattered plantations and copses. It covers an area surrounding Letchworth Garden City and forms the setting to the east of Hitchin.
- 3.21. Pockets of horse grazing and other ‘edge’ influences such as golf courses and caravan parks can be found on the settlement edges. The presence of the A1(M) to the east is strong as are pylon lines to the south. The character area is crossed by several ‘A’ roads linking settlements, which creates a strong sense of movement and activity.
- 3.22. This character area has a sparse covering of recorded nature conservation sites.

#### **Area 219 Baldock Gap**

- 3.23. Landform is characterised by a steeply sloping chalk scarp incised by local dry valleys, although some carry streams. Large scale arable fields dominate the landscape, but are interspersed with localised patches of pasture land. There is sparse woodland coverage although occasional shelterbelts and small plantations are visible in the landscape. Significant wildlife value is associated with the calcareous grassland communities on the scarp slopes.
- 3.24. Small sunken lanes thread the landscape following contours, contrasting with the Roman Road (B197) which cuts the scarp and runs parallel to the A1 (M) in the east.

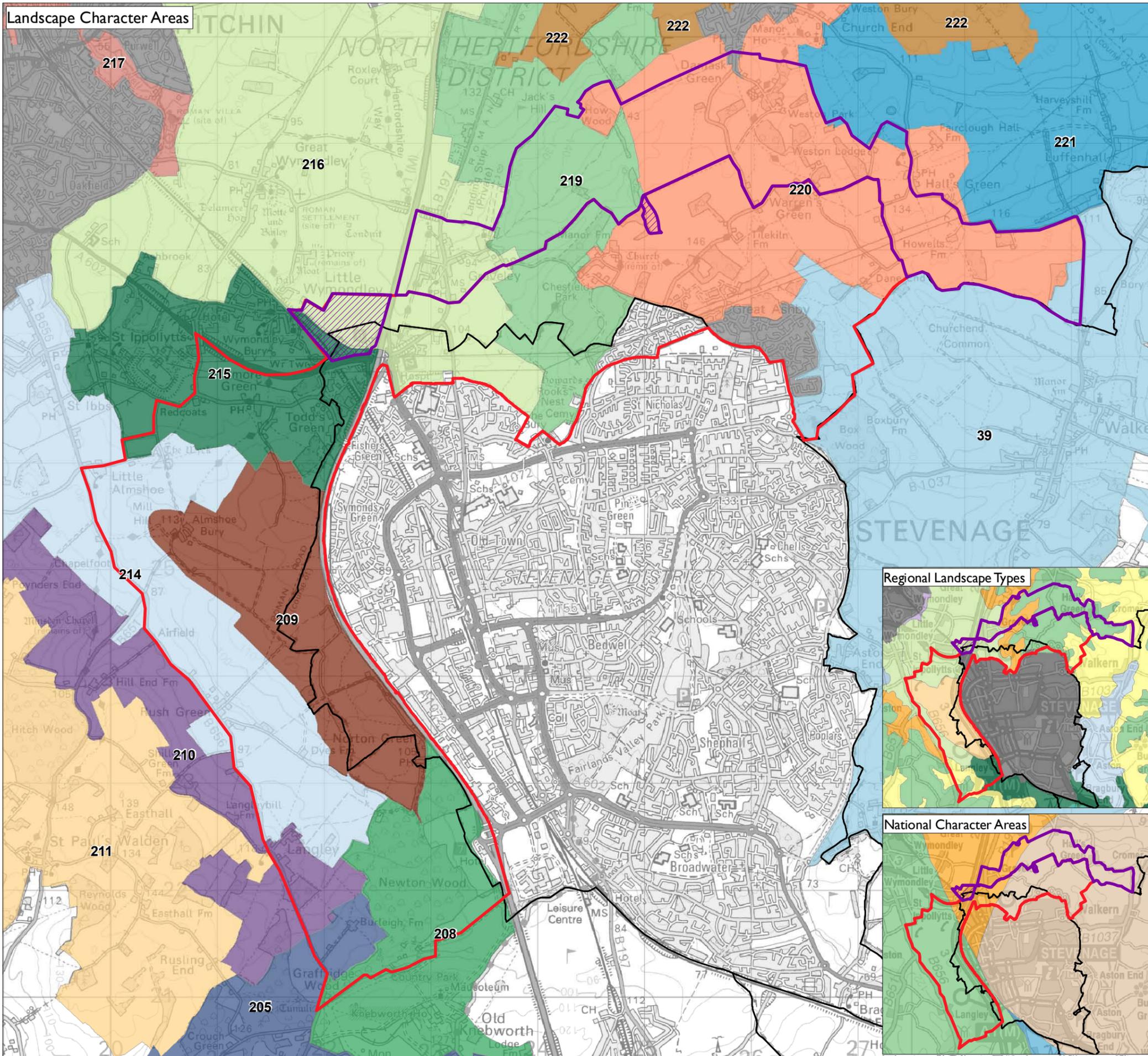
- 3.25. The historic settlement pattern is reflected by a scattering of small farmsteads and the medieval village of Clothall in the north. To the south the area known as Forster Country fringes the northern edge of Stevenage and forms the setting for the historic hamlet of Chesfield.

