

**Tendring District Council**

# **Strategic Green Gaps Review 2020**

**Draft report**  
Prepared by LUC  
December 2020



# Tendring District Council

## Strategic Green Gaps Review 2020

**Project Number**  
11324

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# Chapter 1

## Introduction

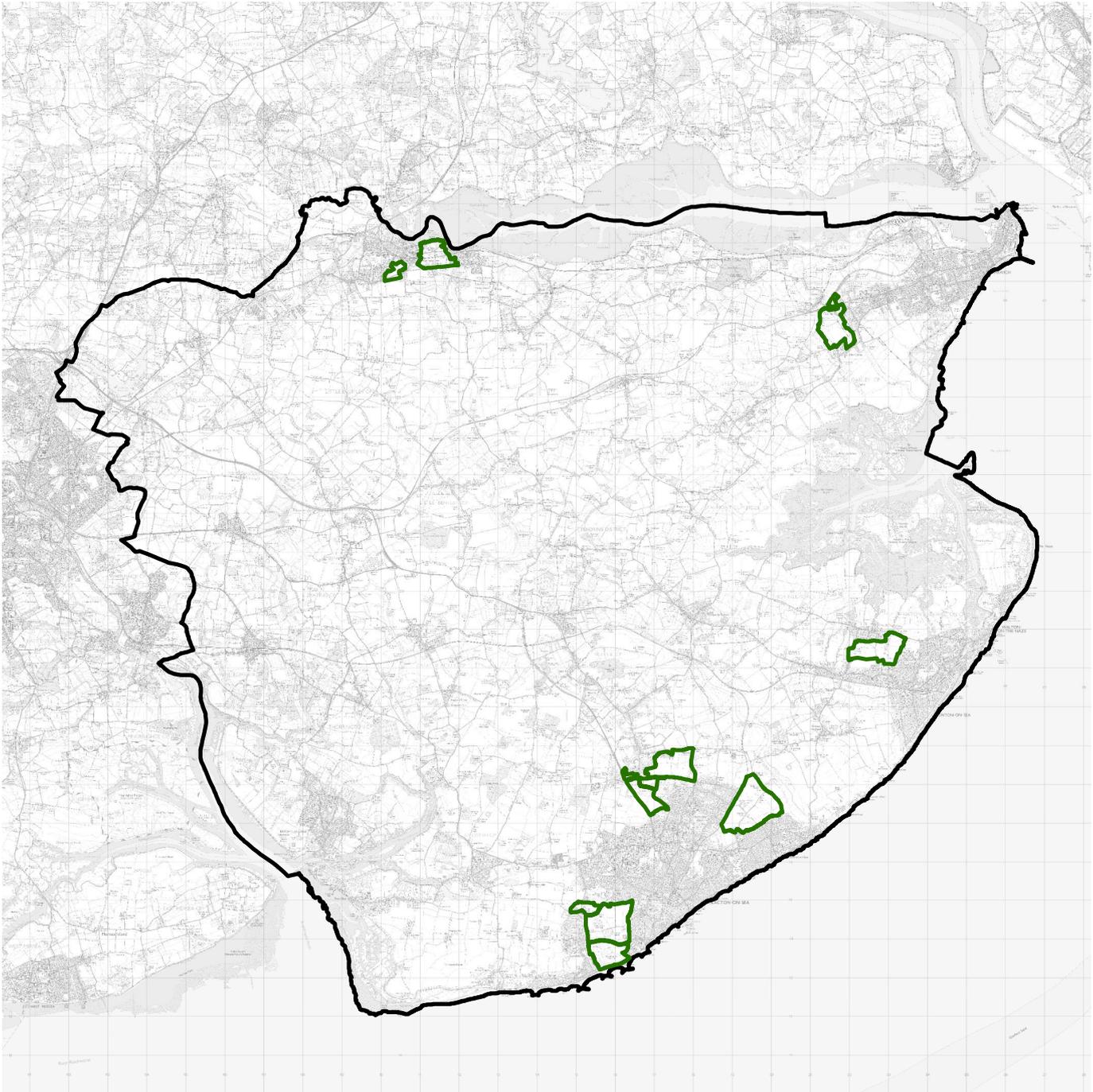
### Project aims and scope

**1.1** The aim of this Strategic Green Gaps Review is to undertake an independent assessment of land locally designated as Strategic Green Gaps (SGG) within the District and to provide an evidence base on the role the gaps play in providing a sense of separation and maintaining individual settlement identity and character. The report will assess whether the existing gaps fulfil the objectives of the Strategic Green Gap policy in the emerging Tendring District Local Plan 2013-2033 (2017 Publication Draft, as submitted) or whether there should be any changes to the geographical extents of the gaps and their boundaries. This Strategic Green Gap Review updates existing evidence on green gaps and provides a more up to date assessment intended for use at both the Local Plan examination and for any subsequent planning applications or appeals.

**1.2** The scope of this study includes a review of the six Strategic Green Gaps proposed for retention in the emerging Tendring Local Plan. These are mapped on **Figure 1.1**. For the purposes of this study, the Lawford, Manningtree and Mistley SGG, which comprises separate western and eastern areas have been assessed individually.

**1.3** Strategic Green Gaps preserve the physical and visual separation of settlements. They also protect the individual identities of settlements (although this is the result of rather than the aim of gaps). SGG therefore have a landscape function to prevent coalescence of settlements, rather than being related to landscape quality or being a policy to protect landscape character. For this reason, strategic gaps may have areas of poorer quality landscape or rural fringe uses which do not necessarily detract from their function as a gap.

**1.4** The sense of separation provided between settlements relates to the character of the gap as well as its size. Small gaps can be effective in maintaining settlement separation if they have a rural character and provide a sense of separation, perhaps as a result of a distinct topography, presence of vegetation which limits inter-visibility between the settlements, or containing a distinct landscape feature. On the other hand, large gaps may not be effective if they have a suburban character, or lack vegetation and have clear inter-visibility between the settlements, and lack any other features that might provide a sense of separation such as a distinct topographical or landscape feature.



Map scale 1:155,000 @ A4

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Source: OS, TDC

**Figure 1.1: Strategic Green Gap location plan**

-  Tendring District
-  Strategic Green Gap

## Background and policy context

### National Planning Policy Framework

**1.5** Protection of existing settlement pattern is not specifically mentioned in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2019), nor the associated PPG. However, the concept of settlement gaps is broadly consistent with the NPPF, in that: “Strategic policies...should make sufficient provision for ...conservation and enhancement of the natural built and historic environment, including landscapes and green infrastructure” (NPPF paragraph 20) and “Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by...protecting and enhancing valued landscape” (NPPF paragraph 170).

### Local Policy Framework

**1.6** In Tendring, SGG form an important part of the Council’s strategy for guarding against the coalescence of settlements. Since they were originally defined in the Council’s 1988 Local Plan, the SGG have been successful at fulfilling the function for which they were intended given the considerable pressure for new development experienced in the District, notably for housing. Whilst the general approach and rationale behind green gaps has remained essentially unchanged, the coverage and policy wording has evolved.

#### Tendring District Local Plan (adopted 1998)

**1.7** The Council’s 1998 Local Plan contained designated ‘Local Green Wedges’ with individual planning policies attributed to each individual Local Green Wedge. These wedges were designated on land between Clacton and Little Clacton; north of Holland-on-Sea; between West Clacton and Jaywick; in the centre of Little Clacton; between Dovercourt, Parkeston, Ramsey and Little Oakley; and between Kirby Cross, Frinton, Great Holland and Kirby-le-Soken.

#### Tendring District Local Plan (adopted 2007)

**1.8** For the Council’s 2007 Local Plan, these areas were generally carried forward but renamed ‘Local Green Gaps’ but with a single general policy applied to all the Local Green Gaps within the district.

**1.9** The 2007 Local Plan states (Paragraph 6.9) that *“their primary purpose and function is to maintain separation between the main urban areas of the District. They also seek to maintain separation between urban areas and free standing smaller settlements that surround them, or between physically separate built up neighbourhoods. By conserving the countryside between residential settlements, local green gap policies aim to preserve the open character of these important breaks between settlements. This approach will also maintain*

*the individual character and landscape setting of towns, villages and neighbourhoods”.*

**1.10** Policy ‘EN2 – Local Green Gaps’ states that *“During the Plan period, land within Local Green Gaps, as defined on the Proposals Map, will be kept open, and essentially free of development. This is to prevent the coalescence of settlements, and to protect their rural settings. Minor development proposals may be permitted if they do no harm, individually or collectively, to the purposes of a Local Green Gap or to its open character. These may include the improvement of existing leisure and recreational facilities, and development for agricultural purposes. In Local Green Gaps, where resources and opportunities permit the Council will encourage the improvement of public rights of way”.*

**1.11** The Council was able to accommodate the vast majority of its development needs on previously developed brownfield sites. It was, therefore, able to carry forward the designation from the 1998 to the 2007 Local Plan with very little challenge. Additional green gaps in the Lawford and Mistley areas were also included, informed by a study undertaken by LUC in 2003. Paragraph 6.11 in the supporting text to Policy EN2 lists the Local Green Gaps as: Clacton-on-Sea/ Little Clacton; Great Clacton/ Holland-on-Sea; West Clacton/ Jaywick; Dovercourt/ Parkeston/ Ramsey/ Little Oakley; Frinton/ Walton/ Kirby Cross/ Great Holland/ Kirby-Le-Soken/ Holland-On-Sea; Lawford/ Manningtree/ Mistley; and Little Clacton.

#### Draft Local Plan 2012

**1.12** The Council’s 2012 (now abandoned) Draft Local Plan renamed these areas ‘Strategic Green Gaps’ (SGG) and, again, proposed a general policy to apply to all the proposed Strategic Green Gaps within the District. However, there was a recognition, in light of much higher housing requirements and a diminishing supply of brownfield land, that the extent of the green gap designation would need to be reconsidered and that it would no longer be feasible to simply carry forward the designation from the 2007 plan unaltered.

#### Tendring District Local Plan 2013-2033 (2017 Publication Draft, as submitted)

**1.13** Local Green Gaps have been replaced by Strategic Green Gaps (SGG) in the emerging Local Plan, although their function essentially remains the same (i.e. to essentially guard against the coalescence of settlements). The SGG will form a key element in the Council’s spatial strategy for growth in the emerging Local Plan, the role of which was reinforced by the Inspector’s proposed main modification MM7(B) to Policy SP2 in Section 1, to ensure existing settlements maintain their distinctive character and role, avoid coalescence between them and conserve their setting.

**1.14** The purpose of the Strategic Green Gaps identified in Policy PPL6 in the emerging Tendring Local Plan (2017) is

*'to maintain an appropriate degree of physical separation between nearby settlements or neighbourhoods.'*

**1.15** Policy 'PPL6 – Strategic Green Gaps states *"Within Strategic Green Gaps ... the Council will not permit any development which would result in the joining of settlements or neighbourhoods, or which would erode their separate identities by virtue of their closer proximity. Planning permission may be granted where: a. the applicant can demonstrate that there is a functional need for the development to be in that specific location and that it cannot be delivered on an alternative piece of land outside of the Strategic Green Gap; b. the development would not compromise the open setting between settlements or neighbourhoods; and c. the development would involve the creation of Green Infrastructure which would support the continuing function of the Strategic Green Gap"*.

**1.16** In the emerging Local Plan, the Council has had to rationalise the number and location of Strategic Green Gaps in the face of development pressures. The emerging Local Plan proposes the retention of the following Strategic Green Gaps:

- Clacton to Little Clacton;
- Between Clacton and Holland-on-Sea;
- Land between Clacton and Jaywick;
- Land between Dovercourt, Ramsey, Little Oakley and Parkeston;
- Land between Frinton, Walton, Kirby Cross and Kirby-le-Soken; and
- Lawford, Manningtree and Mistley.

**1.17** A significant change is the deletion of the Little Clacton Green Gap from the emerging Plan. The Council's 2007 Local Plan designated Green Gaps in two locations around the village of Little Clacton which were based on the Local Green Wedges designated in the 1998 Local Plan. In the 2012 Draft Local Plan the green gaps in and around Little Clacton were not carried forward, as they represented breaks between different parts of the same settlement, and it was felt that the general countryside policies in the Local Plan would be strong enough to resist inappropriate proposals for development. The southern of the two green gaps was also the subject of a planning application for 98 homes which was allowed on appeal and so the settlement boundary is proposed to be amended accordingly.

# Chapter 2

## Methodology

### Methodology

**2.1** An essential element in reviewing areas for local designation is the adoption of a consistent and systematic and transparent process.

**2.2** There is currently no prescribed method for assessing strategic gaps. Strategic gap policies have generally been found sound at Examination, when they are supported by robust and up-to-date evidence to justify the extent or purpose of the gaps identified and are focused on protecting specific areas between settlements (rather than all rural areas outside settlements).

**2.3** The criteria-based approach used in this study draws from LUC's experience in undertaking similar reviews elsewhere in the UK and lesson learned from our involvement in Local Plan examination, as well as the requirements of the brief.

### Key stages and tasks

**2.4** The review of SGG followed five main stages, as set out below.

#### Method development

**2.5** This required discussion with TDC to understand the background to the SGG and the desired outcomes of the study.

#### Development of evaluation criteria

**2.6** The evaluation criteria were developed by LUC drawing on previous strategic gap studies, which has been assessed as robust through the Local Plan examination process. They have been refined to reflect the particular landscape and settlement patterns of Tendring.

**2.7** Each SGG was assessed against the three criteria set out in **Table 2.2** at the end of the chapter.

#### Desk review

**2.8** The desk review involved a two-step evaluation of the gap's role in maintaining openness and separation between settlements or neighbourhood.

**2.9** Firstly, each SGG was assessed against the criteria set out in **Table 2.1**. in order to understand how the identity of the

adjacent settlements and the landscape and visual characteristics of the gap contribute to its character as open and undeveloped land. The site was given a rating as set out below based on each criterion, with a commentary on whether an SGG meets, does not meet or partially meets criteria for designation.

Key	
Fully meets	
Partially meets	
Does not meet	

2.10 The gaps were then evaluated against practical considerations including their extent and boundaries and potential for enhancement.

