

Faversham Town Heritage,  
Landscape Setting and  
Characterisation Study  
Swale Borough Council

May 2015

DRAFT

**Turley**

# Contents

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1.	Introduction	3
2.	Historic Development of Faversham Town	6
3.	The Heritage Assets	12
4.	Landscape Character (Setting Faversham Town)	15
5.	Significance of Faversham town “Heritage Asset”	23
6.	Contribution of Setting to the Significance of Faversham Town “Heritage Asset”	30
7.	Overview of Heritage Asset Significance and Setting	41
Appendix 1: Historical Ordnance Survey Maps		43
Appendix 2: Existing Landscape Character Assessments		44

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DRAFT

**Client**

Swale Borough Council

**Date**

March 2015

# 1. Introduction

## Aim of the Study

- 1.1 This Heritage, Landscape Setting and Characterisation Study has been prepared by Turley Heritage and VIA on behalf of Swale Borough Council to determine the extent to which Faversham town derives its character and historic form from its setting and surrounding landscape.
- 1.2 In seeking to describe the landscape and heritage setting and its contribution to the significance of this settlement, this new characterisation work will build upon and enrich the findings of existing studies and assessment work undertaken by Swale Borough Council, Kent County Council and English Heritage (now Historic England). It is intended that this study will be used to inform and provide a broad framework for the development of future more detailed planning policy and development management decisions within the setting of Faversham Town.

## Context for the Study

- 1.3 Faversham is a small market town located close to the head of two creeks (Faversham and Oare) linking into The Swale. The settlement is set within a surrounding landscape of a mix of marshland, farmed pasture, arable and fruit growing areas and pockets of woodland and parkland. Distinctively this settlement developed historically not along the important London to Canterbury Road (now the A2) but to its north and around its navigable creek at the very edge of the marshes. Other key features include the railway line that arrived in the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century and runs west to east through the modern town; between the historic centre to its north and the A2 almost parallel to its south. And the modern M2 motorway further to the south of the town cutting through farmland.



*Print of a View of Faversham circa 1830 (faversham.org)*

- 1.4 For the purposes of this study the urban area of Faversham town includes a number of still recognisably distinct smaller historic hamlets and settlements at the immediate edges of the main town. These other settlements include Ospringe and Preston along the A2 itself to the south of the centre, and Davington and Oare to the north west towards Oare Creek. It was during the later 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century that the suburban and industrial expansion of Faversham reached out in all directions to embrace these other centres and so reduce their once more separate identities. It is to the north around the creeks and the marshes, and also to the south and the line of the A2, that this expansion has been more constrained historically.

### Structure of the Study

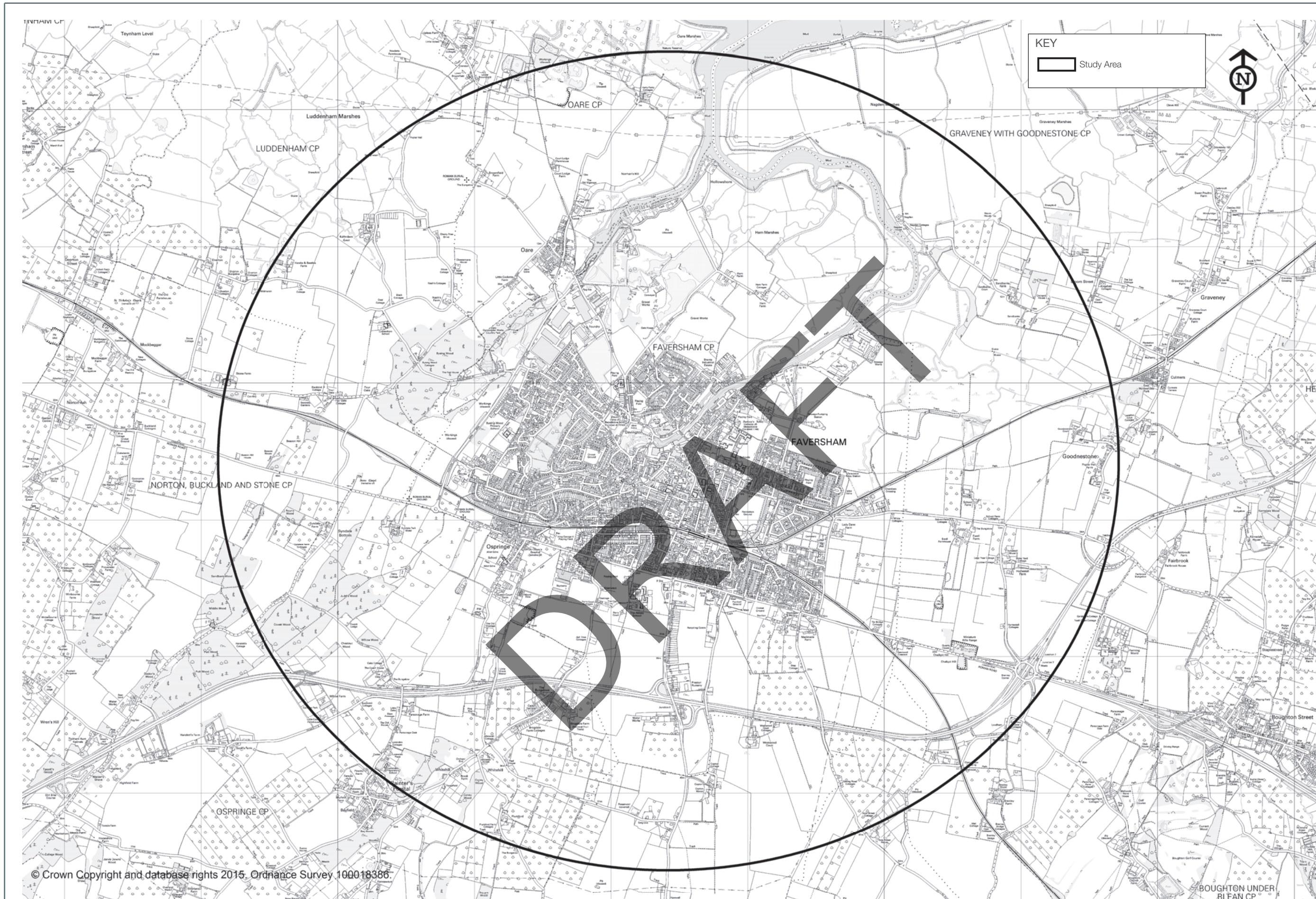
- 1.5 **Section 2** of the study provides further context, with a short overview of the historic development of the settlements of Faversham and its surrounding villages. This section employs map regression and also draws published information including the Faversham Archaeological Assessment document produced by Kent County Council in collaboration with English Heritage (now Historic England) in 2004; as part of the Kent Historic Towns Survey, and Conservation Area Character Appraisal documents produced by Swale Borough Council.
- 1.6 A 360 degree characterisation study area has been defined for the purposes of this study, which is centred on Faversham town and also takes in wider landscape surroundings from the banks of The Swale, to the north, and beyond the M2 motorway, to the south. This study area has been identified as having the potential to contribute to the heritage significance of Faversham town, and its boundary has been informed by desk based appraisal and following on-site survey. **Section 3** identifies the heritage assets within this study area, with a particular focus on the designated heritage assets of the group of conservation areas encompassing Faversham town and other concentrations of scheduled monuments and or listed buildings within this urban area just beyond its boundaries. For the purposes of this study, and in seeking to describe setting, this amalgamation of heritage assets will be treated as a single large and complex “heritage asset” in its own right. It will also be recognised that the setting of this one heritage asset itself will include other heritage assets with their own settings. Figure 1 identified the “study area”.
- 1.7 In tandem with the identification of the heritage assets of Faversham Town, **Section 4** provides a further layer of detail to help understand their setting by describing the landscape character of the surroundings outside the urban area. This includes a review of the existing detailed landscape character assessment and historic landscape characterisation work at a county and borough scale (Kent County Council, English Heritage (now Historic England) and Swale Borough Council), set out in Figures 4, 5, 6 and 7. This overview includes consideration on the established character areas sensitivity, based on the existing landscape character assessments and our own on-site analysis. This sensitivity will also be illustrated graphically in Figure 8. The Swale Borough Council landscape character assessment is used as the critical document, which defines the key landscape character areas that make up the setting of the urban area of Faversham, along with the good practice guidance set out in Landscape Character Assessment Guidance for England and Scotland (2002).



- 1.8 **Section 5** provides a focussed description of the heritage significance of Faversham town, encompassing the large concentration and complex grouping of designated heritage assets at the heart of this urban area. The established areas of the three adjoining, related but distinct, conservation areas of Faversham town are used as a broad framework for this study. In addition a brief description is also undertaken of the key concentrations of other designated heritage assets outside the boundaries of these areas but within the urban area or along the urban fringe of this settlement. The urban area defined in the Swale Borough Council landscape character assessment document is used to describe the edge and extent of Faversham town “heritage asset”, with the landscape character areas comprising its setting. This study uses established guidance produced by English Heritage (now Historic England), including Understanding Place: Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management 2011, and the relevant Selection Guides for Listing, Scheduling and Parks and Gardens.
- 1.9 The next step in **Section 6** is a description of the setting of the Faversham town and its contribution to the significance of this “heritage asset”. The landscape character areas defined in the Swale Borough Council landscape character assessment document are used as an established framework for this study. In describing the relative contribution of these defined areas and further sub-areas of setting to the significance of the town, the broad sensitivity of each of these areas and susceptibility to change will be illustrated graphically. This assessment work uses the established guidance produced by English Heritage (now Historic England); critically the Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning: Note 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets 2015. Also the Landscape Character Assessment Guidance for England and Scotland (2002) and the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, Third Edition (2013) will be considered.
- 1.10 **Section 7** draws the findings of the preceding sections alongside, and provides a summary of the findings of the study.



Figure 1: Study Area



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**Swale Borough Council**  
Project:  
**Faversham Town Centre**  
Drawing:  
**Figure 1: Study Area**

Project Number:  
**SWAH\_3002**  
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**01**  
Date:  
**May 2015**

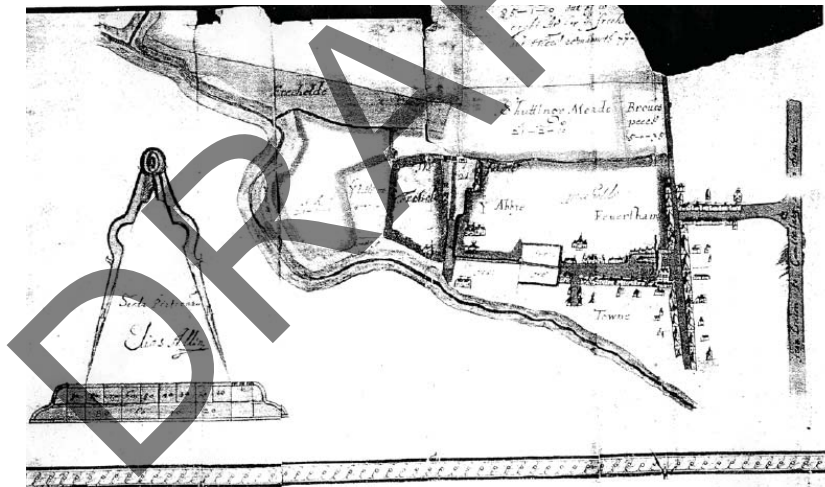
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## 2. Historic Development of Faversham Town

- 2.1 Faversham is located in the north eastern extent of the county on raised ground at the head of a tidal creek (Faversham) which feeds into The Swale and Thames estuaries. The town has its origins in an important Saxon Estate Centre or 'Saxon villa regalis' although it has also been identified that there is potential for a settlement at the head of this creek to have existed as far back as the pre-Roman period<sup>1</sup>. Indeed, a small Roman roadside settlement existed to the south of Faversham in what is now Ospringe, on the important roman road of Watling Street (part of which is the important London to Canterbury road – now A2).
- 2.2 Faversham's importance in the Saxon period was likely due to its proximity of Faversham Creek and its "potential as a trading harbour". Archaeological evidence from the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> century King's Fields cemetery, which included a jeweller's workshop, indicated how wealthy Faversham was at this time. The Saxon settlement is believed to have been centred on a crossroads close to a ford which crossed the head of the creek, now St Ann's Cross (near Tanner's Street and West Street). The Saxon settlement continued to prosper up to the time of the Norman conquest with the formation of a market from the 10<sup>th</sup> century. During the 11<sup>th</sup> century, the town became a "member of the Cinque Port Confederation, with Dover as its head port."<sup>2</sup>



*Elias Allen's Map of the Abbey Farm Estate, Faversham early 16<sup>th</sup> century*

- 2.3 By the medieval period, Faversham had become an important sea port and market town. In 1147, King Stephen granted the founding of a Royal Abbey of St Saviour at Faversham to the east of the Faversham Creek. As a consequence, the prosperous town began to expand north eastwards with the market being relocated to the east of the ford, "in a triangular space formed by Court Street, East Street and West Street"<sup>3</sup> and forming the historic heart. Merchant's houses as well as cellars and warehouses began to relocate close to the east bank of Faversham Creek, along Abbey Street and Court Street to the north east of the

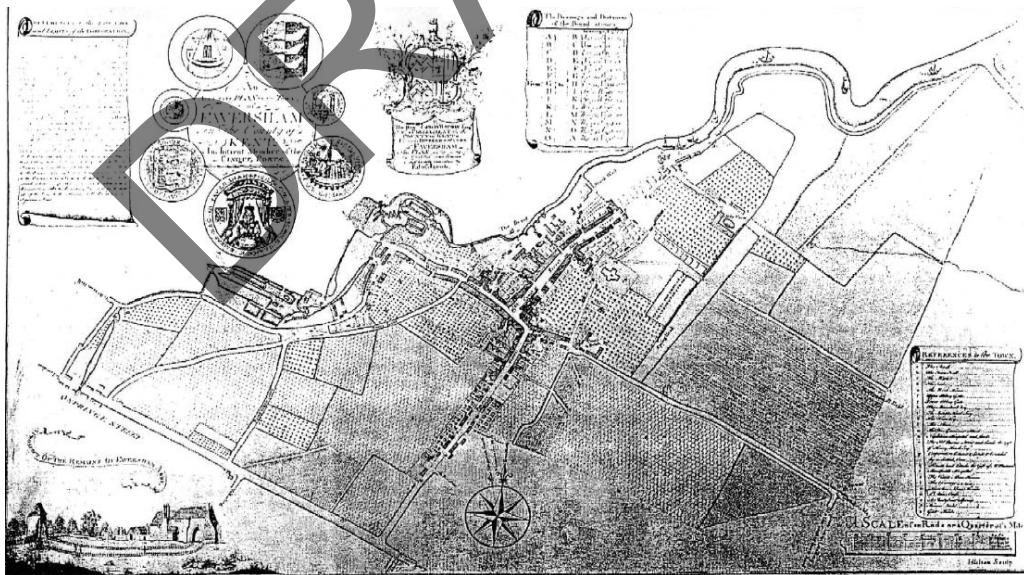
<sup>1</sup> Swale Borough Council (2004) Faversham Conservation Area Appraisal

<sup>2</sup> Ibid

<sup>3</sup> Ibid

market. This area started to be known as the New Town while the remains of the Saxon settlement forming the Old Town.

- 2.4 Faversham is distinctive in the context of prevailing historic settlement patterns in North Kent in the way it did not grow up on the important London to Canterbury road and former Watling Street (now the A2). It was positioned away from this key transport link, and instead historically focused on the port and creek further north. It does not therefore have a linear settlement pattern exemplified by towns such as Sittingbourne that were instead formed along the principal thoroughfare. Subsequent development of the town from the Medieval period onwards took place in all four directions with only the constraints of the northern marshes and with the medieval market place and effective crossroads at its heart. It was not until the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century that the suburban expansion of the town reached the line of the A2. This feature is distinctive and remains legible in today's relationship and transition between the townscape and its rural landscape surroundings.
- 2.5 Following the Dissolution of the monasteries in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the royal abbey was closed and destroyed with the exception of part of the gatehouse on Abbey Street and Abbey Farm to its north east. Faversham continued to prosper economically through this period, most notably the port. Also during the 16<sup>th</sup> century a sluice was constructed to *"help scour the creek of alluvial mud"* enabling larger ships to reach the port. As a consequence, quays started to be erected along the east side of Faversham Creek along with the industrial growth of warehouses, mills and yards on the former marshland. *"By the end of the C16 much of London's grain was being shipped through Faversham port, and then into the C17 and C18 a combination of industries flourished including oyster fishing, gunpowder manufacturing and brewing"*<sup>4</sup>



Jacob's Map of Faversham 1760-1774

<sup>4</sup> Swale Borough Council (2004) Faversham Conservation Area Appraisal

- 2.6 By the 18<sup>th</sup> century, as illustrated in Jacob's map of 1760-1774, the original medieval plan at the heart of the town had been largely retained with West Street, Preston Street and the upper part of Court Street forming the commercial core and expansion. Former marshland located at the head of the creek south west of the commercial core had been drained and become built over by this time. Gunpowder manufacturing mills had also become established as a key industry from the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> century, or later relocated, in the town and towards its north west around Davington and Oare Creek. As illustrated in this 18<sup>th</sup> century map, the urban area of Faversham at this time remained notably separated from the principal thoroughfare of the London to Canterbury road to its south. The town was largely surrounded a complex field pattern including many fruit orchards and hops to the south and east, which has historically been a key feature of the landscape of this part of north Kent. There is also evidence in this period (or earlier) for a number of large gentry houses within their own grounds established outside the town but still within its orbit, such as Syndale House and Macknade along the London to Canterbury road.