#### **Area 220 Weston Park**

- 3.26. This is a gently rolling arable chalk landscape with significant areas of ancient deciduous woodland, largely associated with the Weston Park estate and Weston village. The landscape scale is intricate and enclosed due to woodland cover, an extensive network of winding lanes and interlocking pattern of fields, lanes and curvilinear boundaries; this creates a sense of enclosure and enhances the character of the landscape. Scattered ponds are visible, notably within the Weston Park area, where they are surrounded by clusters of woodland and parkland exotics, creating a strong parkland identity.
- 3.27. Scattered farmsteads, the historic medieval village of Weston and estate buildings add to the historic and cultural landscape character and result in a sense of a settled landscape.

#### **Area 221 Upper Beane Valley Tributaries**

- 3.28. A bowl like landform characterised by underlying chalk geology. Steep sloping chalk valley sides are incised by watercourses. Fields are medium to large scale and of an irregular pattern. The character area is sparsely settled with the area largely under arable cultivation, with scattered hedgerows, waterside trees and small blocks of relict ancient woodland contributing to the landscape structure.



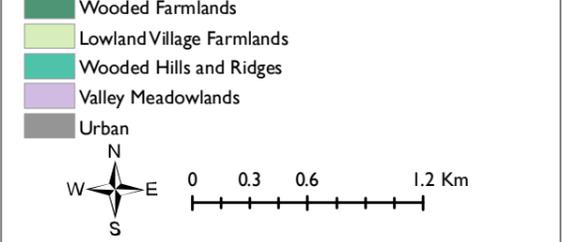
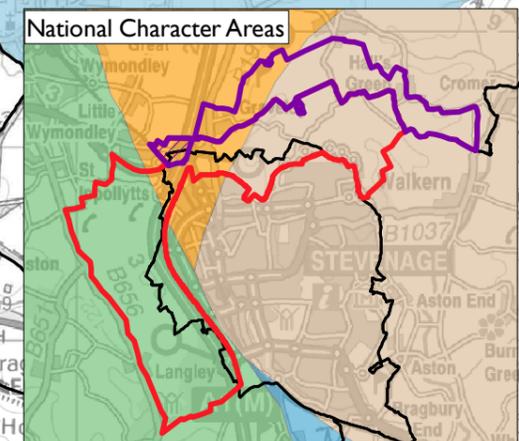
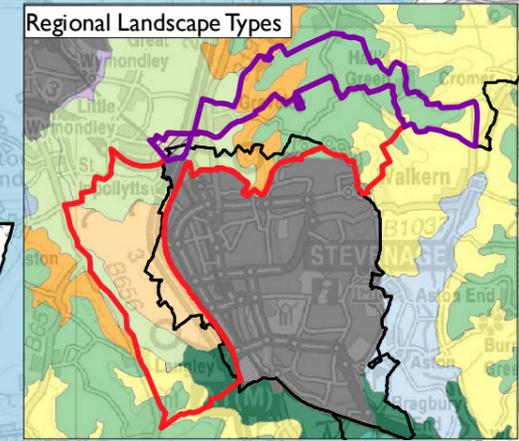
# Stevenage Landscape Sensitivity Study

Figure 3.1: Landscape Character Areas Context

- Key**
- Study area
  - Sites within SNAP for Landscape Sensitivity Study
  - SNAP boundary
  - Local Authority boundaries

- Landscape Character Areas**
- Urban areas
  - 39: Middle Beane Valley
  - 205: Codicote Plateau
  - 208: Knebworth Parklands
  - 209: Almshoe Plateau
  - 210: Langley Scarp
  - 211: Offley St Paul's Walden
  - 214: Langley Valley
  - 215: Wymondley and Titmore Green
  - 216: Arlesey - Great Wymondley
  - 217: River Oughton and Purwell Valleys
  - 219: Baldock Gap
  - 220: Weston Plateau Parklands
  - 221: Upper Beane Valley Tributaries
  - 222: Weston - Green End Plateau