2.11 The issues were summarised, concluding what, if any changes were proposed to the existing extent and boundary of the SSG.

### Field survey

2.12 The results were verified through field survey, and boundaries checked and refined on the ground. The field survey was undertaken from public rights of ways, roads and publicly accessible viewpoints.

### Final Report

2.13 The outputs of the evaluation exercise are presented in **Chapter 3**.

Table 2.1: Strategic Green Gap Assessment Criteria

Criteria	Explanation	Indicators of weak gap	Indicators of strong gap
<b>Existing settlement identify and pattern</b>	Assess the extent to which the settlements or neighbourhoods that lie adjacent to the gap have an individual townscape character and identify and how that contributes to existing settlement pattern.	The individual townscape character, origin, form and pattern of the settlements or neighbourhoods that lie adjacent to the gap are not distinct.  Loss or partial loss of the gap would not adversely affect the existing settlement pattern.	The individual townscape character, origin, form and pattern of the settlement or neighbourhoods that lie adjacent to the gap are distinct.  The presence of Conservation Areas, Listed Buildings are indicators of individual settlement character.  The gap plays a role in settlement separation and pattern.
<b>Landscape character</b>	Assess the landscape character of the area between the settlements or neighbourhoods and any land use and landscape features within the gap that contribute to its character as open and undeveloped land.	There are significant man-made features or urban land uses that contribute to the developed character of the landscape.  The area has a suburban character and residential areas outside defined settlement boundaries weaken the perception of the gap as 'countryside'.  The area lacks landscape features that contribute positively to the undeveloped character of the gap.	Existing land uses contribute to the open and undeveloped character of the landscape e.g. agriculture, horticulture, forestry.  There is a low density or absence of built development.  The landscape has significant landscape features that contribute to its undeveloped character.
<b>Visual character</b>	Assess the visual character of the area between settlements. How do the views to or from settlements into the open countryside	Views to and from the settlement do not contribute positively to the visual character of the area.	Views to and from the settlement contribute positively to the visual character of the area (e.g.

Criteria	Explanation	Indicators of weak gap	Indicators of strong gap
	contribute to that character and provide a perception of separation between settlements or neighbourhoods?	There is a lack of elements that provide a sense of separation between settlements.	Views mentioned in the LCA/ CA appraisal).  Landscape elements, such as hills, ridges, and/or tall vegetation within the gap contribute to the sense of visual separation between the settlements.  Open vistas and long views may also indicate a strong gap where they are an important part of the character of the landscape.

Table 2.2: Practical considerations

Consideration	Explanation
<b>Gap extent</b>	<p>Assess the role of the extent of the gap in maintaining physical separation between settlements or neighbourhoods and preventing coalescence.</p> <p>What is the physical extent of the area between settlements? Is the gap less than 2km away from a neighbouring settlement? A distance further than 2km could be considered too great to prevent the coalescence of two settlements but the gap should be of sufficient size to make it practical to develop policies for its protection, management and planning.</p> <p>What are the key routes between settlements? Appropriateness of distances will vary from area to area and are intrinsically linked to characteristics and features of the landscape which sits between settlements. i.e. gaps should have the sense of leaving one settlement, moving through the gap (on footpaths or roads) before entering a settlement of different character.</p>
<b>Boundary defensibility</b>	<p>Assess the existing boundaries of the SGG which should follow physical features on the ground, taking into account potential new boundary features that may alter the risk of settlement coalescence.</p> <p>Review the development pressures on the land between the settlements from draft allocations or infrastructure projects. Boundary lines are drawn to the existing settlement edge taking into account planning permissions and allocations.</p>
<b>Potential for enhancement</b>	<p>Review existing environmental designations (both national and local level ecological and cultural heritage designations), priority habitats and recreational features (including PRoW, cycle paths, open access land/registered common land, allotments, amenity green spaces e.g. sports pitches, play areas and parks) to provide an indication of the value of the landscape.</p> <p>Environmental designations and features indicating higher GI value (indicated through the presence of SSSI, SINCs, National and Local Nature Reserves, Ancient Woodland, recreational linkages etc).</p> <p>Use this to consider the potential enhancements to existing open space, wildlife areas, cultural heritage and access to the countryside (via PRoW etc).</p>

**2.14** These indicators work in combination and the SGG will not need to fulfil all criteria equally. The assessments are based on professional judgement, taking account of the complex interplay between of criteria, as well as those which might be more important to a particular SGG.

## Limitations of this study

**2.15** This is a strategic-level study undertaken at a scale of 1:25,000. It therefore not a replacement for detailed studies for specific development. The gap boundaries are chosen to be functional, defensible and pragmatic and where possible following defined features on the ground including roads, tracks, field boundaries or occasionally Public Rights of Way (PRoW). This means that the gaps may include some areas that are not critical to a gap function but are included for practical reasons.

**2.16** Similarly, the boundaries of the gaps are always taken up to the existing settlement edge represented by Settlement Development Boundaries (SDB) or the extent of proposed allocations. The definition of a critical area of gap away from the existing settlement edges would not be practical or defensible.

**2.17** Finally, it should be noted that an SGG is not a landscape quality designation and gaps may include degraded elements or features, such as abandoned land. The key requirement is that overall, they are open in character and are not developed.

## Chapter 3

### Assessments

**3.1** This chapter presents the results of the study of the six SGG against the agreed assessment criteria.

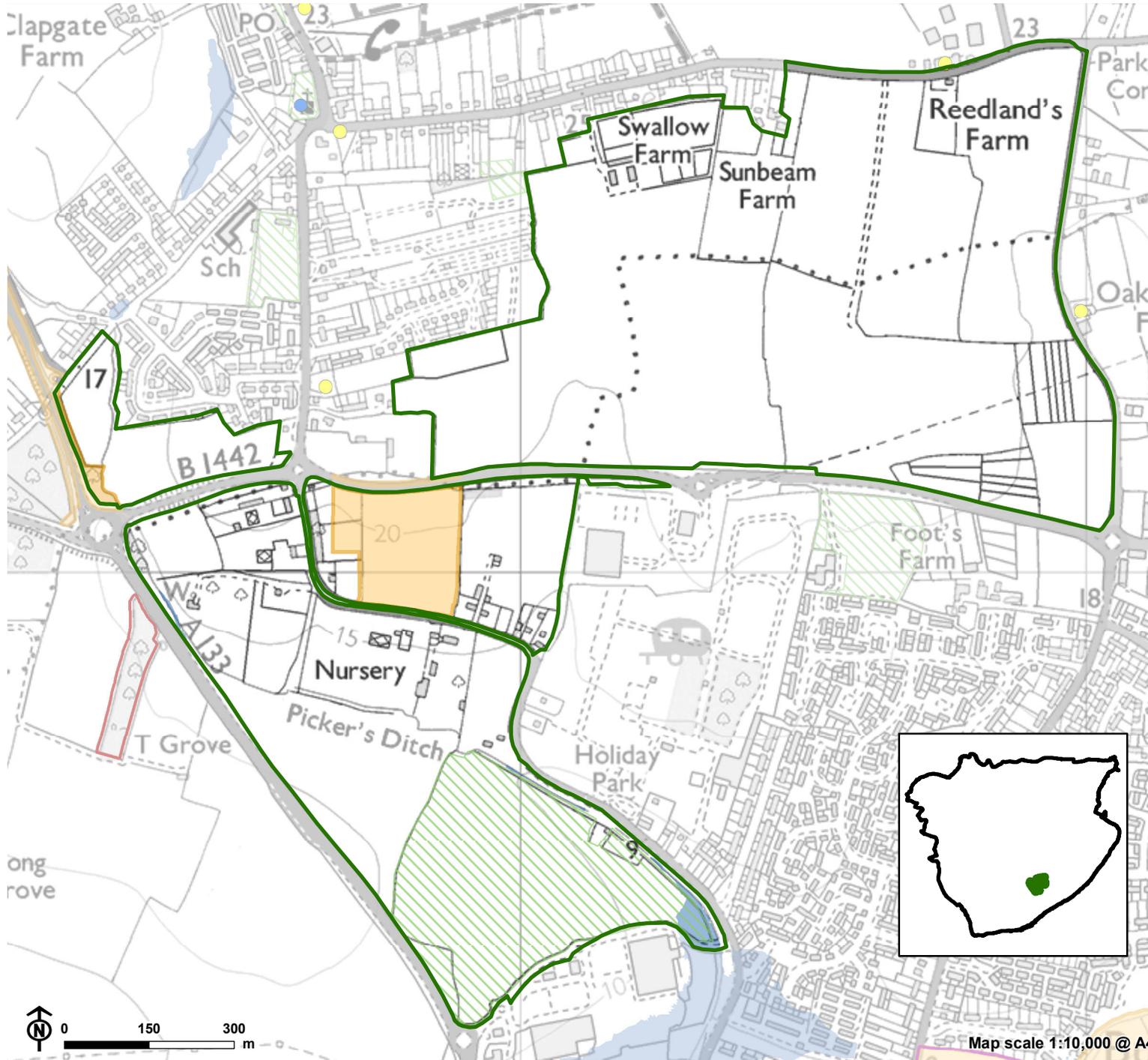
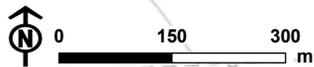
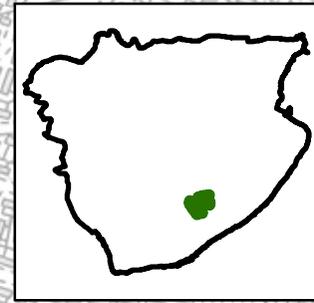


Figure 3.1: Land between Clacton and Little Clacton - location and context designations

- Tendring District
- Strategic Green Gap
- Local Nature Reserve
- Local Wildlife Site
- Potential Local Wildlife Site
- Flood zone 3
- Green space
- Listed building**
- II\*
- II



Map scale 1:10,000 @ A4

## Land between Clacton and Little Clacton

### Representative photos



Flat to gently undulating landform and large-scale arable fields result in a visually open landscape to the east and north-east of the SGG.



Fields are generally defined by low hedgerows with occasional hedgerow trees.

Summary Information	
SSG Name	<b>Land between Clacton and Little Clacton</b>
Location and extent of area	This draft SGG is approximately 127ha and is located in the south of the District, to the north-west of Clacton, lying between the settlements of Clacton and Little Clacton.
Landscape character context	LCA 8B 'Clacton and Sokens Clay Plateau' as defined within the Tendring District Landscape Character Assessment (2001).

### Assessment

Assessment criteria		Commentary
<b>Existing settlement identify and pattern</b>	Fully meets	<p>Clacton developed as a seaside resort during the 19<sup>th</sup> century and continued to grow into the 20<sup>th</sup> century. As a result, what had been individual village centres (such as Great Clacton) were subsumed within the suburbs of Clacton. The Tendring District HLCA (2008) notes that much of the current urban area of Clacton dates to the post 1960's. The townscape adjoining the SGG comprises a mix of late 20<sup>th</sup> century suburban residential estates (Bursville Park), holiday parks and modern retail parks and industrial estates. The character, origin, form and pattern of this townscape is therefore not distinct.</p> <p>In contrast Little Clacton retains a townscape character that contributes to its individual settlement identity. It began as a small linear village, with development organised along The Street. The Tendring District HLCA (2008) notes that within the wider St Osyth Area (HLCA 11) settlement was historically very dispersed, with Little Clacton being one of two small foci. The historic extent and form of the village is indicated today by the presence of several listed buildings along The Street to the north of the village, including the Grade II* Church of St James and several Grade II listed cottages and farmhouses. The presence of these listed buildings contributes to the individual character of the settlement.</p> <p>Subsequent 20<sup>th</sup> century ribbon development occurred to the south of the village on Holland Road, London Road and St Osyth Road East, along with the development of a small housing estate and Firs Holiday Park off Bertram Avenue</p>

Assessment criteria		Commentary
		to the south-east. Whilst this development altered the form and pattern of the settlement, Little Clacton retains a village character and identity distinct from Clacton. The existing gap therefore plays a role in settlement separation.
<b>Landscape character</b>	Fully meets	<p>The SGG is largely made up of flat to gently undulating agricultural land. This is principally in the form of large-scale arable fields, with some smaller-scale pasture fields and paddocks adjacent to settlement edges and around farmsteads. Fields are generally rectilinear and defined by low gappy hedgerows with occasional hedgerow trees.</p> <p>Small areas of woodland cover to the west and south-west provide contrast in an otherwise open landscape (including that between the A133 and the B1441 London Road, within Brook Country Park, shelter belt planting around Highfields Holiday Park, and tree belts along the A133 and B1442 Centenary Way). Brook Country Park (opened in 2010) comprises approximately 14ha of rough grassland with scattered blocks of trees and forms a significant feature that contributes to the undeveloped character of the landscape to the south-west. A single watercourse - Picker's Ditch - flows through the SGG to the south-west, ultimately feeding Holland Brook beyond Clacton to the east.</p> <p>Parts of the landscape to the south and south-west of the SGG has an urban-fringe character. This is due primarily to the influence of the urban edge of Clacton; relatively high levels of traffic and infrastructure associated with the A133 and B1442 Centenary Way (including embankments, cuttings and roundabouts); and the presence of scattered built forms along the B1441 London Road (including nurseries and residential properties).</p> <p>The landscape within the SGG therefore retains a rural character, albeit with urban-fringe influences in places. Existing land uses and features contribute to the character of the SGG as open and undeveloped land and there is a general absence of built development.</p>
<b>Visual character</b>	Fully meets	<p>The flat to gently undulating landform and predominance of large-scale arable fields means that the landscape within the SGG is for the most part visually open. This is particularly apparent in eastern and north-eastern parts of the SGG. Open views across arable land to and from the southern and eastern edges of Little Clacton contribute positively to the visual character of the area and provides a key characteristic of the village, as referenced in the Guidance for LCA 8A.</p> <p>In contrast, western and south-western parts of the SGG tend to be more visually enclosed, due to the presence of woodland vegetation (as described above). Views from the south-western edge of Little Clacton, and from the edge of Clacton to the south-west of the SGG therefore tend to be more restricted. The presence of high levels of traffic and infrastructural features associated with the A133 and B1441 London Road also detract somewhat from the visual character of the landscape around the edges of Clacton to the west and south of the SGG.</p> <p>The presence of the intervening landscape elements to the west and south-west of the SGG contribute to a sense of visual separation between Little Clacton and Clacton, despite this being the shortest distance between the two settlements. Whilst the land is more visually open to the east, there is sufficient distance and intervening hedgerows between the two settlements to provide a strong sense of separation.</p> <p>Overall, views to and from Little Clacton and Clacton across the intervening SGG generally contribute to the character of an open and undeveloped landscape and provide a perception of visual separation.</p>