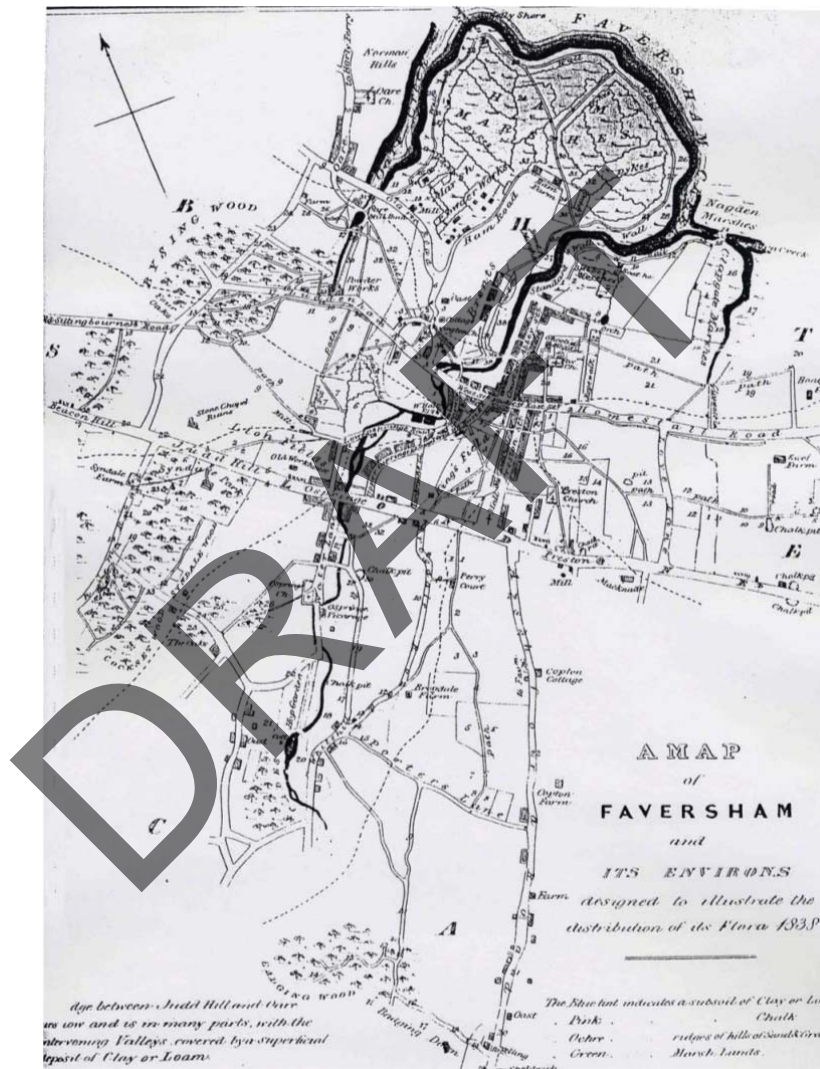


*Andrews, Dury and Herbert's Map of Faversham 1769*

- 2.7 Andrews, Dury and Herbert's Map from 1769 shows the historic town in its wider context with the then clearly distinct but smaller settlements of Ospringe and Preston located to the south, close the former Roman road and largely separated by fields, and Oare with its own Medieval origins, church and strategic position at the head of its creek within the marshes to the northwest of Faversham. Ospringe has always enjoyed a close relationship with the



London to Canterbury road, and the historic focus of the Maison Dieu. This settlement developed historically both along this route and also along the lane leading to its outlying church in the south; creating a distinctive T shape. The hamlet at Preston (next Faversham) was never more than a modest cluster of buildings along this part of what is now the A2; with its church set away towards Faversham. Located to the north-west of the main town is the hill top former Davington Priory which was founded in the 12<sup>th</sup> century had been deserted in the 16<sup>th</sup> century and by this time partially demolished. The priory (now church) became the focus of its own hamlet again distinct from Faversham.



Map of Faversham and its environs (from *Flora and Fauna of Faversham*) 1838

- 2.8 The mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, saw further expansion of the town into the surrounding fruit orchards and hops fields largely to the south and also on farmland to the north of the creek near Davington. This growth was catalysed by the arrival of the railway to the town in 1858. The late 19<sup>th</sup> century complex of brewery buildings to the north of the market place attests to the prosperity of new industry in the town in this period. As illustrated in the 1870 Ordnance Survey map, this expansion was however gradual and the fairly autonomous form and

medieval layout of the town with its historic commercial core at the heart was retained during this century. Other changes that took place at this time included improvements to the port and the straightening and narrowing of the Faversham Creek as illustrated by comparison of the 1838 map of Faversham and the 1870 Ordnance Survey map.

- 2.9 By the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, much of the area between Preston Street and Ospringe Road, formerly agricultural land, was formed of residential streets with rows of the terraced and semi-detached housing as illustrated in the 1908 Ordnance Survey Map. Further warehouses and quays were also constructed along the east side of the creek as Faversham Port continued to flourish. Some development continued towards the north side the Watling Street however, on the whole, the separation of town with this principal thoroughfare still remained at this time.



*View of modern residential development along Faversham Creekside*

- 2.10 During the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the creekside port at Faversham began to gradually decline *“in reaction to changes in industry and transport”*<sup>5</sup>. The town however continued to expand outwards with the construction of extensive residential estates in the later part of the 20th century. As illustrated in the modern 1972-3 Ordnance Survey Map, much of this expansion was focused on the former fruit fields to the west and east of the town, with much of the former rural landscape to the south and north of Davington being taken over by an urban street pattern of housing. As a consequence, the historically independent centres at Ospringe, Preston (Next Faversham) and Davington started to be merged with the much expanded town. Although modern residential development also occurred in Oare, the creek

<sup>5</sup> Swale Borough Council (2004) Faversham Conservation Area Appraisal

has maintained a stronger sense of separation from the main town. Much of the former agricultural land between the railway and the former Watling Street had also become developed and effectively suburbanised by this time, along with the first pockets of residential housing and recreation facilities on the south side of this road.

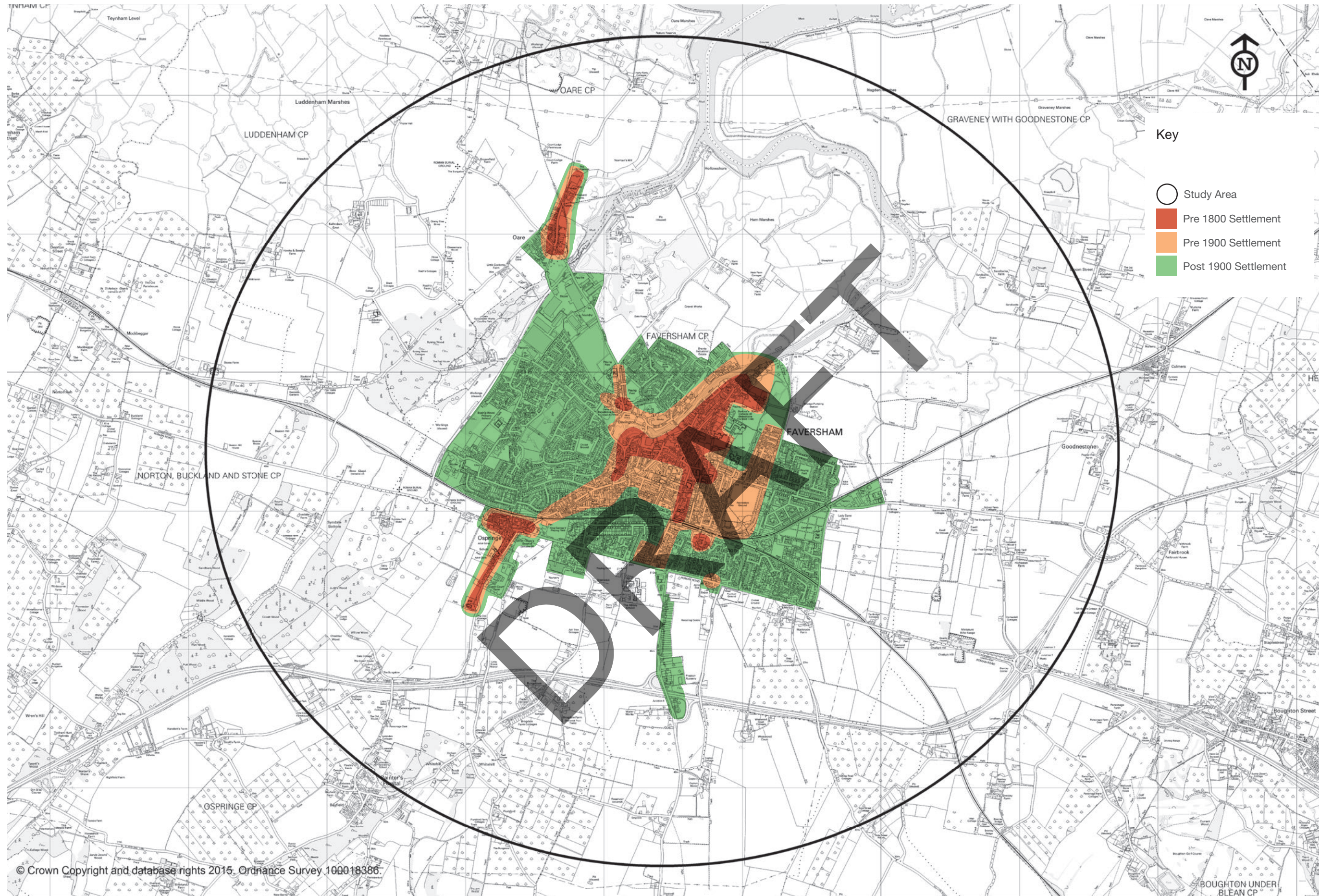
- 2.11 To the north of the town the floodlands of the marshes remain as a constraint to further expansion; shifting pressure today for further growth towards the south and east of the urban area. Piecemeal suburban development along the A2, coupled with the diversion of traffic away from this road to the M2 motorway, has begun to weaken the current role and legibility of this route as a clear line between town and country. Further expansion also serves to challenge the well-established status of Faversham as a small market town with its own rural hinterland. Other recent changes have included the erosion of many fruit and hop fields that were once such a dominant and historic feature of the landscape surrounding Faversham. Replacement with “dwarf stock” and land being turned over to arable crops continues to occur.
- 2.12 Appendix 1 includes a series of large scale Ordnance Survey maps of the study area and Faversham town from each epoch during the 20<sup>th</sup> century. These help to illustrate how the historic settlement at Faversham and its outlying hamlets or villages have grown over this time. Figure 2 (Historic Phases of Faversham Town) is a more graphical representation of how this urban area has grown and also how its relationship with its landscape surroundings has changed over time.

***Key Published Sources***

- *Kent County Council / English Heritage (now Historic England), Kent Historic Towns Survey: Faversham Archaeological Assessment, 2004*
- *Swale Borough Council, Faversham Conservation Area Appraisal, 2004*
- *Swale Borough Council, Ospringe Conservation Area Appraisal, 2004*
- *Swale Borough Council, Preston next Faversham Conservation Area Appraisal, 2004*
- *Swale Borough Council, Syndale Conservation Area Appraisal, 2008*
- *Newman, J. The Buildings of England: Kent: North East and East, 2013*



Figure 2: Historic Phases of Faversham Town



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**Figure 2: Historic Phases of Faversham Town**

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### 3. The Heritage Assets

#### Introduction

3.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2012 defines a heritage asset as:

*“A building, monument, site, place, area, or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest”.*

3.2 Designated heritage assets are those which possess a level of heritage interest that justifies designation under relevant legislation and are then subject to particular procedures in planning decisions that involve them. For the purposes of this study these include scheduled monuments, listed buildings and conservation areas.

3.3 Non-designated heritage assets also include area of archaeological interest, locally listed buildings and other features.

#### The Study Area

3.4 Within the defined 360 degree characterisation study area for Faversham town, the designated heritage assets have been identified and are illustrated on the accompanying map. The key groupings of these assets are also described in more detail below.

#### Conservation Areas

3.5 The following key conservation areas are located within the study area and at its centre. They form part of the historic settlement and wider urban area of Faversham town.

Name	Date of Designation
Faversham	1971 and later amendments
Ospringe	16 <sup>th</sup> June 1982
Preston Next Faversham	9 <sup>th</sup> March 1976

3.6 A fourth landscape dominated conservation area lies to the south west and just outside the edge of the urban area of Faversham town, as below. It falls within the immediate setting of the town and has a close historical relationship with it.

Name	Date of Designation
Syndale	19 <sup>th</sup> June 2008

3.7 In addition to the three key urban conservation areas, and landscape at Syndale Conservation Area within their setting, identified above, two further conservation areas are located partially within the study area and fall within the wider setting of Faversham town.

Name	Date of Designation
Painters Forstal	16 <sup>th</sup> September 1992
Goodnestone	24 <sup>th</sup> November 1999

### Listed Buildings

- 3.8 There are a large number of statutory listed buildings of special architectural or historic interest located within the study area. These have been grouped broadly according to their
- 3.9 geographical or historic relationship and set out below. The highest concentration of listed buildings falls within the boundaries of the four conservation areas within Faversham town and its immediate setting.
- The Faversham Market Place – this includes listed buildings in the historic centre of Faversham, on the streets surrounding the medieval Market Hall (now Guildhall) including Court Street, West Street, Abbey Street and New Creek Road.
  - Preston Street, The Mall and environs – this includes the surrounding listed buildings to the east and west of these two principal roads in the southern extent of the town and centred on the railway station.
  - A2 (former Watling Street) - listed buildings fronting or being situated close to the historic former Roman Road (with the exception of those in the outlying former villages Ospringle and Preston Next Faversham).
  - Davington – listed buildings gathered around the former priory to the west of the historic core of Faversham.
  - Oare – the group of buildings located in the small creekside settlement of Oare to the north west of the main town.
  - Ospringle and Syndale Park – including the Church of St Peter and St Paul and the Old Vicarage, encompassing the listed buildings within this former village, and grounds of former Syndale House.
  - Preston Next Faversham – a small group of listed buildings located around the historic roadside settlement of Preston.
  - Painters Forstall and Lorenden – including the listed buildings in the small hamlet of Whitehall.
  - South and South Eastern outlying villages and hamlets – including Copton, Brenley House and Colkins.
  - Goodnestone and environs – includes Homestall House and farm to the south.
- 3.10 The settings of these listed buildings, notably those within the historic core of Faversham town, are largely formed of the conservation areas in which they sit. For those listed

buildings not located within conservation areas, notably those in the outlying villages and hamlets to the south, their setting is largely defined by the small settlements in which they are situated as well as the wider rural landscape surroundings.

### Scheduled Monuments

- 3.11 The following scheduled monuments are located within the historic centres of Faversham and Ospringe, and also former industrial sites in the areas of Davington and Oare Creek.

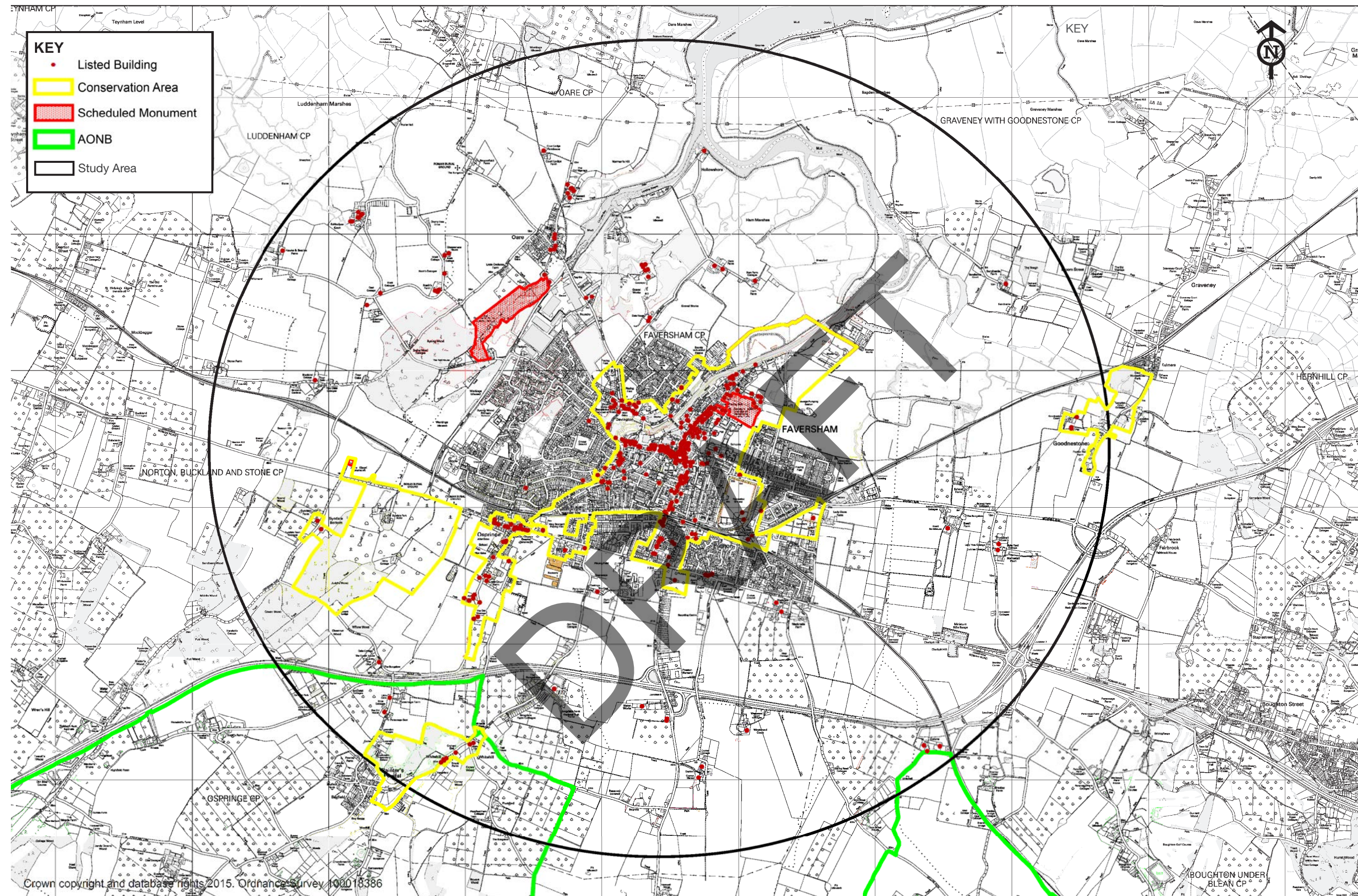
Name	Schedule Number
Site of St Saviours Abbey, including the remains of an Iron Age farmstead and Faversham Roman Villa	24362
The Maison Dieu, a 16 <sup>th</sup> century house incorporating part of a medieval hospital	24359
Chart Gunpowder Mills	31401
Oare Gunpowder Mills	31414

### Non-Designated Heritage Assets

- 3.12 Areas of Archaeological Potential have been identified within Faversham Town and the surrounding area by Kent County Council. More focused Urban Archaeological Zones have also been defined in the Faversham Archaeological Assessment 2004 produced by English Heritage (now Historic England) and Kent County Council; encompassing the historic centre of Faversham town, the creek head, abbey farm and station area.
- 3.13 The Kent Historic Environment Record (formerly the Sites and Monuments Record) is a database of archaeological sites, finds and buildings in the County, and is maintained by Kent County Council.
- 3.14 Figure 3 identifies the designated heritage assets within the “study area”, including conservation areas, listed buildings and scheduled monuments.



Figure 3: Heritage Assets (Faversham Town)



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Project:  
Faversham Town Centre

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Figure 3: Heritage Assets (Faversham Town)

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01

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## 4. Landscape Character (Setting Faversham Town)

### Introduction

- 4.1 Good practice guidance for determining the character of an area is set out within the Landscape Character Assessment Guidance for England and Scotland; and the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, Third Edition. This is supported by one of the twelve Core Planning Principles identified within the NPPF, which states, in summary, that the different roles and character of different areas should be taken into account, whilst recognising the core character and beauty of the countryside. Paragraph 64, of the NPPF, confirms that permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take the opportunity to improve the character and quality of an area and the way it functions.
- 4.2 Paragraph 113 states that local planning authorities should set criteria based policies against which development proposals on or affecting landscape areas will be judged. To support the NPPF the Department for Communities and Local Government issued the Planning Practice Guidance (2014). In paragraph 003 the design guidance category supports the need to evaluate and understand the defining characteristics of an area in order to identify appropriate design opportunities and policies.
- 4.3 This evaluation and understanding has been undertaken within the previously identified study area and is set out within the following existing landscape character area assessments:
- Kent Historic Landscape Characterisation Study
  - The Landscape Assessment of Kent
  - Swale Landscape Character and Biodiversity Appraisal
  - Urban Extension Landscape Capacity Study
- 4.4 Each of the assessment's 'character areas', that fall within the study area, have been identified and reviewed to establish whether the existing landscape features and elements reflect and contribute to the identified key characteristics. This has included a mixture of desk study and field work to classify and verify the character of the landscape.

### Landscape condition and sensitivity

- 4.5 Consideration has been given to the existing assessment's established condition and sensitivity, in terms of the Landscape Assessment of Kent and the Swale Landscape Character and Biodiversity Appraisal, and sensitivity, in the Urban Extension Landscape Capacity Study.

4.6 The Landscape Character Assessment Guidance for England and Scotland defines 'landscape condition (or quality)' as:

*"... based on judgements about the physical state of the landscape, and about its intactness, from visual, functional, and ecological perspectives. It also reflects the state of repair of individual features and elements which make up the character in any one place."*

4.7 The supporting Topic Paper 6: Techniques and Criteria for Judging Capacity and Sensitivity (2002) identifies that there are varying definitions to 'landscape sensitivity'. This study adopts the papers definition for 'overall landscape sensitivity', which states:

*This term should be used to refer primarily to the inherent sensitivity of the landscape itself, irrespective of the type of change that may be under consideration. It is likely to be most relevant in work at the strategic level, for example in preparation of regional and sub-regional spatial strategies. Relating it to the definitions used in Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, landscape sensitivity can be defined as embracing a combination of:*

- *the sensitivity of the landscape resource (in terms of both its character as a whole and the individual elements contributing to character); and*
- *the visual sensitivity of the landscape, assessed in terms of a combination of factors such as views, visibility, the number and nature of people perceiving the landscape and the scope to mitigate visual impact.*

### **Kent Historic Landscape Characterisation Study**

4.8 Kent Historic Landscape Characterisation Study was produced by Oxford Archaeological Unit on behalf of Kent County Council and English Heritage (now Historic England) to aid the current landscape characterisation of the county. The following historic landscape character areas (HLCA) identified by the characterisation study fall within the study area:

- HLCA 17 – Northern Horticultural Belt
- HLCA 28 – Northern Coast and Marshland

4.9 These HLCA are illustrated in relation to the site within Figure 4. Each area have been discussed below and summarised in Appendix 2 of this study.

#### **HLCA 17 – Northern Horticultural Belt**

4.10 This HLCA is located to the east, west and south of Faversham and is described as linear area of horticultural activity running from Medway through to the Wantsum Channel. The study identifies that economically, it is situated between a series of major towns and would have supplied markets locally and further afield due to the extensive road and rail corridor.

## **HLCA 28 – Northern Coast and Marshland**

- 4.11 Located to the north of Faversham this historic landscape character area is described as being a balanced mix of reclaimed marsh and coastal landscape.

### **Summary**

- 4.12 The study provides a 'reliability grading' based on its supporting evidence. HLCA 17 – Northern Horticultural Belt has a grading of 4 out of 5 and HLCA 28 – Northern Coast and Marshland is 5 out of 5. Due to the scale of the HLCA it is considered that this assessment is too general for the purpose of this study. It can, however, be used as a baseline for further exploration.

## **The Landscape Assessment of Kent**

- 4.13 The Landscape Assessment was produced by Jacobs Babbie on behalf of Kent County Council and was based on previous landscape character assessments (including the Kent Historic Landscape Characterisation Study) and provides information on the condition and sensitivity of the area. This assessment was proposed to be used in a variety of forward planning strategies, in land management schemes and in planning control.

- 4.14 The following character areas identified by the appraisal fall within the study area:

- Eastern Swale Marshes
- Eastern Fruit Belt
- Faversham Fruit Belt

- 4.15 These landscape character areas are shown in Figure 5, discussed below and summarised in Appendix 2 of this study.

### **Eastern Swale Marshes**

- 4.16 Located to the far north of Faversham this character area is described as being 'open, flat grazing land with broad skies, few landscape features and a strong sense of remoteness, wildness and exposure'. Although the condition of the area is considered to be very good the area is identified as having intrusive power lines. The character area's sensitivity is defined as being 'high'.

### **Eastern Fruit Belt**

- 4.17 This character area surrounds the edge of Faversham to the east, west and south, with a further portion directly north. It is described as being 'predominantly rural, agricultural landscape characterised by a complex and highly structured landscape pattern of orchards, shelterbelts, fields of arable, pasture and horticultural crops, and blocks of woodland'. The assessment considers that the large farmsteads and cluster villages do not reflect a strong time-depth in their materials or scale and landscape features, such as field boundaries and woodlands, are no longer distinctive. The sensitivity of the character area is defined as 'low'.

### **Faversham Fruit Belt**

- 4.18 To the southwest of Faversham this character is located on the edge of the defined study area. The area is described as being a mix of unusual and highly distinctive landscape of small, square, outdoor 'rooms' created by the treed shelter belts for the



associated hop gardens and orchards and contrasting intensively cultivated arable fields. The assessment identifies that, although the settlement patterns and highways are historic in location, the time-depth element of the landscape has become weak. The character area's sensitivity is defined as being 'low'.

### Summary

- 4.19 The features and elements within the established study area do, broadly, reflect and contribute to the key characteristics of the identified landscape character areas they fall within, as defined within the Landscape Assessment of Kent. The identified sensitivity for each area is summarised in table 4.1 below. It is, however, considered that this assessment's landscape character areas are too broad for the purpose of this study.

Table 4.1: Landscape Assessment of Kent landscape character area's sensitivity

Character Area	Sensitivity
Eastern Swale Marshes	High
Eastern Fruit Belt	Low
Faversham Fruit Belt	Low

### Swale Landscape Character and Biodiversity Appraisal

- 4.20 The Swale Landscape Character and Biodiversity Appraisal Supplementary Planning Document was produced by Jacobs Engineering UK on behalf of Swale Borough Council. The appraisal is material planning consideration in the determination of planning applications across the borough and sets out what the Council expects from development proposals on matters of landscape character and biodiversity. The appraisal was adopted in September 2011.

- 4.21 The following character areas identified by the appraisal fall within the study area:

- Goodnestone Grasslands (3)
- Graveney Marshes (5)
- Ham Marshes (6)
- Luddenham and Conyer Marshes (8)
- Stone Arable Farmlands (17)
- Faversham and Ospringe Fruit Belt (20)
- Graveney Arable Farmlands (21)
- Graveney Fruit Farms (22)
- Doddington and Newnham Dry Valleys (36)

- 4.22 These landscape character areas are shown in Figure 6 and are discussed below and summarised in Appendix 2.

#### Goodnestone Grasslands (3)

- 4.23 Located to the northeast of Faversham, adjacent to the settlement's boundary, this character area is described as 'a tranquil and unspoilt character'. The area's condition is described as generally in good condition and its sensitivity is 'high'. The area is

considered within the assessment to be locally very distinctive, undisturbed and inaccessible despite its close proximity to the town centre.

#### **Graveney Marshes (5)**

- 4.24 This character area is located to the north of Faversham on the edge of the study area and is described as 'a huge open expanse of alluvial coastal marsh'. The character area's condition is described as generally in moderate condition and its sensitivity is 'high to moderate'. Modern farming practices have weakened the area's sense of place by removing any signs of its traditional agricultural character and any distinctive features.

#### **Ham Marshes (6)**

- 4.25 Located to the north of Faversham (in between Graveney Marshes (5) and Stone Arable Farmlands (17)) this character area is described as 'extremely tranquil landscape with unrestricted panoramic views'. The character area's condition is described as generally in good condition and its sensitivity is 'high'. Through traditional farming practices the marshland maintains its distinct character.

#### **Luddenham and Conyer Marshes (8)**

- 4.26 This character area is located to the northwest of Faversham and is described as 'an extensive flat open area of unimproved fresh water grazing marsh'. It's condition is described as good and sensitivity is 'moderate'. The assessment also establishes that the marshland maintains its distinct character through traditional farming methods.

#### **Stone Arable Farmlands (17)**

- 4.27 To the north and west of Faversham this character area is described as rolling arable landscape with enlarged fields that are irregular in shape and medium to large-scale. The character area's condition is described as poor and its sensitivity is 'moderate'. The assessment establishes that in places the landscape is very distinct and historic in origin. There are, however, topographical high points where the landscape has been opened up for modern farming practices. These areas are identified as being vulnerable to change.

#### **Faversham and Ospringe Fruit Belt (20)**

- 4.28 Covering the area to the south and east of Faversham this character area contains predominately modern arable fields with limited areas of fruit and hop production. The character area's condition is described as good and its sensitivity is 'moderate'. The assessment identifies that historic farming practices are reflected in the landscape structure and built form, although it reflects that this has been eroded with late 20th century expansion of farmsteads and loss of traditional farm buildings.

#### **Graveney Arable Farmlands (21)**

- 4.29 This character area stretches from Cleve Marshes to Goodnestone, to the east of Faversham, on the edge of the study area. The character area is a mixture of arable and fruit production and its condition is described as poor and its sensitivity is 'moderate'. The latter is due to traditional features that once contributed to the distinctiveness of this landscape being lost.

### **Graveney Fruit Farms (22)**

- 4.30 This character area is located to the north east of Faversham, on the edge of the study area. It is described as being enclosed and intimate landscape used for the production of soft and hop fruit. The character area's condition is described as good and its sensitivity is 'moderate'. Within the area are a number of traditional elements such as shelterbelts and historic buildings and the field pattern is essentially historic, although there has been a change in hop growing to fruit.

### **Doddington and Newnham Dry Valleys (36)**

- 4.31 Located to the west and southwest of Faversham this character area is described as being influenced by the underlying geology with a number of tranquil dry chalk valleys providing a distinct feature. The character area's condition is described as good and its sensitivity is 'high'. The latter is due to the larger open arable landscapes, located on the higher ground, being identified as being highly visually sensitive.

### **Summary**

- 4.32 This study considers that features and elements within the established study area do, reflect and contribute to the key characteristics of the identified landscape character areas, as defined within the Swale Landscape Character and Biodiversity Appraisal. The identified sensitivity for each area is summarised in table 4.2 below. Very little change has taken place within the landscape since this appraisal was completed and, due to the scale and level of detail it is considered that the document's character areas are suitable to use for this study.

Table 4.2: Swale Landscape Character and Biodiversity Appraisal landscape character area's sensitivity

<b>Character Area</b>	<b>Sensitivity</b>
Goodnestone Grasslands (3)	High
Graveney Marshes (5)	Moderate
Ham Marshes (6)	High
Luddenham and Conyer Marshes (8)	High
Stone Arable Farmlands (17)	Moderate
Faversham and Ospringe Fruit Belt (20)	Moderate
Graveney Arable Farmlands (21)	Moderate
Graveney Fruit Farms (22)	Moderate
Doddington and Newnham Dry Valleys (36)	High

### **Urban Extension Landscape Capacity Study**

- 4.33 To inform the Local Development Framework the Urban Extension Landscape Capacity Study was produced by Jacobs Engineering UK on behalf of Swale Borough Council. This study considered the landscape significance of any proposals to extend the Borough's principal urban areas, including Faversham.

4.34 The study used an established matrix methodology to assess the local landscape value against local landscape sensitivity to determine each study area's capacity to accommodate change. It provided guidelines and mitigation for development in each study area. It did not accept the inevitability of development, but assessed which locations could best accommodate change in landscape terms should there be an overriding need to release land for development.

4.35 Around Faversham six study areas were identified, as illustrated in Figure 7. These study areas are summarised in Appendix 2 and the key points are set out below.

#### **Study area 1**

4.36 This study area is located to the north of Faversham, directly adjacent to the settlement edge. This edge is described as a harsh boundary. The area's sensitivity is defined as being 'high' and is identified as having a 'distinct sense of remoteness and big skies and is both characteristic and part of the North Kent Marshes, as well as providing the local setting to Ham Marshes'. The study goes onto identify the area's value as being 'moderate' and states that the area has a 'low' capacity to accept change.

#### **Study area 2**

4.37 Located directly adjacent to the northeast of Faversham this area is located within almost the entire Goodnestone Grasslands landscape character area. The area's sensitivity is defined as being 'high' and is described as having a 'tranquil and unspoilt character'. The study goes onto identify the area's value as being 'moderate', due to the landscape designations and designated heritage assets. The study considers that the area has a 'low' capacity to accept change.

#### **Study area 3**

4.38 To the east of the settlement edge of Faversham this study area is described as having few urban influences. The area's sensitivity is defined as being 'moderate'. The area is recognised as having a mix of traditional fruit orchards and hop production along with large extents of agricultural intensification and horticultural land use. The study goes onto identify the area's value as being 'moderate', with a 'moderate' capacity to accept change.

#### **Study area 4**

4.39 This study area is located to the southeast of Faversham's settlement edge and is described as 'Urban fringe land uses', which has created a fragmented and poorly defined transition between the urban and rural areas. The area's sensitivity is defined as being 'moderate', with the M2 and the A2 impinge on the tranquillity of the landscape to the south and the open landscape created by the agricultural intensification. The study goes onto recognise the area's value as being 'moderate', with a 'moderate' capacity to accept change.

#### **Study area 5**

4.40 Located to the southwest of the settlement edge of Faversham this study area is described as 'urban fringe land uses', with the development located on land to the south of the A2 'creating a fragmented and poorly defined transition between the urban and rural areas'. The study goes onto recognise the area's value as being 'moderate', with a 'moderate' capacity to accept change.

### Study area 6

- 4.41 To the west of the settlement edge of Faversham the B2045 is described as providing ‘a clear physical divide between the largely industrial periphery of Faversham’s western extent and the undulating countryside to the west’. The area’s sensitivity is defined as being ‘high’ and reflects that ‘the undulating wooded farmland, which features elements of strong historical elements, provokes a strong sense of place’. The study goes onto identify the area’s value as being ‘moderate’ and states that the area has a ‘low’ capacity to accept change.

### Summary

- 4.42 The features and elements of the study areas established within the Urban Extension Landscape Capacity Study are still present and can be used to further support the findings of the Swale Landscape Character and Biodiversity Appraisal’s character areas sensitivity. These are summarised in table 4.3.

Table 4.3: Urban Extension Landscape Capacity Study area’s sensitivity

Character Area	Sensitivity
Study area 1	High
Study area 2	High
Study area 3	Moderate
Study area 4	Moderate
Study area 5	Moderate
Study area 6	High



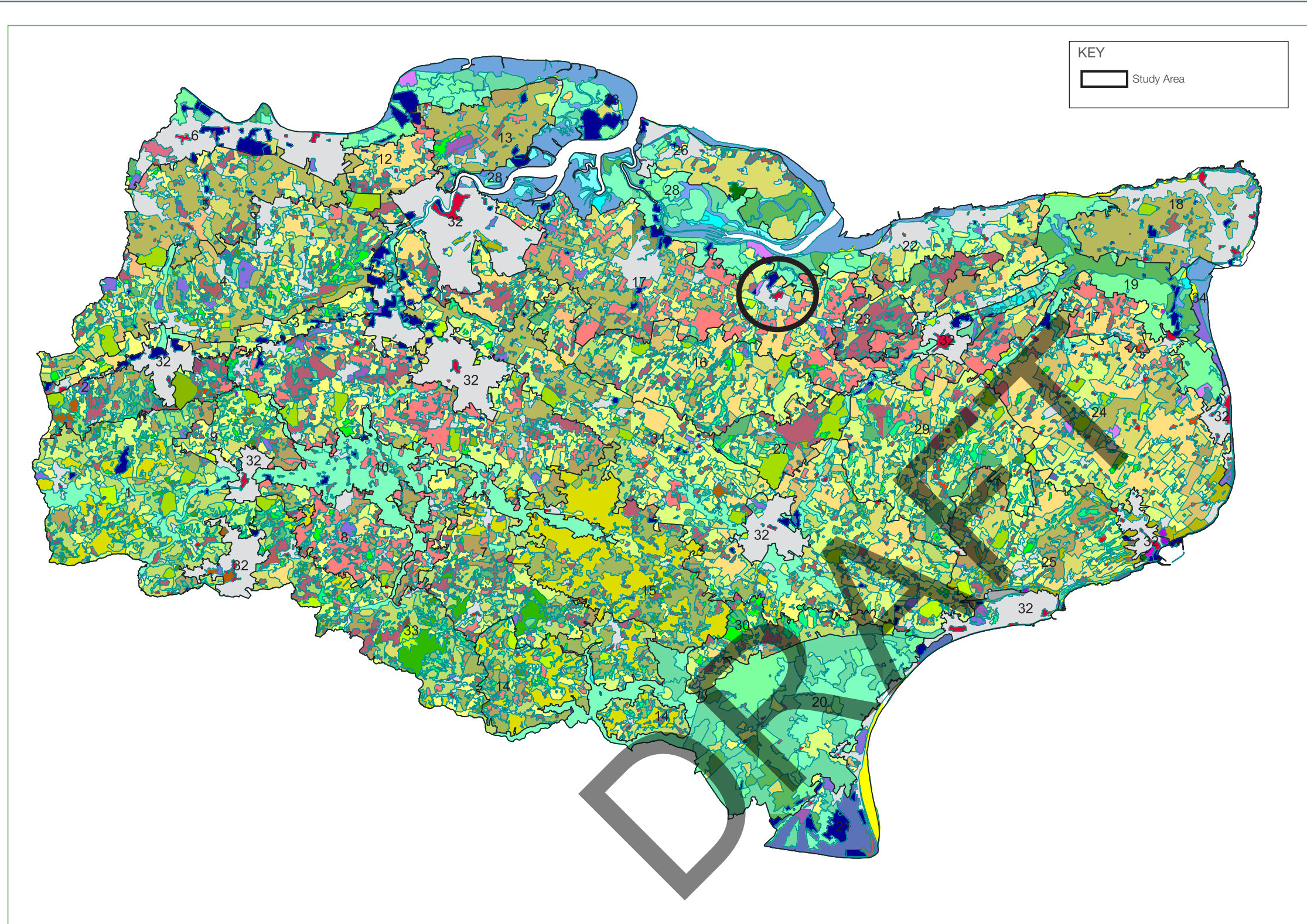
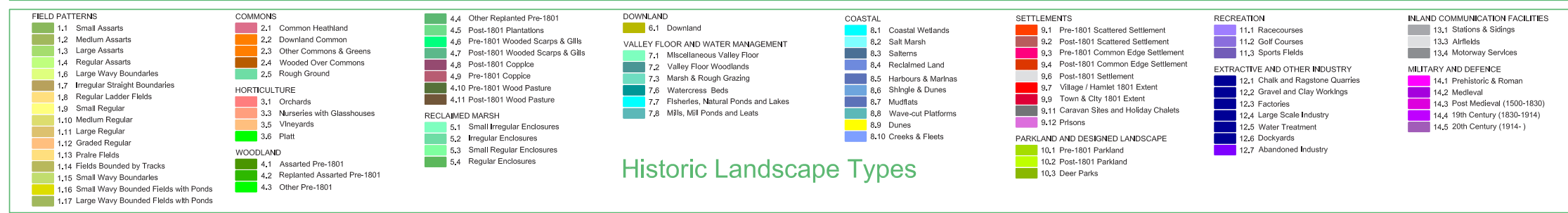


Figure 3.1

Historic Landscape Character Areas

Historic Landscape Character Areas

- 1 Western Weald
- 2 Western Greensand
- 3 Western Gault Band
- 4 Western North Downs
- 5 North Western Foothills
- 6 Dartford and Gravesham Conurbation
- 7 Central Low Weald
- 8 Wealden Horticultural Pocket
- 9 Low Wealden Pocket
- 10 Medway Basin
- 11 Greensand Horticultural Belt
- 12 Rochester / Chatham Hinterland
- 13 Hoo Peninsula
- 14 Southern High Weald
- 15 The Marling Weald
- 16 Central North Downs
- 17 Northern Horticultural Belt
- 18 Isle of Thanet
- 19 Wantsum Channel
- 20 Romney Marsh
- 21 Eastern Coastal Belt
- 22 Former Blean Forest
- 23 Forest of Blean
- 24 North Chalk Downs
- 25 Eastern Clay-with-Flints North Downs
- 26 Isle of Sheppey
- 27 Stour Valley Parkland
- 28 Northern Coast and Marshland
- 29 Clay-with-Flints North Downs
- 30 Weald-Romney Border Area
- 31 Central Valley Area
- 32 Urban Conurbation
- 33 Central High Weald
- 34 Wantsum Coastal Belt



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**Figure 4: Kent Historic Landscape Characterisation Study**

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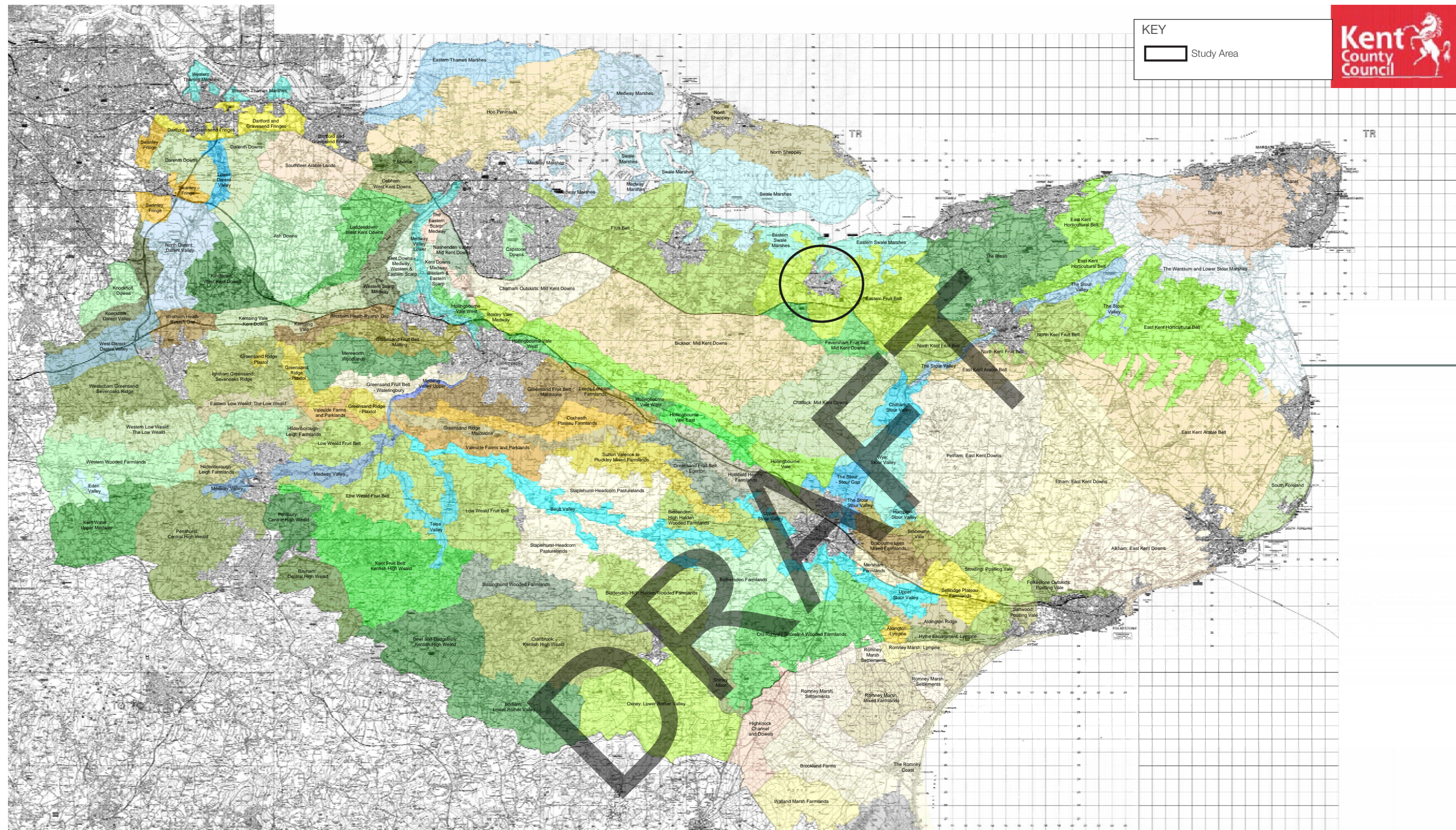
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Figure 5: The Landscape Assessment of Kent



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Figure 5: The Landscape Assessment of Kent

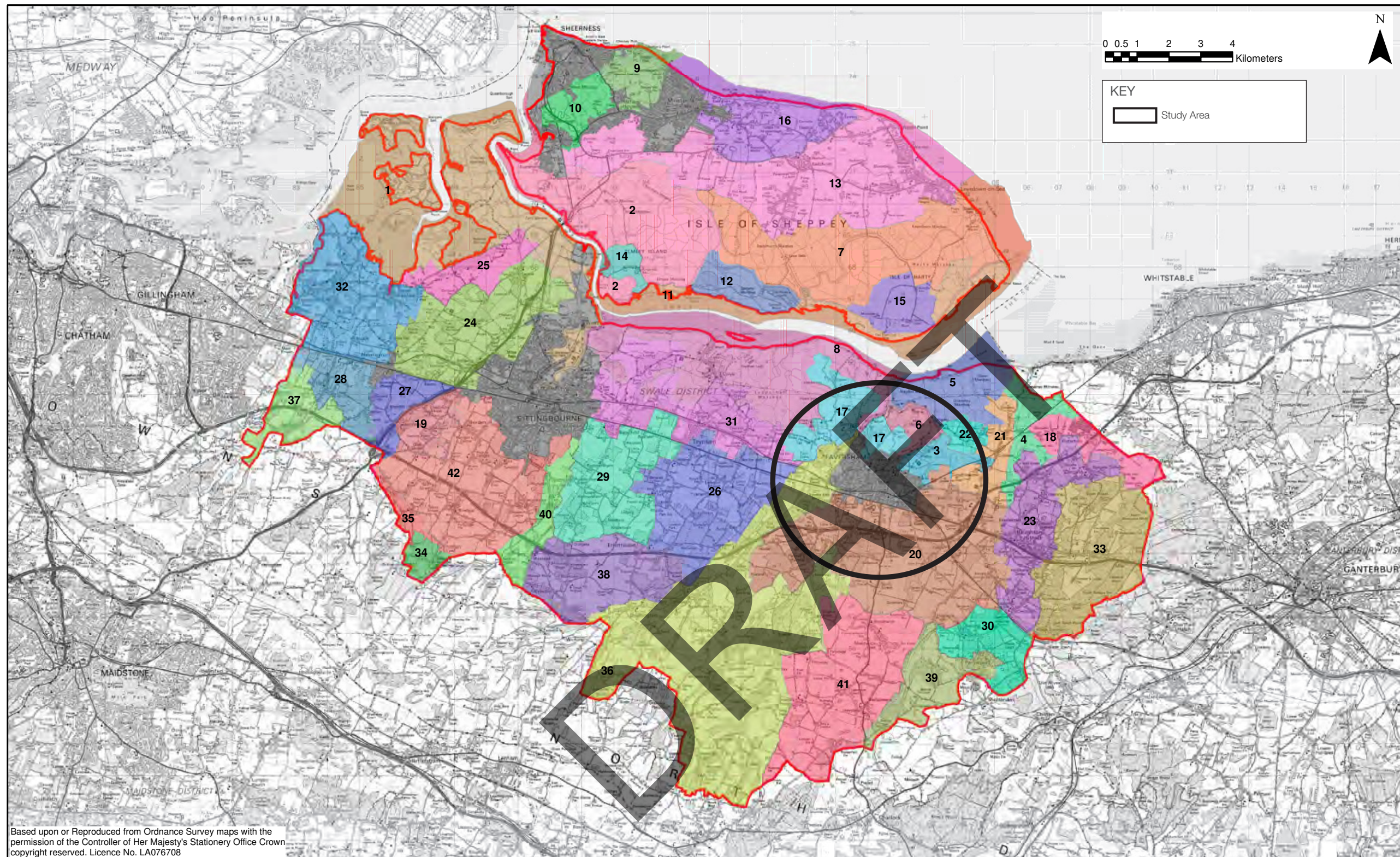
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Figure 6: Swale Landscape Character and Biodiversity Appraisal



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Legend	
Swale Borough Boundary	6. Ham Marshes
Urban Areas	7. Leysdown and Eastchurch Marshes
<b>Character Areas</b>	8. Luddenham and Conyer Marshes
1. Chetney and Greenborough Marshes	9. Minster Marshes
2. Elmley Marshes	10. Sheppey Court and Diggs Marshes
3. Goodnestone Grasslands	11. South Sheppey Saltmarshes and Mudflats
4. Graveney Grazing Lands	12. Spitend Marshes
5. Graveney Marshes	13. Central Sheppey Farmlands
14. Elmley Island	15. Isle of Harty
16. Minster and Warden Farmlands	17. Stone Arable Farmlands
18. Waterham Clay Farmlands	19. Borden Mixed Farmlands
20. Faversham and Ospringe Fruit Belt	21. Graveney Arable Farmlands
22. Graveney Fruit Farms	23. Hernhill and Boughton Fruit Belt
24. Iwade Arable Farmlands	25. Lower Halstow Clay Farmlands
26. Lynsted Enclosed Farmlands	27. Newington Arable Farmlands
28. Newington Fruit Belt	29. Rodmersham Mixed Farmlands
30. Selling Fruit Belt	31. Teynham Fruit Belt
32. Upchurch and Lower Halstow Fruit Belt	33. Blean Woods West
34. Bicknor Orchards	35. Deans Bottom
36. Doddington and Newnham Dry Valleys	37. Hartlip Downs
38. Milstead and Kingsdown Mixed Farmlands	39. Perrywood Hills and Dry Valleys
40. Rodmersham and Milstead Dry Valley	41. Sheldwich and Leaveland Farmlands
42. Tunstall Farmlands	

Figure 14: Landscape Character Areas

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Study Area

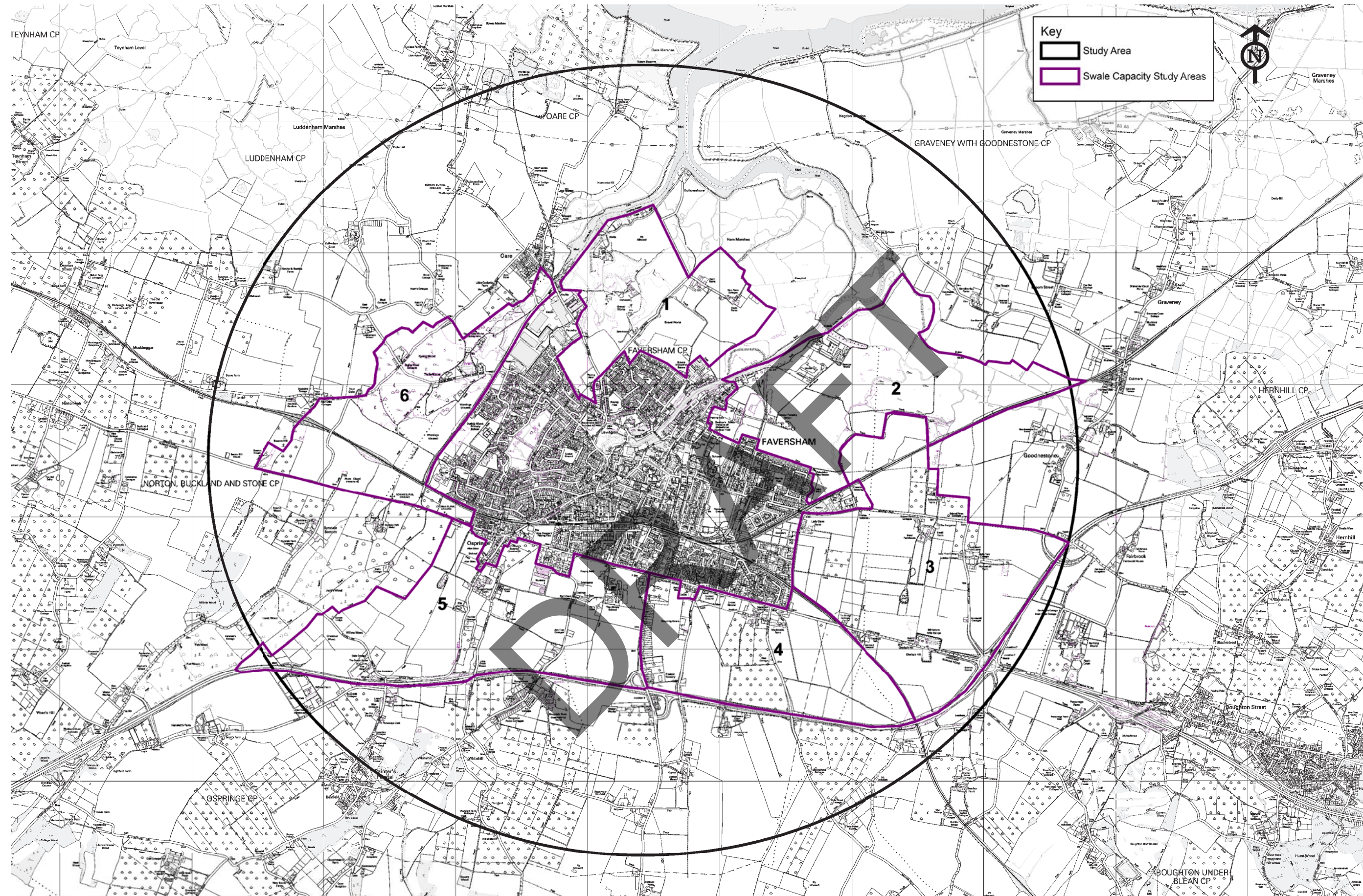
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**Figure 6: Swale Landscape Character and Biodiversity Appraisal**

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Figure 7: Urban Extension Landscape Capacity Study



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Figure 7: Urban Extension Landscape Capacity Study

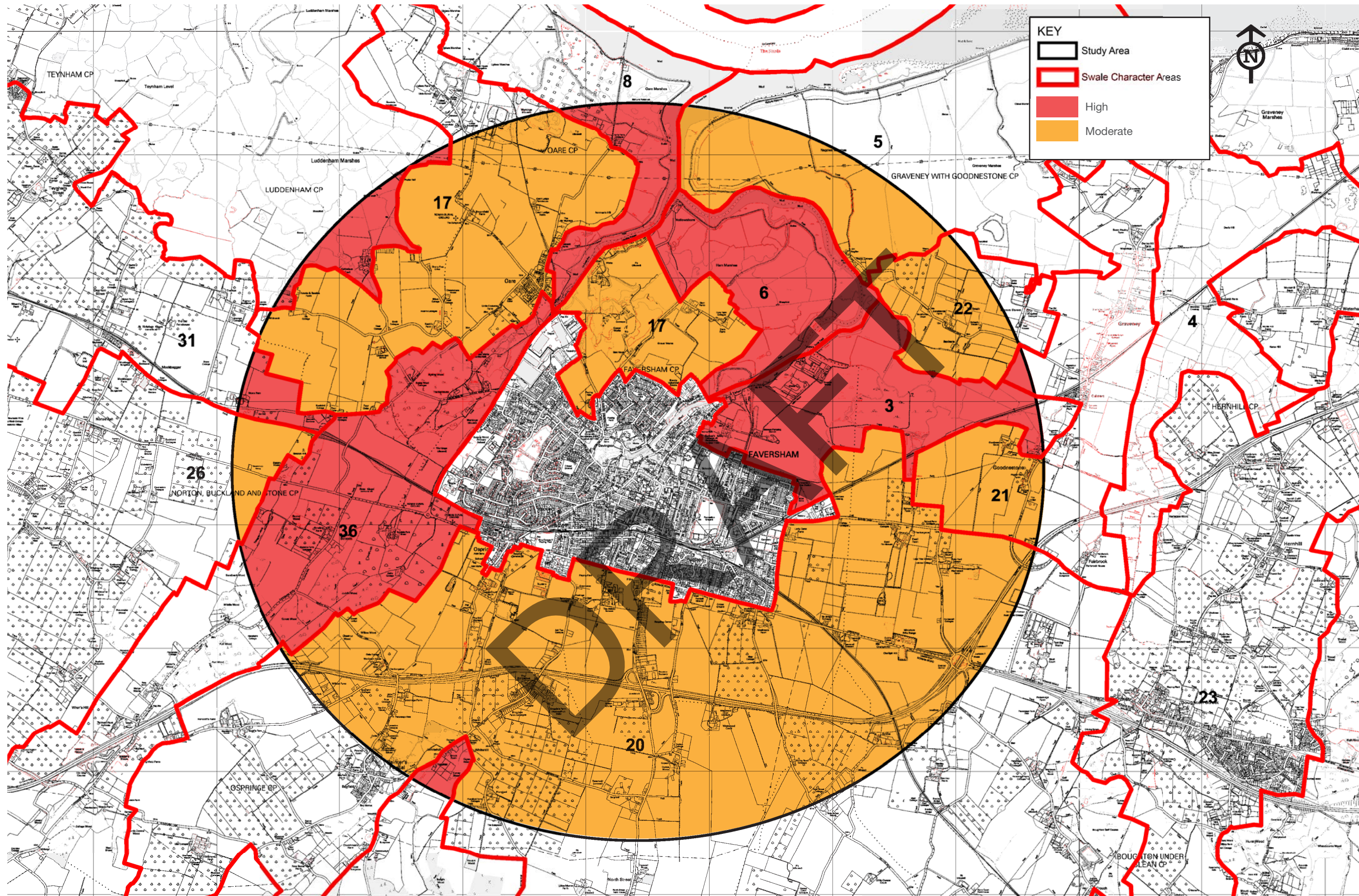
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Figure 8: Landscape Character Area Sensitivity



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- Goodnestone Grasslands (3)
- Gravenev Marshes (5)
- Ham Marshes (6)
- Luddenham and Conyer Marshes (8)
- Stone Arable Farmlands (17)
- Faversham and Ospringe Fruit Belt (20)

- Gravenev Arable Farmlands (21)
- Gravenev Fruit Farms (22)
- Doddington and Newnham Dry Valleys (36)

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**Figure 8: Landscape Character Area Sensitivity**

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## 5. Significance of Faversham town “Heritage Asset”

### Introduction

#### Significance and Special Interest

- 5.1 The NPPF 2012 defines the significance of a heritage asset as:

*“The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset’s physical presence, but also from its setting.”<sup>6</sup>*

- 5.2 Conservation Areas are designated on the basis of their special architectural or historic interest, the character and appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance. English Heritage (now Historic England) has published guidance in respect of conservation areas and this provides a framework for the appraisal and assessment of the special interest and significance of a conservation area: Understanding Place: Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management 2011.
- 5.3 Listed buildings are defined as designated heritage assets that hold architectural or historic interest. The principles of selection for listed buildings are published by the Department of Culture, Media and Sport and supported by English Heritage (now Historic England)’s Listing Selection Guides for each building type.
- 5.4 Scheduled monuments are nationally important monuments and archaeological remains and the relevant English Heritage (now Historic England) Scheduling Selection Guides under different categories.

### Faversham town “Heritage Asset”

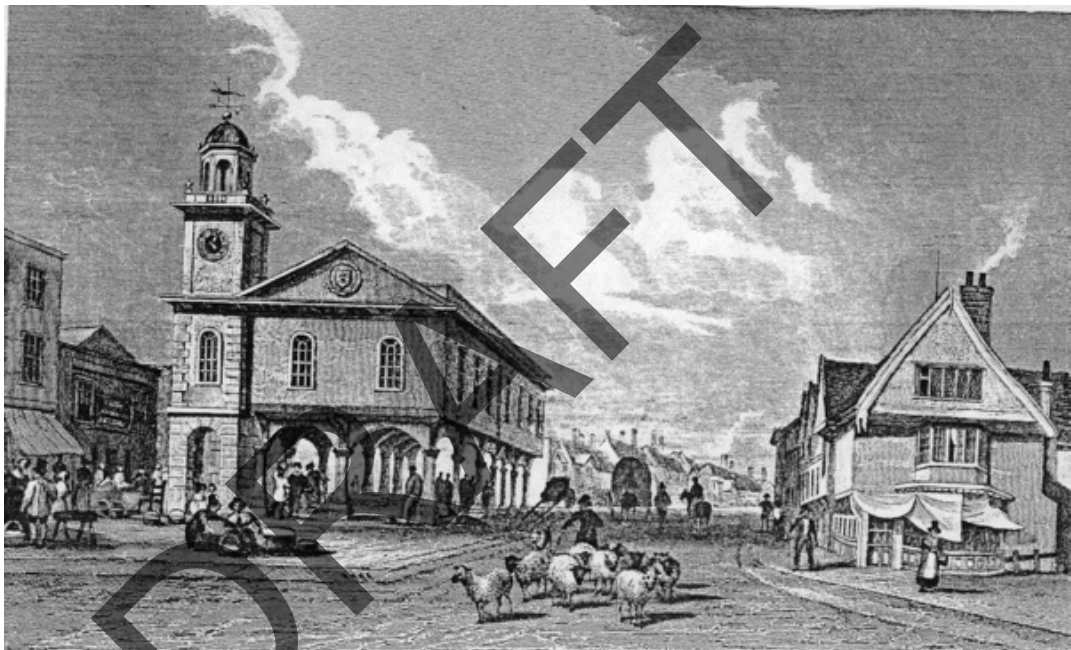
#### Faversham Conservation Area

- 5.5 The historic market town of Faversham developed from the Saxon period as an important port, located close to the Faversham Creek. The settlement is believed to pre-date the Roman period however it gained significance following the establishment of a royal abbey in the 12<sup>th</sup> century. Despite its dissolution and destruction, the royal abbey at Faversham as well as its position close the Faversham Creek greatly influenced its subsequent development and prosperity up to the Late Victorian period. The well preserved Medieval Abbey Street is a townscape feature of particular significance.
- 5.6 The Faversham Conservation Area encompasses the historic core of the town. It is formed of a number of differing character areas, each area reflecting key phases of the development and expansion of the town up to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. At its heart is the medieval historic core, centred on the market place and connecting streets which form the town’s commercial focus. The original medieval layout of narrow plots survives along with a number of important historic buildings, many of which are listed. The 16<sup>th</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> DCLG, National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2012 - Annex 2: Glossary

century Guildhall, along with the parish church, form important landmark features in this area. It is characterised by a fine grain and varied mix of narrow fronted modest brick and timber framed buildings dating from the 15<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> century, situated close to the pavement and forming a continuous high quality enclosed townscape. To the north and east are the remains of the 12<sup>th</sup> century Abbey (largely archaeological), Abbey Farm and the Creek which have greatly influenced the early layout, subsequent development and prosperity of Faversham. The creek is notably more industrial in form and character with remains of historic wharf fronts, reflecting its original historic function. The character of the creek has slightly changed in recent years due to the decline of the port, with modern residential development on the west bank. This area also encapsulates the remains of the Saxon old town, with Davington Church forming another important landmark.



*Faversham Market Place circa 1830 (faversham.org)*

- 5.7 Much of the southern extent of the town, down to the A2 Watling Street is principally characterised by a 19<sup>th</sup> century formal street pattern with rows of high quality villas and terraces providing a consistency of character and uniform appearance. To the east are two important open spaces, the recreation ground laid out as the town's first public park in 1860 and the late 19<sup>th</sup> century cemetery.
- 5.8 Overall, the significance of Faversham Conservation Area is derived from its historical development from the Saxon period to the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, each development phase of which remains fully legible in its plan form, built fabric and relationship between buildings, open spaces and landscape features, most notably the Faversham Creek. The conservation area is of historic value for illustrating the gradual development and increased prosperity of Faversham which is particularly distinctive in this part of Kent in terms of its positioning and layout due to its proximity to the creek rather than the important historic Roman road of the A2. The historical development, prosperity and character of the town were intimately connected to the proximity to the Thames Estuary

and access provided Faversham Creek and also the strategic road network, of which the London to Canterbury road forms part. Historically the types and uses of the landscapes around the town have also helped to shape how and where it has grown, such as the productivity of the fruit belt to the south and east, marshland grazing and oyster beds to the north, and outlying key industries around Faversham and Oare Creeks. The attractiveness of the conservation area with its complex street pattern and varied collections of high quality historic buildings, which include a considerable number of scheduled monuments and listed buildings, also contribute greatly to its high architectural value and local distinctiveness.



*View of Market Place at the centre of Faversham town*

### **Ospringe Conservation Area**

5.9 Ospringe is of significance as a linear settlement with ancient origins, centred on the historic Roman route from London to Canterbury (now the A2). The outlying 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century development of Faversham town has resulted in the village being partially merged to the north however it still retains “a strongly distinctive and special character quite different from that of the much larger town”.<sup>7</sup> A settlement at Ospringe is believed to date back to the Roman times although little evidence survives to confirm this. During the Saxon period, the town was an important centre due to its position on the London to Canterbury Road. The plan form of the town, centred on the junction between the A2 and Ospringe Street is likely to date back to this period.

5.10 Much of this settlement is located within the Ospringe Conservation Area. As found today, the northern extent of the town, is characterised by a clearly defined, closely knit street pattern with 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century modest town houses and cottages with a

<sup>7</sup> Swale Borough Council (2004) Ospringe Conservation Area Appraisal

homogeneity of materials and vernacular styles. Some older buildings survive, particularly in the centre of the village, the most notable of which are the fragmentary survivals of the 13<sup>th</sup> century Hospital of the Blessed St Mary, also known as Maison Dieu. These structures, along with the small number of surviving timber framed buildings are important architecturally as a illustrators of the settlement's early development. Buildings are tightly packed with few gaps and are situated close to the roadside thus giving a continuous frontage and a strong sense of enclosure.



View east along London Road (A2) at Ospringe (High Street)

- 5.11 This is contrasted to the south by Water Lane which is *“rather more open in appearance and more informally structured; its defining feature is the manner in which it embraces the transition in character from ‘urban’ to ‘rural.’”*<sup>8</sup> This part of the conservation area characterised by a variety of cottage, timber framed buildings and later 19<sup>th</sup> century brick built structures which a more informal appearance to the lane. At the southern end at the edge of the settlement, the lane opens up to fields with the parish church set apart and forming an important rural landmark, set within a mid-19<sup>th</sup> century walled churchyard.
- 5.12 The significance of Ospringe Conservation Area is derived from its historic interest as a rural settlement strategically positioned on the London to Canterbury Road and focused on the ancient site of the Maison Dieu, and its independence from the larger centre of Faversham to its north east. This separation and also the historic extent of this much smaller hamlet remains legible today from within and its surrounding landscape. The distinctive street pattern, including Water Lane bridging the stream, and attractively

<sup>8</sup> Swale Borough Council (2004) Ospringe Conservation Area Appraisal



varied built form of Medieval to more modern buildings, including the largely rebuilt parish church, is also of architectural interest.

### **Preston Next Faversham Conservation Area**

- 5.13 Preston Next Faversham is small roadside settlement located on the south-eastern edge of Faversham, *“astride the London-Canterbury Road”*<sup>9</sup>. Historically, the small hamlet was separated from its larger neighbour by fruit fields and pasture land. From the 20<sup>th</sup> century however, residential development has slowly encroached and the *“smaller settlement is steadily, but inexorably, being absorbed into the urban fabric of its very much larger neighbour, and it is now well on the way to becoming part of an almost continuously built-up frontage stretching along the north side of the London-Canterbury Road”*<sup>10</sup>.



*View looking east along London Road (A2) at Preston Next Faversham*

- 5.14 The Preston Next Faversham Conservation Area encompasses the remains of the once separate hamlet. It is of significance as a collection of surviving attractive historic buildings dating from the late 17<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century and illustrating the *“once separate identity”* of the early settlement and its historic development. The north side of the A2 road is more urban in character due to the 20<sup>th</sup> century encroachment however, the surviving thatched cottage, brick built houses as well as the small surviving green space, a remnant of the old chalk pit provide some remnants of its former rural and vernacular character. The south of the A2 is notably more rural yet the buildings are later in date and more ‘polite’ or classical in terms of their appearance. As described in

<sup>9</sup> Swale Borough Council (2004) Preston Next Faversham Conservation Area Appraisal

<sup>10</sup> Ibid

the Conservation Area Appraisal, the *“surviving vernacular architecture [of the buildings on the north and south sides of the A2] continues to be of sufficient strength to constitute a place of special historical interest and local distinctiveness”*.<sup>11</sup>

- 5.15 The significance of Preston Next Faversham Conservation Area is derived from its historic interest as part of historic hamlet (beyond the parish church site) which grew up along part of the London to Canterbury Road. Although now absorbed into the modern urban area of Faversham, this history can still be understood in the attractive architecture and grouping of historic buildings as the town’s edge.

### **Outlying Groups of Listed Buildings and Scheduled Monuments**

- 5.16 The combined boundaries of these three key conservation areas in and around the historic centre of Faversham do not encompass the entire urban area of the town. Predominantly it is the extensive network of streets of residential development, also including some areas of industrial and commercial activity, dating from later 20<sup>th</sup> century expansion and outside the historic core that have been excluded from conservation area designation. These other areas now form an integral part of the Faversham town “heritage asset” and generally lie towards its urban edge where its wider landscape surroundings are met. They also form part of the setting of the inner conservation areas themselves.
- 5.17 Within this outer urban area of the town and also along its fringes; within its immediate setting, are significant points or groups of other designated heritage assets, including listed buildings and scheduled monuments. These include the concentration of listed buildings at the heart of the historically independent settlement of Oare, and its outlying church. These buildings have architectural and historic interest in illustrating the past development of Oare at the head of its creek. Other groups within or at the north west edge of the main town are the historic buildings and structures associated with the past development of Faversham’s once nationally important gunpowder industry at Marsh, Chart, Stonbridge and Oare Works (including Oare mill). At the opposing south eastern edge of Faversham town and conservation area is Macknade; an 18<sup>th</sup> century gentry house and farmstead on the London to Canterbury road. Although now within the orbit of the modern town, these buildings record the prosperity of the town in this period which afforded some the means to establish large houses at its then rural fringe.

### **Syndale Park Conservation Area**

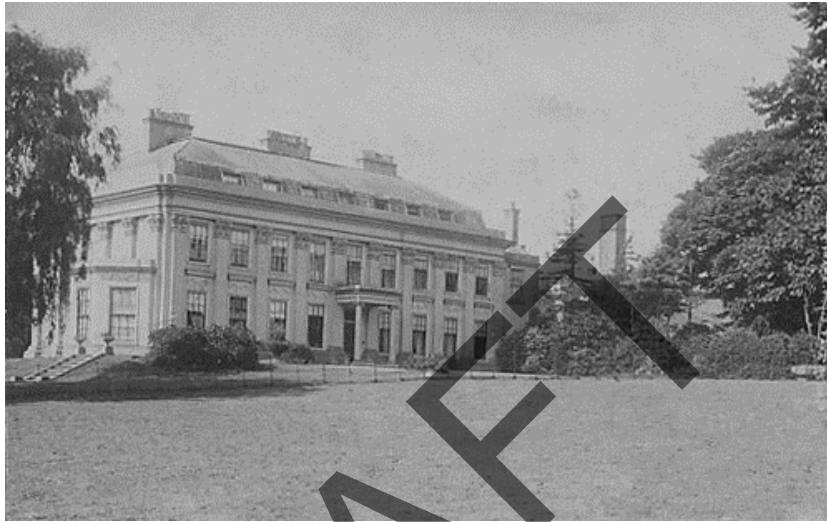
- 5.18 To the south west and outside of the modern urban area of Faversham town, Syndale Conservation Area is landscaped parkland associated with the now destroyed 17<sup>th</sup> century Syndale House, located on the south side of the London-Canterbury Road (A2). This conservation area forms part of the immediate setting of the town and has a close historic relationship with the settlement.
- 5.19 As described in the Conservation Area Appraisal, *“the area’s special interest also derives from the remnants of formal gardens nestled against managed woodland to the south, a scattering of Roman remains and clusters of traditional service and farm*

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<sup>11</sup> Ibid



*buildings previously associated with the Syndale Estate*<sup>12</sup>. Despite the loss of the principal house which stood on the crest of a hill commanding views over the landscaped parkland, the historic layout of the estate and its associated outbuildings has remained fully legible and thus contribute to the conservation area's historic illustrative values. The archaeological remains of the Roman occupation of the site whilst not visible above ground are also of interest for illustrating the ancient function of the area.



*Photograph of Syndale House circa 1950*

- 5.20 The parkland is “*one of the best preserved designed landscapes in the Borough*”<sup>13</sup> and was likely laid out in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century in the popular naturalised design made popular by Capability Brown. It forms an attractive open space that is of high aesthetic value. The estate and farm buildings also form an attractive collection of buildings of differing vernacular styles and local materials, nestled within the parkland or along the Faversham Road and contribute to the local distinctiveness of the area. There is a strong sense of tranquillity and rural character to much of the conservation area with mature hedgerows and timber post and rail fences which is slightly marred by the noise and heavy traffic of the A2 along the north boundary.

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<sup>12</sup> Swale Borough Council (2008) Syndale Conservation Area Appraisal

<sup>13</sup> Ibid

## 6. Contribution of Setting to the Significance of Faversham Town “Heritage Asset”

### Setting and Significance

6.1 The NPPF 2012 defines the setting of a heritage asset as:

*The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.<sup>14</sup>*

6.2 English Heritage (now Historic England) has published the Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning: Note 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets 2015, which provides guidance on managing change within the setting of heritage assets. It firstly looks to define setting. With particular relevance to this study of Faversham town, guidance sets out that extensive heritage assets, such as landscapes and townscapes, can include many heritage assets and their nested and overlapping settings, as well as having a setting of their own. Entire towns also have a setting. Setting is often expressed by reference to views, although the visual impression of an asset is important this is not the only way in which its significance can be understood or appreciated from within its immediate or wider setting.

6.3 Section 4 provides guidance on setting and development management; setting out a broad approach to assessment of development in a series of steps. Step 1 identifies which assets would be affected by change within setting. Step 2 assesses whether, how and to what degree these settings make a contribution to significance of the heritage asset; recommending the key attributes of the asset itself and then consider:

- The asset's physical surroundings; and
- The experience of the asset.

6.4 This step is used as a framework to assess the relative contribution of the landscape character areas (and sub-areas) around Faversham town and within its setting to its heritage significance. Step 3 assesses the effect of development on the significance of the asset, again using a recommended checklist. In tandem, this next step is used as a guide to assessment of the sensitivity of setting to future change.

### Framework and Landscape Character Areas

6.5 English Heritage (now Historic England)'s Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning: Note 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets 2015 has been used as the key framework for the following assessment of the contribution of setting to the significance of the Faversham town “heritage asset”.

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<sup>14</sup> DCLG, NPPF, 2012 – Annex 2: Glossary

- 6.6 In an effort to bring the different yet complementary disciplines of landscape characterisation and heritage significance together, this assessment uses the specific landscape character areas (and urban area boundary) defined in the Swale Borough Council Landscape Character and Biodiversity Appraisal document as the basis to describe the contribution of the surroundings of the town. Owing to the complex patterns of historic landscape and below ground or built heritage features within these broad areas, further sub-areas are also used and illustrated graphically in the accompanying maps to add further detail to this assessment.

## **Marshland & Clay Farmland**

### **3 Goodnestone Grasslands**

### **5 Graveney Marshes**

### **6 Ham Marshes**

### **8 Luddenham and Conyer Marshes**

### **17 Stone Arable Farmlands**

- 6.7 This group of landscape character areas includes both marshlands and the closely associated area of clay farmland (stone arable), which lie to the north of the urban area of Faversham town. It is in these areas that the rural landscape surroundings of the town butts right up to its urban edges with less of the separating suburban or semi-rural zone that is experienced on the south, east and west sides of the town. This is in part derived from the historic constraints presented by these floodlands to the expansion of the settlement northwards. It is on the north side the town that its historic core (i.e. pre-20<sup>th</sup> century) comes closest to the rural edge of modern Faversham. This close connection between the heritage asset of the town and this group of landscape areas to its north is reinforced by the inclusion of part of Faversham Creek an area of open marshland surrounding and to the north of the old port and the historic site of the Abbey Farm within the boundary of the Faversham Conservation Area. Here, the transition between the urban area and marshland is visually notable, the openness of this landscape markedly contrasting with the enclosed and somewhat self-contained experience of historic town.
- 6.8 The marshes and the creeks greatly influenced both the historical positioning and layout of the town, its subsequent prosperity and development. It is here that commerce grew through the port at Faversham (and Oare) and connection to wider markets beyond the Thames Estuary, and the marshes themselves were important areas for food production (grazing and oyster beds) and a site for the expansion of key industries outside the town centre, such as the Marsh Gunpowder Works. This part of the setting of the town makes an important contribution to its heritage significance. This is further evidenced by the concentration of industrial listed buildings at the gunpowder works and more dispersed and isolated point or groups of listed farm buildings on the Ham Marshes and Oare Marshes, and the ancient creekside Abbey Farm itself.





*View looking north from the old port and across Faversham Creek towards Ham Farm*

- 6.9 Later expansion of the town in the 19<sup>th</sup> and then 20<sup>th</sup> century was largely focused in the south and east, then west, leaving this part of the setting of the town as a high quality and largely unspoilt landscape area within a strong rural, even wild, character, defining the town's historic northern reach. This character of the landscape, the openness of low lying fields and marshes and the distinct lack of built form greatly contributes to the experience of remoteness and separation of the north extent of the town, particularly around Abbey Farm and the former port and Creekside. This also allows for more extensive views across the marshes and along the creeks and between the town and its built landmarks and The Swale further to the north. Critically the ability to understand and appreciate the town's important historic connections with these waterways and marshland remains clearly legible within this part of its setting and group of landscape character areas.
- 6.10 The more limited intrusion of modern built form and relatively open appearance of the marshland has also allowed the independent character of the smaller historic creekside settlement of Oare and its own relationship with the water to remain appreciable, just outside the urban area of Faversham. To the west of Oare is the larger part of the landscape character area defined as stone arable farmlands. The part of this area that borders the creek and includes grazing marsh and water in the north relates closely to the marshland landscape character areas. Further south the landscape is characterised by a more modern pattern of large arable fields and there is also increasing distance and weakening inter-visibility from the creek and the historic centres of Faversham town. From within this southern sub-area of this area and setting of the town the legibility of its heritage significance diminishes relative to the other north and eastern floodlands.

### **Summary**

- 6.11 This group of landscape character areas (and sub-areas) forms a distinctive part of the setting of Faversham town, which makes a high contribution to the significance of this “heritage asset”. The important and close historic and functional relationship between Faversham and Oare Creeks and The Swale across the low lying marshes and the town itself remain clearly legible within this landscape. Water determined the original settlement of Faversham (and Oare) and also influenced its later growth and prosperity. The expansive marshlands still retain much of their historic unbuilt character and untamed beauty, and the topography allows extensive views across this landscape, which meets the very edge of the urban area and former port abruptly.

### **Fruit Belt**

#### **20 Faversham and Ospringe Fruit Belt**

#### **21 Graveney Arable Farmlands**

#### **22 Graveney Fruit Farms**

- 6.12 This group of landscape character areas includes the traditionally rich arable and or fruit producing lands to the south and east of Faversham town. This includes areas of truly rural agricultural land usually away from the centre and also areas with a more suburban character along the southern fringe of the modern town, such as the outlying parts of Ospringe, pockets of modern development along parts of the A2 and ribbon housing along the Ashford Road leading south. The motorway M2 traverses this area to the south of the town and is an ever present modern feature experienced within this landscape. The railway also splits and exits the town to its south and north east across this area. Parts of this landscape character area are included within the boundaries of the Faversham, Ospringe and Preston Next Faversham Conservation Areas.



*View looking east from the corner of London Road (a2) and Brogdale Road near the Abbey School*

- 6.13 The ancient Roman / London to Canterbury road (now A2) is a key feature. With the exception of the former independent settlements of Ospringe and Preston (Next Faversham) that grew up deliberately on this strategic route, the line of this road passed through open countryside until the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, with the historic core of Faversham located away to its north. Although later suburban expansion has now reached this line, the road has now adopted a role representing a peculiarly distinct boundary and change in character between the urban area of historic creekside Faversham and its rural hinterland to the south. In areas modern suburban development, including housing, a school and recreation grounds, has crossed the line and this has dulled the once sharper distinction between urban form and rural land. However, this divide still remains legible along much of its length. As found today, built form is primarily concentrated north of the road and to its south substantial areas of open land predominate. This line also stands an important record of the distinctive way in which Faversham has evolved and expanded historically, different from towns that enjoy a more intimate relationship with this route.
- 6.14 As found today, incremental modern development and the introduction of urbanising features on the south side of the A2 has served to dilute the appreciation of the character and function of the road as a transition from urban fringe to rural open landscape. As one continues down some of the lanes and roads running southwards, the rural landscape is slowly revealed, however, from the A2 itself views of the open landscape further south towards the M2 are more limited to a number of varied sections or glimpses between concentrations of built development. Noise and the heavy traffic of the road have also impacted negatively and further erode the former rural character and once more tranquil experience of this part of the town's immediate setting.



*View looking north towards the Abbey School and housing along Ashford Road from nearby open fields*



- 6.15 There are some distinct areas of undeveloped landscape on the south side of the road which still provide a clearly legible indicator of the town's former rural setting and the historic visual and functional links between town and country. This contributes positively to the significance of the town. This is reinforced by the survival of a dispersed number of listed buildings within this area along or just south of the A2 that are strongly connected to the former rural character and greater sense of separation from the historic core of the town. These include former agricultural buildings: cottages and an oasthouse, and large gentry houses such as Macknade House to the east which still retains part of its former grounds and farm group. Ospringe House, for example, has been completely consumed by surrounding modern residential development, however still provides some illustration of the former historic rural character of the road once further outside the orbit of Faversham. Orchards, fruit and hops fields in this area have declined in recent years, but where elements survive these features also contribute to the significance of the town in illustrating the importance of this agriculture to the economy over time, and also the successful 19<sup>th</sup> century breweries.
- 6.16 The experience of the town and its relationship with its landscape surroundings to the south is dynamic and changes considerably as one travels west to east or west to east along the historic line of the London to Canterbury road (now A2). There are places where the legibility of the historic relationship between town and country is stronger than others, and at points where the former sharp contrast between pre 20<sup>th</sup> century town or hamlet and the open rural landscape remains most understandable and appreciable.



*View looking west towards across the valley settlement of Ospringe from the higher ground near Queens Court Farm*

- 6.17 Toward the south western edge of the town and on the A2, modern Faversham and the historically independent settlement of Ospringe now connect (Ospringe Road). The historic core of Ospringe along part of the A2 and down Water Lane on to the parish church and also part of its immediate landscape area and own valley setting is included within its own conservation area boundary. The immediacy of the visual links between the tightly contained built development at the heart of this settlement and the open rural fields and other green space to the south west and south east contributes positively to the significance of this conservation area and Faversham town as a whole. The physical isolation of the church group in the south and remaining listed former agricultural and other historic buildings reinforces this. It is from Water Lane (south part) and the open land surrounding this settlement that the historical rural origins of Ospringe and its past separation from Faversham remain most clearly legible. The distinctive valley enclosure of this settlement with very limited built development on higher ground to east or west adds to its sense of separation and otherness from the town. The key urbanising feature which detracts from this experience is the M2 further to the south which, whilst largely visually masked by tree belts, is a constant noise in the background.
- 6.18 Preston Next Faversham Conservation Area, further east from Ospringe, is another historic settlement positioned strategically on the London to Canterbury road, as evidenced by the existing grouping of historic buildings on both sides of the road at this point. Although now firmly within the urban area of modern Faversham, the character of the historic buildings, both inside and outside the conservation area boundary, and adjoining fragments of open fields along the south side of the road help to protect the legibility of the former isolation and historic agricultural links of this hamlet. Along this part of the road open land immediately to the west of Preston allows glimpsed views southwards into the wider countryside with few intervening urbanising features. Further to both the west and east concentrations of modern residential or commercial development and the dominance of suburbanising landscape features such recreation grounds diminish the legibility of the former rural edge of the town along the road.



*View looking north east from Lorenden Park towards Faversham town*

6.19 The wider setting of Faversham town further to the south of built edge extends out to encompass an open rural landscape of small and medium sized fields and some hedgerow boundaries, historically used for growing fruit and hops, with a dispersed number of former agricultural listed buildings and small settlements, such as Painters Forstal, Lorenden and Whitehill. The area includes parts of the designated village conservation areas of Painter's Forstal and Whitehill. This landscape area forms an important rural backdrop to the town, although direct visual links out from the urban area looking southwards are limited by topography and also constrained by existing built development and infrastructure. The physical, visual and aural intrusion of the M2 motorway through this area, and suburban residential development extending out from the modern town along Ashford Road, serves to temper this appreciation of the historic rural character of this landscape. Due to the slightly rising topography of the land towards the south and the Downs, there are some views from key vantage points in this landscape area back towards Faversham town centre and Ospringe and their landmarks. This allows one to appreciate the settlement within its wider rural landscape surroundings and in the far distance the key features of the creeks and estuary that have sustained the town historically.



*View looking south west from Sandbanks towards Faversham town*

6.20 To the east of Faversham town, north of the A2 and the M2 motorway, the topography of this landscape area is more level and starts to extend northwards to the fringe of marshland and the flood plain. Again this area is dominated by the open fields of agriculture and dispersed pattern of a few small rural settlements and more isolated listed buildings or groups. There are some longer distance views looking back towards the modern town from Goodnestone and the Swale Heritage Trail within this area. The historic core of the settlement of Goodnestone at the very edge of the study area is



designated as a conservation area. These features contribute positively to the understanding and appreciation of the past visual and functional relationships between town and country.

- 6.21 However, the legibility of this contribution has been diminished to some degree by the intervention of urbanising features, such as the infrastructure of the railway line and motorway, and more modern patterns of agricultural use. Other modern industrial or commercial developments such as the Graveney Road estate and Macknade Farm are sited at the fringe of the urban area, which is itself now relatively remote from the historic centre of Faversham as a result of substantial residential suburban expansion eastwards.

### ***Summary***

- 6.22 How, how much and why these landscape character areas (and sub-areas) contribute to significance of the Faversham town heritage asset varies relative to each other. A key feature through this area is the line of the ancient London to Canterbury Road (now A2) and the distinctive historical relationship of Faversham with this route. The town was settled at the head of the creek and away from the road, unlike Ospringe for example. Although modern Faversham has now part expanded across the line of the A2, the contrast of greater built development on the north side and more open rural-like space to the south predominates and the road still provides in substantial parts a clearly defensible edge to the town. As found today, along the south side of the road is a broad area of transition between suburban and rural characters that has blurred the past distinction of this historic line where town meets country. Overall the experience of this feature contributes to the understanding and appreciation of how the town has developed historically.
- 6.23 The identifiably distinct and smaller settlements of Ospringe and Preston have a historically closer relationship with London Road. Remaining areas of open and largely un-urbanised landscape close to the cores of these other settlements contribute positively to the significance of the combined heritage asset by enabling an appreciation of their former separateness and rural setting.
- 6.24 More widely, beyond the M2 motorway to the south and eastwards, these parts of this group of landscape character areas comprise a dispersed pattern of historic farm groups, small villages and fruit or hops fields, which contribute to the understanding and appreciation of the historical and functional links between the town and its traditional agricultural hinterland. Rising topography to the south expands the potential for longer views between this landscape and the historic core of the town. The impact of modern infrastructure, land use and other developments serve to diminish this experience.

## **Dry Valleys and Downs**

### **36 Doddington and Newnham Dry Valleys**

- 6.25 This landscape character area comprises the dry valley that extends along the south west and near western edge of the modern town of Faversham. This includes the former parkland of Syndale House and Syndale Park Conservation Area, which is a designated heritage asset in its own right and also forms part of the immediate landscape setting of

Faversham town. The significance of this conservation area has been described as part of this study.

- 6.26 This area has a strong historic rural character, which is defined by a sense of tranquillity and unspoilt-ness within this undulating landscape of traditional small to medium sized arable fields retaining enclosure by hedgerows, stands of trees and copses and more formal parkland. The area is traversed by the A2 and railway line - the impact of which is minimised to some degree by its cutting. However, overall the impact of more modern urbanising features on this area has been relatively limited. This historic character is further evidenced by the ancient woodland at Bysing Wood, dispersed groups of agricultural listed buildings and archaeological sites (including Roman remains and a former industrial zone), and Syndale parkland. The historic activities of traditional agriculture and gunpowder making, which supported the market and commerce of Faversham, remain legible within this landscape area. Syndale Park also evidences the development of large houses by the gentry on the edge of the town in the early modern period, made wealthy by trade at its centre.



*View looking east from Four Oaks towards Faversham town*

- 6.27 The western edge of Faversham town is well defined, in part by the line of the Western Link road, and there is a sharp transition experienced between modern suburbia and the rural countryside as this line is crossed. Here, the historic core of the town is distanced by the intervention of extension late 20<sup>th</sup> century residential development to its west and north of the A2. Inter-visibility between this landscape area and the landmarks of the historic core of the town (including both Faversham and Davington centres) is more limited. However, it is not isolated and the close historic links between this part of its setting and the market town remain legible in the landscape features and built or below



ground features that remain. At the south west edge of the modern town the historic core of Faversham town meets this rural landscape more closely – where the ancient settlement of Ospringe (and conservation area) sides astride the London to Canterbury road (now A2). The transition from built up historic town (or village) to the rural landscape is much more immediate here and can be experienced as one travels west along the A2 leaving the orbit of modern Faversham town.

- 6.28 This area forms part of the setting of Syndale Conservation Area, greatly contributing to its unspoilt landscape character. The undulating topography of the landscape and the lack of built form greatly enhances the experience of tranquillity and remoteness within the park. The dry valley to the south-east forms a strong visual buffer marking the separation of the estate and the wider rural countryside and greatly influenced the historic commanding positioning of the house. It also forms part of the setting of Ospringe Conservation Area to its east, the dry valley and its surrounding topography also contribute to the tranquil experience of the southern extent of this village and the sense of openness.

***Summary***

- 6.29 This landscape character area (including Syndale Conservation Area) within the dry valley retains much of its historic pattern of agricultural fields, more formal parkland and ancient woodland. This, together with the existing concentration of scheduled monuments and listed buildings (mostly associated with former traditional farming and industrial activity), provides a clear appreciation of the historical, functional and visual links between Faversham town and this part of its setting to the west. This is an area of high contribution to significance.

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## 7. Overview of Heritage Asset Significance and Setting

- 7.1 The characters of the landscape areas (and sub-areas) that form the immediate setting of the Faversham town “heritage asset” are richly diverse. To the north of the town the stark contrast between built edge and expansive marshland is arresting and this preserves the legibility of the close historical, functional and visual links between Faversham (and Davington and Oare) and the water. Further to the south, substantial parts of the rural hinterland of the town still retain a strong sense of their historic character and traditional uses, including the important fruit and hops growing and gunpowder industries. Closer to the town, the ancient line of the A2 (former London to Canterbury Road) defines much of the southern built edge, and helps to records the distinctive positioning of Faversham’s core at the creekhead and away from this route. The once independent settlements of Ospringe and Preston actually on the London Road still retain close relationships with the open landscape surroundings of the modern town, which allows their separateness and rural origins to be readable.
- 7.2 Figure 9 graphically illustrates the relative contribution of the different character areas and sub-areas within these of the “study area” to the significance of the “heritage asset” of Faversham Town; as elements within its setting. This is deliberately a high level analysis, which aims to aid understanding of the written description of the surroundings of the town set out in Section 6. For a more detailed understanding of how and to what degree a specific parcel of land within the study area contributes to the significance of one or many of the various heritage assets further detailed analysis would be required at a finer scale. The table below also summarises the findings of this section.

Table 7.1: Heritage Asset Setting Assessment

Character Area	Contribution of Setting to Significance	
Goodnestone Grasslands (3)	High	
Graveney Marshes (5)	High	
Ham Marshes (6)	High	
Luddenham and Conyer Marshes (8)	High	
Stone Arable Farmlands (17)	High	Moderate
Faversham and Ospringe Fruit Belt (20)	High	Moderate
Graveney Arable Farmlands (21)	Moderate	
Graveney Fruit Farms (22)	High	
Doddington and Newnham Dry Valleys (36)	High	

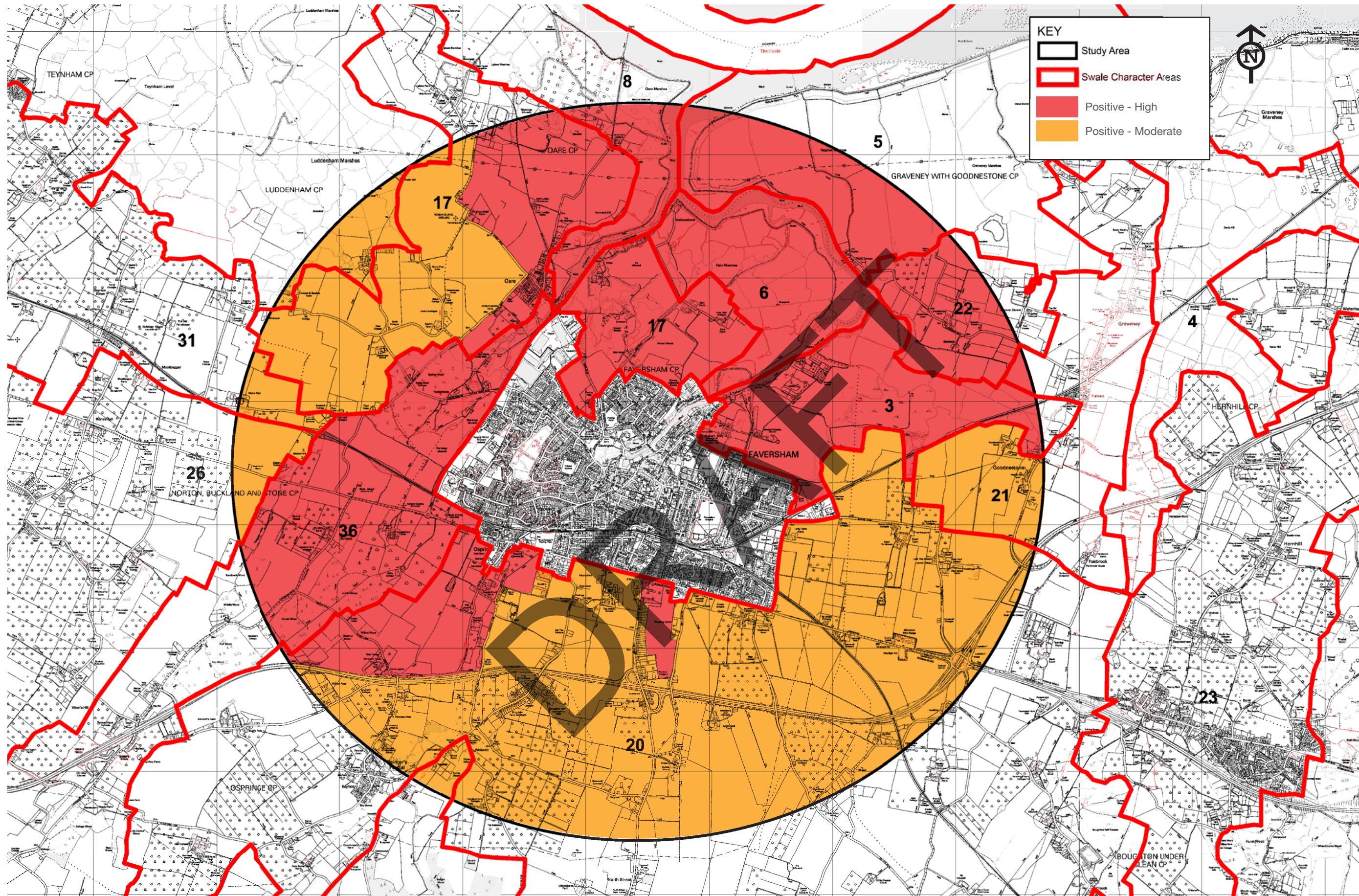


- 7.3 Figure 9 broadly recognises the positive contribution that the setting of the town within the study area makes to its heritage significance overall, and also recognises that the degree of contribution of each of the sub-areas varies relative to each other. A high positive contribution of setting to significance (red) indicates areas of land from where the heritage values of the Faversham town heritage asset can be most clearly understood and appreciated. These are generally areas of historic landscape and built form that retain largely intact and retain strong visual, functional and historic links with the town.
- 7.4 Areas of moderate positive contribution of setting to significance (orange) are of lesser heritage value relative to the former areas. Here, the legibility of the understanding and appreciation of the significance of the town has been diminished; as part of the experience of these areas. This could be as a result of the past degrading of the historic character of landscape or townscape and or weaker links visually, functionally or historically with the town.
- 7.5 This study highlights that the relationship of the “heritage asset” of Faversham Town to its setting is distinctive and specific to this historic settlement. Right across the study area there are many areas within the surroundings of Faversham where the heritage significance of the place, and our understanding and appreciation of its own unique history, can be experienced very strongly. It is inevitable that the historical, functional and visual relationship between the town and its countryside surroundings will continue to evolve over time. However, it is important that change should be managed in a way that sustains and, where appropriate, enhances the significance of this heritage asset. It should also be recognised that inappropriate development within the setting of the town has the potential to cause harm to its significance, and that efforts should be made to avoid or minimise this.

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Figure 9: Contribution of setting to Heritage Significance



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- Goodnestone Grasslands (3)
- Gravenev Marshes (5)
- Ham Marshes (6)
- Luddenham and Conyer Marshes (8)
- Stone Arable Farmlands (17)
- Faversham and Ospringe Fruit Belt (20)

- Gravenev Arable Farmlands (21)
- Gravenev Fruit Farms (22)
- Doddington and Newnham Dry Valleys (36)

Client:  
**Swale Borough Council**  
Project:  
**Faversham Town Centre**  
Drawing:  
**Figure 9: Contribution of setting to Heritage Significance**

Project Number:  
**SWAH\_3002**  
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**09**  
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Scale:  
**NTS @ A3**  
Revision:  
**01**  
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**Final Draft**





# Appendix 1: Historical Ordnance Survey Maps

Epoch 1907-1908

Epoch 1933-1939

Epoch 1956-1992

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# Appendix 2: Existing Landscape Character Assessments

## Background

This appendix sets out the various existing landscape character assessment's resources at a county and borough level. These include:

- Kent Historic Landscape Characterisation Study (2001)
- The Landscape Assessment of Kent (date)
- Swale Landscape Character Assessment (date)
- Urban Extension Landscape Capacity Study (date)

The table below provides a summary of the existing landscape character assessments and areas that fall within the identified study area.

Landscape character assessment	Character Area
The Landscape Assessment of Kent	Eastern Swale Marshes
	Eastern Fruit Belt
	Faversham Fruit Belt
Swale Landscape Character and Biodiversity Appraisal	Goodnestone Grasslands (3)
	Graveney Marshes (5)
	Ham Marshes (6)
	Luddenham and Conyer Marshes (8)
	Stone Arable Farmlands (17)
	Faversham and Ospringe Fruit Belt (20)
	Graveney Arable Farmlands (21)
	Graveney Fruit Farms (22)
Lynsted Enclosed Farmlands (26)	
Urban Extension Landscape Capacity Study	Doddington and Newnham Dry Valleys (36)
	Study area 1
	Study area 2
	Study area 3
	Study area 4
	Study area 5

## **Kent Historic Landscape Characterisation Study**

### **HLCA 17 – Northern Horticultural Belt**

This historic landscape character area is located to the east, west and south of Faversham and is described as being:

*A relatively well defined – linear area running from Medway through to the Wantsum Channel. The belt is primarily defined by horticultural activity, with a predominance of orchards.*

*This belt occurs on the sandier soils of the northern areas in the sheltered belt below the downland areas. Economically, it is situated between a series of major towns which would have supplied substantial markets as well as an extensive road and rail corridor for transportation further afield. The majority of the land associated with the horticulture is relatively flat and associated historic landscape types (HLT) include prairie fields and irregular fields bounded by tracks, roads and paths. These HLTs are indicators, in this case, of the relatively recent transformation of the enclosed landscape through the process of field boundary removal.*

### **HLCA 28 – Northern Coast and Marshland**

This historic landscape character area is located to the north of Faversham and is described as being:

*An extremely well-defined area both in terms of the HLTs and the topographic location. A case could be made for further subdivision based on geographic separation.*

*This area comprises a relatively balanced mix of reclaimed marsh and coastal landscape types typifying the relationship between humans and the marine environment. Areas situated closer to the mouth of the Thames, i.e the area around the Hoo peninsula, contain a greater degree of industrial activity.*

*It is likely that this belt continued further east towards Wantsum Channel but the expansion of Whitstable and Herne Bay town (part of Former Blean Forest) has overlain any evidence of this.*

## **The Landscape Assessment of Kent**

### **Eastern Swale Marshes**

#### ***Context***

This character area is located to the north of Faversham and is described as:

*“This area forms part of the extensive complex of coastal marshes that flanks the Swale Estuary along its southern and northern shores. Although rather less extensive than the marshes across the estuary on the Isle of Sheppey, the Eastern Swale Marshes nevertheless possess many of the same defining characteristics, such as open, flat grazing land with broad skies, few landscape features and a strong sense of remoteness, wildness and exposure.”*

Key characteristics include:

- Remote, wild and exposed;
- Broad skies. Pervasive influence of sea and sky. Creeks, ditches, sea walls. Grazing marsh, wild birds and grazing animals;
- Creekside townscape and waterside buildings; and
- Poorly managed fences. Intrusion of power lines.

**Condition**

The character area's condition is described as:

*"...a unified pattern of elements in which visual detractors such as post and wire fencing and transmission towers are highly visible. Caravan plots are also visual detractors in some areas. The strong network of ditches and creeks defines areas of grazing marsh, and the overall ecological interest is therefore strong. The infrequent settlement has a moderately positive impact on the area. The heritage feature of the ditches varies and may respond to appropriate management in some instances. The condition of the area is considered to be very good."*

**Sensitivity**

The character area's sensitivity is defined below:

*"Whilst visibility is very high, and obviously results in the high sensitivity of the landscape, the sense of place is considered to be moderate. Settlement patterns are characteristic but the built form is largely indistinct. The general landscape pattern based on the sea defence and drainage network has a characteristically historic depth."*

**Eastern Fruit Belt**

**Context**

This character area surrounds the edge of Faversham to the east, west and south, with a further portion directly north and is described as being:

*"... part of the wider landscape of the North Kent Fruit Belt, which runs in a broad band between Gillingham and Whitstable and occupies land between the coastal marshes and the chalk landscapes of the North Downs. This is a predominantly rural, agricultural landscape characterised by a complex and highly structured landscape pattern of orchards, shelterbelts (particularly belts of poplar and alder), fields of arable, pasture and horticultural crops, and blocks of woodland. Apart from the urban area of Faversham, the area contains only small, scattered villages and farm complex which contribute to its quiet, rural character and landscape diversity. Similarly, much of the road network is rural in character but the M2, A299, and A2 have a localised urbanising effect."*

Key characteristics include:

- Rural character, sense of remoteness and privacy;
- Enclosed and diverse;
- Strong woodland blocks; and
- Orchards and hops, shelterbelts. Large pockets of open farmland. Undulating landform.

**Condition**

The character area's condition is described as:



*“The landscape is coherent as a mixed farming landscape, but has lost the diversity of form associated with widespread fruit growing, and has a degraded aspect, resulting from detracting features such as post and wire fencing, redundant hedged field boundaries and dead elms. Small pockets of woodland within large areas of intensively farmed arable land represent weak clusters of ecological value. The cultural integrity of the area, however, is variable - the remote, rural character and large farmsteads remain as important features, although field boundaries and shelterbelts are declining due to the change in land use.”*

### ***Sensitivity***

The character area's sensitivity is defined below:

*“The large farmsteads and cluster villages are characteristic of this area, but do not reflect a strong time-depth in their materials or scale. Natural elements within the landscape such as field boundaries and woodlands are no longer distinctive, and the use of species such as alder and poplar in the remaining shelterbelts also reduces the historic value. Visibility is moderate as, although the landscape is relatively open, the landform is not a dominant feature in the view. The sensitivity of the area is therefore considered to be low.”*

### **Faversham Fruit Belt**

#### ***Context***

This character area is located to the southwest of Faversham, on the edge of the study area and is described as:

*“The character of the fruit belt is strongly evident along the northern edge of the Downs in this area. There are frequent hop gardens and orchards here, sheltered from wind by lines of tall, regular alder or poplar trees, which create an unusual and highly distinctive landscape of small, square, outdoor 'rooms'. It is these distinctive landscapes that give Kent its reputation as the Garden of England. In contrast, the intensively cultivated arable fields which surround the orchards are rolling and open, with few hedges and only infrequent blocks of woodland. In the south an outcrop of acidic sandstone has given rise to the steep pine and bracken-clad slopes of Perry Hill, which stands out from the gently undulating farmland.”*

Key characteristics include:

- Gentle slopes and undulating farmland.
- Hop gardens, orchards and tall shelterbelts.
- Rolling, open arable fields, little woodland.
- Pine-clad feature of Perry Hill.

#### ***Condition***

The character area's condition is described as:

*“...an intensive arable and fruit-growing area on gently undulating land, which reflects the structure of a formerly important fruit-farming landscape. It retains a rural and managed appearance, but is losing structure and scale as the emphasis on fruit disappears. Flint churches and large oast complexes are distinguishing features but the effect of these features is becoming diminished by the visibility of the urban edge. The networks of managed hedgerows and shelterbelts are decreasing and therefore the opportunity for ecological interest is currently slight.”*

### ***Sensitivity***

The character area's sensitivity is defined below:

*"Distinguishing features are comparatively recent, such as alder and poplar shelterbelts and large farmsteads. Although settlement patterns and highways are historic in location, the time-depth element of the landscape has become weak. Tree cover is generally sparse, and visibility is moderate in the undulating landscape."*

## **Swale Landscape Character Assessment**

### **Goodnestone Grasslands (3)**

#### ***Context***

This character area is located to the northeast of Faversham, adjacent to the settlement's boundary and is described as:

*"... a tranquil and unspoilt character, despite the presence of the Faversham to Whitstable railway line, elevated here above the alluvial marshland soils. The primary land use is sheep grazing and towards Faversham it is a popular informal recreation area. The landscape is distinguished by its long grasses and riparian vegetation, which includes reed lined ditches and occasional clumps of mature poplars and alders. Views are long, but interrupted by peripheral features such as shelterbelts and buildings associated with adjacent character areas, the urban fringe and also by the railway embankment."*

Key characteristics include:

- Area of drained alluvial grazing marsh;
- Slightly elevated land to north and south containing more fertile soils;
- Natural meandering and straight man-made drainage ditches;
- Tranquil unspoilt landscape with limited access;
- High ecological value;
- Limited areas of mature woodland;
- Typical riparian vegetation of reed filled ditches and scattered groups of poplar and alder;
- Few buildings and no public highways;
- Railway embankments provide additional wildlife corridor; and
- Grade I and II listed barns at Abbey Farm, which is also a Scheduled Monument.

#### ***Condition***

The character area's condition is described as:

*"... generally in good condition, although pockets of landscape used for horse grazing to the east have become degraded. It is an enclosed area of drained marshland with a distinctive riparian character including well-maintained open ditches with reed filled banks and occasional clumps of mature scrub and trees. It is an area semi-enclosed by mixed mature woodland and vegetation within adjacent character areas."*

### ***Sensitivity***

The character area's sensitivity is defined below:

*“... highly sensitive and locally very distinct landscape. Particularly interesting is the fact that it remains largely undisturbed and inaccessible despite its close proximity to Faversham town centre. In spite of the limited enclosure provided by the railway line and small amount of mature vegetation, visibility across the landscape is high and the urban edge of Faversham is visible.”*

## **Graveney Marshes (5)**

### ***Context***

This character area is located to the north of Faversham on the edge of the study area and is described as:

*“This is a huge open expanse of alluvial coastal marsh located to the north of Graveney and east of Faversham Creek. It contains little semi-natural vegetation and is bleak and windswept in the winter months. During the twentieth century, the landscape has been transformed from an area of traditional grazing marsh to one of monoculture. The landscape has been divided via long straight drainage ditches, into vast fields that now accommodate large-scale cereal production. Significant engineering works have been carried out so as to prevent flooding.”*

Key characteristics include:

- Large open area of alluvial Marshland
- Large-scale arable fields divided by long straight drainage ditches
- Typical features ditches, sea wall, estuarine saltmarsh, sand and mudflats
- Atmospheric and tranquil landscape with large open and often dramatic skies

### ***Condition***

The character area's condition is described as:

*“Overall the landscape is in moderate condition, however it should be noted that within the seawall the agricultural landscape is in a poorer condition, whilst outside of the sea wall the natural landscape is in good condition.”*

### ***Sensitivity***

The character area's sensitivity is defined below:

*“This is a moderately sensitive landscape. Modern farming practices have weakened the area's sense of place by removing any signs of its traditional agricultural character and any distinctive features. The vast open flat landscape and minimal scrub vegetation, means that views are extensive, uninterrupted and panoramic. Overall visibility is therefore very high.”*

## **Ham Marshes (6)**

### ***Context***

This character area is located to the north of Faversham and is described as:

*“... an extensive flat open area of unimproved fresh water grazing marsh. The geology is exclusively alluvial with tidal mudflats in Faversham and Oare Creeks. It is an extremely tranquil landscape with unrestricted panoramic views. Tree cover across the area is limited to occasional isolated groups of mature riparian species adjacent to buildings and along the boundary of adjacent arable fields. Scattered patches of scrub vegetation and isolated thorn bushes also feature. The field pattern may be described as small-scale and divided by a*



*combination of natural and man-made drainage ditches. The ditches are wide and in places lined with reeds.”*

Key characteristics include:

- Flat alluvial marshland with sinuous reed filled ditches. Traditional gates and fences prevent livestock crossing into other fields;
- Large open landscape and dramatic skies;
- Rough grassland used for cattle and sheep grazing;
- Important wetland habitats;
- Boats in the Swale and creeks;
- Minor access lanes and footpaths; and
- Atmospheric and tranquil landscape with large open and often dramatic skies.

### ***Condition***

The character area's condition is described as:

*“Ham Marshes are an unspoilt landscape in good condition. It has a strongly unified landscape pattern with extensive meandering ditches and long unbroken views. Traditional features such as timber wing fencing at ditch crossing points are on the whole very well maintained. Vehicular access is very restricted and the marshes have as a result retained a very tranquil and remote nature.”*

### ***Sensitivity***

The character area's sensitivity is defined below:

*“It is a highly sensitive landscape. Traditional farming practices maintain its very distinct character. The highly visible nature of this open area means that unnatural features would be incongruous and inappropriate.”*

## **Luddenham and Conyer Marshes (8)**

### ***Context***

This character area is located to the northwest of Faversham and is described as:

*“... an extensive flat open area of unimproved fresh water grazing marsh. The geology is almost exclusively alluvial marshland with tidal mudflats in the creeks and the Swale. On the slightly elevated ground around Conyer the soils are a mixture of Woolwich beds, London clay and Oldhaven beds. It is a peaceful scene with views that are generally wide and unrestricted. Tree cover across the marshes is limited to occasional isolated patches of scrub vegetation.”*

### ***Key characteristics include:***

- Flat alluvial marshland with sinuous reed filled ditches. Traditional gates and fences leading into ditches prevent cattle crossing into other fields
- Large open and often dramatic skies
- Rough grassland largely used for cattle and sheep grazing
- Important wetland habitats
- Access routes limited to Harty Ferry approach and Conyer
- Boats in the Swale and creek
- Large-scale landscape with little sense of enclosure

- Strong sense of place, remote and isolated

### **Condition**

The character area's condition is described as:

*"The landscape is largely unspoilt and is considered to be in good condition. The vast isolated marshlands have a coherent visual unity, with extensive meandering ditches and long unbroken views. Traditional features such as timber bridges and wing fencing at ditch crossing points are on the whole very well maintained. Vehicular access is very restricted and the marshes have as a result retained a very tranquil and remote nature."*

### **Sensitivity**

The character area's sensitivity is defined below:

*"This is a highly sensitive landscape. The marshland maintains its distinct character through traditional farming practices. Features within the landscape, although rare, are highly visible where they exist due to the flat and open nature of the land. The integrity of the majority of the marsh is not significantly affected by the distant views of industry and its coastal character is reinforced by boats, shipping and the decaying hulks of historic Thames craft in the mud."*

## **Stone Arable Farmlands (17)**

### **Context**

This character area is located to the north and west of Faversham and is described as:

*"... a rolling arable landscape with enlarged fields that are irregular in shape and medium to large-scale. Traditional farming practices are evident in the few orchards that now remain at Little Uplees. Mature fragmented hedgerows are found along the external field boundaries, but many of the internal hedgerows have been lost. Narrow, often sunken lanes wind through the landscape. In places strong hedgerows enclose the lanes; elsewhere they are open to the adjacent fields."*

Key characteristics include:

- Rolling landscape, gently rising south away from the marshland edge;
- Large number of boats at Oare Creek;
- Complex geology of London clay, head brickearth, head gravel and the more fertile Woolwich, Oldhaven and Thanet beds;
- A landscape generally enlarged as a result of agricultural intensification. Also isolated, smaller scale, more traditionally managed landscapes;
- Flooded pools and gravel workings at Oare and Ham Farm;
- Fragmented mature hedgerows along narrow enclosed winding lanes; and
- Many traditional buildings dating from 17th and 18th century. Victorian cottages and 20th century housing.

### **Condition**

The character area's condition is described as having a:

*"... poor condition, although there are pockets of more traditional landscape which is in better condition. There are significant urban fringe influences north of Faversham, comprising*

*extensive works off Ham Road. Whilst much of this land has been restored to large lakes and wetlands which support the wider marshland landscape, there are remnant detracting features. The wider landscape is an area now largely used for intensive arable farming, where fields have been enlarged and as a result hedgerows lost."*

### ***Sensitivity***

The character area's sensitivity is defined below:

*"It is a moderately sensitive area. In places it is very distinct and historic in origin with a strong sense of place and historic buildings. Whilst visibility can be described as enclosed in places, elsewhere topographical high points and a landscape opened up for modern farming practices means that the landscape is generally vulnerable to change."*

## **Faversham and Ospringe Fruit Belt (20)**

### ***Context***

This character area is located directly to the south and east of Faversham and is described as:

*"... gently undulating landscape that steadily climbs southwards. The mixed geology has led to varied modern farming practices. Traditional fruit and hop production is now less common, with arable being the primary land use. Around Faversham the soils are largely a mixture of head brickearth, Thanet beds drift and chalk. On the lower dip slopes the soils become clay-with-flints and chalk. ... Landscape structure can be described as generally strong and intact. Although it contains no significant areas of woodland, a number of smaller oak and ash woodland shaws are scattered across the area. Many mature specimen trees are associated with farms and villages, whilst shelter belt are used to enclose former and existing hop gardens and orchards. The field pattern may therefore be described as generally intact, mixed, with irregular small to large-scale fields. Consequently intermittent long views are visible from high open areas, but are enclosed elsewhere. ... The urban edge of Faversham is generally well defined and, whilst some urban influences have spread south of the A2, there is a particularly quick transition between the urban and rural areas along the east and south eastern urban boundaries."*

Key characteristics include:

- Gently undulating landscape that steadily climbs southwards;
- Mixed geology of head brickearth, Thanet beds drift, clay-with-flints and chalk;
- Small to medium-scale orchards and large open arable fields;
- Woodland shaws and new plantation;
- Mature fragmented hedgerows supplemented with post and wire fencing;
- Many fine historic buildings in local vernacular style; and
- Motorways, A and B roads, narrow winding lanes. Many lanes of historic interest including former drovers' routes and the A251, a former turnpike road.

### ***Condition***

The character area's condition is described as being in:

*"... in good condition. Land use is a mixture of fruit orchards, some of which are non-intensive, and larger scale arable fields. Mature hedgerows, poplar windbreaks, woodland shaws and mature specimen trees associated with settlement as well as newly planted areas of woodland,*



*all provide a unified landscape structure. In places hedgerows have become fragmented and supplemented with post and wire fencing but generally they are strong and in good condition.”*

### ***Sensitivity***

The character area's sensitivity is defined below:

*“... moderately sensitive landscape. In general term visibility is moderate; however, this varies from high on the elevated open fields where there are views of Faversham, to low on the enclosed lower slopes, valleys and areas of orchard and hops. Mature hedgerows and shelterbelts are characteristic and emphasise the field pattern. Historic farming practices are reflected in the landscape structure and built form, although this has been somewhat eroded with late 20th century expansion of farmsteads and loss of many traditional farm buildings. On the whole the quality of the built environment is high, with many properties retaining a distinct vernacular style.”*

## **Graveney Arable Farmlands (21)**

### ***Context***

This character area is located to the east of Faversham, on the edge of the study area, and is described as an:

*“... area that stretches south in a narrow corridor from Cleve Marshes to Goodnestone. ... The topography is gently undulating, rising from 5 to 15m with localised areas of higher ground, such as at Cleve Hill, which forms a modest raised backdrop to the marshes to the north. The recent development of a large substation for an offshore windfarm at Cleve Hill forms a distinct and visually prominent feature within the landscape. ... As well as arable, this landscape is also used for the production of fruit. Traditional over-mature orchards are falling into decline, but cherries are still sold in the area.”*

Key characteristics include:

- Gently undulating landscape, with localised higher ground
- Mixed field pattern of large and small-scale
- Open arable farmland with isolated mature orchards and soft fruit
- Rural fringe activities such as horse pasture
- Fragmented mature hedgerows along lanes supplemented with post and wire
- Views enclosed by vegetation and built development, but wide from within fields and where hedgerows fragmented

### ***Condition***

The character area's condition is described as:

*“Improved access, modern built form including the large and visually prominent sub station at Cleve Hill and changes in farming practice have transformed the character of this once remote and isolated landscape, to one which is now generally in poor condition. Despite this, large open fields form a coherent landscape pattern and visual detractors are limited to modern chalet style houses, occasional modern farm buildings in poor condition and the poor and insensitive renovation of Graveney Church.”*

### ***Sensitivity***

The character area's sensitivity is defined below as being:

*"moderately sensitive landscape where the landform and field boundaries make for a relatively open environment. Views are sometimes contained by fragmented mature hedgerows, gentle topography and development, but have generally been widened by loss of hedgerows and long views of the marsh to the north and Faversham to the west are often available from higher ground. Many traditional features that once contributed to the distinctiveness of this landscape have been lost."*

## **Graveney Fruit Farms (22)**

### ***Context***

This character area is located to the north east of Faversham, on the edge of the study area, and is described as an:

*"... an enclosed and intimate landscape used for the production of soft and hop fruit. It rises above the surrounding low-lying levels to a height of 20m. The complex geology includes deep, rich, well drained drift soils and small peripheral areas of heavy London clay. Farming practices have largely been transformed in adjacent character areas, which means that this is now a noticeably isolated traditional landscape."*

Key characteristics include:

- Traditional Kentish landscape of orchards and enclosed fruit fields
- An area of high ground, with mixed geology of fertile drift deposits and London clay
- Strong pattern of enclosure created by the shelterbelts and mature hedgerows
- Small isolated mixed deciduous woodland shaws
- Narrow lanes with few passing places enclosed by windbreaks and hedgerows
- Settlement is small-scale and limited to a small hamlet, scattered cottages and farmsteads

### ***Condition***

The character area's condition is described as:

*"This area is in very good condition. Small strips of woodland occasionally interrupt the otherwise strong unity of fruit fields and orchards. There are few detracting features other than isolated modern residential dwellings and occasional inappropriate use of coniferous trees as shelterbelts."*

### ***Sensitivity***

The character area's sensitivity is defined below as being:

*"moderate sensitivity. It retains a very distinct character with traditional elements such as shelterbelts and historic buildings. The field pattern is essentially historic although there has been the conversion from hop growing to fruit. The strong vegetative pattern encloses the landscape and thus reduces its visibility. However, it is on elevated ground and any changes in farming practice that resulted in the loss of trees or hedgerows would visibly increase the sensitivity of the landscape."*

## **Doddington and Newnham Dry Valleys (36)**

### **Context**

This character area is located to the west of Faversham and is described as being part of the:

*“... nationally designated as the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. This is a large and distinct character area, where the nature of the landscape is strongly defined by the underlying geology. For the most part this area lies firmly within the region of the North Downs dip slope. ... The strong landform is emphasised by the network of woodlands and shaws that grow on the steeper slopes of the dry valleys that can be less easily farmed. Between the A2 and M2 motorway lies the Ospringe Valley, consisting of ancient woodland and chalk grassland. In the far south west of the character area lies the Oakenpole Wood, an ancient woodland site. ... Many narrow lanes cut across this tranquil landscape and a number are of historic origin. The most direct routes meander along the valley floors and this is where the larger settlements are located, forming an enclosed and distinctive setting. Major roads and, to a lesser extent railway corridors, introduce discordant elements within an otherwise quiet and peaceful rural landscape but their influence is localised and once away from the immediate vicinity, the rural serenity of the landscape is soon restored. ... This is a landscape where fields vary from small-scale to large. On the upper slopes, where enlargement has resulted from modern farming methods, topography, woodland cover, orchards and mature hedgerows have all been an influence in maintaining the generally enclosed character.”*

Key characteristics include:

- Gently sloping landscape through which cut numerous dramatic dry chalk valleys;
- Geology of chalk and clay-with-flints;
- Upper slopes of enclosed rolling farmland;
- Extensive mature oak and ash woodlands also coppice sweet chestnut and hazel woodlands used for timber production;
- Mixed land use of small to medium-scale orchards and large-scale arable fields;
- Settlement is widespread and small-scale with many traditional vernacular building styles. Properties date from the 16th to 20th centuries;
- Transportation routes include M2, A2, railway line and many narrow lanes; and
- Historic parklands, including archaeological interest at Syndale Park.

### **Condition**

The character area's condition is described as being:

*“... in good condition and contains many features of significant interest. The landscape structure is strong and the network of woodlands and hedgerows maintain a visually unified space. Evidence of recent hedgerow reinstatement in some parts will ensure continuation of the intact landscape structure. Few features detract from the overall coherence except for occasionally dilapidated farm buildings.”*

### **Sensitivity**

The character area's sensitivity is defined below as:

*“...high. The wooded valleys and higher woodland areas help to enclose to a large degree, much of the landscape. However, many of the larger open arable landscapes are located on the higher ground and are highly visually sensitive.”*

## **Swale Urban Extension Landscape Capacity Study**



## Study Area 1

### **Context**

This character area is located to the north of Faversham directly adjacent to the settlement edge, which is described as:

*“... a harsh boundary within the flat surrounding landscape, with an amalgamation of garden and commercial/industrial boundary fence lines often semi ivy clad and in a state of disrepair. Large commercial and industrial buildings stand out in views from the north and much of the landscape is influenced by gravel extraction which has been, or currently is being, undertaken.”*

### **Sensitivity**

The study area's sensitivity is defined as being high and described as being:

*“... largely treeless landscape allows high visibility across the flat and open landscape. This landscape exhibits a distinct sense of remoteness and big skies and is both characteristic and part of the North Kent Marshes, as well as providing the local setting to Ham Marshes.”*

### **Value**

The study area's value is defined as being moderate, due to the following:

- Periphery of Faversham Conservation Area, to the south.
- Boundary of North Kent Marshes Special Landscape Area, to the north and east.
- Boundary of Site of Special Scientific Interest, to the north and east.
- Listed Buildings at Ham Farm and the Gravel Works.

### **Capacity to Accommodate Change**

The study considers that the area has a low capacity to accept change, stating:

*“This landscape is highly sensitive as a buffer between the urban extent of Faversham and Ham Marshes, which form part of the wider North Kent Marshes, and very little further built development would be appropriate. However, the existing urban edge is visually detracting and some small scale infill expansion of residential development could potentially be accommodated east of Ham Road.”*

## Study Area 2

### **Context**

This character area is located to the northeast of Faversham directly adjacent to its settlement edge and is described as:

*“... across almost the entire Goodnestone Grasslands landscape character area. The existing urban edge is visible throughout the Study Area. The urban edge is attractive because it is softened by boundary vegetation, and there is a crisp transition between the urban and rural areas. The creek side urban edge offers a diversity of buildings, amongst them modern and traditional waterside buildings. Close to the Wharf to the west, a traditional farmstead and recent development are partially screened by mature trees and have little effect on the wider landscape character. Key landmark buildings on the urban edge, which are visible from the rural area and provoke a distinct sense of place, include St Mary's Church, historic industrial buildings and boat masts at the Wharf and at Standard Quay.”*

### ***Sensitivity***

The study area's sensitivity is defined as being high and described as being:

- Highly visible landscape, with long distance views towards the urban edge from higher ground outside the Study Area along Sandbanks Road.
- Locally distinct landscape enhanced by Faversham Creek and boating activity.
- Largely undisturbed and inaccessible despite its close proximity to Faversham Town Centre.
- Tranquil and unspoilt character.
- Value expressed through boating activity at the Wharf and along Faversham Creek.
- Saxon Shoreway National Trail/Long Distance Route.

### ***Value***

The study area's value is defined as being moderate, due to the following:

- Faversham Conservation Area to the west.
- Numerous Listed Buildings on the urban fringe of Faversham to the west, including a Grade I Listed barn at Faversham Abbey.
- The periphery of the North Kent Marshes Special Landscape Area to the north.
- The periphery of The Swale Site of Special Scientific Interest, Special Protection Area and Ramsar site to the north.
- Local Wildlife Site.

### ***Capacity to Accommodate Change***

The study considers that the area has a low capacity to accept change, due to

*"... this landscape forms the highly visible and unspoilt foreground to the current, attractive urban edge of Faversham."*

## **Study Area 3**

### ***Context***

This character area is located to the east of Faversham directly adjacent to the settlement edge, which is described as:

*"... well contained by Love Lane, which is lined with a traditional alder shelter belt. There are few urban influences throughout the area, although commercial development has spread eastward, between Whitstable Road and the railway line. Large scale commercial outlets and warehouses are surrounded by areas of car parking, security fencing, lighting and signage. The audibility and views of traffic along the A2 and the A229 slightly detract from the tranquillity and sense of remoteness. However the commercial development and the road network do not impinge greatly on the rural character of the wider landscape, and the urban edge is well softened by traditional shelter belts."*

### ***Sensitivity***

The study area's sensitivity is defined as being moderate and described as being:

*"... Visibility is restricted in places by the traditional framework of poplar, alder and willow shelter belts and the undulating landform. Some of the landscape has been opened up as a result of*

*agricultural intensification, although there are areas of traditional fruit orchards and hop production and large extents of horticultural land use.”*

#### **Value**

The study area's value is defined as being moderate, due to the following:

- Boundary of Faversham Conservation Area west of Love Lane.
- Listed Buildings on traditional farms.
- Traditional fruit orchards, hops, shelterbelts and oast houses.

#### **Capacity to Accommodate Change**

The study considers that the area has a moderate capacity to accept change, stating:

*“... Minor expansion of residential development could potentially be accommodated east of Love Lane, where the land is visually contained by a north south ridge which rises to the east. Extensive development extending beyond, or visible from, land east of this ridge would be inappropriate because it would impose on the rural character of the landscape to the east.*

*Expansion of the existing commercial development north of Graveney Road and south of the railway line might be appropriate in an eastward direction, again where the land is visually contained by the north south ridge which rises to the east.”*

#### **Study Area 4**

##### **Context**

This character area is located to the southeast of Faversham directly adjacent to the settlement edge, which is described as being:

*“...broadly marked by the A2, although a ribbon of housing extends south along the A251. Urban fringe land uses are located on land to the south of the A2, creating a fragmented and poorly defined transition between the urban and rural areas. Urban influences include the well trafficked A2 and M2, a commercial garage along the A2, a food retail business and other commercial development along Selling Road at Macknade Fine Foods, Faversham Town Football Club grounds and a household waste recycling centre west of Salters Lane.”*

##### **Sensitivity**

The study area's sensitivity is defined as being moderate and described as being:

- Much of the landscape has been opened up as a result of agricultural intensification.
- The M2 and the A2 impinge on the tranquillity of the landscape to the south.
- High visibility across open arable fields, although the valley side west of Salters Lane is particularly well physically and visually contained.

##### **Value**

The study area's value is defined as being moderate, due to the following:

- Two Listed Buildings at Macknade.
- Listed Building set within derelict orchard and part of Faversham Town Centre Conservation Area east of the A251.
- Adjacent Preston - next - Faversham Conservation Area set around the A2.
- Some traditional fruit orchards, shelterbelts and oast houses.



### ***Capacity to Accommodate Change***

The study considers that the area has a moderate capacity to accept change, stating:

Expansion of residential development and some small scale commercial development could potentially be accommodated in areas which are well contained physically and visually. Further development would be most appropriate if it was designed at the same scale and density as existing development along the urban edge. Such development could potentially be located:

- On the valley side between the A251 and Salters Lane.
- East of Selling Road up to existing field boundaries, where commercial development and vehicle parking areas currently degrade the landscape.
- Within the enclosed parcel of land east of the B2040, north of the A2 and south of the railway line.

### **Study Area 5**

#### ***Context***

This character area is located to the southwest of Faversham directly adjacent to the settlement edge, which is described as being:

*“... marked by the A2. However urban fringe land uses are located on land to the south of the A2, creating a fragmented and poorly defined transition between the urban and rural areas. Urban influences include The Abbey School east of Brogdale Road, which hosts large scale buildings and sports grounds. A nursery with associated glass houses, polytunnels and evergreen conifer screening belts, and equestrian grazing land are located west of Brogdale Road. The landscape becomes more remote to the south west.”*

#### ***Sensitivity***

The study area's sensitivity is defined as being moderate and described as being:

- Much of the landscape has been opened up as a result of agricultural intensification.
- The M2 impinges on the tranquillity of the landscape to the south.
- The settlement of Ospringe and the numerous Listed Buildings it contains are distinct and historic.
- The integrity and rural valley setting of Ospringe is sensitive.
- The quality of the built environment is high, with many properties retaining a distinct vernacular style.
- Increased sensitivity to the south west as the immediate foreground to the Kent Downs AONB.

#### ***Value***

7.6 The study area's value is defined as being moderate, due to the following:

- Scenic quality of one remaining orchard east of Ospringe.
- Ospringe Conservation Area.
- Faversham Town Centre Conservation Area borders part of the area to the north.
- Numerous Listed Buildings throughout Ospringe.
- North Downs Special Landscape Area to the south west.
- Ospringe Valley Local Wildlife Site to the west.

- Adjacent Kent Downs AONB south of the M2 and west of Vicarage Lane

### ***Capacity to Accommodate Change***

The study considers that the area has a moderate capacity to accept change, stating:

*“...The rural south western extent of the area does not relate well to the urban edge of Faversham, and is sensitive in terms of its location as the immediate setting of the Kent Downs AONB. It is not therefore considered that further extensive development of any kind would be acceptable in this area. To the east of Brogdale Road, the arable landscape is well contained physically by the surrounding road network. The gentle valley landform, intervening vegetation and development visually enclose the land. Small scale business development or residential development at the same scale and density as existing housing on the urban edge could potentially be accommodated immediately to the south of The Abbey School. However, to respect the rural character of the southern part of Brogdale Road, and the largely rural approach to Faversham, it would not be appropriate for development to extend significantly to the south of The Abbey School towards the M2. Neither would development be appropriate immediately to the south of the Listed oast house, in order to retain its setting and its relationship to the adjoining landscape. To the west of Brogdale Road, minor residential development at the same scale and density as existing housing on the urban edge would be appropriate immediately to the west of the nursery buildings and south of the A2. However it is considered important to respect views from, and the rural setting of, the settlement of Ospringe in any further development.”*

## **Study Area 6**

### ***Context***

This character area is located to the west of Faversham directly adjacent to the settlement edge, which is described as:

*“... well contained by the B2045. The road forms a clear physical divide between the largely industrial periphery of Faversham’s western extent and the undulating countryside to the west. There are few urban influences to the west of the B2045, although some minor commercial development has extended into an area of woodland north of Bysing Wood Road. Whilst the B2045 is lit in part and some buildings to the east are large scale, the landscape to the west is well wooded which softens the prominence of the urban edge and creates a rural character. However east of the B2045, between the A2 and the railway line, the landscape is heavily influenced by the surrounding infrastructure routes, which has resulted in an awkward parcel of land which is now a redundant fruit orchard and a small area of arable land.”*

### ***Sensitivity***

The study area’s sensitivity is defined as being high and described as being:

*“...The wooded nature of the landscape helps to enclose the area to a large degree, although open arable fields are located on higher ground to the south and here the landscape is highly visually sensitive. The undulating wooded farmland, which features elements of strong historical elements, provokes a strong sense of place.”*

### ***Value***

7.7 The study area’s value is defined as being high, due to the following:

- This landscape is heavily designated at local and national level for its biodiversity interest and for its landscape/cultural features, and is also very attractive.
- The Swale Site of Special Scientific Interest to the south east of Oare.
- Bysing Wood and Oare Gravel Pits Local Wildlife Site.
- Ancient Woodland.
- Romano British Mausoleum Scheduled Monument south of railway line.
- North Downs Special Landscape Area.
- Oare Gunpowder Works Scheduled Monument north of Bysing Wood Road.
- Several Listed Buildings to the north.

***Capacity to Accommodate Change***

The study considers that the area has a low capacity to accept change, stating:

*“...This landscape has a low capacity to accommodate change because of its high landscape sensitivity and value. The B2045 clearly contains the extent of Faversham, and it would not be appropriate to expand the urban area of Faversham west of this strong physical boundary.*

*However east of the B2045, between the A2 and the railway line, it would perhaps be appropriate to infill the pocket of land which is contained by the surrounding infrastructure routes. Small scale commercial development, and/or an extension of existing housing along the A2, would be appropriate within this area.”*

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