- | Regional Landscape Types   | National Character Areas               |
|----------------------------|--|
| Chalk Slopes and Ridges    | Chilterns                              |
| Rolling Chalk Hills        | East Anglian Chalk                     |
| Wooded Chalk Valleys       | Northern Thames Basin                  |
| Settled Chalk Valleys      | South Suffolk and North Essex Clayland |
| Lowland Village Chalklands |  |
| Wooded Plateau Farmlands   |  |
| Wooded Farmlands           |  |
| Lowland Village Farmlands  |  |
| Wooded Hills and Ridges    |  |
| Valley Meadowlands         |  |
| Urban                      |  |



Source: North Herts, East of England, Natural England  
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## **Green infrastructure**

- 3.29. The North Hertfordshire District Green Infrastructure Plan (GI Plan) identifies a number of characteristics, opportunities and principles for green infrastructure in and around the SNAP area. Relevant points noted in the GI Plan are summarised below:
- The rural setting of the SNAP area is identified in the GI plan as an important part of its character, in terms of topography, woodland cover and the landscape structure of hedgerows, hedgerow and field trees and wooded parklands. The GI Plan notes that landscape structure should be conserved, enhanced or reinforced through restoration of planting for connectivity, and also to create a positive landscape edge to development, with the potential to influence design for any development within and adjacent to the SNAP area.
  - The importance of the landscape setting of local parkland estates such as Chesfield Park is highlighted in the GI Plan.
  - The GI Plan also identifies local landscapes with significant cultural associations, e.g. the area around Forster Country.
- 3.30. The GI Plan makes reference to the value of existing woodlands in the study area in terms of shading and cooling and enhancing habitat connectivity.
- 3.31. The GI Plan identifies the potential implications of climate change for the structural landscape palette, and that this may be accommodated through a broader native planting palette in future landscape proposals and green spaces associated with development in the SNAP area.
- 3.32. A key green space opportunity is the use of the landscape setting of parkland estates, such as Chesfield Park, as the focus for new green space provision (new amenity and semi natural green space).
- 3.33. There is the opportunity to consider local landscapes with cultural associations such as Forster Country as potential sites for semi natural green space within the SNAP. Forster Country forms an important green wedge which sweeps into Stevenage in the north and could provide the opportunity for enhanced landscape linkages to other GI components.
- 3.34. Relevant potential projects identified in the Green Infrastructure Plan are:
- Country Park and green lung (area of search) at Forster Country (GI Plan ref SN3), including strategic SUDS provision;
  - Local level greenspace/pocket park to the northern boundary of the SNAP area (GI plan ref SN10);
  - Structural landscape buffering (native woodland) in relation to the potential urban extension area of search (GI Plan ref SN1);