## Practical Considerations

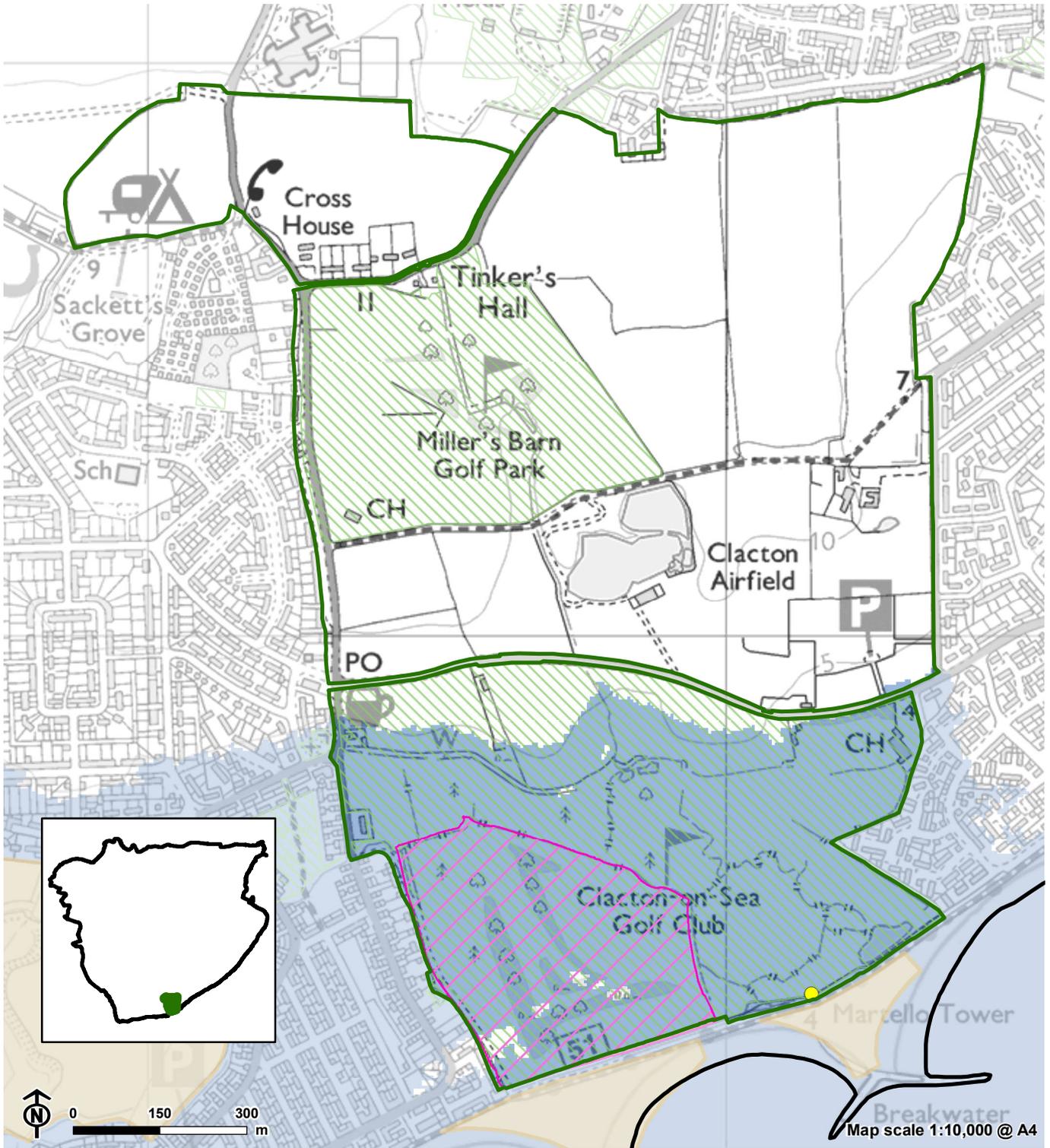
Considerations	Commentary
<b>Gap extent</b>	<p>The physical distance (as the crow flies) between Clacton and Little Clacton ranges from approximately 625m in the east (between Highfields Holiday Park and development on Holland Road) to approximately 250m in the west (between the supermarket on B1442 Centenary Way and Firs Park off Bertram Avenue). As noted above, despite the smaller physical gap to the west of the SGG, this area contains elements which provide a sense of visual separation between the two settlements.</p> <p>The main direct route between Clacton and Little Clacton is the B1441 London Road. The linear distance between the two settlements along this route is approximately 650m. Despite the presence of some scattered built forms along the road, there is a distinct sense of leaving one settlement and travelling through the gap before arriving at the other. This sense of separation is strengthened by the presence of the intervening B1442 and its roundabout junction with London Road. This provides a clear threshold feature between the two settlements when travelling along London Road.</p> <p>Overall, the SGG maintains a clear physical separation between the two settlements and prevents coalescence.</p>
<b>Boundary defensibility</b>	<p>The draft boundaries of the SGG follow physical features on the ground: It is defined by the A133 to the west; by the built-up edge of Little Clacton to the north-west; by Holland Road to the north-east; by Thorpe Road to the east; by the B1442 (Centenary Way) and built-up edge of Clacton to the south-east; and by the edge of Highfields Holiday Park, the B1441 (London Road) and Brook Retail Park to the south and south-west. These are considered to be robust and defensible boundary features.</p> <p>There have been various recent planning applications on land within the SGG:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ To the west, an outline application (15/01720/OUT) in 2015 for up to 175 homes to the south of Centenary Way adjacent to Highfields Holiday Park was dismissed on appeal. Development in this location to the south of the B1442, within the narrowest part of the SGG, would cause a significant physical narrowing the gap between Clacton and Little Clacton and therefore diminish the role the SGG plays in maintaining separation between the two settlements.</li> <li>■ To the north-west, a planning application (20/00920/OUT) for 99 dwellings on land between Progress Way and Little Clacton (west of the B1441 London Road and north of the B1442 Progress Way) is, at the time of writing, yet to be determined. The Landscape Impact Assessment Stage 1 (2009) found that <i>“Development of this area would diminish the gap between Clacton and Little Clacton, but would not significantly affect its function - the A133 and B1442 form strong boundaries up to which development within Little Clacton could extend, while retaining an effective gap to the south”</i>. Although development of this area would have less impact on the narrowest part of the gap, it would still reduce the amount of open land between Little Clacton and Clacton and therefore diminish the role the SGG plays in maintaining separation between the two settlements.</li> <li>■ To the east, an application (18/01499/FUL) for 245 dwellings was refused by the council and then subsequently dismissed on appeal. This would have located development to the north of the B1442 and west of Thorpe Road, breaching the robust and defensible boundary features that these roads form. This is also the more visually open part of the SGG. Development in this location would therefore diminish the role the SGG plays in maintaining separation between the two settlements.</li> </ul>
<b>Potential for enhancement</b>	<p>There is one Local Wildlife Site located between B1442 Centenary Way and B1441 London Road to the west of the SGG. There are no other national or local designations (ecological or cultural heritage) or priority habitats located within the SGG. Public access is also limited,</p>

Considerations	Commentary
	<p>with the only recreational resource being Brook Country Park to the south-west. Brook Country Park is an area of publicly accessible open space that provides informal, quiet countryside recreation via a network of footpaths and which also contributes towards the biodiversity of the area.</p> <p>There are opportunities for enhancement to the landscape and visual character and Green Infrastructure within the SGG. This could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Preserve and where possible enhance views from the settlements to contribute to the amenity of the area and strengthen the sense of visual separation.</li> <li>■ Enhance public access to the countryside, particularly in the east of the SGG, by introducing new public rights of way.</li> <li>■ Enhance the urban fringe landscape around the edge of Clacton by promoting positive landscape management; consider opportunities for woodland creation to enhance landscape character and provide screening of existing buildings.</li> <li>■ Increase the extent of native deciduous woodland using locally occurring native species (including oak and sweet chestnut).</li> <li>■ Promote management of hedgerows; consider reinstatement of hedges, particularly where they have been lost from highly visible locations e.g. along roadsides.</li> </ul>

### Summary and recommendations

**3.2** The analysis above indicates that this SGG meets the objectives of the SGG Policy. The SGG provides an open setting between the two settlements of Clacton and Little Clacton, provides physical and visual separation between the two, and prevents their coalescence. The SGG is particularly important in protecting the individual character and identity of Little Clacton.

**3.3** The draft boundaries of the SGG follow physical features on the ground, which are considered to be robust and defensible boundary features. Therefore, no recommendations are made to alter the extent and boundaries of the SGG.



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**Figure 3.2a: Land between Clacton and Jaywick - location and context designations**

- |                                     |                        |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------|
| Tendring District                   | <b>Listed building</b> |
| Strategic Green Gap                 | II                     |
| Site of Special Scientific Interest |                        |
| Local Wildlife Site                 |                        |
| Flood zone 3                        |                        |
| Green space                         |                        |
| Scheduled monument                  |                        |

## Land between Clacton and Jaywick

### Representative photos



Flat arable fields defined by low intermittent scrubby hedgerows with only occasional hedgerow trees to the north, north-east and east.



Urban-fringe character influenced by surrounding urban development, prominent urban edges, and the presence of Clacton Airfield.

Summary Information	
SSG Name	<b>Land between Clacton and Jaywick</b>
Location and extent of area	This draft SGG is located in the south of the District, lying to the west of Clacton between Jaywick Lane/Golf Green Road to the east and Cherry Tree Avenue and the built-up edge of Clacton to the west. It is approximately 167ha and extends to the coast on its southern border and to Tendring Enterprise Studio School (TES) (formerly Bishops Park Secondary School) and residential development off Stanley Road to the north.
Landscape character context	The SGG extends across three LCA as defined within the Tendring District Landscape Character Assessment (2001): 2B 'St Osyth Drained Marshes'; 3C 'St Osyth Coastal Slopes'; and 4D 'St Osyth Coastal Ridge'.

### Assessment

Assessment criteria		Commentary
<b>Existing settlement identify and pattern</b>	Fully meets	<p>Clacton, which began as a small village located slightly inland (Great Clacton), became a busy seaside town by the late 19th century and continued to grow into the 20th century. As a result, what had been individual village centres (such as Great Clacton and Rush Green) were subsumed within the suburbs of Clacton. The Tendring District HLCA (2008) notes that much of the current urban area of Clacton dates to the post 1960's. This is the case for the townscape adjoining the SGG to the north and east, which largely comprises post-war and late 20th century suburban residential estates. The character, origin, form and pattern of this townscape is therefore not distinct.</p> <p>The settlement pattern of Jaywick to the west of the SGG is more distinctive. Jaywick was the first settlement within the drained Osyth Marshes, and was planned as a holiday village for residents from London. The first of the chalets were built in 1928 and by 1931 two thousand had been built. The Tendring Landscape Character Assessment (2001) describes Jaywick as "a unique and very distinct settlement, although suffering from neglect". The townscape adjoining the SGG to the west has two distinct parts: to the south are the original inter-war</p>

Assessment criteria		Commentary
		residential developments of Brooklands and Grasslands estates and Jaywick Village, which predominantly comprise lightweight bungalows and chalets; and to the north is a 20 <sup>th</sup> century residential housing estate (the Tudor estate), Sacketts Grove Caravan Park and some modern ribbon development along Jaywick Lane/Golf Green Road. Jaywick retains an identity that is distinct from Clacton to the west. The existing gap therefore plays a role in settlement separation.
<b>Landscape character</b>	Partially meets	<p>The landscape of the SGG generally has a suburban character. It is enclosed by urban development to the north, east and west, often with harsh settlement edges (such as to the east on Cherry Tree Avenue). It is traversed by the busy West Road and Rush Green Road and contains some limited built development on Rush Green Road and off Cherry Tree Avenue. Whilst areas to the west and south of the SGG are open, they comprise Clacton Airfield (with its associated landing strip and buildings) and two golf courses - Clacton-on-Sea Golf Course and Millar's Barn Golf Course – which also associate the SGG with the adjacent urban areas.</p> <p>In contrast, the landscape to the north, north-east and east retains a more rural character. These areas comprise relatively flat low-lying agricultural land which is dominated by large-scale rectilinear arable fields defined by low intermittent scrubby hedgerows with only occasional hedgerow trees.</p> <p>Despite the overriding urban-fringe character of the SGG, land uses and features (the golf courses and an open airfield) contribute to the character of the SGG as open and largely undeveloped land. Other than the buildings to the north-east and east, and those associated with Clacton Airfield, there is a general absence of built development within the SGG, which contributes to the perception of the gap as 'countryside'.</p>
<b>Visual character</b>	Fully meets	<p>Areas to the west and south of the SGG contain numerous shelter belts (often associated with the golf clubs) and pockets of scrub vegetation which restrict views. As a result, there is little inter-visibility between the built-up edges of Clacton and Jaywick across the SGG, resulting in a strong sense of visual separation.</p> <p>The landscape north west of Rush Green Road, and to the north east and east of the SGG, is dominated by large-scale arable fields with no woodland and few trees which results in long open views across the flat landscape. There is some inter-visibility between Jaywick and Rush Green in this area, owing to its more open character and the shorter distance between the settlement edges. However, there is sufficient distance and intervening hedgerows between the two settlements to still provide a strong sense of visual separation.</p> <p>There are also open expansive views available out to sea from the south of the SGG which contribute to a sense of visual separation. This is particularly apparent from the coastal path that extends along a sea wall defining the southern boundary of the SGG and from parts of the Clacton-on-Sea Golf Course. From elsewhere open views out to sea are partially restricted by intervening scrub vegetation and the raised sea wall.</p> <p>Overall, views within and across the SGG contribute positively to the visual character of the area as an open and undeveloped landscape and provide a perception of visual separation between settlements.</p>

## Practical Considerations

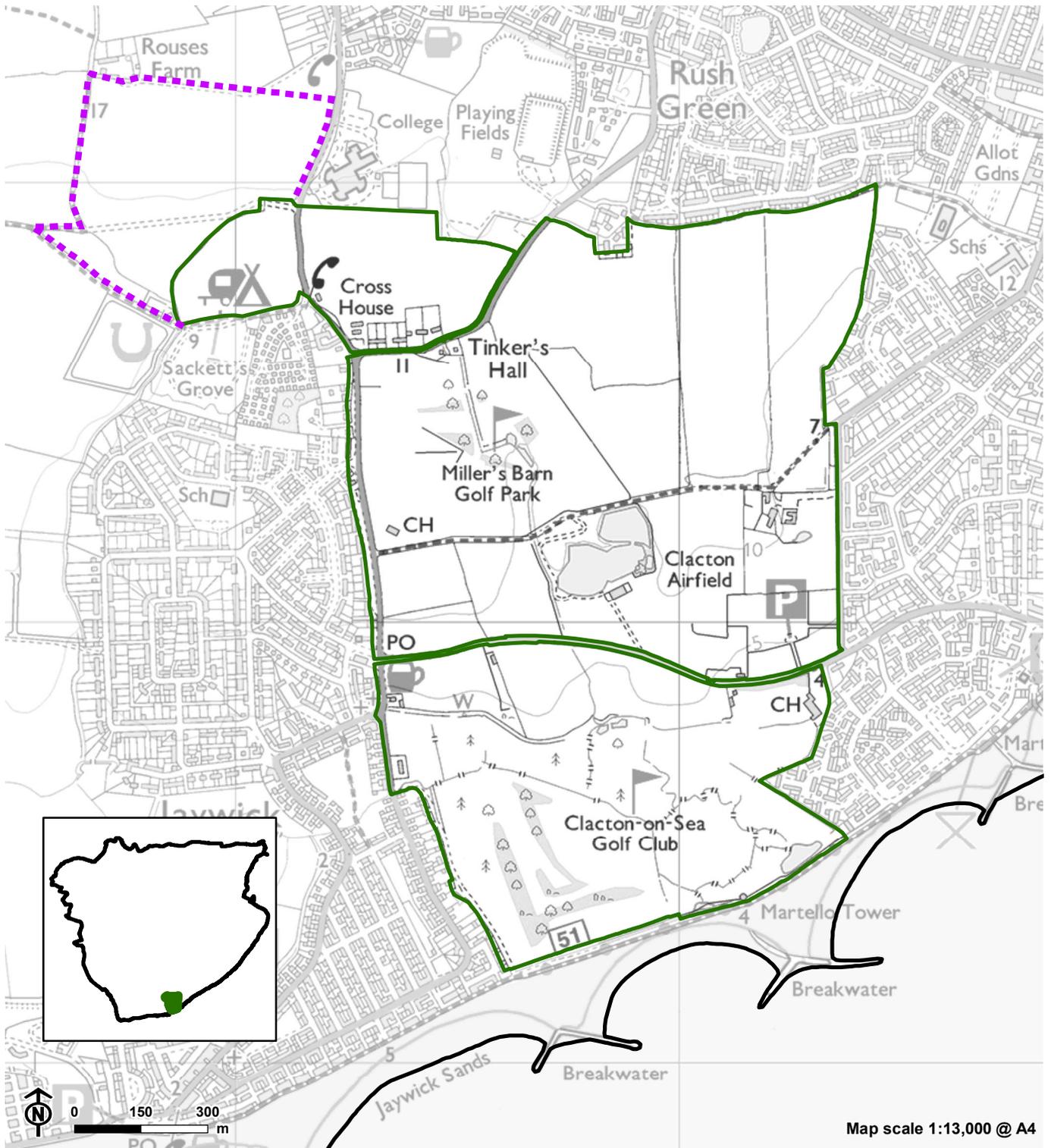
Considerations	Commentary
<p><b>Gap extent</b></p>	<p>The physical distance (as the crow flies) between Clacton and Jaywick ranges from approximately 1.25km to the south (between Jaywick and the western edge of Clacton) to approximately 250m to the north (between the north-east of Jaywick and Rush Green).</p> <p>The main direct route between the western edge of Clacton and Jaywick to the south is West Road. An alternative route is available to pedestrians along the coastal path to the south of the SGG. The linear distance between the two settlements along these routes is between approximately 900m and 1km. This is considered a sufficient distance to provide a strong sense of separation. Additionally, the open sea views available from the coastal path add to a sense of visual separation between the two settlements.</p> <p>The main direct routes between the north-eastern edge of Jaywick and Rush Green are Rush Green Road and Jaywick Lane. The linear distance between the two settlements along these routes is between 250m and 450m. Despite this relatively short distance (and the presence of some scattered built development along Rush Green Road), there is a distinct sense of leaving one settlement and travelling through the gap before arriving at the other. This is primarily due to the open views available from the roads across the surrounding flat arable landscape, which allows the separate identities of the two settlements to be clearly appreciated.</p> <p>Overall, the SGG maintains a clear physical separation between the two settlements and prevents coalescence.</p>
<p><b>Boundary defensibility</b></p>	<p>The draft boundaries of the SGG for the most part follow physical features on the ground. It is defined by the coastline to the south and by SDBs on the majority of the remaining boundaries: that of Clacton to the east and north (Rush Green); and that of Jaywick to the west. To the north-west it is defined by a hedgerow at Tendring Enterprise Studio School (TES) (formerly Bishops Park Secondary School).</p> <p>However, the boundary to the north-west is less robust/defensible than others defining the SGG. Therefore, alterations to the SGG boundary in this location are proposed, as described below and illustrated on Figure 3.2b.</p> <p>Land off Rush Green Road to the north-west of the SGG is being promoted, and has been subject to a number of planning applications for schemes of 228 to 276 homes (15/00904/OUT, 16/00208/OUT and 16/00209/OUT). These were refused by the Council for being contrary to Green Gap policy and upheld at appeal by the inspector (APP/P1560/W/16/3145531), who stated: <i>“the schemes would fail to maintain separation between Clacton and Jaywick in this locality, and would effectively close the countryside gap between the settlements in this area. The proposed development would thereby detract from the setting of Clacton and Jaywick and affect the character and appearance of the area.”</i> This development would reduce the physical separation between Clacton and Jaywick and would reduce the perceived separation between Clacton and Jaywick, particularly when travelling along Rush Green Road.</p> <p>In addition, land south of Rush Green Road is also being promoted for up to 100 dwellings plus provision of sports pitches, but planning permission was refused and no appeal was made. Additional built development extending further south than the settlement boundary would reduce the perceived separation between Clacton and Jaywick, particularly when travelling along Rush Green Road. The existing settlement edge is therefore supported as a robust and defensible SGG boundary.</p> <p>The Inspector’s decision letter in the appeal to develop land north of Rush Green Road (APP/P1560/W/16/3145531; APP/P1560/W/16/3156451; APP/P1560/W/16/3156452 - all dismissed) commented that: <i>“The appeal site, by virtue of its extensive, undeveloped and open character, provides a clear physical and visual separation between Jaywick and Clacton. When travelling along Jaywick Lane and Rush Green Road there is a clear sense of this divide, with views across open countryside on both sides of the road. The site has an attractive tree belt on its eastern edge, but overall does not have a particularly noteworthy</i></p>

Considerations	Commentary
	<i>landscape character. Nevertheless, its openness and rural appearance contributes to the setting of Clacton and Jaywick.”</i>
<b>Potential for enhancement</b>	<p>The Clacton Cliffs &amp; Foreshore SSSI is located to the south-west of the SGG. Martello Tower D (Scheduled Monument and Grade II listed) is located within the SGG to the south-east, with the SGG’s open nature forming part its coastal setting. Public access includes two PRoW: one along the coast to the south; and one crossing the SGG east-west centrally between Clacton and Jaywick. There are no other national or local designations (ecological or cultural heritage) or priority habitats located within the SGG.</p> <p>There are opportunities for enhancement to the landscape and visual character and Green Infrastructure within the SGG. This could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Encourage the planting of woodlands, with species typical of the area, to restore the wooded character of the coastal slopes and to reduce the influence of settlement edges where these are prominent.</li> <li>■ Enhance the hedgerow network by promoting the replanting of hedgerows and encouraging management for species diversity.</li> <li>■ Promote positive land management for remaining open areas of agricultural land.</li> <li>■ Conserve the open setting provided by the SGG to the Martello Tower.</li> <li>■ Retain the open undeveloped character of the coastal marshes by restricting planting to low scrubby species typically found in the local landscape and seek opportunities for their enhancement and restoration.</li> <li>■ Enhance public access within the SGG, by introducing new rights of way to link up with existing PRoW.</li> <li>■ Conserve expansive coastal views.</li> </ul>

### Summary and recommendations

**3.5** The analysis above indicates that this SGG meets the objectives of the SGG Policy. The SGG provides an open setting between the two settlements of Clacton and Jaywick. It provides physical and visual separation between the two, and prevents their coalescence.

The draft boundaries of the SGG generally follow physical features on the ground, which are considered to be robust and defensible boundary features. However, to the north-west the SGG is defined by less robust/defensible features and an extension to the current SGG is therefore proposed, as illustrated on Figure 3.2b. The proposed boundary would extend along the PRoW between Sacketts Grove Caravan Park and Rouses Farm. If the SGG boundary was drawn to this feature and extended north to the field boundary between Rouses Farm and built development on Jaywick Lane, it would provide a greater degree of physical separation between Jaywick and Rush Green. Furthermore, this proposed extension to the current draft SGG would incorporate part of an area proposed area of Green Infrastructure ('Land off Jaywick Lane').

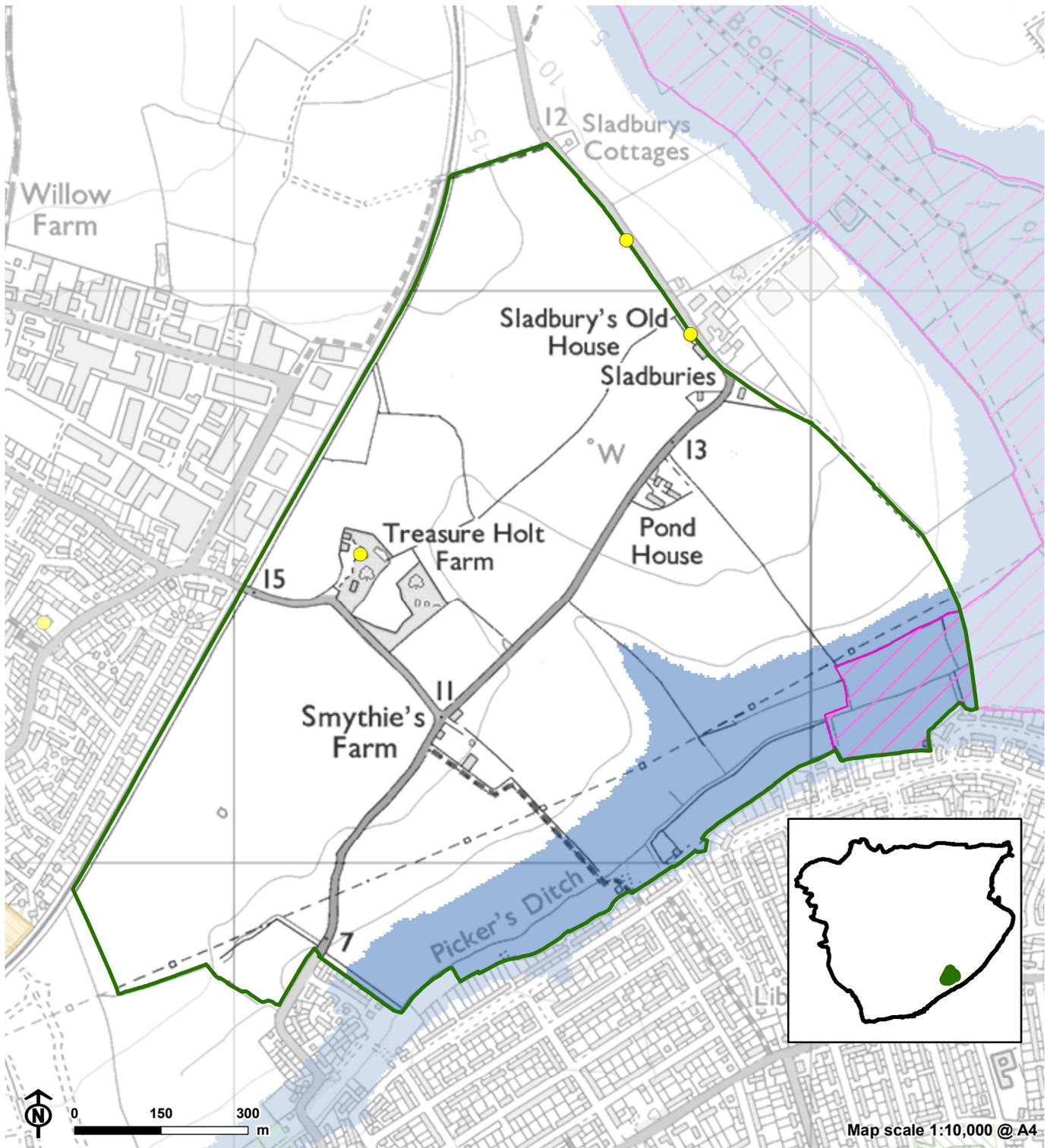


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Source: OS, TDC

Figure 3.2b: Land between Clacton and Jaywick - proposed SGG boundaries

-  Tending District
-  Proposed changes to SGG boundary
-  Strategic Green Gap



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**Figure 3.3a: Land between Clacton and Holland-on-Sea - location and context designations**

- |                                     |                        |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------|
| Tendring District                   | <b>Listed building</b> |
| Strategic Green Gap                 | II                     |
| Site of Special Scientific Interest |                        |
| Local Wildlife Site                 |                        |
| Flood zone 3                        |                        |
| Green space                         |                        |

## Land between Clacton and Holland-on-Sea

### Representative photos



Rolling arable farmland that gently rises from Picker's Brook in the south



Some woodland and mature hedgerows around Treasure Holt Farm creates a greater sense of enclosure to the north-east.

Summary Information	
SSG Name	<b>Land between Clacton and Holland-on-Sea</b>
Location and extent of area	This draft SGG located in the south of the District, is approximately 128ha and lies to the south east of Clacton, between the Colchester-Clacton railway line and Picker's Ditch (adjacent to development on Slade Road/ Fleetwood Avenue). The SGG separates the residential area of Clacton (Bursville Park) to the north and Holland-on-Sea to the south.
Landscape character context	The SGG extends across three LCA as defined within the Tendring District Landscape Character Assessment (2001): 5A 'Holland Brook'; 6D 'Holland Valley System'; and 8B 'Clacton and Sokens Clay Plateau'.

### Assessment

Assessment criteria		Commentary
<b>Existing settlement identify and pattern</b>	Partially meets	<p>Clacton, which began as a small village located slightly inland (Great Clacton), became a busy seaside town by the late 19th century and continued to grow into the 20th century. As a result, what were individual village centres (such as Great Clacton) were subsumed within the suburbs of Clacton. The Tendring District HLCA (2008) notes that much of the current urban area of Clacton dates to the post 1960's. The townscape adjoining the SGG to the north and west comprises a mix of inter-war, post-war and later 20th century suburban residential estates (Bursville Park); caravan parks; and industrial/retail parks. The character, origin, form and pattern of this townscape is therefore not distinct.</p> <p>Little Holland began as a medieval church/hall complex. The historic part of the settlement is marked by a Scheduled Monument and a Grade II listed building, but this is located to the south-east of the settlement overlooking Holland Haven. Little Holland remained separate from Clacton until it was subsumed by inter-war and post-war expansion and became an eastern suburb of Clacton – 'Holland-on-Sea'. The townscape adjoining the SGG to the south includes a significant area of post war semi-detached housing arranged on a distinctive co-axial street plan. The</p>

Assessment criteria		Commentary
		<p>character, origin, form and pattern of this townscape is therefore not generally distinct.</p> <p>The existing gap therefore plays some role in settlement separation.</p>
<b>Landscape character</b>	Fully meets	<p>The landscape of SGG comprises arable farmland which rises gently rises from Picker's Ditch (a tributary of Holland Brook) in the south to a low plateau in the north. Fields are generally large-scale and defined by low hedgerows with occasional hedgerow trees. This results in a largely open character, although there is a noticeable area of woodland around Treasure Holt Farm which, along with nearby mature hedgerows, creates a greater sense of enclosure to the north-east. Smaller scale pasture fields with ditch boundaries along Picker's Ditch are characterised by priority habitat coastal and floodplain grazing marsh to the south-east and contribute to the rural undeveloped character of the area.</p> <p>The SGG is largely devoid of built development, except for some scattered cottages and farmsteads, including Treasure Holt Farm to the north-west, Smythie's Farm to the south, and Pond House and Sladbury's Old House to the east, which contribute to the rural character of the landscape.</p> <p>A series of small pylons and over-head power lines cross the landscape from east to west and Sladbury's Lane, a relatively busy road, traverses the SGG from north-east to south-west. These man-made features and the harsh settlement edges which enclose the SGG to the north, south and west, detract from the rural character of the landscape.</p> <p>The landscape within the SGG largely retains a rural character, albeit with some detracting features. Existing land uses and landscape features contribute to the character of the SGG as open and undeveloped land and there is a general absence of built development.</p>
<b>Visual character</b>	Fully meets	<p>The landscape is predominantly open, with views available across the arable landscape, including from Sladbury's Lane, Burrs Road and PRow to the south. Views are more curtailed to the north-east due to the presence of woodland and mature hedgerows around Treasure Holt Farm.</p> <p>The urban edge of Holland-on-Sea is visible from most locations owing to the sloping landform and its southerly aspect. The urban edge of Clacton is also apparent to the north, particularly the large-scale industrial/retail units off Stephenson Road and Brunel Road, due to a lack of substantial vegetation along the railway line defining this edge.</p> <p>However, generally views within and across the SGG contribute positively to the character of an open and undeveloped landscape and provide a perception of visual separation.</p>

#### Practical Considerations

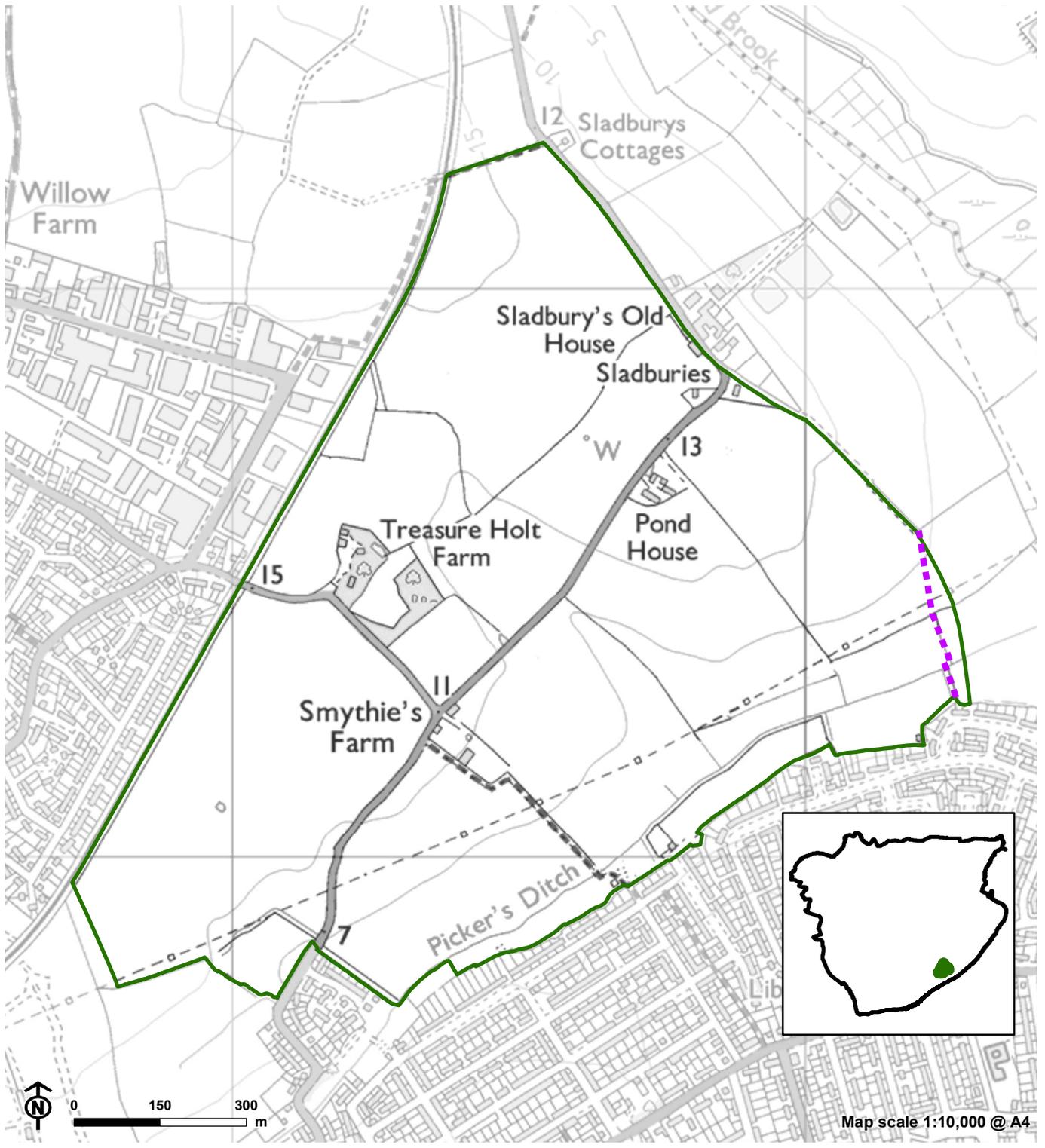
Considerations	Commentary
<b>Gap extent</b>	<p>The physical distance (as the crow flies) between Clacton (Bursville Park) and Holland-on-Sea ranges from approximately 1.2km to the east to approximately 450m to the west.</p> <p>The main direct route between the Clacton and Holland-on-Sea is along Burrs Road and Sladbury's Lane. Another route is also available for pedestrians using Burrs Lane and the PRow extending between Sladbury's Lane and Slade Road/Stafford Road in Holland-on-Sea. The linear distance between the two settlements along these routes is approximately 900m. When travelling along these routes there is a distinct sense of leaving one settlement and travelling through the gap before arriving at the other. This sense of separation is strengthened by the presence of clear threshold features on each settlement edge: the Colchester-Clacton railway to the north and Picker's Ditch to the south.</p>

Considerations	Commentary
	<p>Overall, the SGG maintains a clear physical separation between the two settlements/neighbourhoods and prevents coalescence.</p>
<p><b>Boundary defensibility</b></p>	<p>The draft boundaries of the SGG follow physical features on the ground. It is defined by the Colchester-Clacton railway line to the north, which marks the edge of Clacton (Bursville Park); and by Picker's Ditch to the south, which defines the edge of Holland-on-Sea. To the west it is defined by Valley Farm Holiday Park (caravan park) and the recently consented area of development, which both fall within the SDB, as suggested for amendment by the Council. To the north-east the SGG is defined by Sladbury's Lane, a clear and defensible feature. However, the boundary in the south-east corner is less robust/defensible than others defining the SGG as it does not follow a defined field boundary. Therefore, a small alteration to the SGG boundary in this location is proposed, as described below and illustrated on Figure 3.3b.</p> <p>An area of land west of Sladbury's Lane to the south of the SGG has been granted outline planning permission (15/01351/OUT) on appeal for 132 dwellings. Objections have been received calling for a wider area to be excluded from the SGG. The area currently excluded from the SGG is contained to the south and east by existing built development in Holland-on-Sea and by Valley Farm Holiday Park to the west. It is therefore physically and visually associated with the built-up area. However, land further to the north and north-east is more distinct from the built-up edges of the settlement and therefore makes a greater contribution to the character of the SGG as open and undeveloped land.</p>
<p><b>Potential for enhancement</b></p>	<p>To the south-east the SGG contains an area of priority habitat coastal and floodplain grazing marsh, much of which is designated as part of Holland Haven Marshes SSSI. There are three Grade II listed buildings - one at Treasure Holt Farm to the north and two at Sladbury's Old House to the east. Public access is limited to one PRoW to the south, connecting Sladbury's Lane with the edge of Holland-on-Sea.</p> <p>There are opportunities for enhancement to the landscape and visual character and Green Infrastructure within the SGG. This could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Strengthen the landscape character around existing urban settlements of Clacton and Holland-on-Sea, and enhance vegetation cover along the Colchester-Clacton railway to reduce the visual influence of the edge of Clacton.</li> <li>■ Promote positive land management of open areas, such as through conserving and restoring hedgerows, creation of grassland field margins around intensive arable fields.</li> <li>■ Conserve and extend areas of wetland habitat including grazing marsh, by allowing regular flooding and reducing drainage of less valuable agricultural land around Picker's Ditch. This is particularly important along the Holland Haven Marshes SSSI, and its immediate surrounding in the south of the SGG.</li> <li>■ Increase the extent of native deciduous woodland to enhance the wooded character of the landscape, and link existing sites.</li> <li>■ Conserve the intimate rural character of Sladbury's Lane, by resisting road improvements including new signage, installation of modern street lamps, line painting and widening.</li> <li>■ Enhance public access and enjoyment of the SGG by creating walks along Picker's Ditch and linking this to Holland Brook valley.</li> </ul>

### Summary and recommendations

**3.6** The analysis above indicates that this SGG meets the objectives of the SGG Policy. The SGG provides an open setting between the two settlements of Clacton and Holland-on-Sea. It provides physical and visual separation between the two, and prevents their coalescence.

**3.7** The draft boundaries of the SGG follow physical features on the ground, which are generally considered to be robust and defensible boundary features. However, in the south-east corner the current SGG boundary is not defined by a physical feature. A small change is proposed as illustrated on Figure 3.3b, where the boundary would extend from the end of Sladbury's Lane and follow existing ditched field boundaries to settlement edge of Holland-on-Sea.

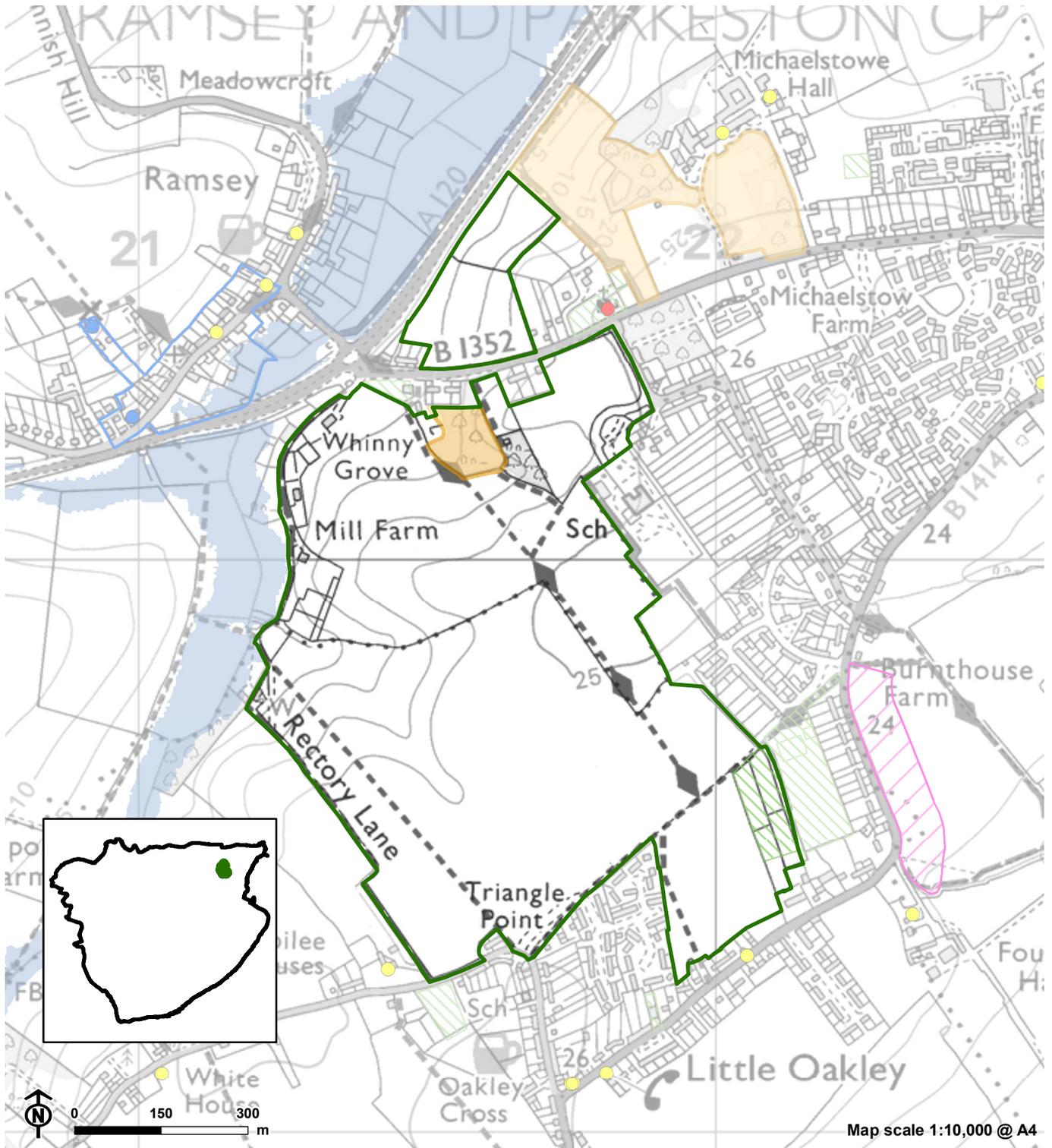


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Source: OS, TDC

Figure 3.3b: Land between Clacton and Holland-on-Sea - proposed SGG boundaries

- Tending District
- Proposed changes to SGG boundary
- Strategic Green Gap



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**Figure 3.4: Land between Dovercourt, Ramsey, Little Oakley - location and context designations**

- |                                     |                        |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------|
| Tending District                    | <b>Listed building</b> |
| Strategic Green Gap                 | I                      |
| Site of Special Scientific Interest | II*                    |
| Local Wildlife Site                 | II                     |
| Flood zone 3                        |                        |
| Green space                         |                        |
| Conservation area                   |                        |

## Land between Dovercourt, Ramsey and Little Oakley

### Representative photos



Large-scale irregular arable fields defined by gappy hedgerows with occasional hedgerow trees.



Horse paddocks adjoining the settlement edge of Upper Dovercourt detract from the uniformity of the wider arable landscape.

Summary Information	
SSG Name	<b>Land between Dovercourt, Ramsey and Little Oakley</b>
Location and extent of area	This draft SGG is approximately 80 ha and is situated on the western edge of the wider Harwich and Dovercourt built-up area in the north west of the District. The SGG lies south of the A120 (Tinker Street) and the B1352 Church Hill and north of the B1414 Harwich Road. The SGG separates the settlements of Ramsey to the north, Little Oakley to the south and Upper Dovercourt to the east.
Landscape character context	The SGG extends across two LCA as defined within the Tendring District Landscape Character Assessment (2001): 4A 'The Oakley Ridge'; and 6E 'Ramsey Valley System'.

### Assessment

Assessment criteria		Commentary
<b>Existing settlement identify and pattern</b>	Fully meets	<p>Settlement at Upper Dovercourt was originally centred around the Church of All Saints (located in the east of Upper Dovercourt today). The settlement gradually expanded during the post-medieval period, through the 19<sup>th</sup> century and into the 20<sup>th</sup> century with ribbon development along Ramsey Road and Oakley Road. The townscape adjoining the SGG to the east comprises post-war and later 20<sup>th</sup> century residential suburban development. However, to the north-east the SGG adjoins the Grade I listed Church of St Michael and forms part of its open setting. Overall, the character, origin, form and pattern of this townscape to the east is not distinct.</p> <p>Early settlement at Little Oakley was focussed on Little Oakley Hall (Grade II listed building), with dispersed settlement also along Harwich Road and Rectory Road. The townscape adjoining the SGG to the south comprises a mix of post-war, later 20<sup>th</sup> century and early 21<sup>st</sup> century residential development off Harwich Road and Rectory Road which represents the later expansion of the village. Despite later development along Harwich Road between Little Oakley and Upper Dovercourt, the former retains a village character and identity distinct from the latter.</p> <p>Ramsey is a small linear village situated at the historic crossing point of Ramsey Creek. The historic parts of the village are designated as a conservation area and</p>

Assessment criteria		Commentary
		<p>contain several listed buildings along The Street and Wrabness Road, including the Grade II* White House Farmhouse and several Grade II listed cottages and farmhouses. Ramsey retains a village character and strong identity distinct from Dovercourt. This is reinforced by the presence of the intervening Ramsey Creek and its steep-sided valley, as well as the A120 (Tinker Street) corridor.</p> <p>The SGG therefore plays an important role in the existing settlement pattern, contributing to the distinct village character of both Ramsey and Little Oakley and their separate identity from Dovercourt.</p>
<b>Landscape character</b>	Fully meets	<p>The landform of the SGG comprises the steeply sloping valley side of Ramsey Creek, which lies between Ramsey and Upper Dovercourt, which rises to the Oakley Ridge, before flattening off to the south to form a plateau lying between Upper Dovercourt and Little Oakley.</p> <p>The landscape is predominantly in arable use, comprising large-scale irregular fields defined by gappy hedgerows with occasional hedgerow trees. The only notable area of woodland cover is Whinny Grove to the north of the SGG. The landscape adjoining Upper Dovercourt to the north-east and east is in use predominantly as pasture/horse paddocks. These areas are characterised by small to medium sized paddocks defined by tape and post and wire fencing, which detract somewhat from the uniformity of the wider arable landscape.</p> <p>There is a general lack of built development within the SGG, although it contains some ribbon development along B1352 Church Hill to the north and some scattered buildings along Rectory Lane to the north-west. This, along with relatively high levels of traffic using the B1352 and A120, weaken the rural character of the gap in the north of the SGG.</p> <p>The landscape within the SGG largely retains a rural character, albeit with some urban-fringe influences. Existing agricultural land use and landscape features contribute to the character of the SGG as open and undeveloped land and there is a general absence of built development.</p>
<b>Visual character</b>	Fully meets	<p>The landscape of the SGG is generally open, owing to the predominance of large-scale arable fields and a general lack of woodland cover. The raised plateau to the south of the SGG affords some longer-distance views to the north-west and west which contribute to the character of the landscape. This includes from the Essex Way, which traverses the landscape from north to south, and PRoW within the SGG to the south and west.</p> <p>To the south of the SGG the edge of Little Oakley is apparent in views across the flat arable land, in particular the recently constructed housing development on the north-eastern edge of the village. Views to the edge of Upper Dovercourt are generally filtered through tree belts along the settlement edge, except for Two Village Primary School which is apparent in places. The edge of Ramsey is generally concealed by the substantial tree belts lining the A120 when viewed from lower slopes to the north. However, from higher ground to the south of the SGG, the village is visible on the opposite valley side, with the Grade II* listed Ramsey Windmill being a significant landmark feature.</p> <p>The SGG forms a large area of agricultural land which provides a strong sense of visual separation between Ramsey, Upper Dovercourt and Little Oakley. Overall, views to and from the settlements across the intervening SGG contribute positively to the character of the area and provide a perception of visual separation.</p>

## Practical Considerations

Considerations	Commentary
<b>Gap extent</b>	<p>The physical distance (as the crow flies) between Upper Dovercourt and Little Oakley is approximately 250m; that between Upper Dovercourt and Ramsey is approximately 300m to 500m; and that between Ramsey and Little Oakley is approximately 1km.</p> <p>The main direct route between Upper Dovercourt and Little Oakley is the B1414 (Harwich Road). The linear distance between the edges of the two settlements along this route is approximately 800m. Despite ribbon development along Harwich Road, there remains a sense of leaving one settlement, and then travelling through the gap before arriving at the other, as the built development is intermittent and gaps between buildings allow views across the surrounding open countryside.</p> <p>The main direct route between Upper Dovercourt and Ramsey is the B1352 (Main Road/Church Hill). The linear distance between the edges of the two settlements along this route is approximately 600m. Despite some ribbon development along Church Hill, there is a sense of leaving one settlement, and then travelling through the gap before arriving at the other, as clear views are available between buildings across the open countryside of the SGG. This sense of separation is strengthened by the presence of the A120 and its junction with the B1352 which provides a threshold feature between the two settlements.</p> <p>The main direct route between Ramsey and Little Oakley is the Essex Way footpath. This crosses the SGG, with sufficient distance to provide a strong sense of physical separation.</p> <p>Overall, the SGG maintains a clear physical separation between the three settlements and prevents coalescence.</p>
<b>Boundary defensibility</b>	<p>The draft boundaries of the SGG generally follow physical features on the ground. It is defined by the A120 (Tinker Street) to the north, by the built-up edge of Dovercourt to the east, by the edge of Little Oakley to the south, and by a series of well-defined hedgerows to the west. Whilst the boundary to the west is based on less robust/defensible features than the other boundaries defining the SGG, it is the logical and most appropriate boundary in the location.</p> <p>There were no specific representations in relation to this SGG designation. However, land adjacent the Two Villages Primary School is the subject of representation promoting development – although that site was the subject of a planning application for 71 dwellings that was refused by the Council and later dismissed on appeal.</p>
<b>Potential for enhancement</b>	<p>There is one LWS within the SGG covering Whinny Grove to the north. There are no other national or local designations (ecological or cultural heritage) or priority habitats located within the SGG. Public access is provided via several PRoW, including the Essex Way.</p> <p>There are opportunities for enhancement to the landscape and visual character and Green Infrastructure within the SGG. This could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Promote positive land management of open areas, such as through conserving and restoring hedgerows where they have been lost.</li> <li>■ Restore and extend native deciduous woodland, particularly on the edges of existing woodlands, for example at Whinny Grove and along settlement edges.</li> <li>■ Conserve the rural character of the historic lanes and their associated vegetation, by resisting road improvement including new signage, installation of street lamps, line painting and road widening (particularly on the B1414 and the B1352).</li> <li>■ Preserve clear views from the ridge across the Ramsey Valley, conserving the rural character of the valley.</li> <li>■ Conserve the rural setting to heritage assets outside of the SGG, including the Church of St Michael.</li> </ul>

Considerations	Commentary
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Conserve views to landmark features such as Ramsey Windmill.</li><li>■ Promote and improve public access and enjoyment of the area, particularly on the promoted Essex Way.</li></ul>

### Summary and recommendations

**3.8** The analysis above indicates that this SGG meets the objectives of the SGG Policy. The SGG provides an open setting between the settlements of Upper Dovercourt, Ramsey and Little Oakley. It provides physical and visual separation between the three settlement, and prevents their coalescence. The SGG is particularly important in protecting the individual character and identity of Ramsey and Little Oakley.

**3.9** The draft boundaries of the SGG follow physical features on the ground, which are considered to be robust and defensible boundary features. Therefore, no recommendations are made to alter the extent and boundaries of the SGG.

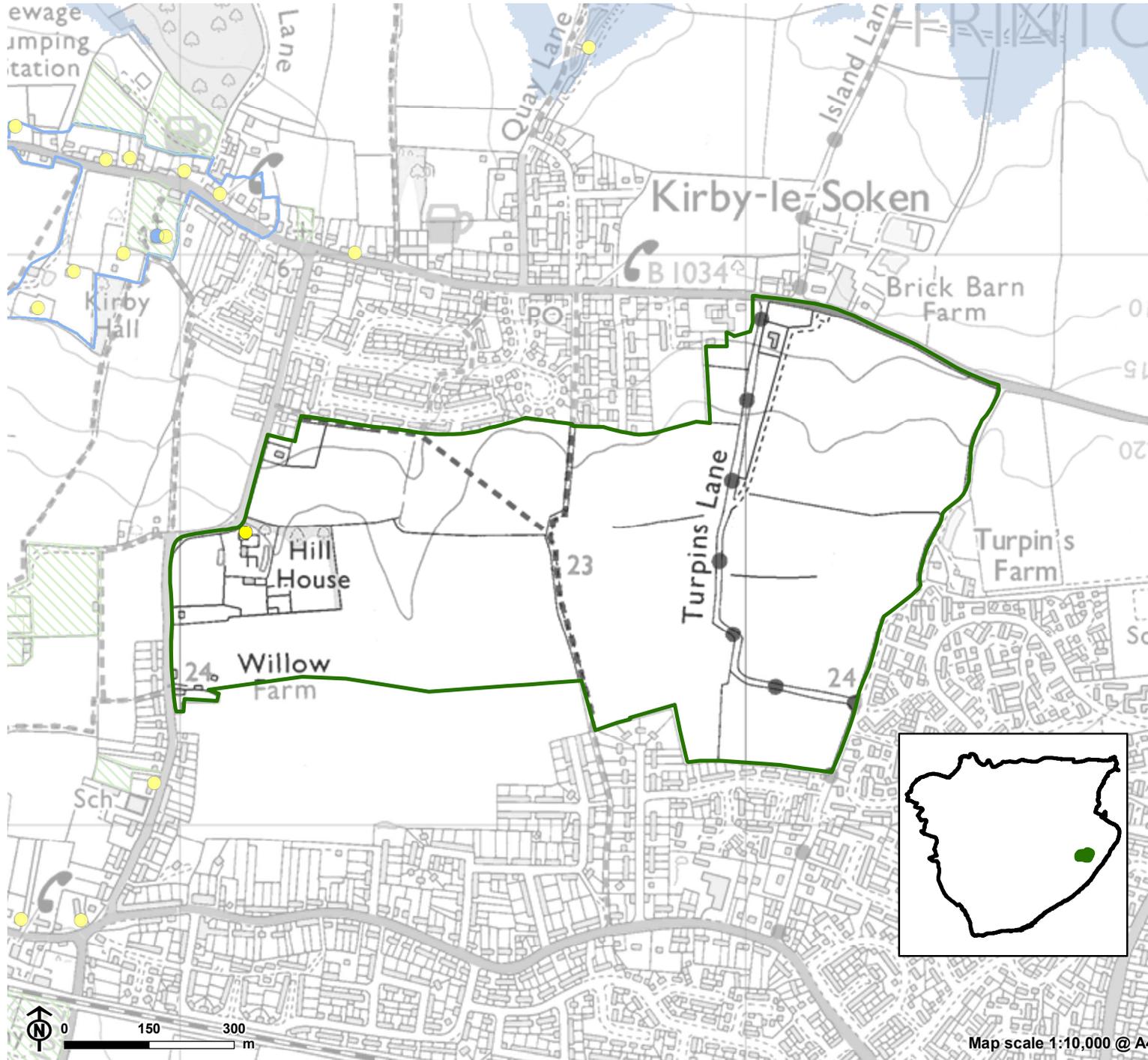
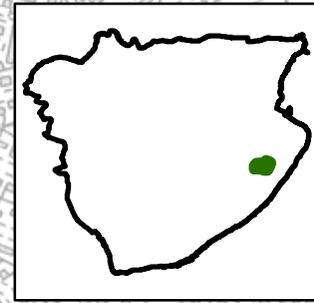
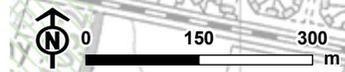


Figure 3.5: Land between Frinton, Walton, Kirby Cross and Kirby-le-Soken - location and context designations

- Tendring District
- Strategic Green Gap
- Flood zone 3
- Green space
- Conservation area
- Listed building**
- II\*
- II



Map scale 1:10,000 @ A4

## Land between Frinton, Walton, Kirby Cross and Kirby-le-Soken

### Representative photos



Large-scale rectilinear arable fields defined by gappy hedgerows with occasional hedgerow trees.



Recently constructed development is apparent within the landscape and gives rise to some urban-fringe influences.

Summary Information	
SSG Name	<b>Land between Frinton, Walton, Kirby Cross and Kirby-le-Soken</b>
Location and extent of area	This draft SGG is approximately 73ha and is situated in the east of the District between the settlements of Frinton/Walton, Kirby Cross and Kirby-Le-Soken.
Landscape character context	The SGG falls within LCA 8B 'Clacton and Sokens Clay Plateau', as defined within the Tendring District Landscape Character Assessment (2001).

### Assessment

Assessment criteria		Commentary
<b>Existing settlement identify and pattern</b>	Fully meets	<p>Frinton-on-Sea developed from a small dispersed settlement during the late 19th century and continued to grow into the 20th century, including the construction of housing inland to the north and along main roads such as the B1033 (Frinton Road/Thorpe Road). The area adjoining the SGG to the east and south-east is infill development between Frinton and Walton and comprises post-war and later 20th century and early 21st century housing. The character, origin, form and pattern of this townscape is therefore not distinct.</p> <p>Kirby Cross historically comprised dispersed development along Thorpe Road, with the historic parts of the settlement indicated today by several listed buildings. The townscape adjoining the SGG to the south and south-west comprises 19th and 20th century ribbon development along the B1033, along with some recently constructed residential development at the Willow Farm site off Halstead Road. This development physically connects Kirby Cross with Frinton. The character, origin, form and pattern of this townscape is not generally distinct.</p> <p>Kirby-le-Soken is a historic settlement that was originally centred on a church/hall complex. The original village core of the settlement is designated as Kirby-le-Soken Conservation Area and contains a number of listed buildings, including the Grade II* Church of St Michael. The village began to expand considerably during the inter-war period, with piecemeal 'plotland style' development off Walton Road to the east of the village core. Whilst this development altered the form and pattern</p>

Assessment criteria		Commentary
		of the original settlement, Kirby-le-Soken retains a village character and identity distinct from Frinton/Walton to the east and Kirby Cross to the south. The SGG therefore plays an important role in maintaining the existing settlement pattern.
<b>Landscape character</b>	Fully meets	<p>The landscape within the SGG comprises gently undulating agricultural land that occupies a low plateau lying above Hamford Water to the north. The landscape is predominantly in arable use and comprises several large-scale rectilinear fields defined by gappy hedgerows with occasional hedgerow trees. The only notable woodland cover in the SGG is a small area of woodland associated with Hill House to the west and an area of pioneer scrub vegetation to the south-east.</p> <p>There is a general lack of built development within the SGG, except for some scattered buildings to the east off Halstead Road (Hill Farmhouse and Willow Farm) which are rural in character.</p> <p>The landscape within the SGG is largely rural in character, and there is a general absence of built development. Existing land uses and features contribute to the character of the SGG as open and undeveloped land.</p>
<b>Visual character</b>	Fully meets	<p>The landscape of the SGG is generally open, owing to the predominance of large-scale arable fields and a general lack of woodland or trees. This affords open views across the SGG, as well long views out across Hamford Water to the north from more elevated parts of the SGG.</p> <p>Whilst the more established settlement edges adjoining the SGG are generally softened by mature garden vegetation, recently constructed development is more apparent within the flat, relatively open landscape, resulting in a visually prominent settlement edge which detracts from the rural character of the SGG. This is particularly noticeable on the edge of Kirby Cross to the south-west (Finches Park development) and at the eastern end of Kirby-le-Soken (development on Chartfield Drive).</p> <p>Owing to the relatively narrow extent of the SGG there is some direct inter-visibility between the edge of Kirby-le-Soken and Frinton/Walton and Kirby Cross. However, there is sufficient distance, as well as some intervening hedgerows, between the settlements to provide a strong sense of visual separation.</p> <p>From certain areas glimpsed views are available towards the Church of St Michael (Grade II* listed building). This is a prominent landmark marking the historic core of Kirby-le-Soken and contributes positively to the rural character of the SGG.</p> <p>Overall, views within and across the SGG generally contribute to the character of an open and undeveloped landscape and provide a perception of visual separation.</p>

### Practical Considerations

Considerations	Commentary
<b>Gap extent</b>	<p>The physical distance (as the crow flies) between Kirby-le-Soken and Walton/Frinton is between approximately 400m and 600m; and that between Kirby-le-Soken and Kirby Cross is approximately 450m.</p> <p>The main direct route between Kirby-le-Soken and Walton/Frinton is the B1034 (Walton Road). The linear distance between the edges of the two settlements along this route is approximately 400m. When travelling along Walton Road there is a sense of leaving one settlement, and then travelling through the gap before arriving at the other as there are clear views across the open countryside of the SGG from the road.</p> <p>The main direct route between Kirby-le-Soken and Kirby Cross is Halstead Road. Another route is also available for pedestrians using the PRow extending between Victoria Avenue (Kirby-le-Soken) and Frinton Road (Kirby Cross). The linear distance between the edges of</p>

Considerations	Commentary
	<p>the two settlements along these routes is between approximately 450m and 500m. When travelling along these routes there is a clear sense of leaving one settlement, and then travelling through the gap before arriving at the other due to the open views across the open countryside of the SGG.</p> <p>Overall, the SGG maintains a clear physical separation between the three settlements and prevents coalescence.</p>
<b>Boundary defensibility</b>	<p>The draft boundaries of the SGG generally follow physical features on the ground. It is defined by the edge of Kirby-le- Soken and the B1034 (Kirby Road) to the north; by the edge of Walton to the east; by the edge of Frinton and Kirby Cross to the south; and by Halstead Road to the west. The boundaries to the north-east and south-west currently appear to be based on less robust/defensible features than the other boundaries defining the SGG. However, these boundaries mark the SDBs in these locations, and will mark the built-up edge of Walton/Frinton and Kirby Cross following the introduction of consented development at the Turpin's Farm Site and Willows Farm Site respectively.</p> <p>Land at Turpin's Farm west of Elm Tree Avenue, was allocated for housing development and open space and now benefits from planning permission for a scheme of 210 dwellings.</p> <p>Land at Willow Farm on the southern boundary, which obtained planning permission on appeal, for 240 dwellings, is now the Finches Park development and is being carried out by Linden Homes. The scheme had been designed to retain and safeguard a significant green gap to Kirby-le-Soken – including a green infrastructure buffer to the north.</p> <p>An outline planning application (17/00836/OUT) for up to 85 homes on land to the west of Edenside was refused by the Council for being contrary to green gap policy and later dismissed on appeal. In dismissing the appeal (APP/P1560/W/18/3196412), the Inspector commented: <i>"Development of the site would significantly compromise the function of the LGG [Local Green Gap] by eroding it at a point where it is already narrow."</i></p>
<b>Potential for enhancement</b>	<p>The SGG contains one Grade II listed building - Hill Farmhouse to the west. There are no other national or local designations (ecological or cultural heritage) or priority habitats located within the SGG. Public access is provided by a number of well-used PRow and other informal footpaths that traverse the SGG, particularly to the east.</p> <p>There are opportunities for enhancement to the landscape and visual character and Green Infrastructure within the SGG. This could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Conserve the rural, tranquil character as a setting for Hamford Water, including resisting further encroachment of built development on the skyline at the crest of slopes.</li> <li>■ Conserve and enhance the hedgerow network, including replanting of hedgerow trees, to encourage management for wildlife and as important landscape features. Seek opportunities to join the hedgerow network with small copses.</li> <li>■ Consider opportunities to create meadows or permanent pasture to restore grassland habitats lost through agricultural intensification, including the creation of grassland field margins.</li> <li>■ Maintain the historic leafy lanes of Halstead Road and Walton Road, resisting road improvements or widening that would threaten their rural character.</li> <li>■ Increase the extent of native deciduous woodland using locally occurring native species to enhance the character of the landscape.</li> <li>■ Consider opportunities to enhance the landscape setting to villages through woodland creation along the settlement edge of Frinton and Kirby-le-Soken, particularly in the vicinity of recently constructed developments to create new character and provide screening.</li> </ul>

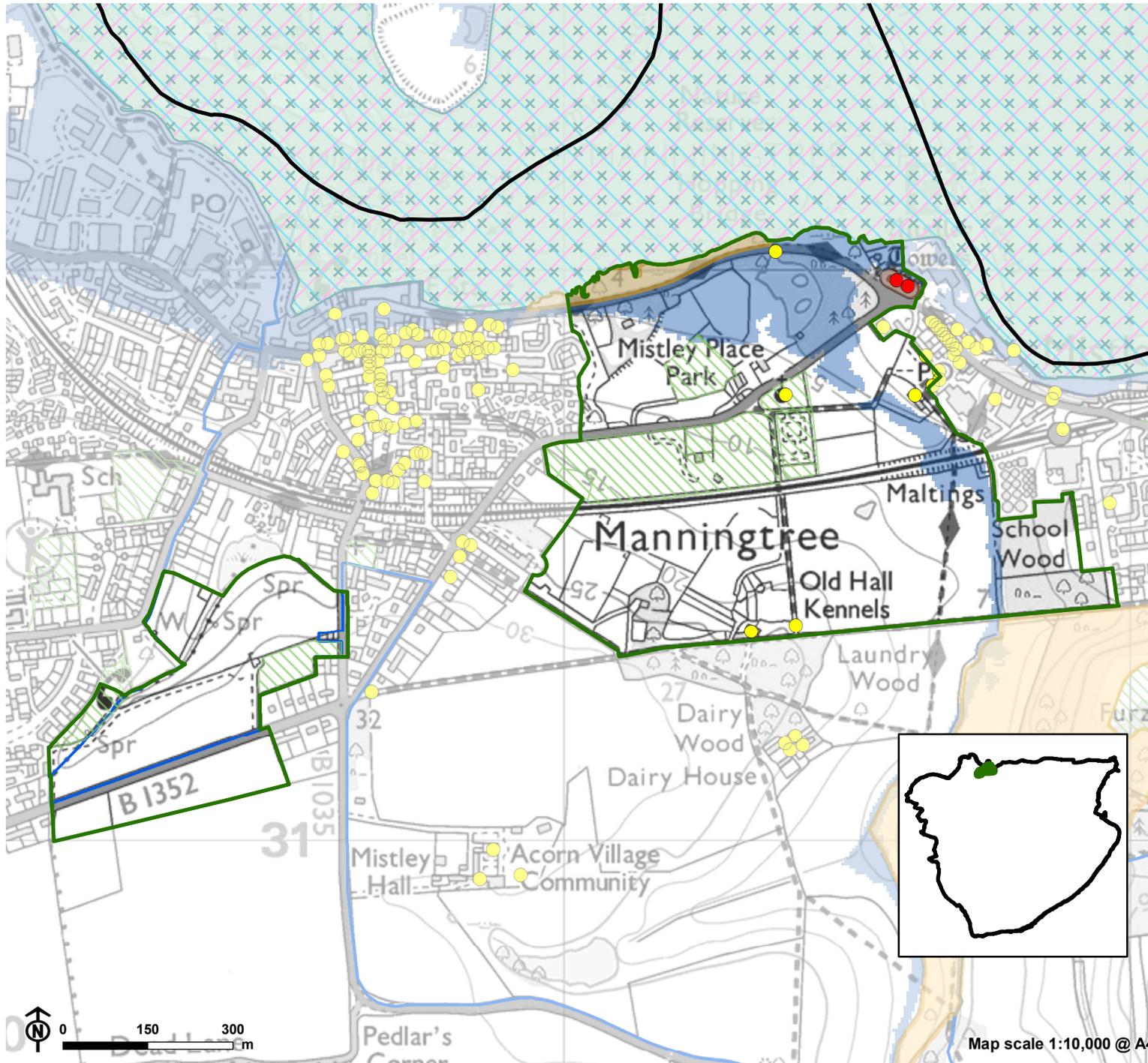
Considerations	Commentary
	■ Conserve views to historic features, such as the Church of St Michael in Kirby-le-Soken.

### Summary and recommendations

**3.10** The analysis above indicates that this SGG meets the objectives of the SGG Policy. The SGG provides an open setting between the settlements of Walton/Frinton, Kirby Cross and Ramsey. It provides physical and visual separation between the three settlements, and prevents their coalescence. The SGG is particularly important in protecting the individual village character, rural setting and identity of Kirby-le-Soken.

**3.11** The draft boundaries of the SGG follow physical features on the ground, which are considered to be robust and defensible boundary features. Therefore, no recommendations are made to alter the extent and boundaries of the SGG.

**Figure 3.6: Land between Lawford, Manningtree and Mistley - location and context designations**



- Tendring District
  - Strategic Green Gap
  - Special Protection Area
  - Ramsar
  - Site of Special Scientific Interest
  - Local Wildlife Site
  - Important Bird Area
  - Flood zone 3
  - Green space
  - Conservation area
  - Scheduled monument
- Listed building**
- I
  - II

Map scale 1:10,000 @ A4

## Land between Lawford, Manningtree and Mistley (eastern area)

### Representative photos



Pasture fields, recreation grounds and parkland featuring mature hedgerows and several small woodlands results in a well-treed character.



Glimpsed views to landmark features such as the Mistley Towers contribute positively to the character of landscape.

Summary Information	
SSG Name	<b>Land between Lawford, Manningtree and Mistley (eastern area)</b>
Location and extent of area	This SGG located in the north of the District, is approximately 50ha and situated between Manningtree and Mistley/New Mistley.
Landscape character context	The eastern SGG falls entirely within 6A 'Stour Valley System'.

### Assessment

Assessment criteria		Commentary
<b>Existing settlement identify and pattern</b>	Fully meets	<p>Manningtree and Mistley are historic settlements located on the southern bank of the wide Stour Estuary.</p> <p>Manningtree was an historic port and medieval planned town and a cluster of historic buildings mark the historic core of the town today. The area of Manningtree lying west of SGG represents the later expansion of the town inland to the south along New Road. This comprises lower-density development (in comparison to the town centre), featuring vernacular and classical houses and artisan dwellings (some of which are listed buildings) as well as more modern infill development.</p> <p>Mistley forms an eastern suburb of Manningtree and is a planned industrial village developed in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. Several houses, wharves, quays, warehouses, granaries and a large malting-house were constructed, and the town subsequently developed into a centre for the malting industry. The townscape today features a mix of large-scale 19<sup>th</sup> century industrial development, and smaller scale housing from the 18<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries. 19<sup>th</sup> century development at Mistley Green adjoins the north-east boundary of the SGG and is particularly characterful. Other notable buildings/features include Mistley Towers and Swan Fountain. The special architectural and historic interest of both Manningtree and Mistley is reflected in the designation of Manningtree and Mistley</p>

Assessment criteria		Commentary
		Conservation Area, which covers the SGG. The character, origin, form and pattern of the two settlements is generally distinct. The existing gap therefore plays an important role in settlement separation.
<b>Landscape character</b>	Fully Meets	<p>The eastern SGG has an undulating landform, falling gradually from higher ground in the south-west towards the River Stour in the north and a small stream which flows through it to the east. The landscape is associated with the now vanished Mistley Hall and comprises a mix of pasture fields, paddocks, sports fields/recreation grounds, parkland and a cemetery. Fields are generally defined by dense mature hedgerows and are interspersed with several small woodlands, including Round Clump to the south-west and wooded areas within Mistley Place Park to the north. Hedgerows and woodland belts lining Green Lane, New Road and the Manningtree to Harwich railway (which traverse the area from west to east) and the mature tree belts lining the small stream to the east, all add to the well-treed character.</p> <p>The absence of built development, existing land uses, and landscape features all contribute positively to the character of the SGG as an open and undeveloped rural landscape.</p>
<b>Visual character</b>	Fully meets	<p>The eastern SGG is visually enclosed, due to the presence of woodland cover (as described above). This woodland contributes positively to the character of the SGG and creates a strong the sense of visual separation between Manningtree and Mistley. Views across the SGG from the eastern edge of Manningtree and from the western edge of Mistley tend to be restricted but glimpsed views are available towards Mistley Towers (Grade I listed building and Scheduled Monument), the Church of St Mary and St Michael (Grade II listed building), and the chimney tower associated with The Maltings (Grade II listed building), which are prominent landmarks that contribute positively to the character of the SGG.</p> <p>In contrast, to the north of the SGG, there are open expansive views across the wide Stour Estuary to the Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB, including from The Walls and parts of Mistley Place Park. The SGG contributes to the rural setting of the estuary.</p> <p>Overall, these views contributes positively to the character of landscape and provides a perception of visual separation between Mistley and Maningtree.</p>

### Practical Considerations

Considerations	Commentary
<b>Gap extent</b>	<p>The physical distance (as the crow flies) between Manningtree and Mistley/New Mistley is between approximately 480m and 1km.</p> <p>The main direct routes between Manningtree and Mistley are the B1352 (New Road) and The Walls. Another route is available for pedestrians using the PRoW along Green Lane. The linear distance between the edges of the two settlements along these routes is between approximately 570m and 880m. When travelling along these routes there is a clear sense of leaving one settlement, and then travelling through the gap before arriving at the other. This sense of separation is strengthened by the limited inter-visibility between the two settlement edges.</p> <p>Overall, the eastern SGG maintains a clear physical separation between the settlements and prevents coalescence.</p>
<b>Boundary defensibility</b>	<p>The draft boundaries of the SGG generally follow physical features on the ground.</p> <p>The eastern SGG is defined by the edge of Manningtree to the west, by the Stour Estuary to the north, by the built-up edge of Mistley/New Mistley to the east, and by Green Lane to the south. These are considered to be robust and defensible boundary features.</p>

Considerations	Commentary
<p><b>Potential for enhancement</b></p>	<p>The eastern SGG contains a number of listed buildings, including the Grade I Mistley Towers, the Grade II Church of St Mary and St Michael and the Grade II Old Hall Mistley. Mistley Towers are also designated as a Scheduled Monument and the SGG falls within Manningtree and Mistley Conservation Area. The area adjacent to the Stour Estuary in the north is covered by a LWS. Public access is provided by a number of well-used PRoW, including the Essex Way. Other valuable recreational resources include Mistley Place Park and several sports fields.</p> <p>There are opportunities for enhancement to the landscape and visual character and Green Infrastructure within the SGG. This could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Conserve and enhance the ecological structure and landscape character of woodlands.</li> <li>■ Conserve the setting of the Scheduled Monument and Grade I listed Mistley Towers, and the other Grade II listed historic buildings within the SGG and conserve views to these prominent landmarks.</li> <li>■ Maintain the wooded character of New Road and The Walls, resisting road improvements or widening that would threaten their rural character.</li> <li>■ Promote and improve public access and enjoyment of the area, connecting with existing recreational resources such as the Essex Way.</li> <li>■ Conserve and enhance views across the Stour Estuary to the Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB.</li> </ul>

### Summary and recommendations

**3.13** The analysis above indicates that this SGG area meets the objectives of the SGG Policy. It provides an open setting between the settlements of Manningtree and Mistley. It provides physical and visual separation between the settlements and prevents their coalescence. The SGG is particularly important in protecting the individual character, rural setting and identity of Mistley.

**3.14** The draft boundaries of the SGG follow physical features on the ground, which are considered to be robust and defensible boundary features. Therefore, no recommendations are made to alter the extent and boundaries of the SGG.

## Land between Lawford and Manningtree (western area)

### Representative photos



Open arable fields north of Long Lane.



Open arable and pasture land within the SGG is visually open with strong level of inter-visibility between the edges of Lawford and Manningtree.

Summary Information	
SSG Name	<b>Land between Lawford and Manningtree (western area)</b>
Location and extent of area	This SGG area located in the north of the District, is approximately 14 ha and situated between Lawford and Manningtree.
Landscape character context	The western SGG extends across two LCA as defined within the Tendring District Landscape Character Assessment (2001): both 6A 'Stour Valley System' and 7A 'Bromley Heaths'.

### Assessment

Assessment criteria		Commentary
<b>Existing settlement identify and pattern</b>	Partially meets	<p>Lawford predominantly comprises mid to late 20th century suburban development with some areas of early 21st century infill. The built form comprises a mix of semi-detached houses and bungalows organised along Colchester Road and Waldegrave Road. The character, origin, form and pattern of this townscape is therefore not particularly distinct.</p> <p>In contrast, Manningtree is a historic settlement located on the southern bank of the wide Stour Estuary. Manningtree was an historic port and medieval planned town and a cluster of historic buildings mark the historic core of the town today. The area of Manningtree lying to the north and east of the western SGG represents the later expansion of the town inland to the south along Trinity Road, New Road and Colchester Road. This comprises lower-density development (in comparison to the town centre), featuring vernacular and classical houses and artisan dwellings (some of which are listed buildings) as well as more modern infill development. The special architectural and historic interest of Manningtree is reflected in the designation of Manningtree and Mistley Conservation Area, which covers the townscape and open space of the SGG extending south to the B1352 Long Road.</p> <p>Although the character and origin of the two settlements are generally distinct, the settlements have effectively merged to the north of the SGG and will do to the</p>

Assessment criteria		Commentary
		south once the consented development south of Long Road ( 17/01181/OUT) is built out. However, the SGG plays and will continue to play an important role in providing the perception of a gap separating the settlements to the south and when travelling between them along Long Road.
<b>Landscape character</b>	Fully Meets	The southern half of the western SGG comprises an area of flat plateau-top open arable farmland, with medium to large-scale fields defined by low clipped hedgerows. This is traversed by Long Road, which connects Lawford with Mistley. The northern half of this area has a sloping landform and comprises an area of open pasture and allotment gardens to the north-east, and a wooded area associated with a small stream to the north-west. The landscape is open in nature and the lack of built development contributes to the perception of the gap as 'countryside'.
<b>Visual character</b>	Fully meets	<p>The landscape is generally visually open. This is particularly apparent to the south of the area, with rural views available from Long Road across flat arable farmland to the north and south adding to the sense of visual separation between the settlements. However, existing open views to the south will be altered by the introduction of consented development for residential dwellings to the south of the SGG (17/01181/OUT).</p> <p>Despite the woodland to the north-west, rural views are available across the narrow extent of the SGG to the north, (including from Colchester Road on the edge of Lawford) because of the falling landform, which dips to the stream in this area. As a result there is a strong level of inter-visibility between the edges of Lawford and Manningtree, however, these east-west views across open arable land, pasture and woodland are rural in character and contribute positively to the character of the SGG.</p>

### Practical Considerations

Considerations	Commentary
<b>Gap extent</b>	<p>The physical distance (as the crow flies) between Lawford and Manningtree is between approximately 160m and 380m.</p> <p>Although merged to the north, the main direct route between Lawford and Manningtree is Long Road. The linear distance between the edges of the two settlements along this route is approximately 400m. When travelling along the road there is a sense of leaving one settlement, and then travelling through the gap before arriving at the other. Clear views across the open countryside of the SGG are available from the road.</p> <p>The introduction of consented development for residential dwellings between Long Road/Clacton Road (17/01181/OUT) could potentially close the existing settlement gap between Manningtree and Lawford to the south of the SGG. However, the retention of a strip of open space approximately 100m wide south of Long Road will be important in preserving the perception of separation between the settlements.</p>
<b>Boundary defensibility</b>	<p>The draft boundaries of the SGG generally follow physical features on the ground. The SGG is defined by the edge of Lawford to the west, and by the edge of Manningtree to the north and east.</p> <p>To the south the SGG boundary crosses an open arable field, extending between existing built development on Long Road. This is based on a less robust/defensible feature than the other boundaries defining the SGG, but will mark the future built-up edge in this location, following the introduction of consented development between Long Road and Clacton Road. The boundaries of the SGG have been amended from the 2007 adopted plan to include a strip of land south of Long Road in order to maintain the perception of a gap between Lawford and Manningtree</p>

Considerations	Commentary
	<p>In granting outline planning permission (15/00761/OUT) for development at Long Road/Clacton Road, the Council took into account the position of the designated SGG in the emerging plan. The developer's original planning application and parameters plan also provided for open space along the northern edge of the site. However, the developer has since obtained planning permission (17/01181/OUT) on appeal to reduce the area of open space around the site and increase the housing numbers from 300 to 485 units but still retaining the open space along Long Road, to the north of the site. It will be important that this part of the SGG remains open, if a sense of physical and visual separation is to be retained between Lawford and Manningtree when travelling along Long Road. If development were to be introduced along the road frontage in this location, it would be perceived as ribbon development connecting the two settlements, and this would diminish the role the SGG plays in maintaining separation between the two settlements.</p>
<p><b>Potential for enhancement</b></p>	<p>The SGG falls within Manningtree and Mistley Conservation Area. There is no public access to the area, although there is informal access along field boundaries.</p> <p>There are opportunities for enhancement to the landscape and visual character and Green Infrastructure within the SGG and the increased development on land to the south of Long Road makes this enhancement more important. This could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Conserve and enhance the ecological structure and landscape character of woodlands and stream-side habitats.</li> <li>■ Promote and improve public access and enjoyment of the area, connecting with existing PRow outside the SGG.</li> <li>■ Enhance vegetation cover to the south of Long Road to reduce any future visual influence of the consented development between Long Road and Clacton Road.</li> </ul>

### Summary and recommendations

**3.15** The analysis above indicates that this SGG meets the objectives of the SGG Policy. The SGG, although a small gap which will be effectively enclosed following completion of consented development to the south, could continue to provide an open rural setting to Lawford and Manningtree and an effective sense of separation between the settlements.

**3.16** The draft boundaries of the SGG follow physical features on the ground, which are considered to be robust and defensible boundary features. Therefore, no recommendations are made to alter the extent and boundaries of the SGG.