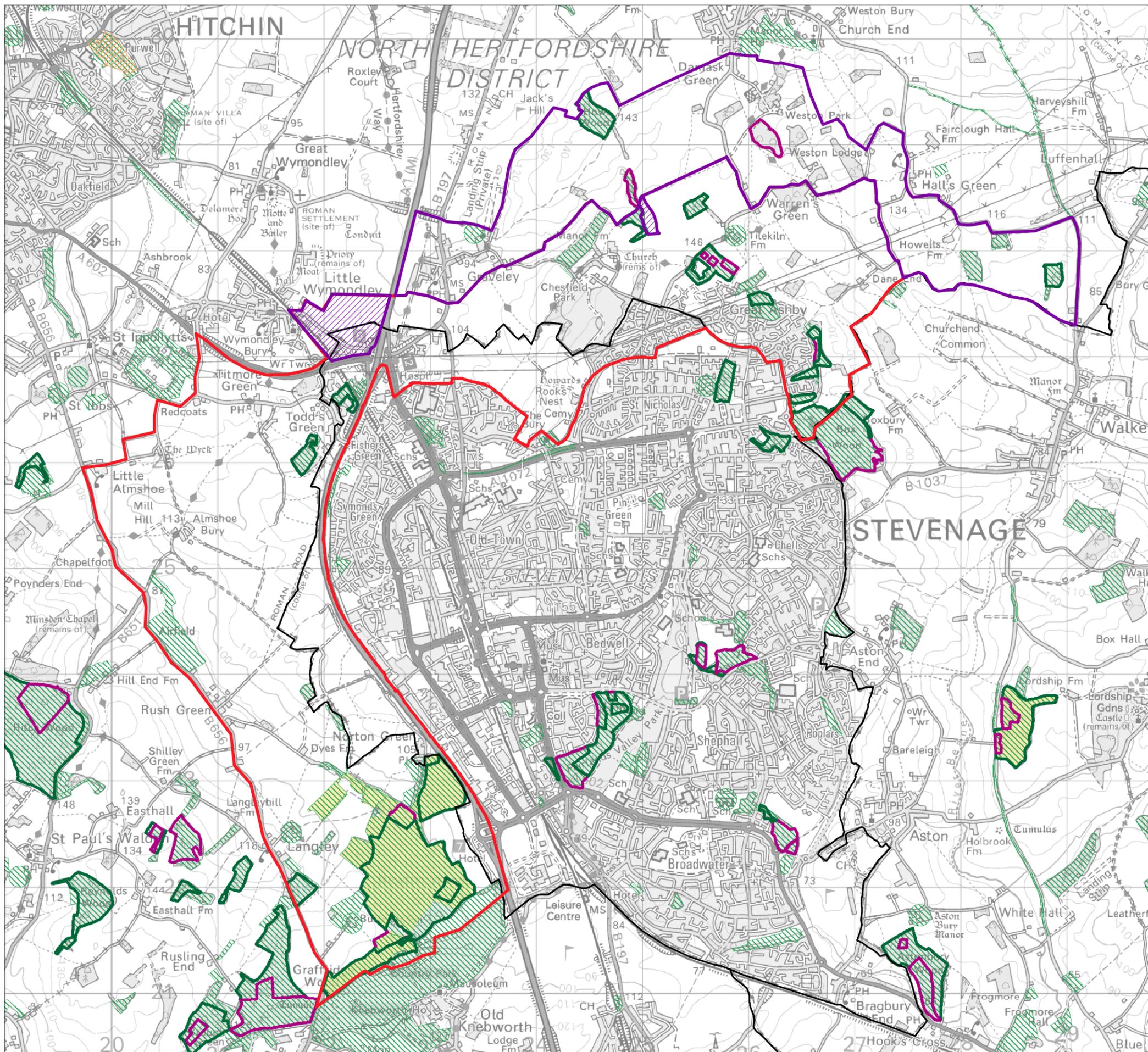
- Local level green links and connections between existing parts of the Path and Right of Way (PROW) network, to the north of SNAP – GI Plan refs SN16 and SN17);
- Enhanced connections over the A1(M) for Sustrans Route 12, including land bridge.

### **Nature conservation designations**

- 3.35. There are few areas which are designated for their nature conservation value within the study area, however several areas of ancient woodland are designated as District Wildlife sites. These are shown on **Figure 3.2**.

### **Cultural heritage**

- 3.36. In the vicinity of the study area, the historic environment and associated interest (notably at Graveley and Weston) is highlighted through extensive building listing. The Priory at Little Wymondley is designated as a Scheduled (Ancient) Monument, although no cultural heritage designations cover the study area itself. The cultural heritage context is shown on **Figure 3.3**.

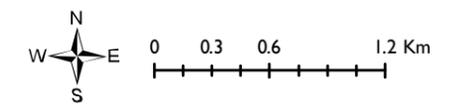


# Stevenage Landscape Sensitivity Study

## Figure 3.2: Nature Conservation Context

### Key

-  Study area
-  Sites within SNAP for Landscape Sensitivity Study
-  SNAP boundary
-  Local Authority boundaries
-  Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs)
-  Local Nature Reserves (LNRs)
-  District Wildlife Sites
-  Ancient & Semi-Natural Woodland
-  Ancient Replanted Woodland



Source: North Herts, Natural England

Date: 02/02/2010  
Revision:



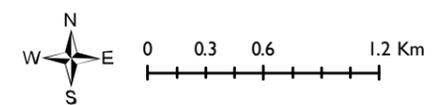


# Stevenage Landscape Sensitivity Study

## Figure 3.3: Cultural Heritage

### Key

-  Study area
  -  Sites within SNAP for Landscape Sensitivity Study
  -  SNAP boundary
  -  Local Authority boundaries
  -  Listed buildings
  -  Registered parks and gardens
  -  Scheduled monuments
- Historic Landscape Character (HLC)
-  Pre 18th C enclosure
  -  Built-up areas - historic
  -  Built-up areas - modern
  -  Communications
  -  Commons, wastes, heaths
  -  Horticulture
  -  Inland - managed wetlands
  -  Industry
  -  18-19th C enclosure
  -  Mineral
  -  Miscellaneous
  -  Parks, gardens, recreation
  -  20th C agriculture
  -  Water features
  -  Woodlands



Source: North Herts, English Heritage

Date: 02/02/2010  
Revision:

