

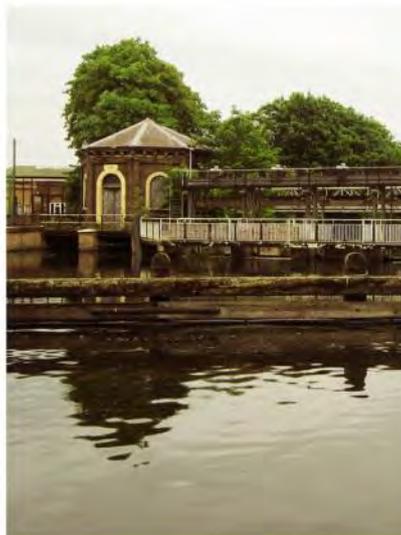


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# Lee Valley Regional Park

## Landscape Character Assessment and Landscape Strategy

Prepared by LUC  
April 2019



**Project Title:** Lee Valley Regional Park Landscape Character Assessment

**Client:** Lee Valley Regional Park Authority

Version	Date	Version Details	Prepared by	Checked by	Approved by
V1	06.10.2017	Draft Report	M Jansson B Gurney K Ahern	K Ahern	K Ahern
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## Landscape Strategy

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Planning & EIA  
Design  
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# **Introduction and Landscape Context: Overview**

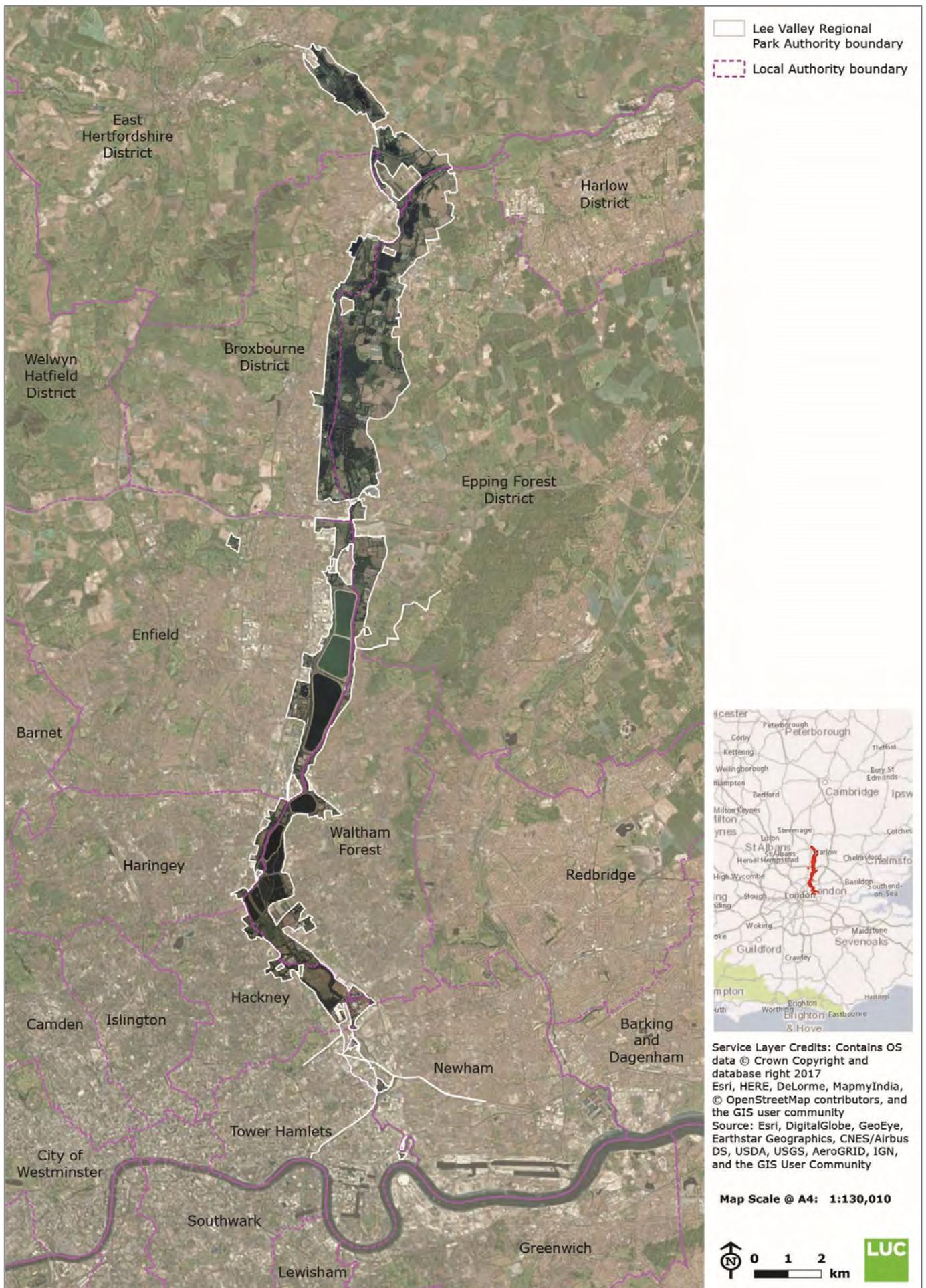


# 1. Introduction and Landscape Context

## Background & Purpose of the Landscape Character Assessment

- 1.1 LUC has prepared this study on behalf of the Lee Valley Regional Park Authority (LVRPA). It provides a comprehensive and up to date Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) and Landscape Strategy for the Park following good practice as recommended by **Natural England's recently published Approach to Landscape Character Assessment (2014)**.
- 1.2 The study draws together existing information on character from the LVRPA Landscape Character Assessment (LDA, 1995), the A Strategic Landscape Vision (LDA, 1995) and the Landscape Sensitivity Study (LUC, 2014). It builds on this and updates it with new information and field survey to create a consistent and robust landscape evidence base that will support the emerging Park Development Framework and future work in preparing strategic planning evidence.
- 1.3 It will provide sound evidence to inform work on policy development and development management, guiding development and land management that is sympathetic to local character and qualities of the Park.
- 1.4 This report is set out in two parts. **Part 1** provides an overview, comprising two sections:
  - Introduction and landscape context; and
  - Method and approach to the landscape character assessment.
- 1.5 **Part 2** presents the landscape character and landscape strategy for the Lee Valley comprising:
  - The landscape classification; and
  - Profiles for the 12 landscape character types and **38** character areas.
- 1.6 The report is supported by the following appendices:
  - **Appendix 1** provides a Glossary of Terms.
  - **Appendix 2** presents the Bibliography and Reference list.
  - **Appendix 3** provides the field survey sheet

**Figure 1.1 Lee Valley Regional Park Context**



## Context

- 1.7 The Lee Valley Regional Park was created by statute in the Lee Valley Regional Park Act 1966. The Act places a duty on the Authority to develop, improve, preserve and manage the Park as a place for recreation, sport and the provision of nature reserves. The Regional Park extends for 26 miles from the Thames through east London and up to Ware in Hertfordshire (a location map is provided in **Figure 1.1**). It consists of 4,000 hectares or 10,000 acres, around 40% of which are owned and managed by the Lee Valley Regional Park Authority, which was set up to maintain the Park as set out in the Act.
- 1.8 The Lee Valley Regional Park includes a diverse series and contrasting range of landscapes. These include semi natural lowland river landscapes and flood meadows and mosaic wetland landscapes which are the rich legacy of mineral extraction, to post-industrial and inner London landscapes much valued for their biodiversity interest and green infrastructure importance. The Park's intrinsic value is that it lies in such close proximity to often densely developed riparian boroughs. It is a landscape which is in a constant state of evolution, resulting from its **location in a 'growth area' where there is significant development pressure that** has the potential to change the intrinsic character of the Park.

## The Lee Valley Regional Park Landscape Evidence Base

- 1.9 The previous landscape baseline for the LVRP comprises two studies: LVRP Landscape Character Assessment (LDA, 1996) and LVRP Landscape Sensitivity Study (LUC, 2013). The present study will provide an updated baseline that replaces the 1996 LCA, with a revised classification. The 2013 Sensitivity Study, although not aligned with the new classification, still forms a valuable augmentation to the present study, providing an evaluation of the sensitivity of the landscape of the Park to a series of specific development scenarios.

- 1.10 Further details of these studies are provided below.

### **LVRP Landscape Character Assessment (LDA, 1996) and LVRPA Strategic Landscape Vision (LDA, 1996)**

- 1.11 The current landscape character assessment was undertaken in 1996 and followed the standard methodology set out in the 1993 Countryside Commission Landscape Character assessment Guidance. It identifies eight broad landscape character areas running north south within the Park. Since 1996 the LCA guidance has been updated in 2002 and again in 2014. There have also been substantial changes over many areas of the Park over the past twenty years, and this update will provide an opportunity to update the evidence base to reflect these changes as well as be prepared in accordance with the guidance prepared by Natural England in 2014 'An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment'.

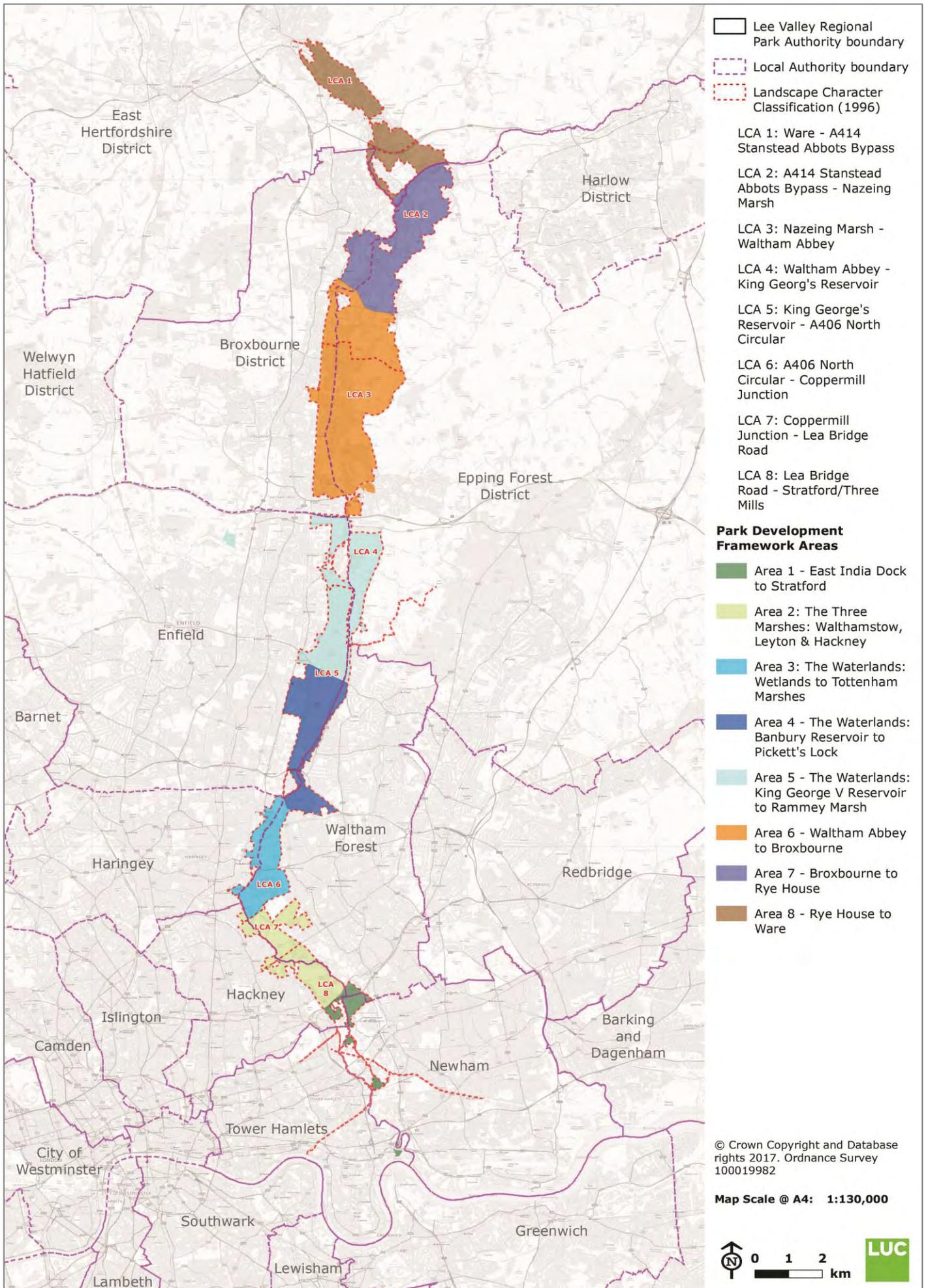
### **LVRP Landscape Sensitivity Study (LUC, 2013) Unpublished**

- 1.12 This assessment used the information in the 1996 and involved a targeted field survey to capture additional information specifically to inform the sensitivity analysis of specific types of development. The study identified locations where there are important views into the Park and also highlighted a number of locations where there are visually detracting edges to the Park.
- 1.13 The study provided a partial update to the landscape baseline characterisation, providing revised key landscape characteristics, updated photos and identifying sensitive features and characteristics. The study also used the spatial areas established for the Regional Park Development Framework<sup>1</sup> in the interests of ensuring consistency across the different spatial planning evidence bases used in Regional Park decision making. These areas are closely aligned with the 1996 LCA areas, albeit with some rationalisation. The relationship between the Park Development Framework spatial planning areas and the landscape character areas derived for the 1996 Landscape Assessment is shown on **Figure 1.2**.

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<sup>1</sup> Lee Valley Regional Park Authority, 2012, **Lee Valley Regional Park Development Framework**

**Figure 1.2 Park Development Framework Spatial Planning Areas**



## Relationship to Published Landscape Studies

- 1.14 Landscape does not stop at administrative boundaries but continues seamlessly into surrounding Boroughs. An aim of this LCA update was to show consistency **with surrounding authorities' LCAs**, and to nest within existing regional and national landscape classifications. Existing assessments are as follows:

### National Level

- 1.15 **National Character Area Study, Natural England (2013)** - NCAs divide England into 159 distinct natural areas. Each is defined by a unique combination of landscape, biodiversity, geodiversity, history, and cultural and economic activity. Their boundaries follow natural lines in the landscape rather than administrative boundaries.
- 1.16 Two occur partly within the present study area, these are the **NCA 111 Northern Thames Basin** and **NCA 112 Inner London**. These broad areas form the highest level of LCA across the study area and are illustrated in **Figure 1.3**.

### Regional Level

- 1.17 The **East of England Framework** covers the north of the present study area (see **Figure 1.4**) and includes a **Landscape Typology** (2009), an **Urban Landscape Typology** (2009), integrated Landscape Character Objectives (2011) and **Guidance On Assessing The Sensitivity Of The Landscape of the East of England** (2011). It was undertaken at a scale of 1:50K to provide a context for more detailed county and district-level assessments. It included an evaluation at the type level including judgements on strength of character, condition, key issues, strategy and guidelines.
- 1.18 The southern part of the Park falls within Natural England's **London's Natural Signatures** (2014) **Lee River Valley Natural Landscape Area**. This framework, intended to '*re-establish the relationship between the built and the natural aspects of London*', provides a high-level, broad overview of the character and evolution of the natural landscapes within London, including geological, topographical and ecological information.

### District Level

- 1.19 Two county-level landscape character assessments occurring within the north of the study area have been carried out: **Essex Landscape Character Assessment** (2003) and **East Hertfordshire Landscape Character Assessment** (See **Figure 1.5**). The Essex LCA was carried out on behalf of Essex County Council and Southend-on-Sea Borough Council to form part of the Replacement Structure Plan for the county. The Hertfordshire Landscape Character Assessment was undertaken between 2000 and 2005 on behalf of district and borough councils following a standard methodology, of which those covering relevant Riparian Authorities are listed in **Table 1.1** below.

### Local Studies

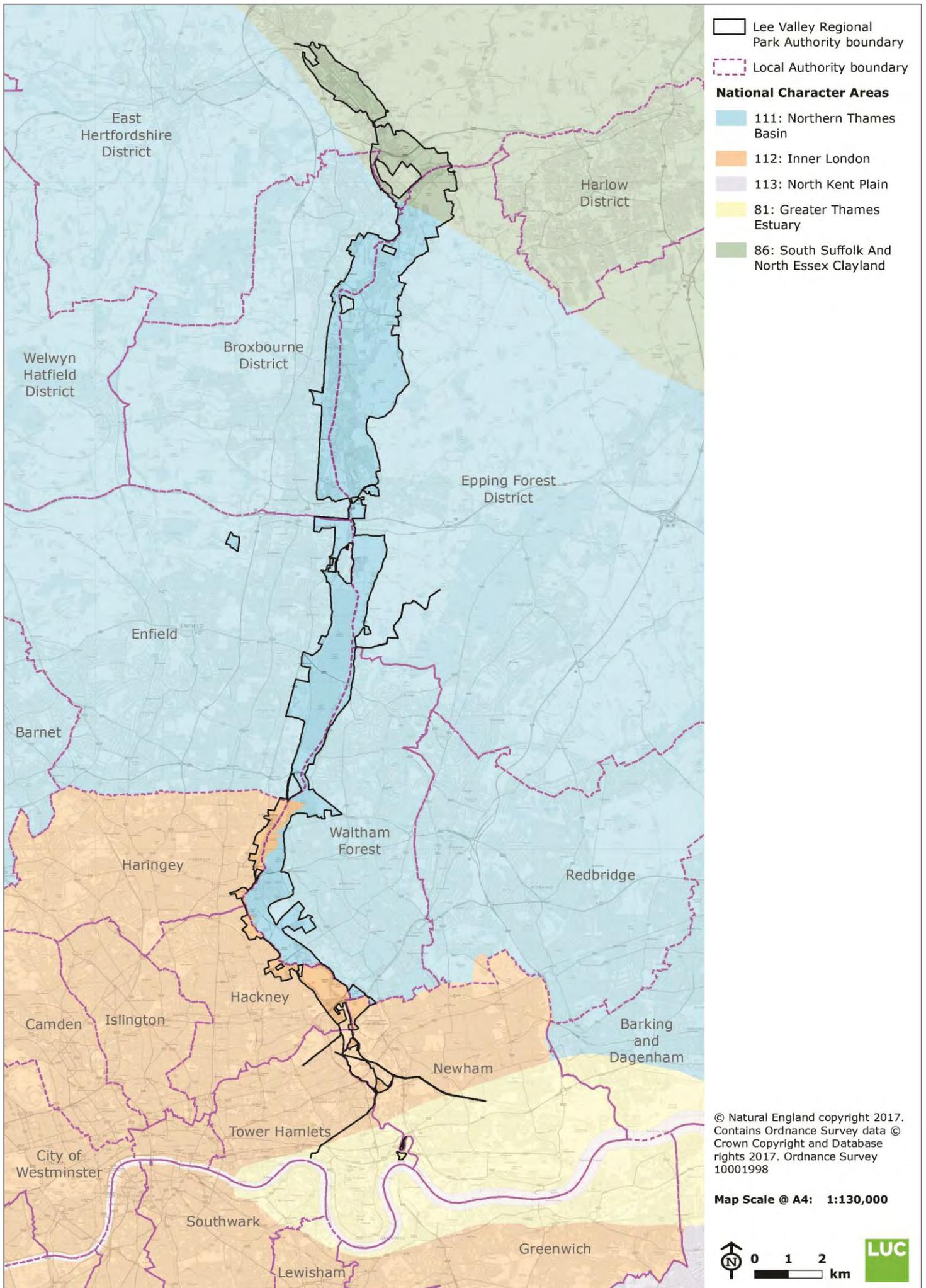
#### *Riparian Boroughs Landscape Studies*

- 1.20 In recent years the majority of the riparian boroughs have undertaken their own townscape/urban characterisation studies which include elements within the Lee Valley. These assessments will have been subject to consultation, may be embedded as SPG and will inform policy and decision-making. These studies are listed in **Table 1.1** below, together with a list of the areas they have classified that occur within the Lee Valley.

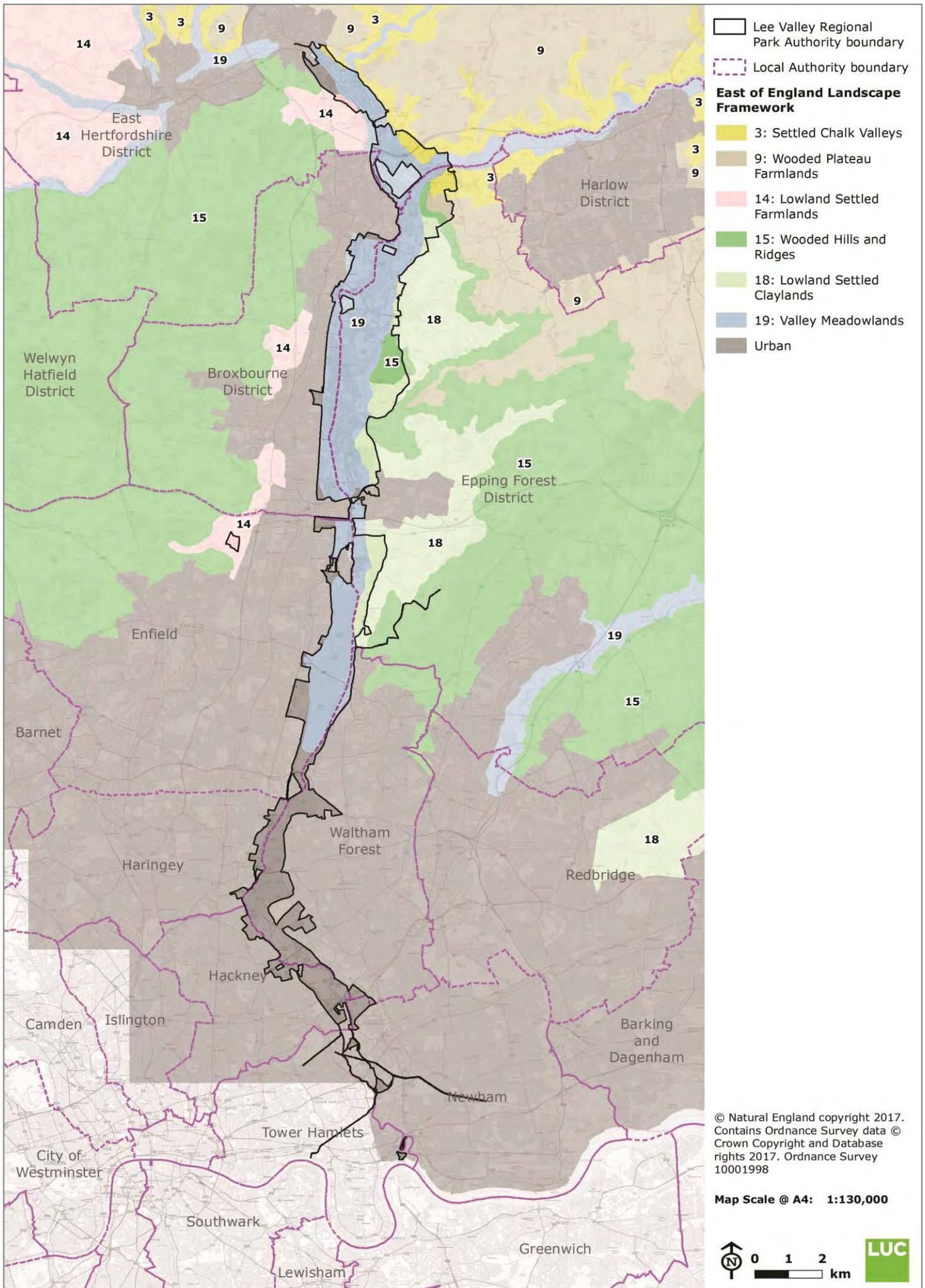
**Table 1.1 Local Landscape Character Assessments within the Lee Valley**

Authority	Date of Study/Status	Character Areas within the Lee Valley
Broxbourne	October 2008	D1 Mid Lee Valley D2 Turnford and Thistly Marshes
Enfield	February 2011	4A The Lee Valley Rivers and Reservoirs <i>Urban Areas:</i> Enfield Wash; Ponders End; Edmonton; Angel; Edmonton; Brimsdown; Picketts Lock; Central Leaside
Epping Forest	January 2010	A3 Lee Valley Marshes A4 Rammey Marsh
Hackney	Currently being completed	
Haringey	February 2015	Tottenham Hale
Newham	September 2011	Lower Lee Valley, north of the District Line including parts of Stratford and West Ham Lower Lee Valley, south of the District Line towards the Thames including parts of Canning Town
Tower Hamlets	September 2009 (Addendum 2016)	Poplar Riverside Bromley by Bow
Waltham Forest	Currently revoked	

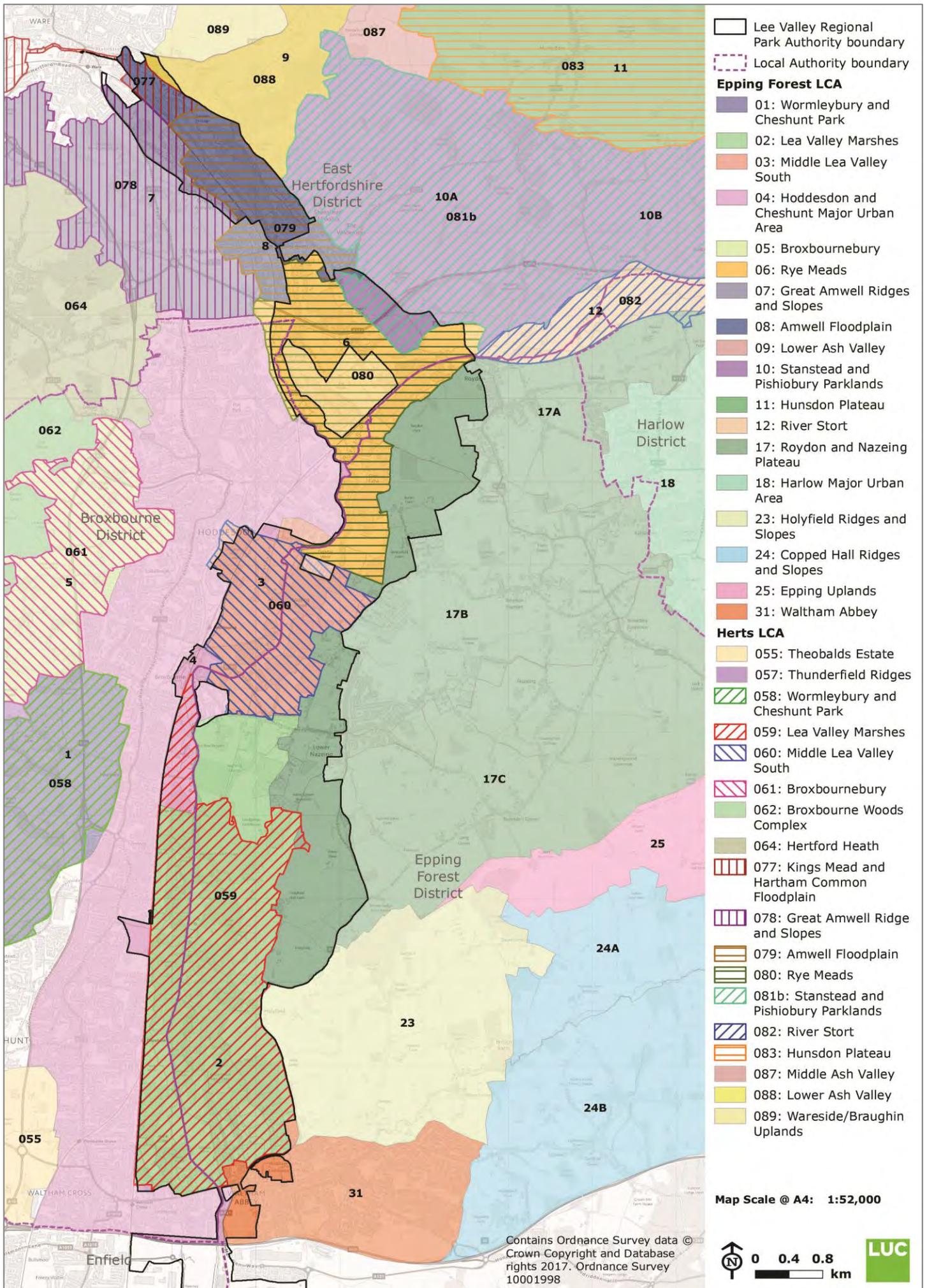
**Figure 1.3 Landscape Character Context – National Character Areas**



**Figure 1.4 Landscape Character Context – East of England Landscape Framework**



**Figure 1.5 Landscape Character Context – County and District Level Landscape Studies**



## 2. Methodology

### Approach

- 2.1 The method for undertaking this consolidated LCA follows the method promoted by Natural England through '*An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment*' (2014)<sup>2</sup>, which embeds the principles of the European Landscape Convention (ELC) within it. It updates the previous '*Landscape Character Assessment: Guidance for England and Scotland*', published by the Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage in 2002, though the methodology is broadly the same as the previous guidance. The 2014 guidance lists the five key principles for landscape character assessment as follows:
- Landscape is everywhere and all landscape and seascape has character;
  - Landscape occurs at all scales and the process of Landscape Character Assessment can be undertaken at any scale;
  - The process of Landscape Character Assessment should involve an understanding of how the landscape is perceived and experienced by people;
  - A Landscape Character Assessment can provide a landscape evidence base to inform a range of decisions and applications;
  - A Landscape Character Assessment can provide an integrating spatial framework- a multitude of variables come together to give us our distinctive landscapes.
- 2.2 The process for undertaking the study involved five main stages, described below, namely:
- Desk Study;
  - Field survey;
  - Classification and Description;
  - Evaluation; and
  - Reporting and Consultation.
- 2.3 The Landscape Strategy was prepared by Chartered Members of the Landscape Institute.
- 2.4 GIS was used throughout the study as the tool for collating, manipulating and presenting data.

### Desk Study

- 2.5 The first stage involved the collation and mapping of a wide range of existing information on the characteristics of the Lee Valley in GIS and analysing information to generate a draft classification for verification in the field.
- 2.6 The areas identified from the draft characterisation were mapped into draft landscape character types and areas following a hierarchical approach as follows:
- **Landscape Types** - which are generic and share common combinations of geology, topography, vegetation and human influences, e.g. Rural Valley Floor with Open Water and Marshes.
  - **Character Areas** - which are single and unique, discrete geographical areas of the landscape type, e.g. Amwell Floodplain.

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<sup>2</sup> [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/396192/landscape-character-assessment.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/396192/landscape-character-assessment.pdf) [accessed August 2017]

2.7 A draft set of key characteristics, based on available information, was formulated at this stage to be checked in the field.

### Data and references used in this study

2.8 Data used within the report, including data collated in the GIS database, is shown in **Table 2.1 GIS Data**. Details of the references used within the text are provided in the Bibliography in **Appendix 2**.

**Table 2.1 GIS Data**

Name	Date	Source
Base OS mapping at 1:25K and 1:10K	August 2018	Ordnance Survey
Lee Valley Regional Park boundary, Riparian Authorities area boundary	January 2017	LVRPA
Aerial imagery	2016	LVRPA
Land ownership	August 2018	LVRPA
Terrain 50 Contours and terrain surface	July 2017	Ordnance Survey
Recreation data: Cycle routes, walks, strategic walks network, pathways, mixed use routes, published walks, NCN routes, Rights of Way.	January 2017	LVRPA
Bedrock and superficial geology	October 2017	BGS
Agricultural Landscape Classification	July 2017	Natural England
Infrastructure related data: Bus garages, routes & stops; TFL routes, and super highways.	January 2017	LVRPA
Night skies and intrusion	Night skies - 2016, Tranquillity - 2007	CPRE
National Character Areas	January 2017	Natural England
Historic Landscape Character Types (HLC)	July 2006	Archaeology Data Service
Landscape Character Areas and Types (for LVRP and neighbouring authorities)	July 2017	LVRPA
London Landscape Character Types (Natural Signatures)	July 2017	Natural England
Rivers and flood zones	July 2017	Environment Agency, Ordnance Survey
Agricultural Land Classification		Natural England
Heritage designations: Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas, Scheduled Monuments, and Registered Parks & Gardens.	July 2017	Historic England, LVRPA
Nature conservation designations: Important	July 2017	Joint Nature

Name	Date	Source
Bird Areas, Ancient Woodland, SAC, SPA, SSSI, Ramsar, SINCR, County Wildlife Sites, NNR, LNR, country parks, and priority habitats.		Conservation Committee (JNCC), Natural England, LVRPA
Green Belt	2016-2017	DCLG
Social stats data: population statistics, schools and places of worship	January 2017	Office for National Statistics (ONS)
Strategic Growth Corridors and Areas	January 2017	LVRPA
Open spaces including metropolitan parks, green regions, recreation and leisure areas	January 2017	LVRPA

### Field Survey

- 2.9 A field survey was undertaken to appraise the draft characterisation. This specifically focussed on:
- verifying and fine-tuning the classification of the landscape types and areas identified;
  - recording information on landscape character and characteristics (including information on aesthetic/ perceptual factors that cannot be gained through desk study);
  - identifying key positive attributes and the services they provide;
  - landscape quality i.e. the physical state of the landscape and the condition of key elements within it; and
  - recording visible forces for change acting on the landscape.
- 2.10 In addition, information was gathered on landscape value (condition, rarity, scenic quality/beauty, enjoyment (recreation), cultural associations and naturalness/ tranquillity) within each area.
- 2.11 A systematic and rigorous approach was adopted for the survey, with information recorded on Field Record Sheets (see **Appendix 3** for an example) and through a comprehensive photo record.

### Classification and Description

- 2.12 Information collected in the field was incorporated into a revised classification and the landscape character types/ areas described to provide comprehensive information on character including a list of succinct key characteristics and a description of character.

### Landscape Types and Character Areas

- 2.13 Landscape types have been identified that have broadly similar patterns of geology, landform, soils, vegetation, land use, settlement and field pattern in each area in which they occur. This does not mean that they will be identical, but that they have a common pattern of elements.
- 2.14 Each landscape type is subdivided into a number of geographically specific character areas. They share generic characteristics with other areas of the same type, but have their own particular identity or 'sense of place'.
- 2.15 For the Lee Valley, land use was considered to be the main determinant of local character.
- 2.16 This is a local scale assessment and the focus has been on individual landscape character areas, with a greater level of detail provided on each of these and only with a brief overview developed for the generic landscape type.

### Evaluation

- 2.17 The report presents a clear division between the characterisation and evaluation parts of the assessment.
- 2.18 The evaluation covers:
- landscape quality/ condition i.e. the physical state of the landscape and its intactness;
  - valued features and characteristics (i.e. the landscape attributes that are of value<sup>3</sup>, covering what is important about the landscape and why);
  - forces for change acting on the landscape;
  - a landscape strategy and guidelines to protect and manage the landscape, and plan for change.

### Reporting and Consultation

- 2.19 The Landscape Character Assessment and Strategy will support the Park Development Framework (PDF) and, in particular, form part of the Area Proposals for the Regional Park. The Character Assessment and Strategy has undergone a process of consultation and refinement initially through discussion with both officers and Members of the Park Authority, followed by a formal six week period of public consultation during April and May 2018.
- 2.20 Key stakeholders with an interest in the Park were contacted, including statutory bodies, riparian authorities, leisure, recreation, sporting and nature conservation organisations and individuals (approx. **340 people**) and **copies of the documents were made available via the Authority's** website and at the major venues located throughout the Park. The comments received were reported to and considered by the Authority, and a number of amendments were incorporated within the final version.
- 2.21 The PDF Area Proposals include reference to the appropriate Character Area and the need to protect, enhance and manage the landscape as set out in the landscape strategy guidelines for **that Area. New proposals will be 'framed'** around these guidelines.

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<sup>3</sup> Valued landscapes as referred to in the National Planning Policy Framework, 2018, DCLG, paragraph 170

## 3. The Landscape of the Lee Valley

- 3.1 This section presents a revised and updated version of Section 2 *Development of the Lee Valley Landscape* of the 1996 LCA by LDA. It provides a summary of the natural and cultural factors that have shaped the character of the Lee Valley landscape and has informed the classification set out in Section 4 of the report.
- 3.2 The sources of information and data used to inform this section are provided in **Table 2.1 GIS Data** and in the Bibliography (**Appendix 2**) at the end of this report.

### Geological and Physical Evolution

#### Geology and soils

- 3.3 Geology is an important factor in determining landscape as it influences landform, soil type, vegetation patterns, land use and settlement patterns. The solid geology of the Lee Valley is shown in **Figure 3.1** and the superficial geology in **Figure 3.2** (data from the British Geological Survey).
- 3.4 The Lee Valley is part of the London Basin and most of the area is underlain with London Clay. Outcrops of London Clay form prominent low hills on the eastern valley side, and in the lower valley the clay is reflected in a shallower valley profile. The transition to chalk in the upper valley to the north of Hoddesdon and Nazeing is marked by a gradual change of land form on the valley sides and higher land outside the valley where broad plateaus extend out into Hertfordshire and Essex. The valley sides become steeper, corresponding to outcropping of the chalk north of St Margaret's and Stanstead Abbots which gives rise to a more defined, smaller scale, semi-enclosed valley form. In the upper valley, the surrounding landscape is generally more rolling and open, reflecting the influence of the chalk. The topography of the Lee Valley is shown in **Figure 3.3**.
- 3.5 The valley superficial geology comprises mostly alluvial deposits of gravel, clay, silt and sand, the result of erosion and deposition of earlier formations and associated with the complex series of river terraces throughout the Thames Valley.
- 3.6 These drift deposits have had a significant effect on the development of the Lee Valley landscape, with extensive sand and gravel extraction in the upper valley having created new lakes and wetland features, many of which are today used for recreation and wildlife conservation.

#### Hydrology

- 3.7 The significant water features within the valley are the unifying elements of the valley landscape. These includes major water channels (the **River Lee Navigation**, **Hugh Myddleton's** New River and what remains of the natural course of the River Lea) as well as extensive water bodies in the form of flooded gravel pits in the upper valley and large elevated reservoirs which occupy the valley throughout the midsection. The water courses in the lower reaches of the valley form a complex series of interconnecting channels constrained by engineered banks and linking with the waters of the Thames, south of Three Mills. The primary water courses and water bodies, together with flooding maps are shown in **Figure 3.4**.
- 3.8 The Lee Valley is drained by a complex of watercourses which form part of the extensive Lower Lee Catchment. **The predominantly clay catchment gives a 'flashy' response with water levels rising quickly after rainfall.** Historically the valley has been subject to extensive flooding. Approximately 63% of the Park is still classified as being prone to flooding (Flood Zone 2 or above – see Figure 3.4). There is a long history of water flows being controlled through complex systems including weirs, sluices, ditches and channels for the purposes of navigation and to supply water to London. The River Lee Navigation is canalised throughout its length with locks and weirs regulating water levels and flow. Various flood defence works are evident in the mid and lower

reaches of the valley in the concrete Flood Relief Channels that are present throughout the mid-section of the valley.

- 3.9 These features perform important flood-relief functions both within the valley and across wider adjacent areas, with floodwater retained as surface water in the waterbodies and artificial channels and the system of weirs and sluices serving to reduce flows downstream. These systems also maintain river flows in drier periods with water released more slowly from wetland habitats. In addition, the natural elements of the Park, such as the natural river channels, soils and marshes retain floodwater by soaking up and storing excess water during periods of heavy rainfall.

### **Vegetation and ecology**

- 3.10 The topography, underlying geology and soils, together with past and present human activity, have influenced the distribution of habitats through the valley. Important habitats include rivers and streams, grasslands and wetlands as well as woodland and trees, and a number of post-industrial sites.
- 3.11 **Figure 3.5** shows the distribution of basic habitat types. **Figure 3.6** shows the extent of nature conservation designations.

### **Rivers and Streams**

- 3.12 The River Lea, its associated channels and its tributaries are vital to the ecology of the valley, providing hydrological and ecological links between the wetlands of the floodplain. A lowland clay river, The River Lea is associated with low gradient, base-rich water and fine/rich substrates. Typical plants include Arrowhead and Yellow Water-lily.
- 3.13 The greatest ecological diversity is found in the more natural channels, such as the Cornmill Stream and the Old River Lea, although the highly modified channels also offer some value for biodiversity, particularly with artificial habitat enhancements. Kingfishers and Sand Martins can be found in the eroding banks of the more natural courses and within quiet backwaters fish and a wide range of other wildlife including Otters can thrive.
- 3.14 The importance of the river habitats within the valley are reflected in their inclusion in statutory designations (see **Figure 3.6**) including the Lee Valley SPA, Amwell Quarry SSSI, Rye Meads SSSI, the Turnford and Cheshunt Pits SSSI, Cornmill Stream and Old River Lea SSSI, Chingford Reservoirs SSSI, Walthamstow Reservoirs SSSI, and Walthamstow Marshes SSSI. Rare and threatened species are present in the upper valley, such as Shining Ramshorn snail, White-legged Damselfly, Otter and Water Vole. As the River flows into inner London human influences increasingly dominate the river and its importance as a wildlife corridor is heightened.

### **Woodland and trees**

- 3.15 Wet or carr woodland is the most common woodland type in the Park, mostly established on old gravel workings and through natural succession from reed swamp and fen. Willow and poplar thrive on the nutrient rich soils of the valley floor and where gravel workings have been abandoned, willow scrub with alder and birch have relatively quickly formed dense, wet woodland.
- 3.16 Wet woodland habitats are a key feature noted in the Turnford and Cheshunt Pits and Waltham **Abbey Woods SSSI's and the wet woodland cover has increased in the Park** as willow and alder colonise the edges of the disused gravel pits. There are extensive areas within the River Lee Country Park, Rye Meads, Waltham Abbey and Sewardstone. Many nationally scarce and notable invertebrates are associated with wet woodland habitats in these areas and communities of mosses and liverworts have become established on the trunks of living and fallen trees.
- 3.17 The heavier clay soils on the eastern valley sides and surrounding higher land support dense woodland. The ridge top woods along the eastern horizon mark the edge of the formerly more extensive Epping Forest. These woods are an important feature influencing the character of the Lee Valley. The better drained, drier soils of the valley sides in the northern part of the park support oak, ash and maple. Hazel and holly are notable amongst understorey and hedgerow species.

### *Wetland Habitats*

- 3.18 Wetland habitats are focused mostly around the many former mineral extraction sites in the upper valley, but also at Walthamstow Marshes and the complex of Victorian and Edwardian reservoirs now known as Walthamstow Wetlands.
- 3.19 Historic gravel extraction has created a series of large lakes with varying conditions for biodiversity. A series of restored gravel pit lakes at Amwell, Rye Meads, Glen Faba and within the Lee Valley Country Park provide an important habitat, particularly for birds and are designated as SSSI.

### *Grassland and Fen*

- 3.20 Seasonally flooded grasslands and fen once dominated the Lee Valley but, following national trends, areas of this habitat have been dramatically reduced. In the Lee Valley the loss has primarily been the result of mineral extraction, with large areas also lost to landfill and subsequent use for sports fields, particularly within the urbanised lower valley.
- 3.21 Extensive long-standing areas of fen are now scarce in the Park but important areas have survived at Rye Meads, Silvermeade, Cornmill Meadows and Walthamstow Marshes. These are sustained through traditional management, such as grazing animals in summer months. The remaining sites are often fragmented and their condition affected by low water levels.
- 3.22 Modified over centuries of human activity, these artificial landscapes are of high wildlife value. For example, the ditches excavated on many wet grassland sites such as Cornmill Meadows and Silvermeade to water livestock, and facilitate irrigation can be used by species such as Water Vole as part of a wider network of water channels. These complexes of wetland habitats also support impressive invertebrate assemblages, with sites such as Cornmill Meadows and Amwell Nature Reserve supporting over half of the total number of British dragonfly species.
- 3.23 Substantial funding has been made available to increase the areas of reedbed in the Lee Valley in recent years. Sites that have benefited include Amwell, Rye Meads and Seventy Acres Lake in River Lee Country Park and the creation of 1.6ha of reedbed was established as part of the transformation of the lower valley into the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park for the 2012 Olympic Games.
- 3.24 The fen and meadow habitats remaining at Rye Meads, Cornmill Meadows and Walthamstow Marshes are all recognised as of national importance, designated as SSSIs. Other sites such as Silvermeade and Amwell meadows are regionally significant and designated as Local Wildlife Sites.

### *Post-industrial/Urban habitats*

- 3.25 Post-industrial urban habitats form a significant feature in the Park, consisting of open mosaic habitats on previously disturbed land and those of the built environment. The ecological value of these habitats, such as pulverised fuel ash dumps, redundant water treatment works and **temporary 'brownfield' sites** within the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park support a diverse range of flora and fauna, often in a stressed environment. The new associations of species that are occurring are interesting in their own right and have considerable ecological, educational and research value. The fact that many provide the only wildlife habitat available in urban areas increases their importance.

## Cultural\Human Influences

- 3.26 The Lee Valley has been a strategic corridor of activity and provider of resources for London since the earliest times. The river has been used to transport produce from the surrounding rural areas into London up until comparatively recently and water has been supplied to the city since around 1613 when the New River aqueduct was constructed. Canalisation of the River Lee Navigation began in Elizabethan times with the development of mills also occurring from this time onward.
- 3.27 Early industrialisation was a result of the availability of water power for numerous mills. These include the Waltham Abbey Royal Gunpowder Mills (originally a fulling mill but already producing gunpowder by 1665), the 19<sup>th</sup> century Royal Small Arms Factory at Enfield and Wright's Flour Mill

(Greater London's last surviving working mill) at Ponders End. Further south at Bow is the Three Mills tidal complex, with the grade I listed House Mill open to the public.

- 3.28 In the 18<sup>th</sup> century the Bow porcelain factory was developed. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century the lower Lee became an important area for the manufacture of chemicals, in part based on the supply of by-products such as sulphur and ammonia from the Gas Light and Coke Company's works at Bow Common. Other industries included Bryant and May, Berger Paints, Stratford Railway Works and confectionery manufacturer Clarnico (later Trebor). The Orchard House Yard and Thames Ironworks shipyards were important industries where the river meets the Thames.
- 3.29 From as early as the 18<sup>th</sup> century, by virtue of its rich soils, the Lee Valley was also renowned for its market gardens, producing plants, fruits and vegetables which were sold at London markets and beyond. This continues today, with extensive nurseries and glasshouse areas in and around the northern part of the Park.
- 3.30 In the 20<sup>th</sup> century the combination of transport, wide expanses of flat land and electricity from riverside and canal-side plants such as Brimsdown, Hackney, Bow and West Ham led to expansion of industries. Some of these industrial areas continue to thrive, while others have declined; some have been converted to retail or leisure uses.
- 3.31 Gravel extraction in the Lee Valley started in the 1920s. Some of the pits were back-filled with waste from the local coal-fired power stations; the remainder gradually flooded and have been reclaimed by nature, making a haven for wildlife, in particular certain plants and wetland birds.
- 3.32 Significant changes took place in the Lee Valley due to the expansion of London during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Urban and residential development extended along the high ground west of the valley and the level of industrial activity increased considerably. This included the development of various public utilities with the construction of the massive reservoirs to provide water for **London's** increasing population. Power stations and gasworks were also sited in the valley and extensive areas of marshland were filled with refuse. Sewage works are a further feature. Many of the historic buildings and structures relating to the water industry still remain and red brick pumping stations and water towers form landmarks in certain locations. These processes resulted in the degradation and loss of extensive areas of natural and semi-natural wetlands on the valley floor.
- 3.33 Sand and gravel extraction commencing in the early 1900s has been a major influence in the changing landscape of the valley. The legacy of former workings persists as numerous flooded pits. These have formed lakes of varying character, with the earlier, less efficient extraction methods giving rise to rich wildlife habitats as at Fishers Green. The resulting abandoned workings have developed reed beds, carr woodland and extensive willow, alder and birch scrub, as well as expanses of open water dotted with islands and promontories. This enclosed wooded character is suggestive of the early valley landscape prior to clearance for pasture.
- 3.34 The valley became increasingly accessible as a place for recreation with the development of the railways and roads. Urban expansion in the surrounding areas has seen the valley being used more and more for recreational purposes with this function being positively identified in **Abercrombie's plan for Greater London in the 1940s and later reiterated by the Civic Trust in 1967.**
- 3.35 Extensive areas, often related to land filling of former marshes, were developed as playing fields and in some cases the landfill artificially raised the valley floor leaving unnatural landforms and materials which frequently contained contaminants. The decline of some industries and decommissioning of former power stations and water-related processing plants has provided opportunities to restore derelict sites.
- 3.36 Since it was conceived, the LVRP has provided a regional destination for formal and informal recreation, sport and leisure. The London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games introduced a **national and international dimension to the Park's** profile. It receives millions of visitors each year, some taking part in the numerous formal activities available, but most visiting to enjoy the semi-natural landscape with its wildlife interest and a break from the surrounding urban environment.

## The Future

- 3.37 The Lee Valley landscape has evolved over time in response to physical and cultural influences. Landscapes are not static and will continue to evolve in the future and this has never been truer than of the Lee Valley – although it is difficult to be precise about the effect of change. An understanding and recognition of intrinsic landscape character and qualities, articulated through this assessment, should help ensure that local distinctiveness is conserved and enhanced/restored and, where appropriate, encourage creation of new valued landscapes, in association with any future change.
- 3.38 Key current driving forces for change are:
- increasing use of the Park as a recreational resource;
  - climate change;
  - flood alleviation and water supply;
  - development adjacent to and within the Park; and
  - agriculture and industrialisation.
- 3.39 The maps of Night Skies (**Figure 3.8**) and Tranquillity (**Figure 3.9**) show the effects of recent intrusions. **Figure 3.10** illustrates the Strategic Growth Corridor and predicted growth areas within the study area.

### Climate change

- 3.40 The effects and our responses to climate change are fast becoming the most important driver for change in the 21st century. The impacts of these changes in the UK have been comprehensively researched by the UK Climate Impacts Programme (UKCIP)<sup>4</sup>. Hotter drier summers, warmer wetter winters, an increase in the frequency of some extreme weather events and rising sea levels could have significant impacts upon the landscapes of the Lee Valley.
- 3.41 Inland habitats and species will have to cope with new and changing seasonal temperatures and rainfall patterns. New pests and diseases are likely to take on a new prevalence, as well as exotic, non-native plant and animal species – combining to change the distribution and composition of semi-natural habitats across the landscape.
- 3.42 In response we are likely to see projects to strengthen the resilience of habitats to the effects of future climate change, as well as changes in flood alleviation management. The challenge will be to respond to climate change while ensuring the retention of valued landscape features and attributes, as identified by this assessment.

### Flood alleviation and water supply

- 3.43 In recent years, changes in rainfall patterns as a result of climate change and significant increases in run-off as a result of development of open land within the catchment has increased flood risk by an estimated 3.3% in parts of the Park. This trend is likely to continue as climate change intensifies and development pressures increases the amount of impermeable surfaces in and around the Park.
- 3.44 As well as performing important functions in relation to flood management, the waterbodies within the Park are important for water abstraction, water supply and effluent discharge. There are a number of risks associated with this: the potential for effluent discharge from sewage treatment works to reduce the water quality of surrounding waterways; and for over-abstraction of water to reduce water levels in river channels and adversely affecting both water quality and biodiversity. As populations in **London, Hertfordshire and Essex's increase** these risks are only likely to increase.

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<sup>4</sup> <http://www.ukcip.org.uk/>

### **Development**

- 3.45 Considerable development is anticipated within most riparian authorities, with significant numbers of homes already planned adjacent to the Park, particularly in the mid-section within Waltham Forest, Haringey and Enfield. Other sites identified for major residential development within draft Local Plans include Ware in East Herts and Cheshunt in Broxbourne.
- 3.46 The increase in residential development is likely to result in further pressures for development or land use change within the Park, for example infrastructure and facilities such as schools and community buildings that is required to support an increased population and expanding businesses. There may also be a need for new transport infrastructure and road upgrading to accommodate increased traffic and more formal types of local recreation and play space.
- 3.47 Several major infrastructure projects are also planned which may impact both directly and indirectly on the Park. This includes upgrades to waste treatment works and energy sub stations and plans for Crossrail 2.
- 3.48 These forms of development have the potential to have a major impact on the Park, particularly on perceptions of openness, remoteness and tranquillity and reduce its semi-natural character. Poorly sited and designed development that does not respond to the Park's local context could result in a more fragmented and weaker landscape character.
- 3.49 Recognising differences in landscape character is essential to ensure that land management changes and decisions about new development proposals take every practical opportunity to respect and enhance the sense of place of different areas.

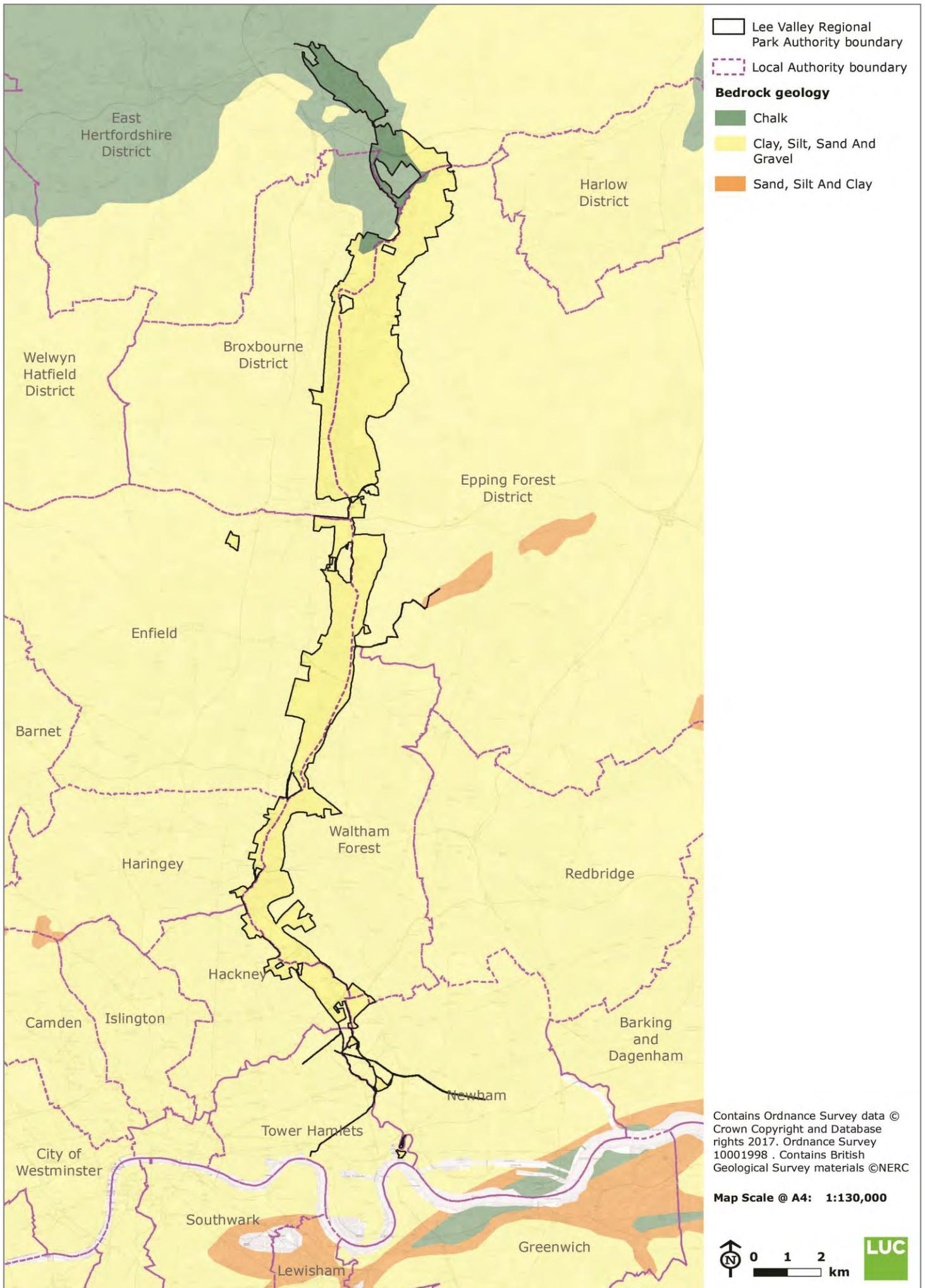
### **Recreation**

- 3.50 The large levels of growth in population expected to take place around the Park is likely to increase the numbers of visitors to it. The Park provides a wide range of different opportunities for formal and informal recreation which can contribute to improving health and wellbeing of people within local communities, and increasing number and duration of visits is encouraged. There is however the potential for an increase in numbers to have a negative impact on the condition and quality of sensitive habitats found throughout the valley. Careful management is needed to prevent disturbance to the valuable habitats and the wildlife they support.

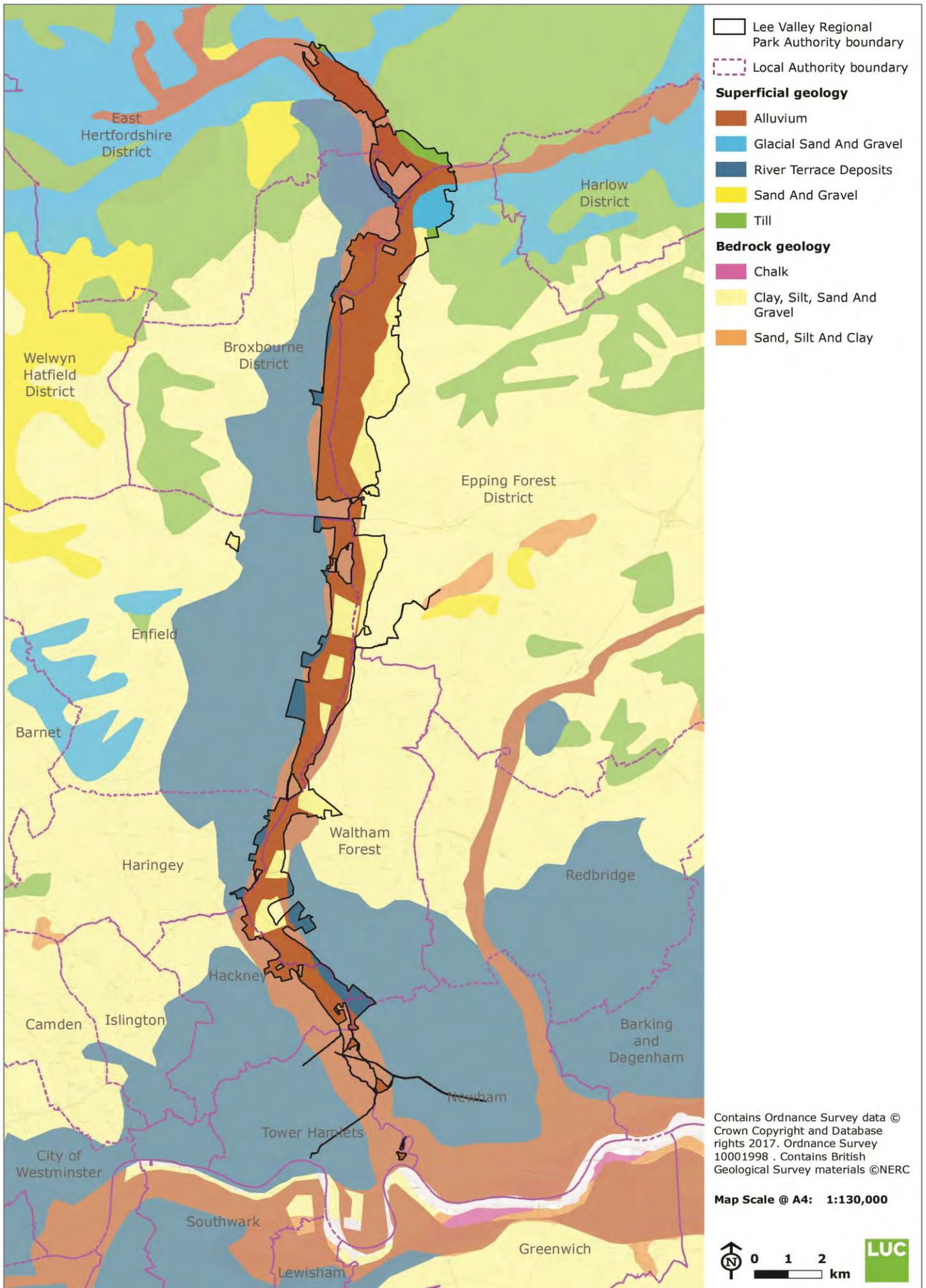
### **Agriculture and industrialisation**

- 3.51 Large-scale agriculture within the rural-urban fringe is increasing with a considerable demand for glasshouses and smaller-scale sustainable food production, including allotments and community growing initiatives. The growth of glasshouses and smaller-scale producers may bring local economic benefits. However, glass houses have the potential to detract from landscape qualities such as openness and natural character and result in the fragmentation of the landscape and management issues.

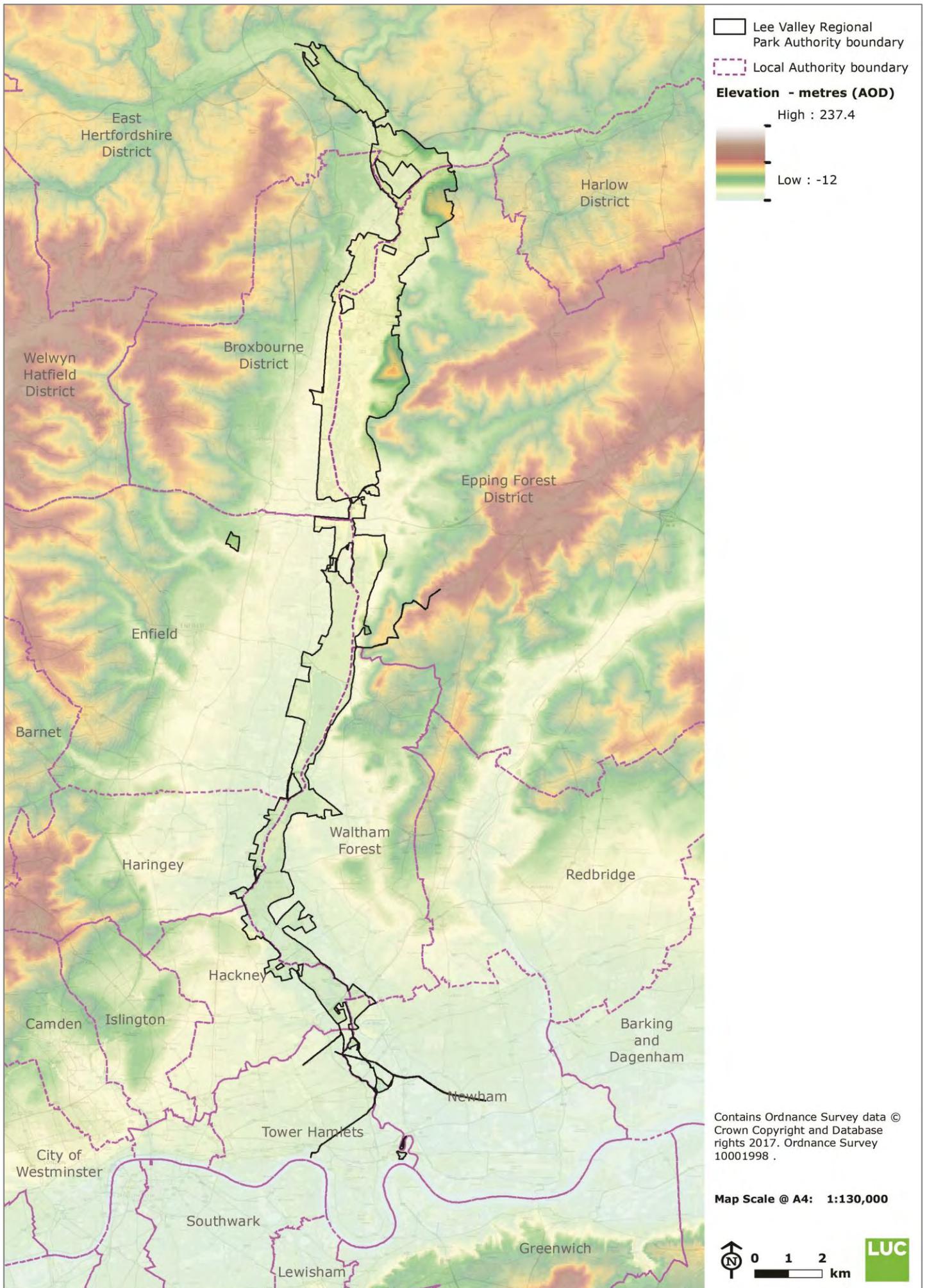
**Figure 3.1 Bedrock Geology**



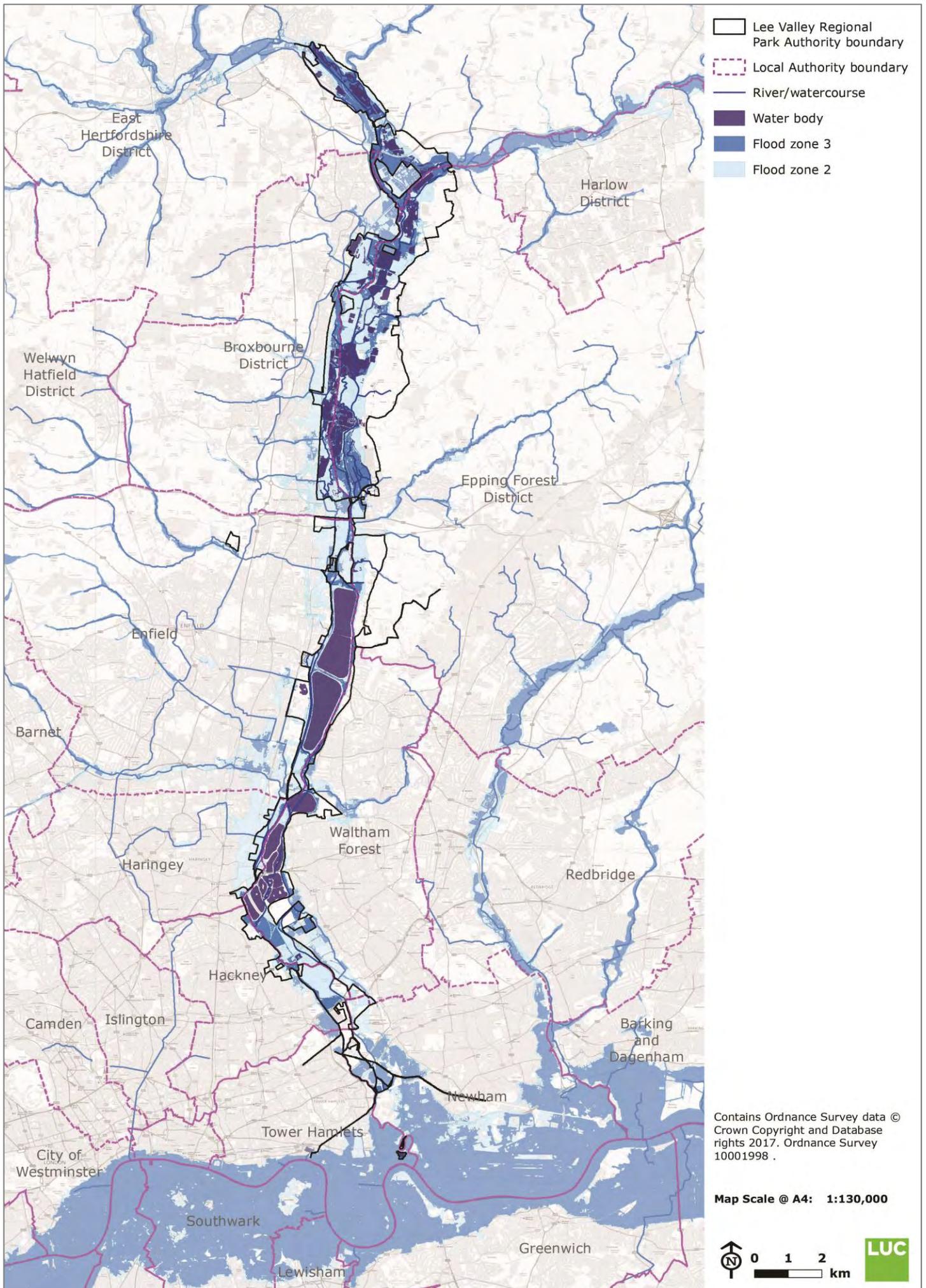
**Figure 3.2 Superficial Geology**



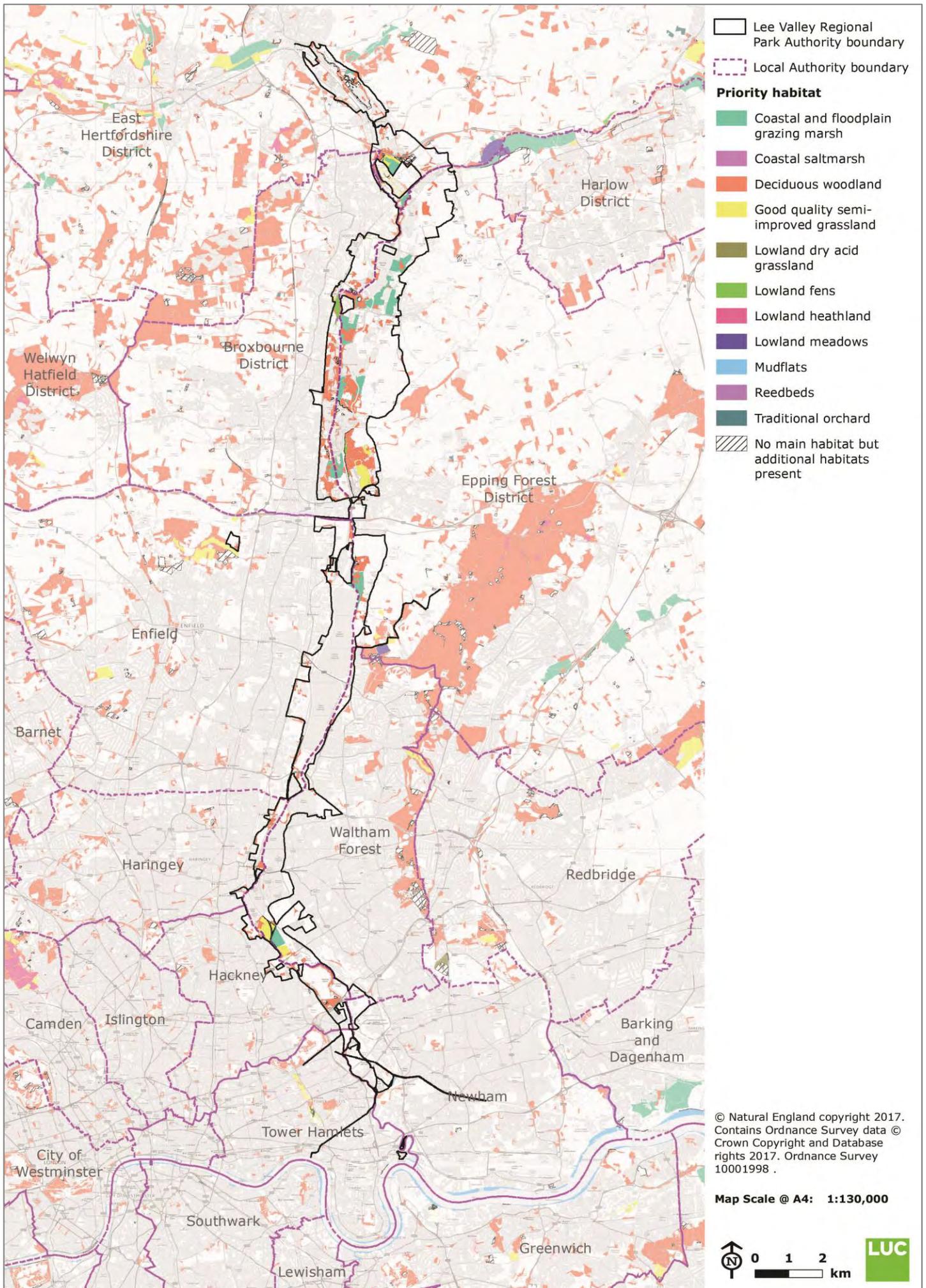
**Figure 3.3 Topography**



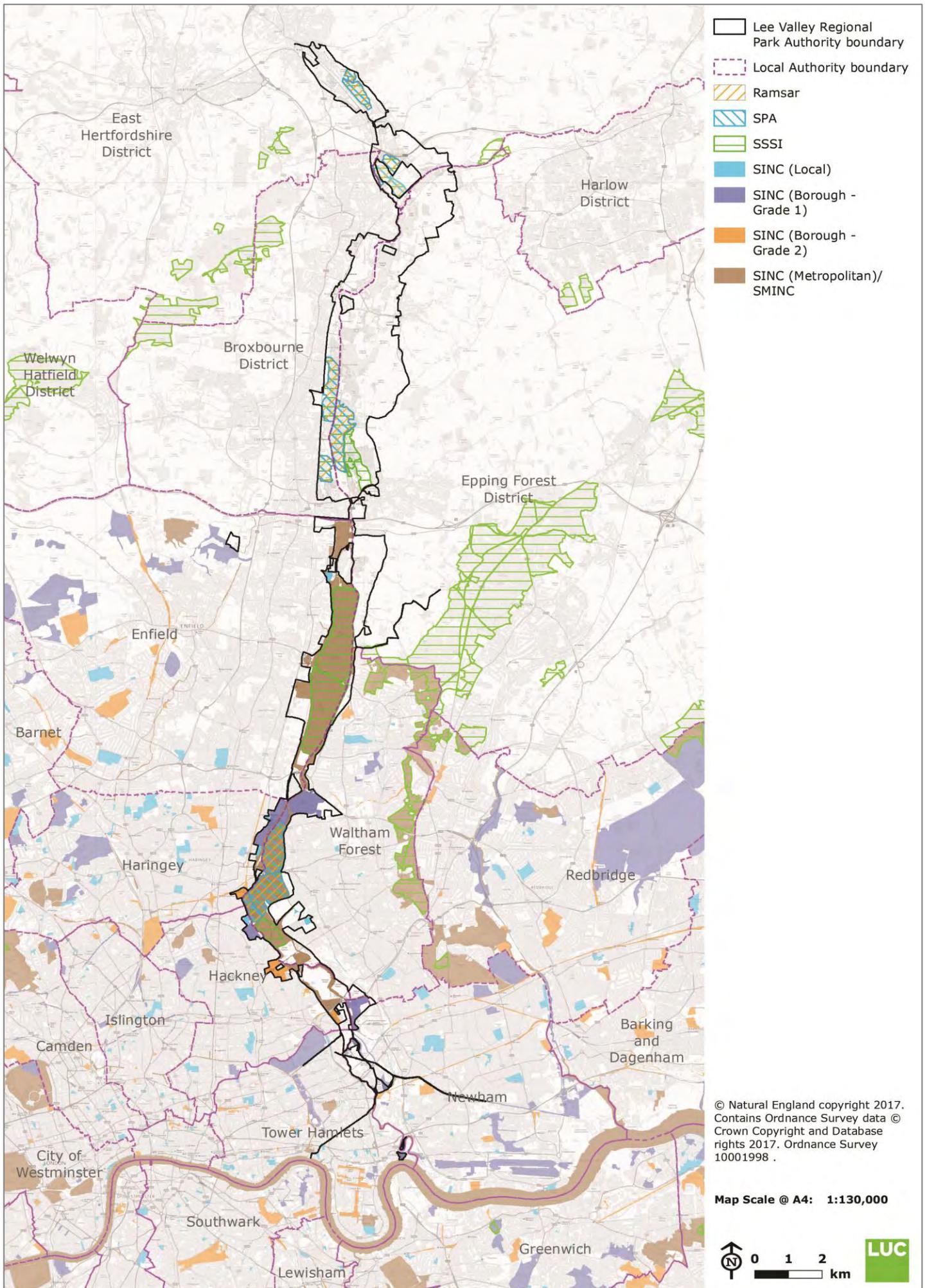
**Figure 3.4 Hydrology**



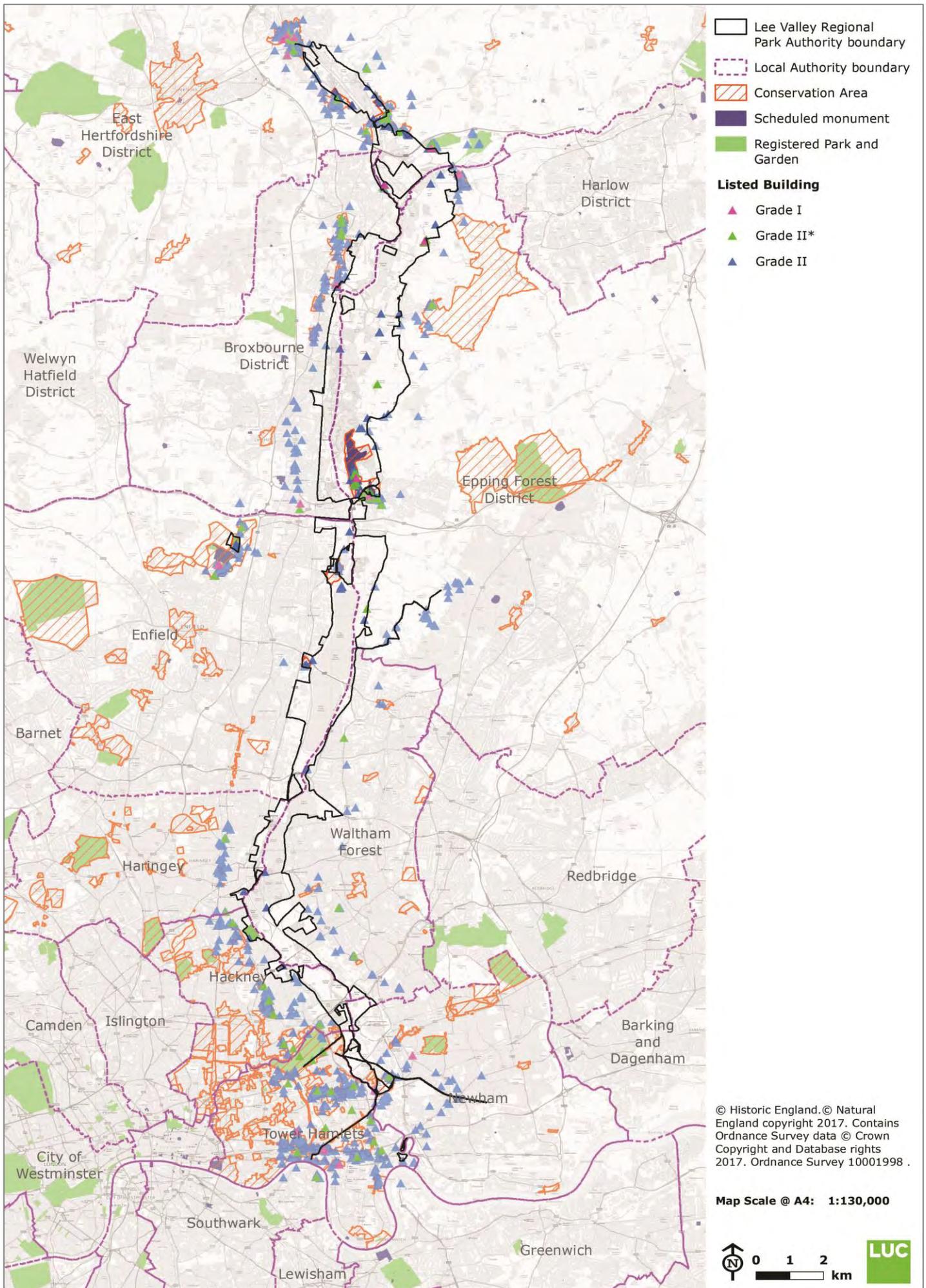
**Figure 3.5 Habitats**



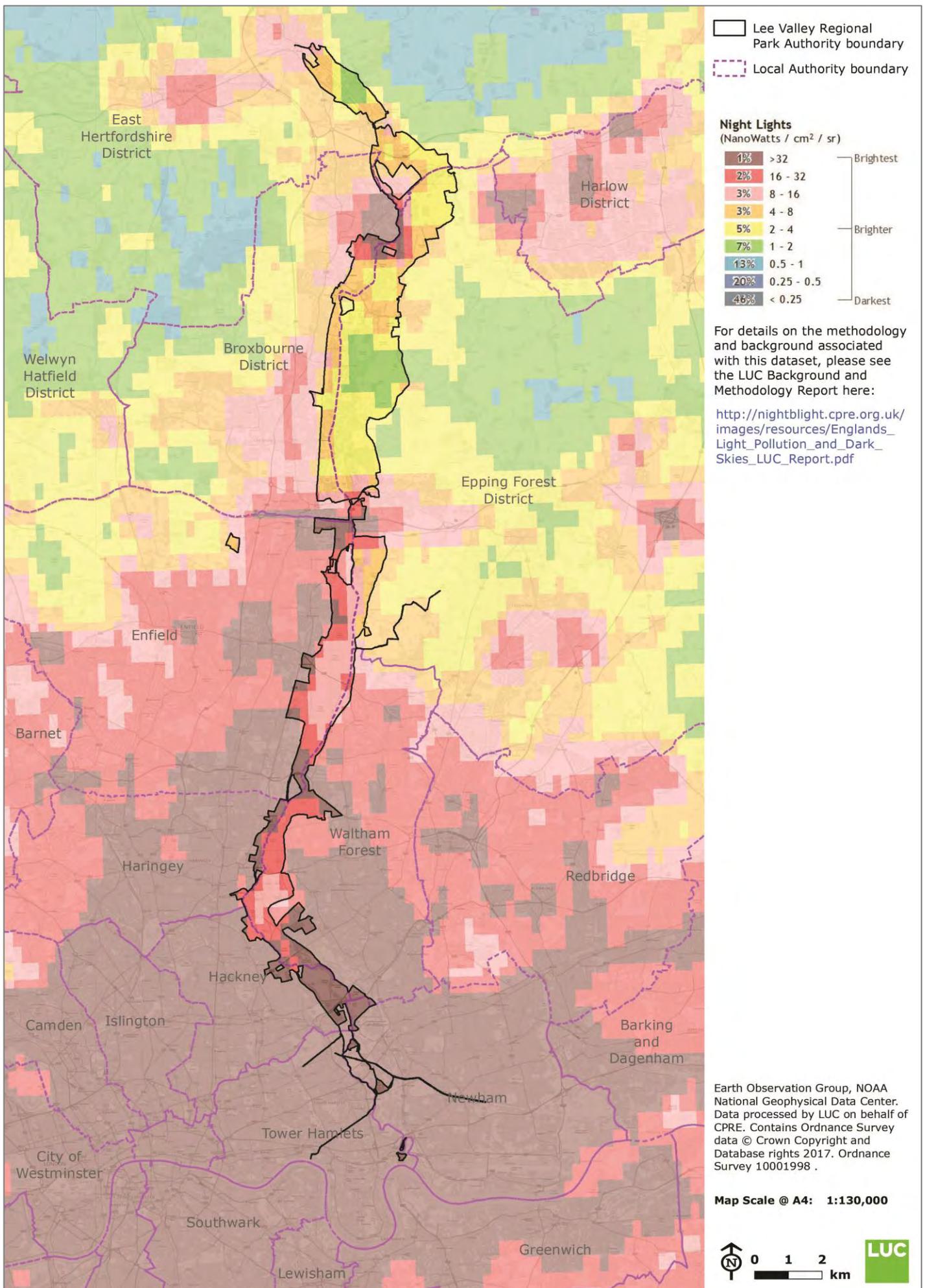
**Figure 3.6 Nature Conservation Designations**



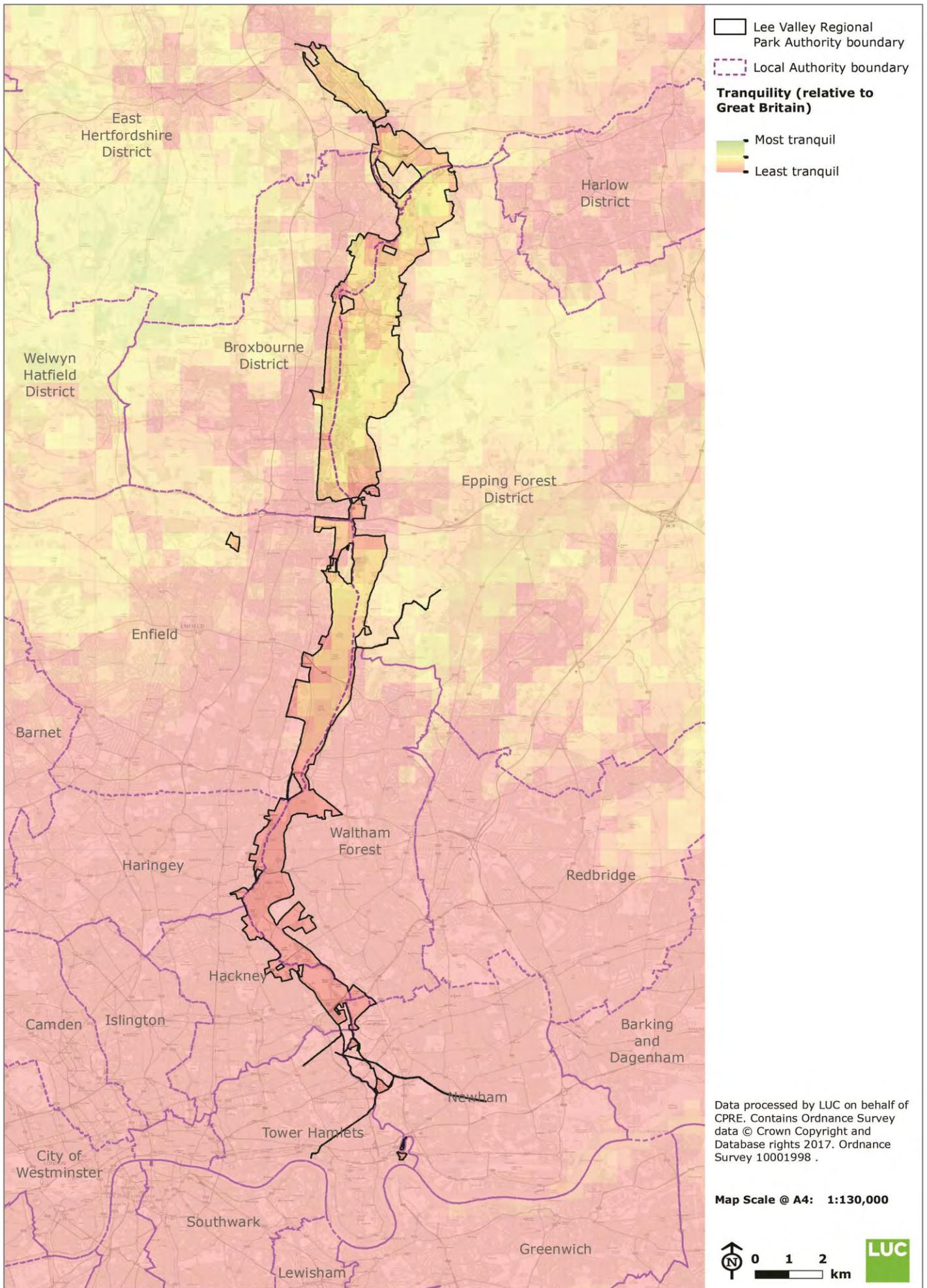
**Figure 3.7 Historic Environment Designations**



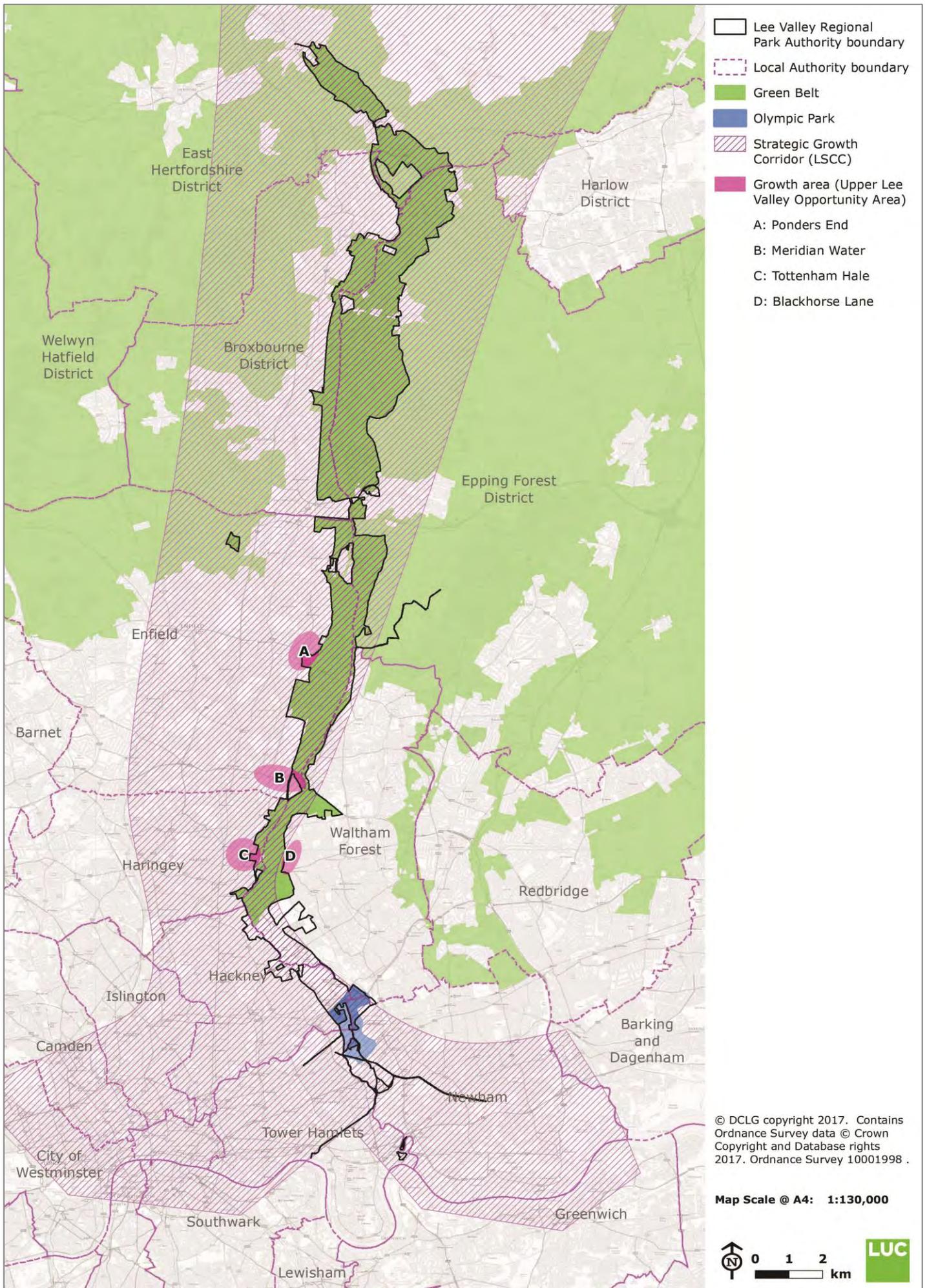
**Figure 3.8 CPRE Night Skies**



**Figure 3.9 CPRE Tranquillity**



**Figure 3.10 – Lee Valley Development Context**



## 4. Landscape Classification

- 4.1 This section of the report presents the results of the landscape character assessment, drawing together information gathered from the desk study review and the field survey.
- 4.2 Twelve landscape types and 38 landscape character areas have been identified as listed in **Table 4.1** below. The classification is shown in **Figure 4.1**, **Figure 4.2** and **Figure 4.3**.

**Table 4.1 Landscape Classification**

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER TYPE	CHARACTER AREA	
Valley Floor/Floodplain		
<b>A: Rural valley floor mosaic with wetlands and marshes</b>	A1	Amwell floodplain
	A2	Rye Meads
	A3	Glen Faba & Nazeing Meads
	A4	Kings Weir to Waltham Town Lock
<b>B: Urban valley floor with reservoirs and wetlands</b>	B1	King George's & William Girling Reservoirs
	B2	Banbury Reservoir
	B3	Walthamstow Wetlands
<b>C: Urban valley floor with marshland</b>	C1	Rammey Marsh
	C2	Tottenham Marshes
	C3	Walthamstow & Leyton Marshes
	C4	Hackney Marsh
<b>D: Urban valley floor with leisure facilities</b>	D1	Lee Valley Athletic Centre & Ponders End Lake
	D2	Folly Lane playing fields
	D3	Douglas Eyre Playing Fields
	D4	Low Hall Sports Ground
	D5	Lee Valley Ice Centre & Riding Centre
<b>E: Valley floor with post-industrial parks</b>	E1	Royal Gunpowder Mills
	E2	Essex Filter Beds & Middlesex Filter Beds
	E3	Bow Creek Ecological Park
	E4	East India Dock Basin

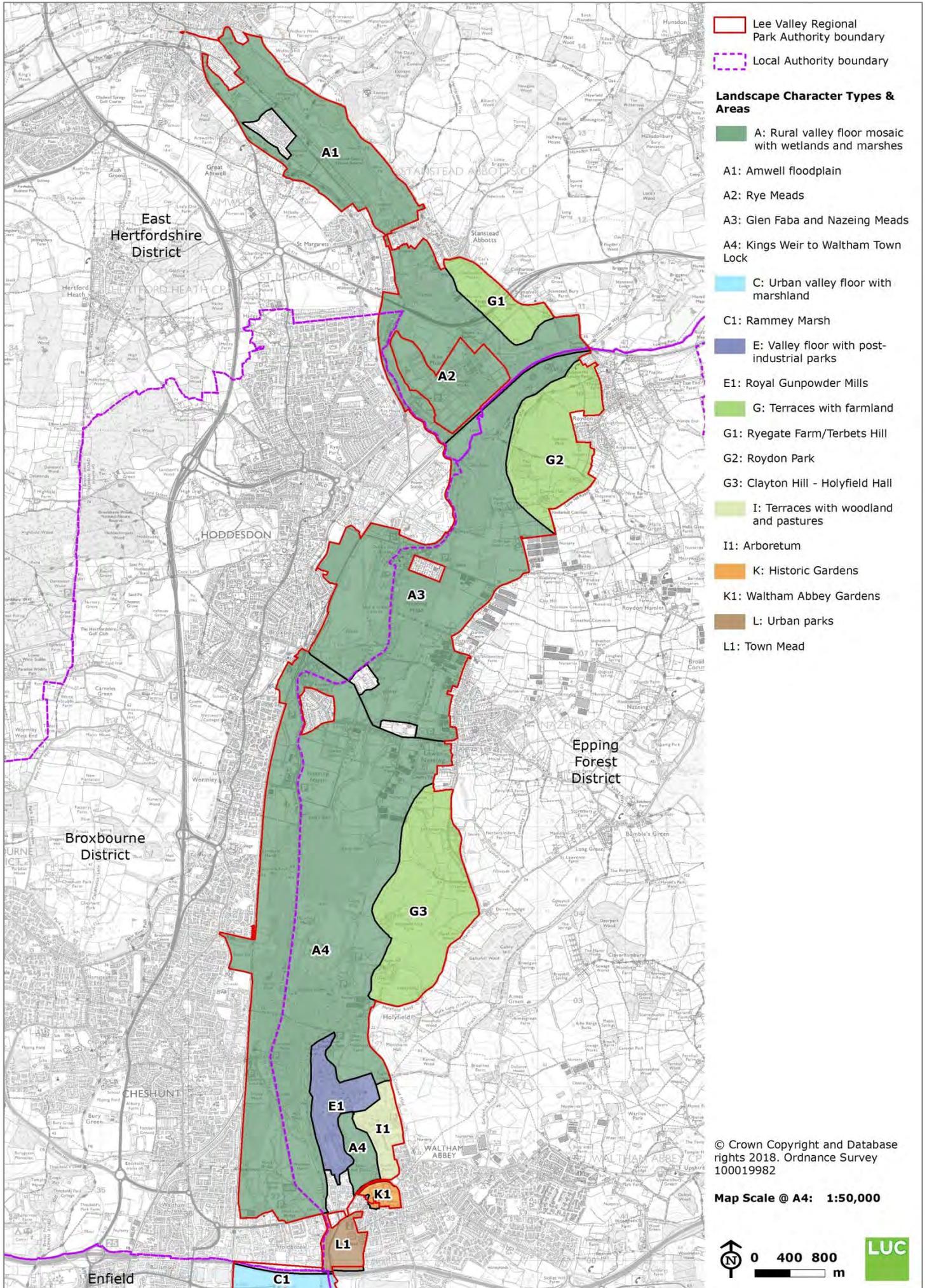
LANDSCAPE CHARACTER TYPE	CHARACTER AREA	
<b>F: Peri-Urban Valley Floor</b>	F1	Edmonton
River Terraces		
<b>G: Terraces with farmland</b>	G1	Ryegate Farm /Terbets Hill
	G2	Roydon Park
	G3	Clayton Hill - Holyfield Hall
<b>H: Terraces with industrial legacy parkland</b>	H1	Gunpowder Park
	H2	Olympic Park
<b>I: Terraces with woodland and pasture</b>	I1	Arboretum
Lower River backwaters		
<b>J: Lower river backwaters</b>	J1	London Greenway
	J2	Lower River Backwaters
Urban Parks and Gardens		
<b>K: Historic Gardens</b>	K1	Waltham Abbey Gardens
	K2	Myddelton House
<b>L: Urban parks</b>	L1	Town Mead
	L2	Prince of Wales Open Space
	L3	Markfield Park
	L4	<b>St James's Park</b>
	L5	Springfield Park
	L6	Millfields Park
	L7	Three Mills

### The Status, Meaning and Limitations of Boundary Lines

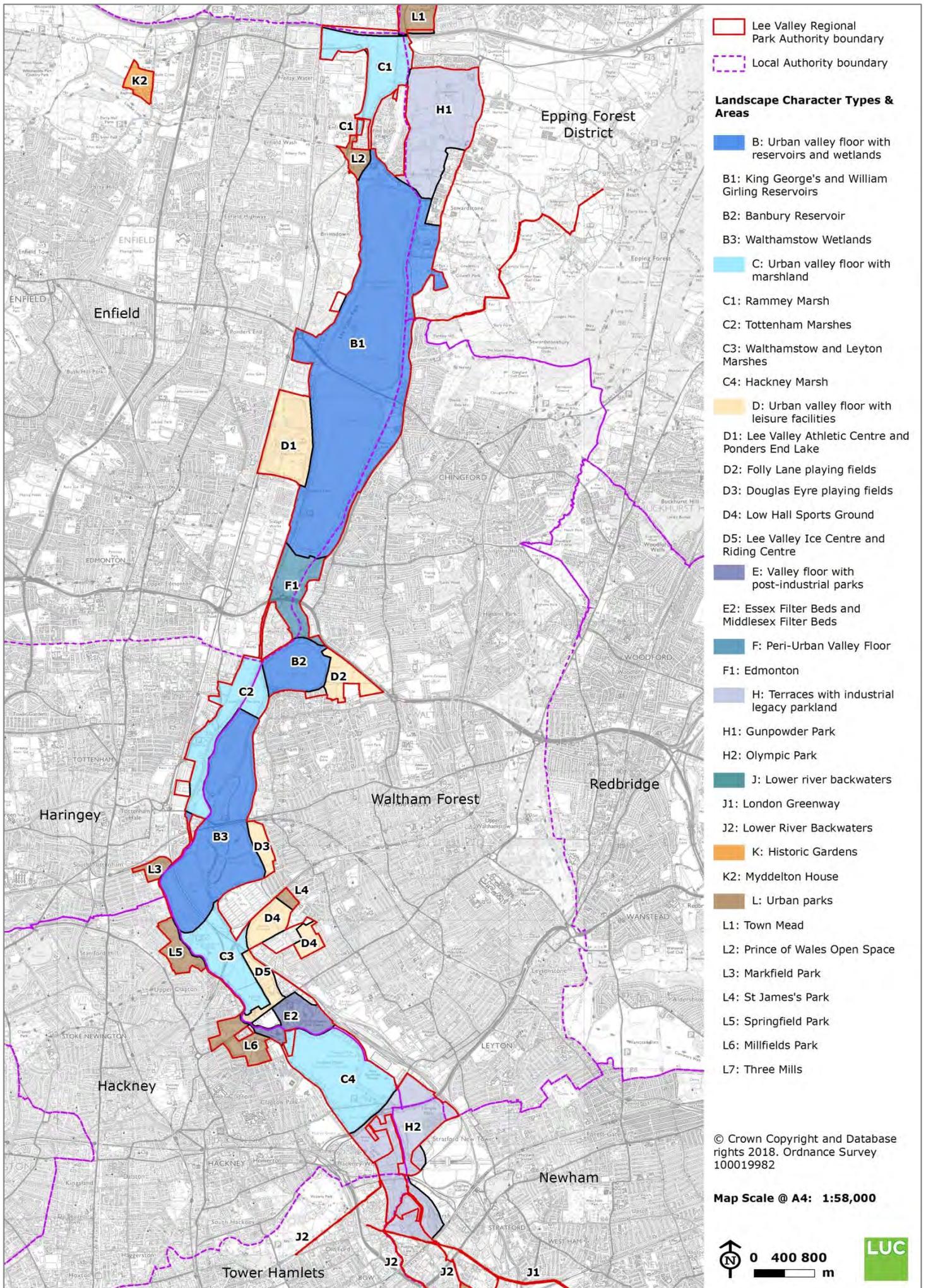
- 4.3 The precision of boundaries drawn around landscape character areas and types varies with the scale and level of detail of the assessment. This assessment has been mapped at a scale of 1:10,000 which means that it is suitable for use at this scale. The scale of this classification will need to be taken into account whenever the assessment is used to ensure that the level of detail is compatible with the intended application.
- 4.4 In reality landscape character does not change abruptly at the boundaries. Boundaries therefore often represent transitions rather than marked changes on the ground.
- 4.5 The LCA maps presented in **Part 2** show the boundary of the landscape character areas as a solid green line. Where areas classified as forming part of a landscape character area do not lie within

the LVRP boundary (for example parts of the Olympic Park LCA), this area is indicated as a thin grey line.

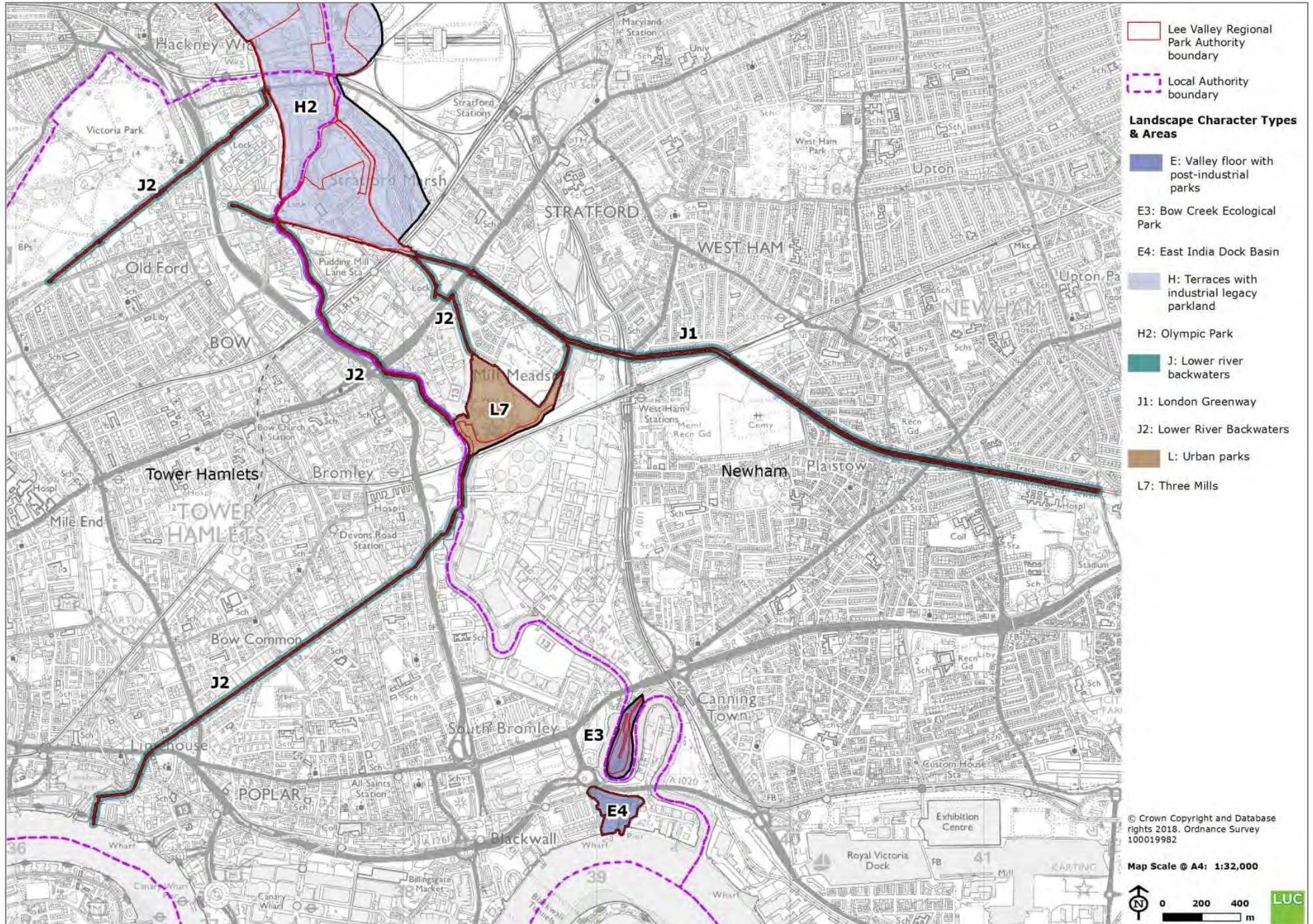
**Figure 4.1 Landscape Classification – Lee Valley North**



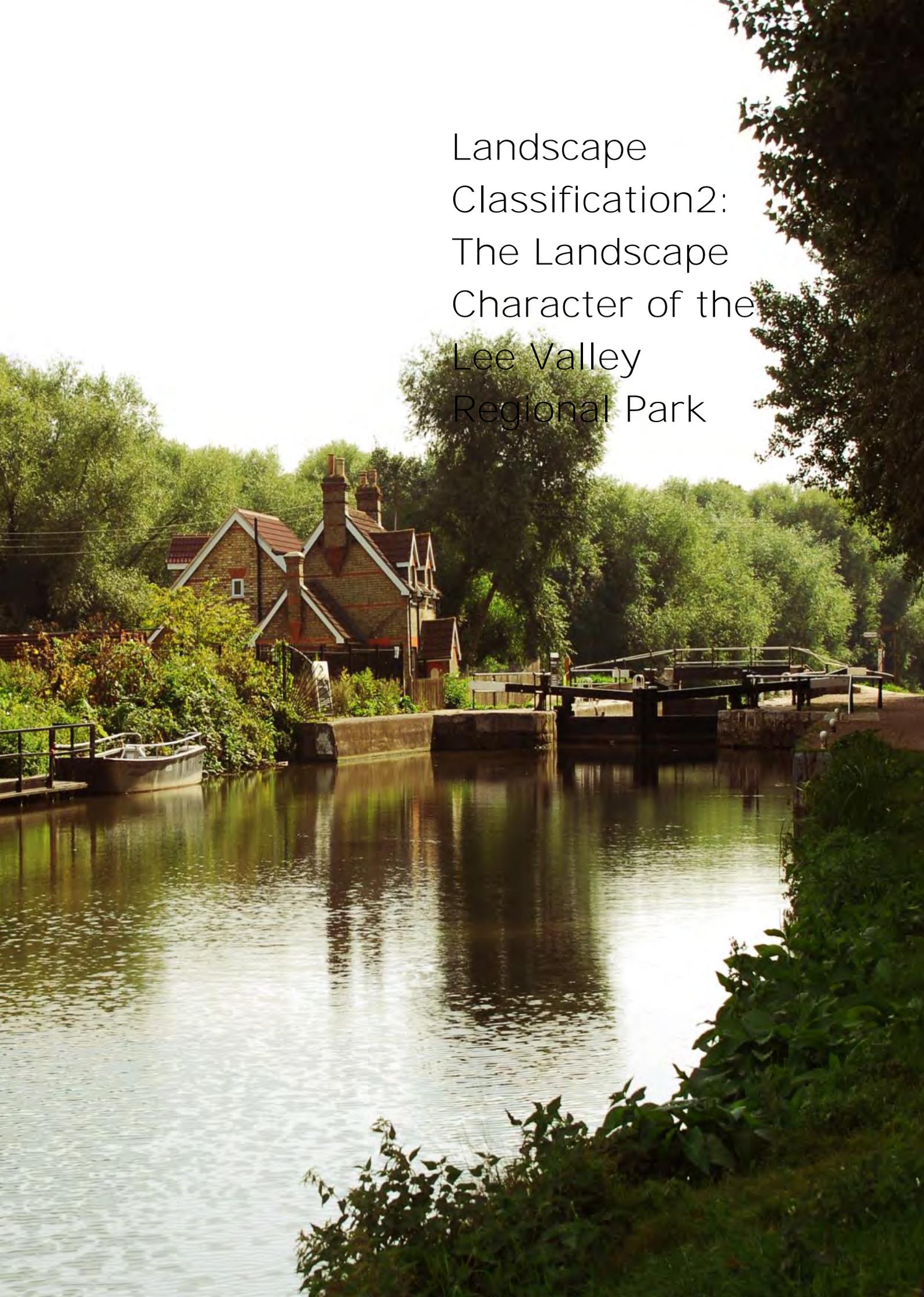
**Figure 4.2 Landscape Classification – Lee Valley South**



**Figure 4.3 Landscape Classification – Lee Valley Southern Backwaters**



Landscape  
Classification2:  
The Landscape  
Character of the  
Lee Valley  
Regional Park





# LCT A: Rural valley floor mosaic with open water and marshes

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## LCT A: Rural valley floor mosaic with open water and marshes



Amwell Quarry Nature Reserve.

### Overview

- 4.6 This Landscape Character Type is concentrated in the northern half of the Lee Valley Regional Park, within Hertfordshire and Essex. It is characterised by a flat, valley floor landform underlain by alluvial deposits.
- 4.7 This type has been strongly influenced by mineral extraction, with former grazed meadows and ditch systems in the floodplain worked in 1970-80s and then later restored as wetlands for nature conservation. It maintains a strong rural character.

### Physical Influences

- 4.8 The landscape is mostly an intricate pattern of waterbodies and managed wetlands, comprising areas of open water, water channels, grazed meadows, scrub and ribbons of woodland.
- 4.9 Key landscape features are the major water channels, the River Lee Navigation, Hugh Myddelton's 1613 New River and the 'natural' course of the River Lea and its numerous tributaries.
- 4.10 Settlement is generally limited within the floodplain itself although small areas of localised development, including sewage works, housing estates built in the late 20th Century, and development associated with leisure facilities are dispersed along the valley floor. The area is also influenced by a number of major roads and railway lines

that cross or follow alongside the valley floor and pylon lines are features in the southern areas.

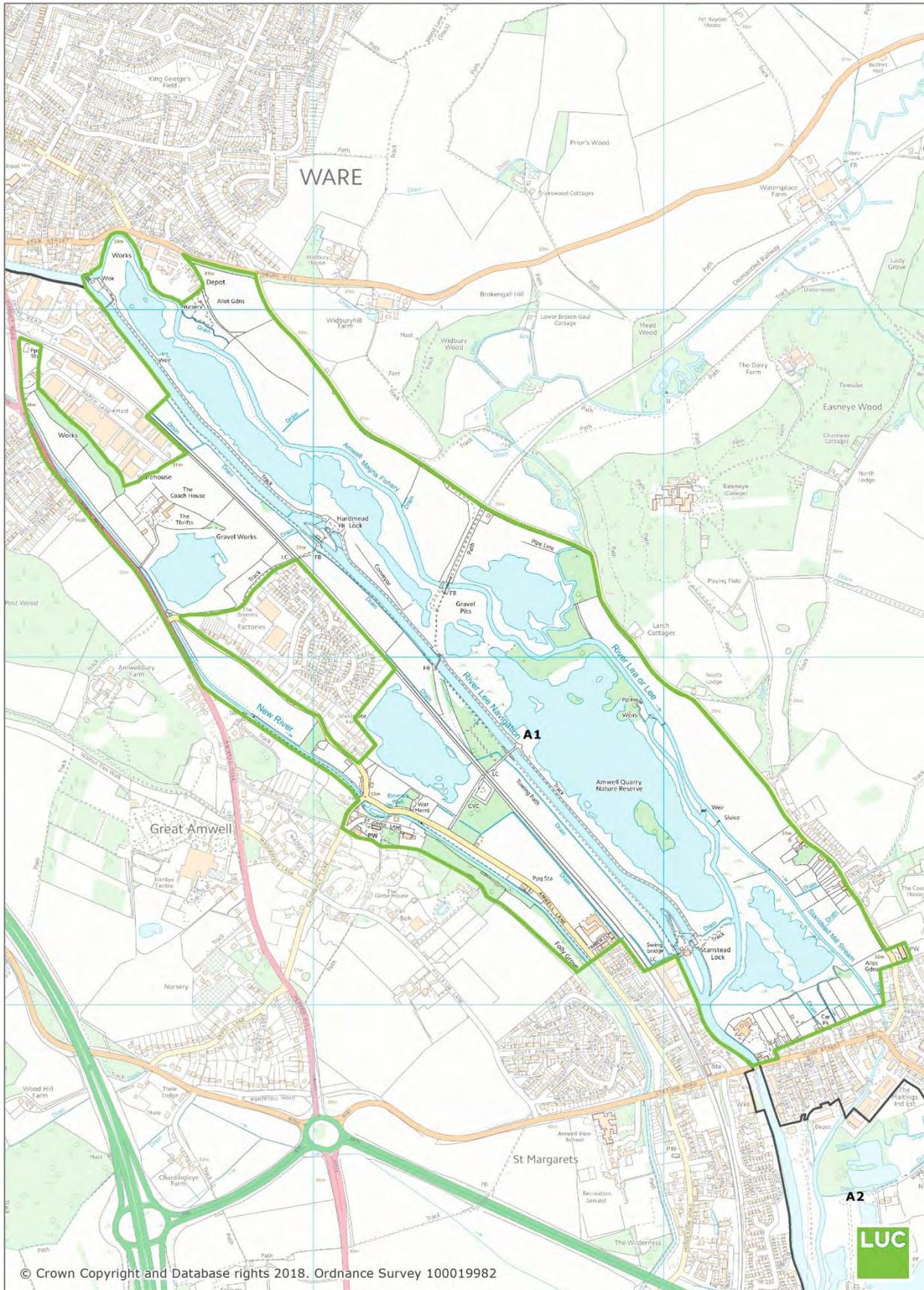
### Natural Character

- 4.11 The diverse landscape supports important semi-natural wetland and woodland habitats, many of which are designated as SSSIs and form part of the Lee Valley SPA, which provides a nationally important habitat for overwintering birds, as well as breeding birds, dragonflies and damselflies.

### Cultural Influences

- 4.12 The underlying surface geology of gravel deposits resulted in extensive historical gravel extraction which has shaped the current landscape through the creation of lakes and wetland habitats.
- 4.13 Public access and recreation now characterises much of the areas of previous workings. These are managed by the Park Authority, the Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust and the RSPB and contain trails and hides, including country parks, campsites, sailing clubs, and private fisheries. Long Distance Footpaths and the Lee Navigation also provide access to the landscape for people.
- 4.14 The landscape contains a diverse range of heritage assets dating back to the medieval period, including Rye House Gatehouse and **Emma's Well**.

# LCA A1: Amwell Floodplain



## LCA A1: Amwell Floodplain



View southeast along the New River flanked by grazed floodplain at the edge of Ware. Wooded ridge visible on the skyline.



View along the River Lee Navigation framed by willow and mature trees



Board walk and interpretation board within the Amwell Quarry Nature Reserve



Intricate wetland landscape within Amwell Quarry Nature Reserve with wooded valley sides

### Location and Boundaries

- 4.15 This is a distinct area of narrow valley floor, enclosed by clearly defined valley sides (Widbury Hill and Easneye Wood to the north and the ridge above Great Amwell to the south), with wooded ridges forming the skyline. It lies at the north of the LVRP, on the border between Hertfordshire and Essex, and is defined by the settlement edges of Ware and Stanstead Abbots to the northwest and southeast respectively, the course of the New River to the southwest and Hollycross Road to the northeast.



### Key characteristics

- Narrow, valley floor, enclosed by clearly defined valley sides (Widbury Hill and Easneye Wood to the north and the ridge above Great Amwell to the south), with distinctive wooded ridges forming the skyline.
- Strongly influenced by the presence of the Amwell Quarry Nature Reserve, managed by the Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust: a former mineral extraction site, the reserve is now designated as a SSSI and part of the Lee Valley SPA, which provides a nationally important habitat for overwintering birds, as well as breeding birds, dragonflies and damselflies.
- Intricate mosaic of meandering water channels, open waterbodies and wetlands created from former mineral workings, ribbons of willow and scrub, wet woodland, and grazed meadows in some places are succeeding to scrub.
- Strong linear feature formed by the canalised Navigation, fringed by willow, allowing framed views along the valley floor.
- Attractive rural setting and strong rural character with industrial and suburban influences limited to the peripheries and generally well screened by woodland.
- Distinctive setting provided by the adjacent historic villages of Great Amwell and St Margarets
- Small vernacular and human scale references predominate, including the church tower of Great Amwell and Hardmead and Stanstead Lock.
- Species rich wetland landscape, with hawthorn and a range of wild flowers providing colour and visual interest, particularly in spring and summer.
- Localised areas of visual containment due to wooded character, providing a sense of remoteness and seclusion.
- Contrast between the apparent semi-naturalness of the wetlands and the settlement edges, the man-made features of the Lee Navigation canal and the manicured surrounds of the New River on the south western edge.
- Relative tranquillity, despite proximity of railway.

## Evaluation

### Landscape Quality & Condition

- 4.16 This is an area with a coherent landscape character, with consistent features of water bodies fringed with woodland and scrub. The small housing estate located west of Sheepcote farm breaks with this pattern and appears out of place with the semi-natural character of the wider character area and its mostly rural setting.
- 4.17 The area gives the impression of being relatively well maintained and managed, with well-surfaced paths and signage and interpretation boards positioned at the main entrance points into Amwell Nature Reserve. There are however some areas where elements such as tall metal palisade fencing and the general condition of the landscape give the area a degraded appearance and together with limited or no signage on footpaths make the area feel unwelcoming. These are generally concentrated at the settlement edges of Stanstead Abbots, Ware and the housing estate adjacent to Sheepcote Farm.

### Valued Features and Characteristics

- The intricate and diverse wetland habitat mosaic including open water, grazed meadow, scrub and wet woodland which provides visual interest and texture, and an important environment for wildlife.
- Sense of remoteness and relative tranquillity due to the wooded character reducing the perceived influence of surrounding development and the absence of tall structures and major roads.
- Historic and rural character of the adjacent settlements of Great Amwell and St Margarets and **the 'time depth' provided by the historic** feature of the New River.
- The relative cohesion and continuity of landscape character that provides a strong sense of place.
- Recreational areas including the network of trails through the nature reserve and fishing lakes, provide for passive and active pursuits, including walking, fishing and viewing wildlife. In addition the Hertfordshire Way Long Distance Footpath and several public rights of way provides access to, and enjoyment of, the landscape.
- Rural character of the visual setting of the valley, including views across the valley from Hollycross Road and framed views over the water bodies.

### Landscape Strategy

- 4.18 This character area provides an important landscape resource in terms of its nature conservation value and the opportunities it provides for formal and informal recreation. It is an area with a largely cohesive landscape character and with strong semi-natural and rural qualities. The focus should be on conserving and enhancing these valued qualities in the long term and ensuring it continues to support a diverse range of flora and fauna as well as opportunities for people to enjoy the rural valley landscape.

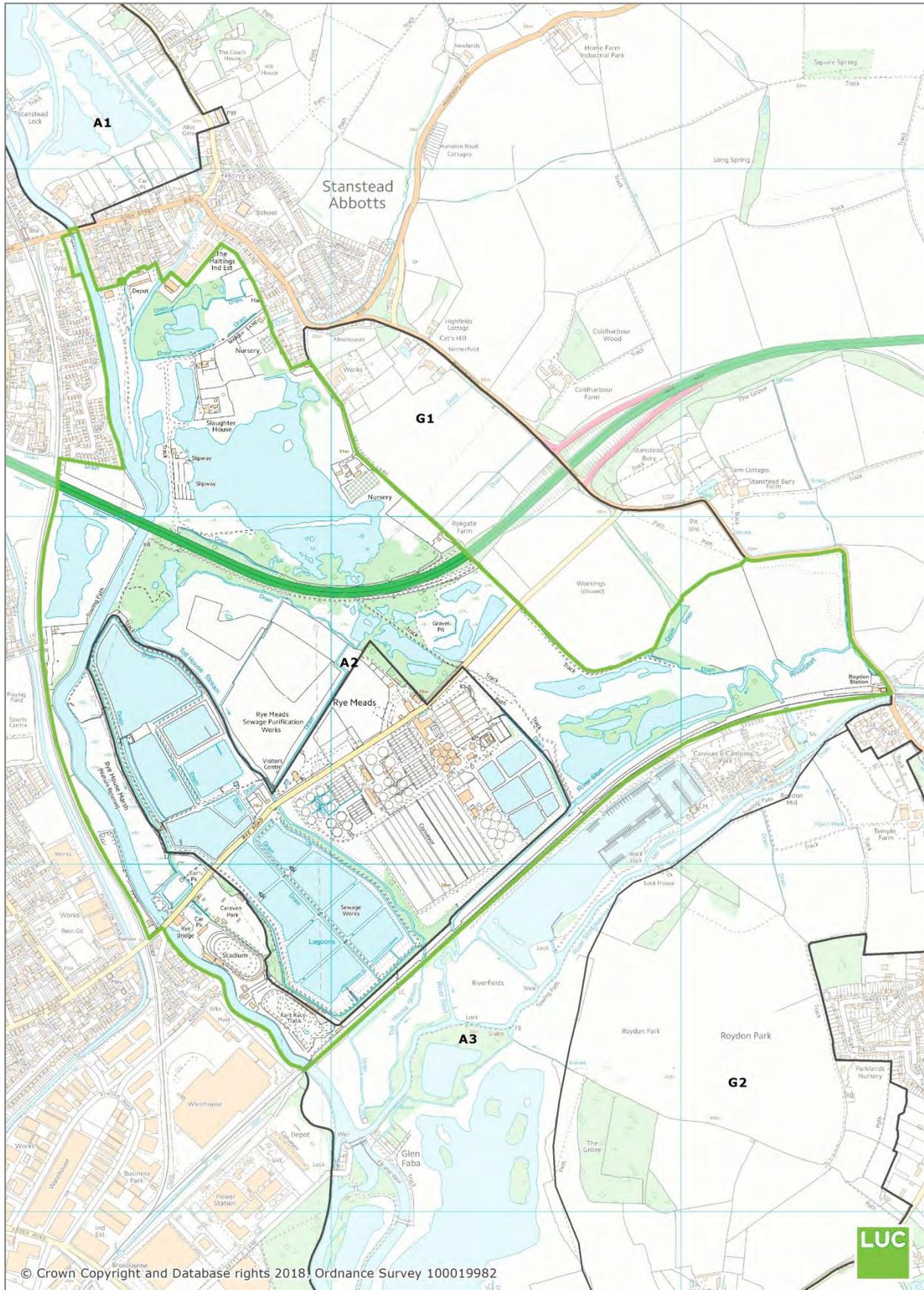
### Guidelines

- Continue positive conservation and management of the diverse and valuable wetland habitats, re-creating lost habitats, and balancing this with provision of recreation and enjoyment of the landscape
- Protect the coherent, undeveloped character of the valley and the sense of naturalness and tranquillity this provides
- Protect the distinctive rural setting of the low wooded ridges, the historic villages of Great Amwell and St Margarets and the undeveloped skylines, which could be vulnerable to insensitive development
- Retain the predominance of small scale and historic landmarks such as church towers
- Seek to improve provision of visitor facilities and access points in the long term, ensuring they do not intrude on the rural and tranquil character of the area but encourage increased access and enjoyment of the nature reserve and the landscape
- Seek to improve connections to the surrounding communities within Stanstead Abbots, Ware and new housing developments, and improve signage and footpaths linking into these settlements and ensure entrances are well managed
- Seek opportunities to improve harsh or visually intrusive settlement edges at Ware
- Any future proposed residential development should respect and respond to the existing small scale, contained pattern and well defined settlement edges at Ware and Great Amwell
- Large scale development and tall structures are unsuitable in this area due to the scale and the

coherent character which dominates

- Any linear infrastructure development (underground infrastructure, services or pipelines) should be aligned with existing linear features in the west of the area and should include mitigation measures to contain effects on sensitive landscape features and character

# LCA A2: Rye Meads





Rye Meads Nature Reserve managed by the RSPB.



View over Abbotts Lake towards the Hertford Yacht Club, one of several leisure facilities in the area.



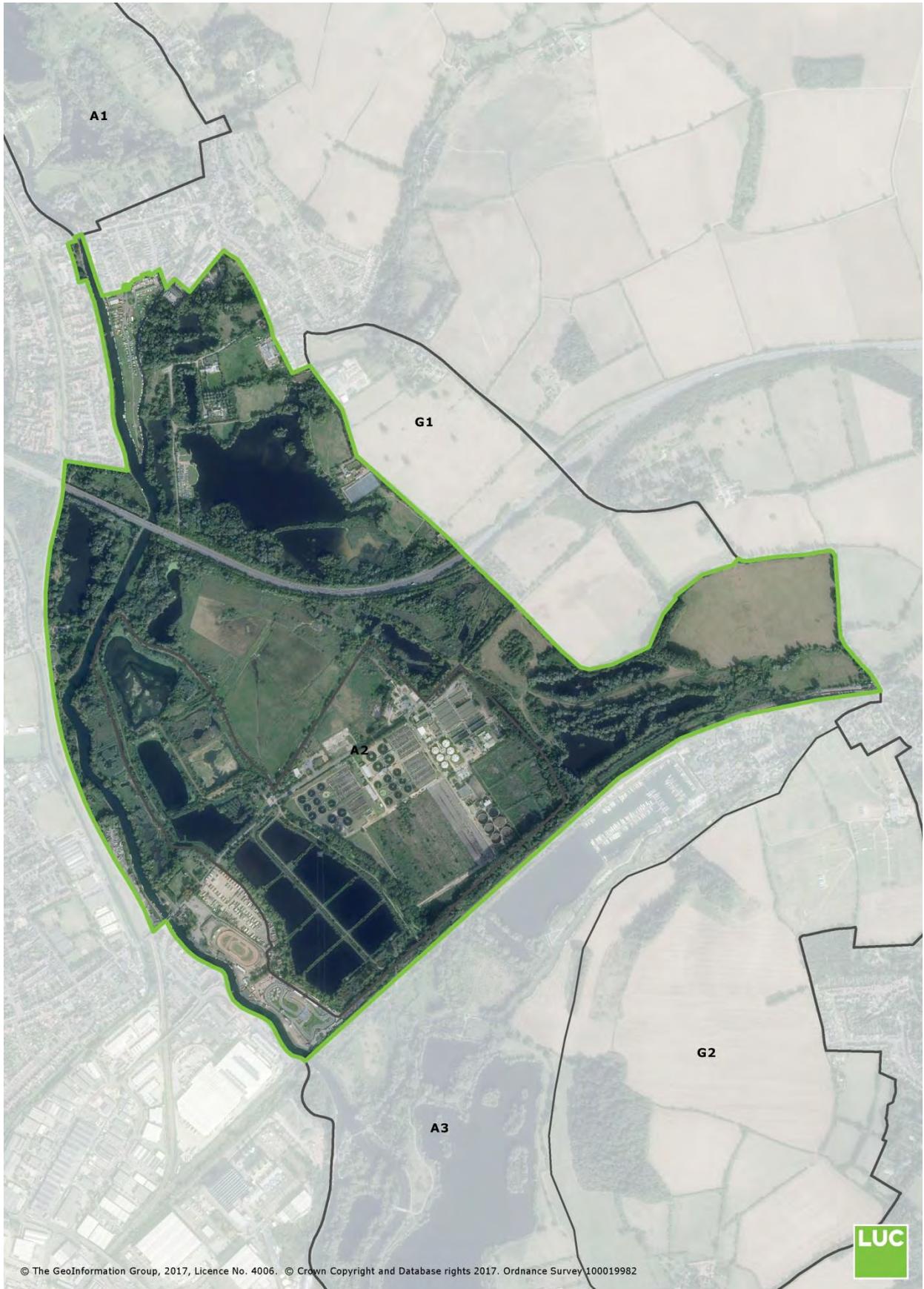
Rye House Gatehouse, an important 15<sup>th</sup> Century scheduled monument, site of the Rye House Plot of 1683.



Rye House Speedway and Karting has important 20<sup>th</sup> Century Heritage.

### Location and Boundaries

- 4.19 LCA A2 Rye Meads is located where the valley widens out to the south of Stanstead Abbots, north of the confluence of the Rivers Lea and Stort and northeast of Hoddesdon within the Epping Forest District. This area comprises areas of open water and wet meadow surrounding the operational Rye Meads Sewage works (not within the LVRP). The settlement edge of Stanstead Abbots and St Margarets forms the northern boundary, whilst the southern boundary is defined by the Cambridge to London railway line. To the west the character area includes the narrow area of land following the course of the New River and then the River Lee Navigation. The eastern boundary is defined more loosely by rising farmland that forms the valley side at Terbets Hill, roughly by the 32m contour line. The valley floor is cut laterally by the Stanstead Abbots bypass (A414).
- 4.20 To the east lies LCA G1: Ryegate Farm /Terbets Hill (part of Type G Terraces with Farmland) and to the west of the valley lies the urban area of Hoddesdon forming a more abrupt urban edge defined by the course of the New River.



### Key characteristics

- **Flat valley floor, broadening out to the south, with gently rising, rounded valley sides:** the rural Cat's Hill and Terbets Hill to the east and the urban settlement of Hoddesdon to the west.
- Small to medium scale, semi-enclosed and irregular landscape pattern comprising an intricate mosaic of water channels, lakes, open wet meadows, and reed beds with ribbons of woodland and scrub.
- Predominantly influenced by the presence of the Rye Meads Nature Reserve, managed by the RSPB and Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust: a former mineral extraction site.
- Rich assemblage of wetland habitats, including remnant ancient flood meadows supporting locally rare tall fen vegetation.
- Small scale, light industry is dispersed through the area, including the Rye Meads Sewage Works, small nurseries and glasshouses, which have a local influence on character but are generally well screened by trees.
- Rural setting provided by the open farmland on the valley sides to the east contrasting with the urban setting of Hoddesdon to the west.
- Overhead powerlines and Rye House Power Station interrupt the skyline and diminish the rural qualities in the southeast.
- Sense of time depth and diverse range of heritage assets, ranging from the Grade 1 listed and scheduled monument Rye House to the more recent and culturally important Rye House Speedway and Karting.
- Noise from the Stanstead Abbots Bypass (A414), which bisects the area, is a constant presence although visually it is relatively well screened by trees lining the road.

### Evaluation

#### Landscape Quality & Condition

- 4.21 An important area for biodiversity, with the RSPB and Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust nature reserves at Rye Meads and Rye House Marsh accommodating the largest reedbed in the county. This is reflected in the Rye Meads SSSI designation. The diversity of habitats also provide colours, textures and visual interest throughout the year.
- 4.22 Parts of the area have strong semi-natural qualities, where views of meadows and open water are set within regenerated willow and scrub that screen adjacent development. The framework of vegetation creates a small scale, intimate landscape that feels removed from the urban development present to the west.
- 4.23 It is however an area of mixed and sometimes fragmented character, particularly due to the severance in the south around the sewage works. The setting to Rye House Gatehouse is particularly poor, with its visual and functional setting fragmented by the presence of Rye Meads Sewage Works, The Travelling Showmans caravan depot, railway station and stadium, particularly their associated fencing, and signage. In addition, the power lines that cross the south of the area disrupt an otherwise undeveloped skyline.

### Valued Features and Characteristics

- The intricate and diverse wetland habitat mosaic including open water, grazed meadow, scrub and wet woodland which provides visual interest and texture, and an important environment for wildlife.
- Sense of remoteness and relative tranquillity due to the trees and scrub reducing the perceived influence of surrounding development.
- **The 'time depth' provided by the historic features of Rye House** Gatehouse and the ancient flood meadows.
- Recreational areas including the network of trails through the nature reserve and fishing lakes, provide for passive and active pursuits, including walking, fishing and viewing wildlife. In addition the River Lee Navigation and several public rights of way provides access to, and enjoyment of, the landscape.
- The linear connection along the historic New River and Lee Navigation to the west which provides connectivity through the LVRP and a boundary with Hoddesdon.
- Rural character of the visual setting of the valley to the east created by Terbets Hill and attractive views over lakes and meadows.

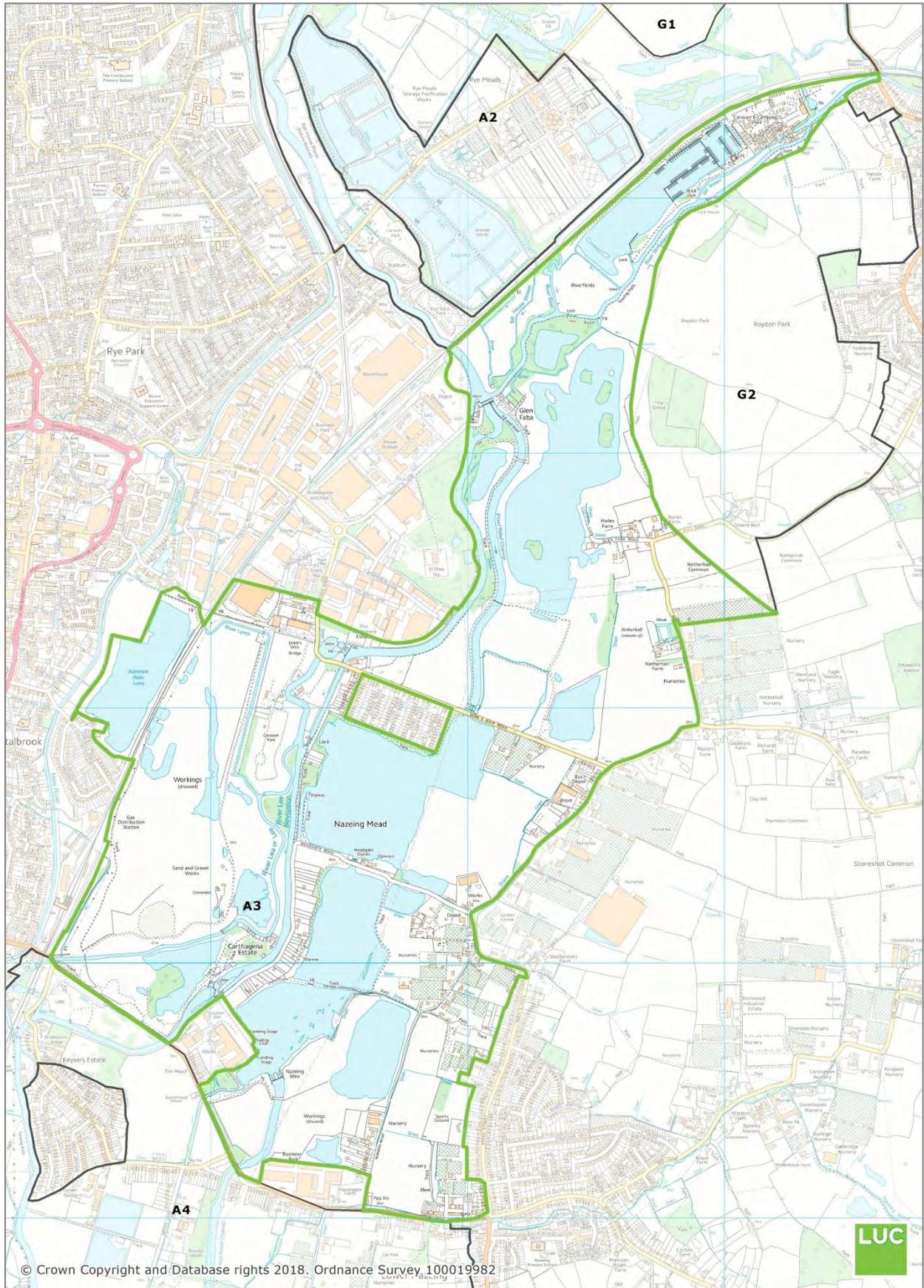
### Landscape Strategy

- 4.24 A2 Rye Meads has a cohesive landscape character and strong rural qualities, particularly within the north although the character is more fragmented with detracting features in the south. The strategy for this area is to conserve and enhance the valued qualities, particularly its value for biodiversity and recreation and its rural, tranquil character, whilst seeking opportunities to improve and re-integrate areas that are more fragmented, such as around the sewage works and in the southwest where poorly integrated development at the edge of Hoddesdon detracts from the setting to Rye House.

### Guidelines

- Continue positive conservation and management of the diverse and valuable wetland habitats, re-creating lost habitats, and balancing this with provision of recreation and enjoyment of the landscape
- Protect the coherent, rural and undeveloped character of the valley and the sense of naturalness and tranquillity this provides
- Seek to improve the provision of visitor facilities which do not intrude on the rural and tranquil character of the area but encourage access and enjoyment of the nature reserve and the landscape
- Seek improved connections between Rye Meads and the surrounding communities within Hoddesdon, including signage and footpaths linking into the settlement, and ensure entrances are well managed
- Seek opportunities to improve incongruous or visually intrusive development around the sewage works and at Hoddesdon, particularly where these affect the landscape setting of Rye House
- Any future small scale development such as settlement extensions should respect and respond to the existing small scale landscape pattern and well defined settlement edge to the west
- Any linear infrastructure development (in the form of underground services and pipelines or road and rail expansion) should be aligned with existing linear features of the Lee Navigation and railway line at the western edge of the area and should include mitigation measures to contain effects on sensitive landscape features and character
- Seek opportunities to improve the disjointed landscape setting to Rye House, particularly the visual integration of the adjacent sewage works, depot and stadium which currently detract from the setting

# LCA A3: Glen Faba and Nazeing Meads



## LCA A3: Glen Faba and Nazeing Meads



A well-used network of recreational routes, such as NCN Route 1. Pylon lines cross the valley converging at Rye House Power Station and are visually prominent in certain areas.



Historic infrastructure associated with the Navigation – Roydon Locks, near the confluence with the River Stort.



Local industrial heritage foci are provided by sites such as Dobb's Weir



View west over the lake at Glen Faba from Hailes Farm. Pylons and the chimneys of Rye House Power Station are visible above the trees, but the urban development is generally well screened by the trees.

### Location and Boundaries

- 4.25 LCA A3 is part of the broad valley floor containing a series of wetlands. It is located towards the north of the Regional Park, defined by the London and Cambridge Railway to the north, and the B194 between Broxbourne and Lower Nazeing to the south. The western boundary follows the course of the River Lee Navigation around the edge of Rye Park and the settlement edge of Hoddesdon. The eastern boundary is defined by the rising slopes of Roydon Park (approximately the 30m contour line) in the north, Low Hill Road which links Roydon, Netherhall and Lower Nazeing and the settlement edge of Lower Nazeing to the south.

## LCA A3: Glen Faba and Nazeing Meads



### Key characteristics

- Broad valley floor comprising a series of large water bodies, notably Glen Faba and Nazeing Meads formed from reclaimed former gravel pits with important succession habitat and Spitalbrook - an area of former gravel workings not yet restored and not accessible to the public
- Small to medium scale, irregular landscape pattern including an intricate mosaic of water channels, wetlands, meadows with ribbons of willow and scrub, plus areas of open water fringed with reedbeds and pockets of development
- Strong wooded character providing containment and relative tranquillity and a sense of separation from the urban areas of Spitalbrook and Broxbourne to the west
- Major water channels (the River Lee Navigation and the New River to the west and the River Stort Navigation which joins the River Lea north) forming linear features through the area and the main focus of activities as well as allowing attractive framed views along the valley floor
- Several distinctive landscape heritage assets including medieval sites such as Nether Hall and features associated with the River Lee **and River Stort Navigations, such as Dobb's Weir, Roydon Locks and lock keeper's cottages**
- Wide views across open water to the east, where the rolling farmland and wooded hill tops of Clayton Hill provide an attractive rural setting and form an important skyline
- Locally distinctive and prominent topographic features forming the eastern valley side, which contribute to **the area's setting and offer notable vantage points** - Clay Hill and the wooded slopes of Roydon Hill (LCA G2 Roydon Park)
- Areas of high tranquillity within more semi-enclosed, wooded areas and attractive waterside character of **the River Stort, Admiral's Walk Lake and within waterway corridors of the River Lea and the Lee Navigation**
- Well-used recreation areas valued by local communities and different interest groups, including provisions for a range of formal recreational uses including fishing as well as informal activities such as walking, cycling and viewing wildlife
- Pockets of residential development and small scale industrial works and glasshouse complexes dispersed through the valley floor which interrupt the predominantly semi-natural character of the area and the irregular landscape pattern
- Industrial and urban development outside the Park forms an industrial setting to the valley floor north of **Dobb's Weir and around Glen Faba, but is not** intrusive due to the strong framework of trees surrounding the River Lee Navigation

## Evaluation

### Landscape Quality & Condition

- 4.26 Most of this area maintains a strong and consistent landscape character, where the small scale and intricate pattern of lakes, meadows and riparian woodland provide a sense of tranquillity and naturalness that contrasts with the urban and industrial setting to the west. There are however pockets of more fragmented character where plant nurseries/extensive glass house development (particularly to the east at Nazeing) and piecemeal residential development have not responded sympathetically to this intricate landscape pattern. For example north of Nazeing Meads treatment of features such as property boundaries are particularly incongruous. Development within the valley floor is however generally very well contained within a strong framework of vegetation and

the influence from adjacent development to the west is limited to a small number of tall structures, such as the chimneys of Rye House Power station.

### Valued Features and Characteristics

- The intricate and diverse wetland habitat mosaic including open water, grazed meadow, scrub and wet woodland which provides visual interest and texture, and an important environment for flora and fauna
- The predominantly undeveloped character of the valley, due to the predominance of semi-natural habitats, open water and deciduous woodland, which provides a sense of naturalness and tranquillity and relative wildness in close proximity to the urbanised areas of Hoddesdon
- Sense of remoteness and relative tranquillity due to the trees and scrub reducing the perceived influence of surrounding development
- The multiple water channels of the Stort, Lee Navigation and flood relief channels that cross the valley floor
- Rural character of the visual setting of the valley to the east and framed views over the water bodies
- **The 'time depth' and sense of place provided by the heritage assets including medieval sites such as Nether Hall and features associated with the River Lee and River Stort Navigations, such as Dobb's Weir, Roydon Locks and lock keeper's cottages**
- Extensive provision for recreation, including the fishing lakes at Glen Faba and Nazeing Meads, a camping site, and boat hire providing for both passive and active pursuits (fishing, walking, cycling and viewing wildlife). In addition the River Lee Navigation and several public rights of way and cycle routes provides access to, and enjoyment of, the landscape

## Landscape Strategy

- 4.27 This character area provides an important landscape resource in terms of the rich range of flora and fauna it supports. It is also an area with a largely cohesive landscape character and semi-natural and rural qualities despite the proximity of Hoddesdon. It contains a number of important heritage assets which reveal the history of the Lee Valley and provide a distinctive sense of place. The strategy is to conserve and enhance these valued qualities, specifically its wildlife value and opportunities for people to access and enjoy the landscape and appreciate its historic and ecological dimensions.

### Guidelines

- Continue positive conservation and management of the diverse and valuable wetland habitats, re-creating lost habitats, and balancing this with provision of recreation and enjoyment of the landscape
- Protect the coherent, and dominant semi-natural character of the valley and the sense of naturalness and tranquillity this provides
- Conserve and enhance the framework of mature trees that help create the rural landscape setting and sense of remoteness and relative tranquillity.
- Protect the rural setting of the low rolling farmland on the valley sides to the east, particularly the undeveloped skylines of Clay Hill and Roydon Park, which are vulnerable to development
- Protect the wide, open views across the lakes towards the mostly undeveloped skyline to the east which are characteristic
- Develop a public access strategy for sites that are not currently accessible, such as Spitalbrook
- Protect the landscape setting of important heritage assets, particularly the medieval site of Nether Hall, which is highly sensitive to change
- Seek to improve connections to the surrounding communities within Hoddesdon, through extending the

## LCA A3: Glen Faba and Nazeing Meads

provision of signage and footpaths linking into these settlements and ensuring entrances are well managed

- Seek opportunities to improve harsh development edges or visually intrusive development, such as those relating to the glasshouses in the east of the area for example by extending the framework of mature trees
- Ensure any new development fits within and responds to the established landscape framework of trees and vegetation, does not erode or fragment it or result in loss of mature vegetation
- Any linear infrastructure development (either underground infrastructure, pipes and services or rail and road infrastructure) should be aligned with the existing linear features of the railway line and Lee Navigation in the west of the area and should include mitigation measures to contain effects on sensitive landscape features and character



## LCA A4: Kings Weir to Waltham Town Lock



Characteristic view east across open water, fringed with trees towards the low hills above Holyfield Hall Farm which form a rural setting to this part of the valley. Pylons are a consistent feature.



The Lee Navigation is a constant feature along the western edge of the Park and provides a focus of activity as well as distinctive framed views along the valley floor.



Small local parks and picnic areas occur around the peripheries of the valley floor. The wooded character provides a strong degree of containment.



Remnants of the mill at Broxbourne, dating back over 900 years, now renovated and situated by the Old Mill and Meadows.

### Location and Boundaries

- 4.28 Located within the upper Lee Valley, to the north of the M25, London Orbital, this area of rural valley floor is defined to the north by the B194 Nazeing New Road, to the south by the A121 between Waltham Abbey and Waltham Cross. The western boundary is strongly defined by the Broxbourne and Hertford Railway to Cheshunt and Broxbourne. The eastern boundary follows the B194 as it skirts around the foot of the low hills of Holyfield, Galley Hill and Clayton Hill which create a rural landscape setting to the valley.

# LCA A4: Kings Weir to Waltham Town Lock



### Key characteristics

- Dominated by a series of large lakes (the result of historic mineral workings), usually containing several small vegetated islands and rich in aquatic and marginal flora
- Small to medium scale, irregular wetland landscape comprising an intricate mosaic of open water, water channels fringed with dense ribbons of riparian woodland, reedbeds, swamp, hay and fen meadows, and marshland, with willows particularly characteristic
- Remnant meadows and meadows on restored landfill sites interspersed with woodland have a secluded, semi-enclosed character and provide a strong sense of naturalness and sense of time depth (history)
- Rich assemblage of wetland habitats of high ecological value recognised in a number of national and international-level nature conservation designations (a proportion of the area is included within Lee Valley SPA and Ramsar sites)
- Complex engineered hydrological system comprising weirs that draw excess water from the Lee Navigation (keeping the canal navigable) and feed the former gravel pits and the Old River Lea, in addition to a system of ditches and sluices.
- Open views across open water to the east, where the rolling farmland and wooded hill tops of Clayton Hill provide an attractive rural setting and form an important skyline
- Strong wooded character providing a strong degree of containment and a sense of separation from the urban areas of Cheshunt and Broxbourne to the west
- Discernible historic dimensions, with historic features including water mills (e.g. Broxbourne), locks and historic wet meadows (e.g. Silvermeade)
- Continuous presence of pylon lines, converging on the substation at the centre of the area creating a strong vertical presence and reflected in the open water
- Limited influence from development within and outside the area due to the strong framework of trees, although glass houses, temporary buildings at Warf Road and farm buildings in the north are visible from the valley floor
- Extensive formal and informal recreation facilities including sailing, car parking picnic sites, bird hides, fishing and access opportunities, including the River Lee Navigation and several public rights of way and cycle routes which provide access to, and enjoyment of, the landscape
- A more fragmented character is evident to the south, where the Lee Valley White Water Centre and residential development at the Royal Gunpowder Mills site are less well contained and integrated within the valley floor landscape
- Some intrusion created by transport corridors to the south, particularly the M25, and the west by the railway although absence of roads within the area is characteristic

### Evaluation

#### Landscape Quality & Condition

- 4.29 This is an area with a largely consistent landscape character of high quality, with a complex landscape pattern of grazed meadow, marshes, riparian woodland, and water bodies persisting across much of the valley floor.
- 4.30 The rich variety of wetland habitats are reflected in the national and international designations (parts of the area fall within the Lee Valley SPA and Ramsar sites) with the area including important breeding and wintering sites for water birds such as Shoveler, Tufted Duck, Great Crested Grebe and Bittern.

- 4.31 It generally has a secluded, rural character and the influence from development within and immediately surrounding the area is generally limited to localised areas, although pylons and the electricity transformer station form intrusive elements in this small scale and intricate landscape, visible in both expansive and more enclosed views. Existing settlements are mainly set within a strong landscape framework, e.g. Broxbourne and Cheshunt, although recent housing at the Gunpowder Mills and the piecemeal development at Wharf Road begins to fragment the relative intactness and continuity of landscape character to the south.

### Valued Features and Characteristics

- The intricate and diverse wetland habitat mosaic including open water, grazed meadow, scrub and wet woodland which provides visual interest and texture, and an important environment for wildlife reflected in international, national and local designation
- The predominantly undeveloped character of the valley, due to the predominance of semi-natural habitats, open water and deciduous woodland, which provides a sense of naturalness and tranquillity and relative wildness in close proximity to the urbanised areas of Broxbourne and Cheshunt
- Sense of remoteness, relative tranquillity and seclusion due to the trees and scrub reducing the perceived influence of surrounding development, general absence of built features within the LVRP boundary and absence of main road along boundaries and crossing the valley
- Rural character of the visual setting of the valley to the east and framed views over the water bodies
- Mature landscape framework and wooded edge to the east which filters and screens the influence of Cheshunt
- **The 'time depth'** provided by the remnant mill at Broxbourne and historic feature of the Navigation
- Extensive provision for recreational activities, including the Fishers Green sailing club at Holyfield Lake, several private fishing lakes, picnic areas and, providing for both passive and active pursuits (fishing, canoeing, walking, cycling and viewing wildlife)

## Landscape Strategy

- 4.32 The overall strategy for LCA A4 is to conserve and enhance the secluded rural character, and high ecological value, as well as provision for informal access and recreation.
- 4.33 The River Lee Country Park Management Plan 2017-2022, prepared jointly by LVRPA and the Canal and River Trust, provides maintenance and development management plans for the Country Park which falls within this LCA. This includes detailed plans for habitat management and biodiversity.

### Guidelines

- Continue positive conservation and management of the diverse and valuable wetland habitats, re-creating lost habitats, and balancing this with provision of recreation and enjoyment of the landscape
- Protect the coherent, and mostly undeveloped character of the valley and the sense of naturalness and tranquillity this provides, including the wooded framework which integrates the settlement edge at Cheshunt
- Conserve the rural setting and undeveloped skylines associated with the rolling farmland and wooded hill tops of Clayton Hill and Holyfield to the east
- Seek improved connections to the surrounding communities within Broxbourne and Cheshunt, through extending the provision of signage and footpaths linking into these settlements and ensuring entrances are well managed

## LCA A4: Kings Weir to Waltham Town Lock

- Seek opportunities to improve harsh or visually intrusive settlement edges of the residential development at the Royal Gunpowder Mills site
- Any future small scale glass house development and settlement extensions should respect and respond to the existing small scale, contained pattern and well defined settlement edges at Cheshunt and Broxbourne, making use of the existing landscape framework
- Large scale developments are unsuitable in this area due to the scale and coherent character which dominates
- Any linear infrastructure development, such as railway extensions and routing of utilities should be aligned with existing linear features in the west of the area (namely the railway line and Lee Navigation) and should include mitigation measures to contain effects on sensitive landscape features and character as well as connectivity

# LCT B: Urban valley floor with reservoirs and wetlands

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## LCT B: Urban valley floor with reservoirs and wetlands



Walthamstow Wetlands

### Overview

- 4.34 This Landscape Character Type is located towards the centre of the LVRP, within the London Boroughs of Enfield, Hackney, Haringey and Waltham Forest. It comprises a series of medium to large scale operational drinking water reservoirs and associated water utilities infrastructure including engineered embankments.
- 4.35 The complex of reservoirs was built over a period of seventy years from the mid-C19th to provide drinking water to **London's increasing population**. The reservoirs still provide approximately **15% of London's water supply**.

### Physical Influences

- 4.36 The landscape is characterised by a wide valley floor occupied by a series of reservoirs of varying forms and scale, most with steep, grassed embankments. A number of canalised waterways flowing adjacent to the reservoirs are also characteristic, including the Lee Flood Relief Channel, the River Lee Diversion and Dagenham Brook.
- 4.37 Major transport corridors, including roads and railway lines, cross the areas and the northern areas are influenced by large scale industrial developments at their fringes.

### Natural Character

- 4.38 A large proportion of the landscape is covered by the Chingford Reservoirs SSSI which recognises the undisturbed open water habitat as major wintering grounds for wildfowl and wetland birds in London. The Lockwood, Maynard and Warwick Reservoirs are also included in the Lee Valley Ramsar and SPA, designated for its importance to wintering ducks Gadwall and Shoveler.
- 4.39 It also forms a part of the chain of wetlands and reservoirs along the River Lea identified as a Site of Metropolitan Interest for Nature Conservation, displaying a rich aquatic and marginal flora particularly in the reservoirs and streams.

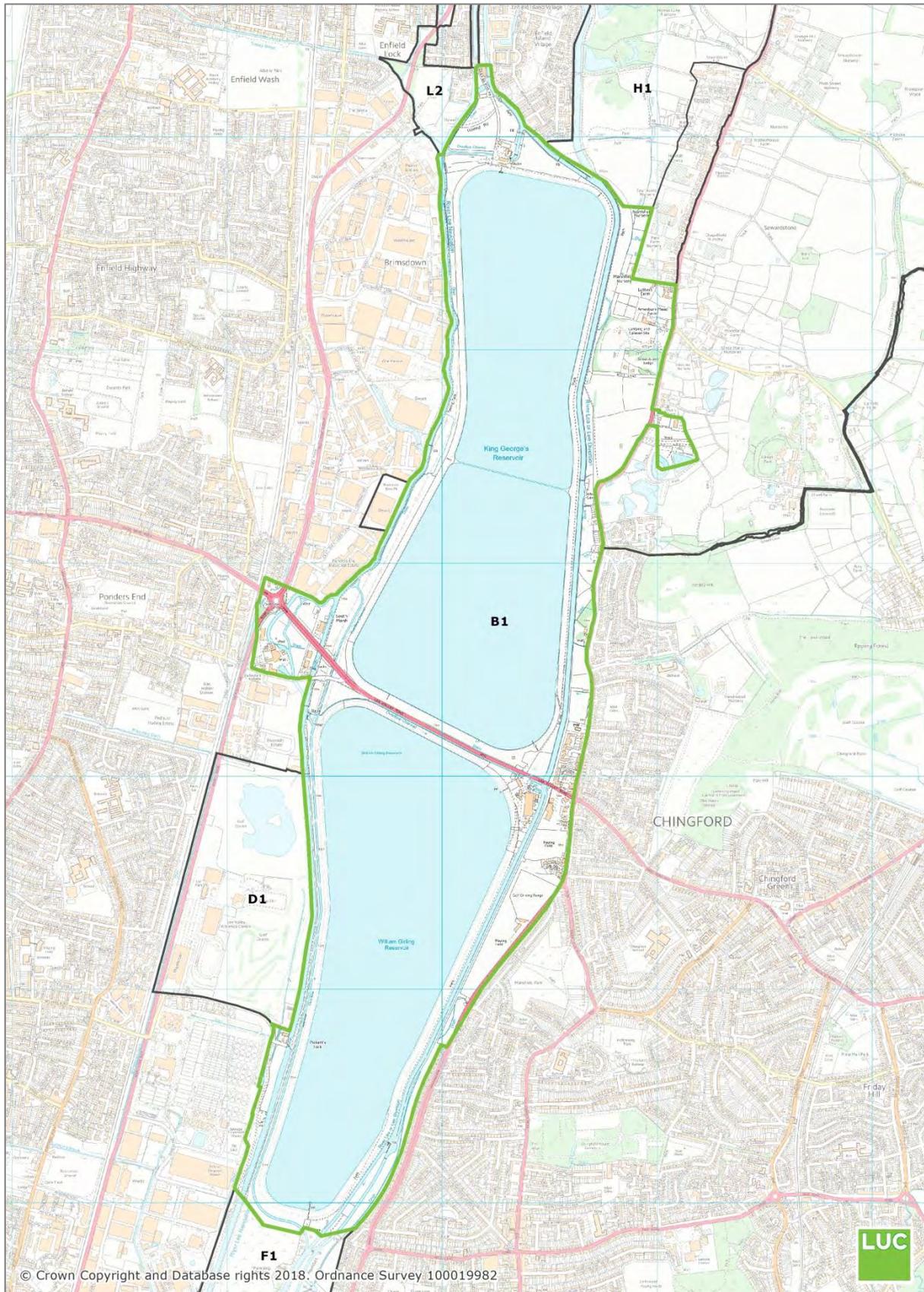
### Cultural Influences

- 4.40 The varying forms and scale of the reservoirs (the earlier reservoirs are smaller and more irregular, contrasting with the vast and more elevated water bodies constructed in the early C20th) reflect the growing demand for water supply that drove their creation.
- 4.41 The steep embankments are a key feature in the landscape and create a physical and visual barrier to the reservoirs. Although operational, parts of the reservoirs are accessible to the public and are popular for informal recreation, particularly fishing and bird watching due

## **LCT B: Urban valley floor with reservoirs and wetlands**

to the populations of breeding and wintering birds supported by the water bodies. The complex known as Walthamstow Reservoirs opened in Autumn 2017 as Walthamstow Wetlands nature reserve.

# LCA B1: King George's and William Girling Reservoirs



## LCA B1: King George's and William Girling Reservoirs



Pylons are a prominent feature in the linear landscape.



Sheep trails on steep reservoir embankment.



Small pockets of paddocks provide a semi-rural edge to the reservoirs in places.



Long views across large expanses of water towards the London city skyline from the valley sides.

### Location and Boundaries

- 4.42 **The King George's and William Girling Reservoirs are situated at the centre of the LVRP and form a large expanse of water between Ponders End and Chingford. The area is defined by the A1037 to the east and the settlement edge to west, which is characterised by large scale industrial development at Brimsdown. The steep embankment of the reservoirs is a bold feature in the landscape and provides strong definition to the character area.**

# LCA B1: King George's and William Girling Reservoirs



### Key characteristics

- Large, elevated reservoirs retained by steep, grassed embankments forming prominent vertical features in the valley landscape
- Small areas of reclaimed former marshlands on the fringes now used for formal and informal recreation
- The waterways of the River Lee Navigation and River Lea, often lined with mature trees (which frame long views and provide a sense of enclosure) form important linear features through the area
- The wooded ridgeline of Epping Forest to the east of the LVRP forms an important skyline which contrasts with the expanses of intensely urbanised areas visible to the south and west.
- A fragmented and interrupted character created by reservoir embankments and main road corridors which cross the valley with public access largely restricted to the narrow navigation corridor along the western edge and small areas of playing fields to the east
- Extensive views from the elevated valley sides including Mansfield Hill to the east over areas of open water and a wooded valley floor backed by dense urban and industrial development.
- A landscape of variable scale from the very large scale, reflective expanses of the reservoirs, massively engineered embankments and small, intimate areas of neglected **'leftover' landscapes created by the severances introduced by the reservoirs and transport corridors.**
- A more urban/industrial character is created by industrial and utilities infrastructure and associated visual intrusions

### Evaluation

#### Landscape Quality & Condition

- 4.43 The reservoir embankments appear well-managed and uncluttered while their engineered profile forms a strong unifying feature throughout the area. Smaller, isolated areas at the edges of the reservoirs have a less distinct character and include pockets of poorly managed pasture and buildings (sometimes dilapidated) that are associated with adjacent properties. These detract from other areas of more intact paddocks. The A110 also bisects the area which creates a strong severance between north and south.

## LCA B1: King George's and William Girling Reservoirs

### Valued Features and Characteristics

- **Views across the open water from 'borrowed' landscape features such as the topography at Mansfield Hill, are especially important.**
- Areas of remaining small scale landscape which have not been disturbed by large scale infrastructure are important as little remains of the original landscape pattern.
- The gentle landform of the valley sides to the east, the largely undeveloped skylines formed by the wooded ridges and small hills enclosing the valley to the east.
- The substantial areas of artificial embanked reservoir landforms, forming undeveloped skylines
- The few semi-natural areas on the valley floor and the existing framework of trees and remaining riverine features.
- The generally small to medium scale landscape comprises a complex mosaic of both channelled and naturalised rivers and navigations, wetlands, meadows and woodland.
- **Views to and from 'borrowed' landscape features such as the rolling, rural hills to the east and wooded ridges associated with Epping Forest**

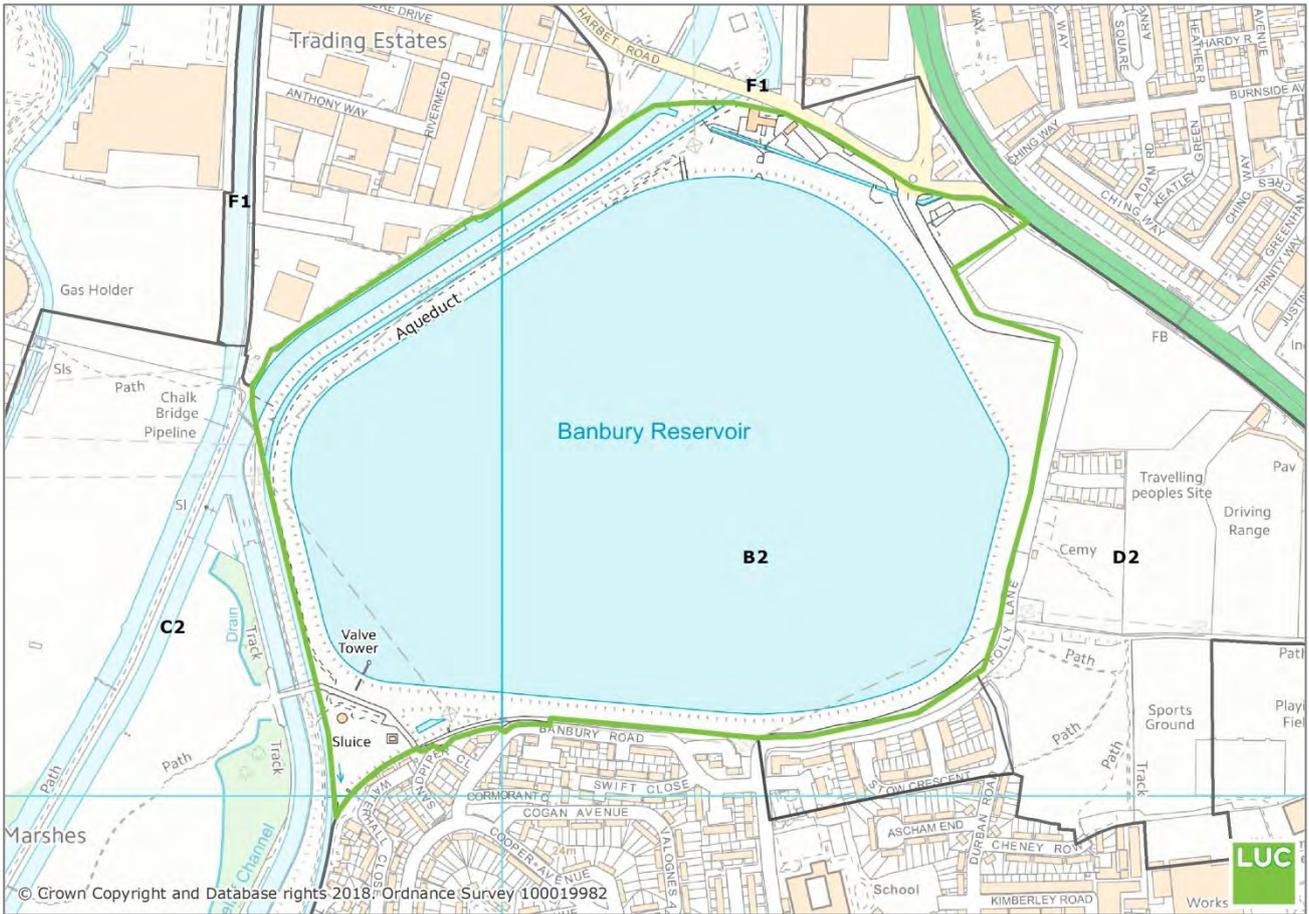
### Landscape Strategy

- 4.44 The reservoirs are important as part of the LVRP, although operational requirements necessarily limit opportunities for access. Connectivity is provided by the linear corridors of the River Lea and Lee Navigation which form the east and west boundaries of this character area respectively, creating a conduit for wildlife and people; which should be conserved and enhanced. The edges of fragmented reclaimed marshland landscape offer opportunities for restoration and enhancement to improve their quality and function as open space and access points into the Lee Valley.

### Guidelines

- Maintain and enhance physical permeability and retain panoramic views from valley sides
- Maintain the sense of openness along existing linear routes and seek to avoid creating further visual and physical severances
- Seek to restore aspects of valley floor landscape character where space permits, and consider using tree and structural landscape planting to help soften views of reservoir berms and flanks which form the backdrop to many views in this area.
- Encourage greater opportunities for recreation including provision of public footpaths with potential connections between Sewardstone Paddocks and Lee Valley Campsite

# LCA B2: Banbury Reservoir



## LCA B2: Banbury Reservoir



Southern edge of the reservoir from the edge of the residential area within Highams Hill with pylons, gas holder and the chimney of the London EcoPark incinerator visible above the reservoir embankment.



Footpath linking Tottenham Marshes with Higham Hill to the south of the reservoir, enclosed by palisade fencing. The Victorian valve tower visible above the embankment in the centre provides a link to the history of the area.



Victorian buildings associated with the original workings of the reservoir (located in the northwest of the area) with the Lee Flood Relief Channel in the foreground and development within Walthamstow visible above the embankment.



View from Folly Lane on the eastern side along the long grass embankment berm.

### Location and Boundaries

- 4.45 Banbury Reservoir lies within the centre of the LVRP immediately south of the North Circular (A406). It is defined primarily by the extent of the reservoir embankments but includes a section of the Lee Flood Relief Channel that follows the western edge of the reservoir embankment. It forms part of a broad valley floor and together with Tottenham Marshes (LCA C2) and playing fields to the east of Folly Lane (LCA D2) separates the heavily urbanised areas of Higham Hill (at the north-western edge of Walthamstow) to the south, Chingford to the north and Edmonton to the west.



### Key characteristics

- Part of a broad urbanised valley landscape defined by a large, elevated reservoir retained by steep, engineered embankments forming prominent landforms in the surrounding flat landscape
- A landscape of contrasting scale and openness, with the large scale expanses of the reservoirs and engineered embankments surrounded by smaller, more enclosed fringes containing narrow paths to the south and east lined with shrubs and trees
- Canalised waterways of the River Lee Navigation and Flood Relief channels form important linear features alongside the reservoir, providing a valuable recreation and wildlife corridor
- Elevated grassed embankments are prominent and restrict any views over the open water from surrounding areas
- Simple skylines formed by the embankment berms which contrasts with the complex of industrial units to the north and west and housing at the edge of Higham Hill (within Walthamstow) to the south
- Strong urban/industrial character created by industrial and utilities infrastructure and associated visual intrusions, with limited landscape features
- Highly fragmented character, with reservoir embankments abutting road corridors, pylons, water channels and developed areas with limited integration
- A small number of distinctive Victorian buildings, including a valve tower mounted on the embankment, **provide 'time depth' and a link to the history of the reservoir**
- An area severed physically and visually by infrastructure and industrial development, with public access restricted to the narrow navigation corridor along the western edge and paths following the eastern and southern sides of the reservoir

## Evaluation

### Landscape Quality & Condition

- 4.46 Although a relatively simple and uniform area in terms of character, comprising a large area of open water contained within embankments, this is a visually and physically disjointed and fragmented part of the LVRP caused by road infrastructure associated with the A406, North Circular Road. Very little remains in the landscape that resembles the broad open floodplains which once would have occupied this part of the valley, the large embankments of the reservoirs having disrupted the valley profile and large areas of development encroached well into the valley floor. The Victorian buildings and structures, dating from the early C20th when the reservoir was built, are valuable as a link to the history of the area, but are generally in a poor state of repair.
- 4.47 As a working part of the chain of reservoirs supplying drinking water to London, the reservoir itself is not accessible to the public and access around the reservoir is limited to a footpath following the southern edge of the embankment and Folly Lane. The limited path network is nevertheless important as a means of access into the northeast of Tottenham Marshes. Extensive palisade fencing, security lighting and signage that characterise the accessible areas, whilst important to the safe operation of the reservoir, does not make for a welcoming or attractive entrance point to the Park from the adjacent residential area.
- 4.48 Within a heavily urbanised context the local river system provides an important wildlife corridor, although the reservoir itself is of more limited ecological value and is the only one of the thirteen within the Lee Valley that is not designated as a SSSI.

### Valued Features and Characteristics

- Together with Tottenham Marshes and the open playing fields to the east of Folly Lane, Banbury Reservoir provides an open area that separates the urban Higham Hill (at the north-western edge of Walthamstow) to the south, Chingford to the north and Edmonton to the west
- Water channels provide a valuable wildlife corridor and access links north to south along the valley, in particular the narrow fringes of vegetation (mostly ruderals) following the Lee Flood Relief Channel offer some seasonal colour and interest
- **A small number of distinctive Victorian buildings that provide 'time depth' and a link to the history of the reservoir**
- Path networks to the south and east of the reservoir are important as access points into Tottenham Marshes and the Lee Valley for communities within Walthamstow

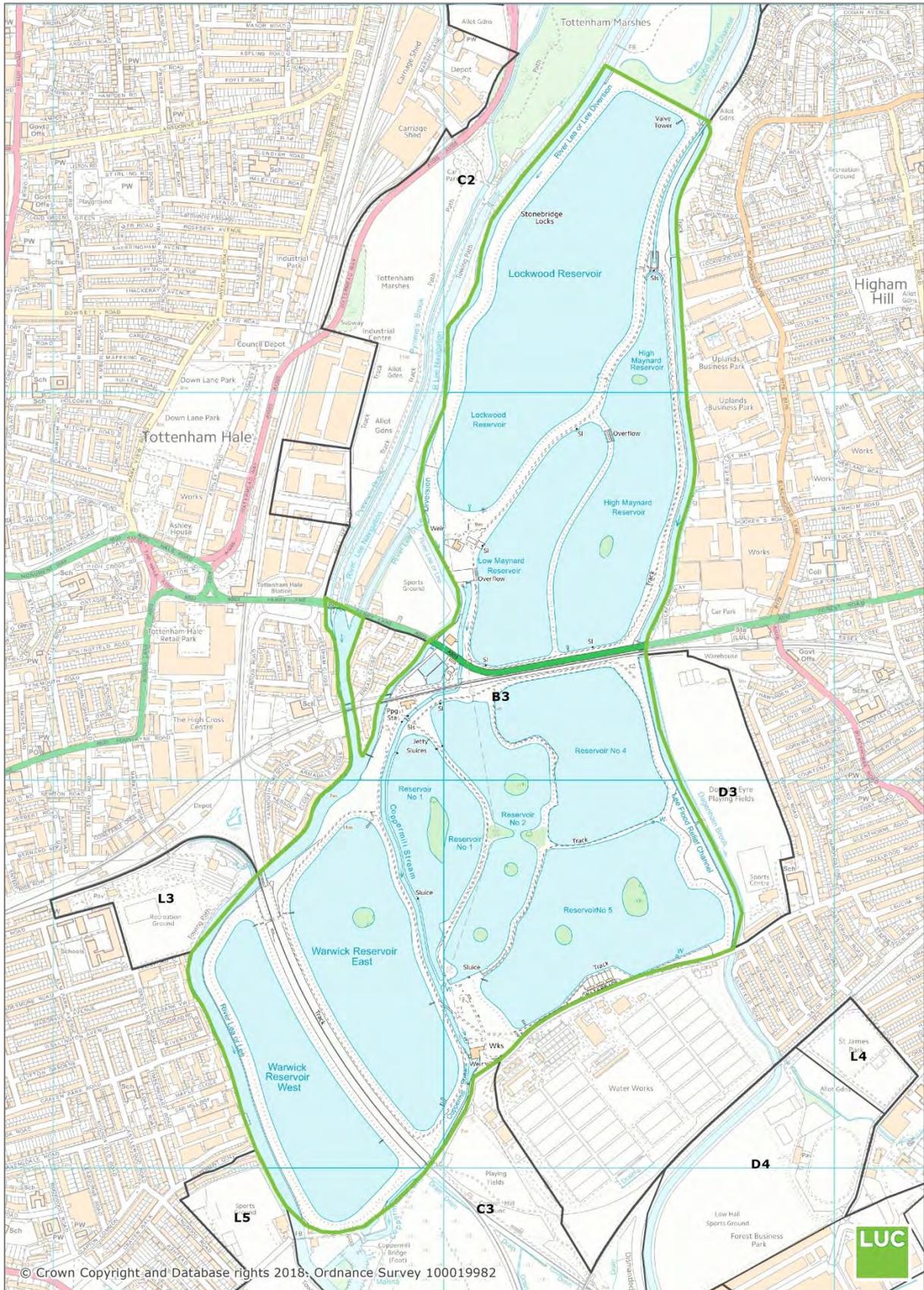
### Landscape Strategy

- 4.49 This is an area that is currently heavily constrained by the operational requirements of the reservoir, which limits both access and opportunities to enhance the areas value for wildlife and enjoyment of the landscape. It is however important as part of a north-south corridor for wildlife and access through the valley within a heavily urbanised context and as a point of access into the Park from the northwest edge of Walthamstow. The focus within this area should therefore be to enhance the ecological value of the margins of undeveloped land that remain in the area and improve the quality and function of the access points that exist.

### Guidelines

- Strengthen the physical connections through the area, north and south along the Lee Navigation
- Maintain the sense of openness along existing linear routes and seek to avoid creating further visual and physical severances
- Seek to restore aspects of valley floor landscape character, for example expand the extent of meadows where space allows and introduce more naturalised sections of the water channels
- Seek opportunities to introduce tree and structural landscape planting to help soften views of reservoir berms and flanks which form the backdrop of views from the Lee Navigation as well as soften the harsh edges to industrial developments and transport routes to the north and northwest

# LCA B3: Walthamstow Wetlands





The Marine Engine House, built in 1894, once pumped water between the reservoirs. A locally listed building, the refurbished and redeveloped Engine House today houses a visitor centre for Walthamstow Wetlands.



Small to medium, irregularly shaped reservoirs contained by tree planting, with visual intrusions limited to overhead pylon lines.



New visitor entrance point along Ferry Lane, with high quality wayfinding and visitor facilities



Extensive views from the top of the berms along the valley, to Walthamstow and Tottenham Hale and to Canary Warf to the south

### Location and Boundaries

- 4.50 The Walthamstow Wetlands are located in the lower River Lee Valley, to the north of Walthamstow Marshes and east of Tottenham Marshes. The River Lee flood Relief channel forms the boundary between the LVRP and industrial development at Walthamstow to the east, whilst the Lee Navigation and respective flood relief channel separates the area from Tottenham Marshes in the west. The western and northern edges are defined by the bottom of the reservoir berms. An access road to the Thames Water works from Coppermill Lane defines the southern boundary. The A503 bisects the area together with a railway which runs on embankment just above road level into Blackhorse Road station.

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### Key characteristics

- Series of ten operational reservoirs which have been subject to habitat and environmental enhancements and opened to the public as a wetland nature reserve
- Open expanses of water set within small to medium sized and irregularly shaped reservoirs dating from the second half of the C19th.
- Reservoirs enclosed by embankments of varying heights and containing wooded islands and interwoven with watercourses, including flood relief channels, the River Lea and Coppermill Stream
- Reservoirs partly fringed with ribbons of woodland and scrub, providing a degree of containment and sense of removal from surrounding development in more contained areas as well as seasonal interest and colour.
- Presence of machinery and the movement of vehicles as part of the continued operation of the site
- Several distinctive historic buildings and structures associated with the creation and operation of the reservoirs in the late C19th including the Marine Engine House (built in 1894 and which once pumped water between the reservoirs), the Grade II listed Coppermills (built 1806) and valve towers
- Wetland landscape of international importance, designated as a RAMSAR site, SSSI and part of the Lee Valley SPA, which provides an important habitat for overwintering birds, as well as breeding birds.
- Extensive views along the valley from the top of the berms with views of landmark buildings within Canary Wharf and providing a reminder of the proximity of the city
- River Lee Navigation along the western edge and Coppermill Stream form important wildlife corridors
- Pylons, network of railway lines and major roads have an urbanizing influence and fragment and sever parts of the area
- Surrounding urban and industrial context which strongly influences the more open reservoirs

## Evaluation

### Landscape Quality & Condition

- 4.51 The area has a distinctive quality and sense of place derived from its historic and natural heritage and has recently become a highly valued landscape asset and recreational resource for local communities and the wider population **since opening to the public as an 'urban wetland' in October 2017**. The refurbished and redeveloped Engine House as a visitor centre is now popular and well visited and acts as the main entrance point into the southern wetlands.
- 4.52 The reservoirs have a strong landscape character and intricate pattern of open water fringed with mature trees, scrub and marginal planting that give parts of the area a more natural character than the other areas of the type. This vegetation provides a degree of visual containment and restricts views out to development at Tottenham and Walthamstow. From the top of the high berms however, expansive views are available across the valley to the complex urban context that it lies within. The A503 has a localised influence on levels of tranquillity, as does the adjacent railway, but generally the area has a sense of being removed from the surrounding urban areas.
- 4.53 Security fencing running along the length of the perimeter, along Forest Road and Coppermill Lane create a harsh visual edge locally, but mostly the operational features of the reservoir do not detract from the overall character of the area.

### Valued Features and Characteristics

- The openness and sense of space provided by the expanses of water and vegetation that contrast strongly with the dense and busy urban environments adjacent
- The ribbons of scrub and woodland which fringe the reservoirs and waterways, providing additional visual interest and texture, a sense of separation from development and an important environment for wildlife
- Sense of remoteness and relative tranquillity within the more enclosed reservoirs, where the enclosure limits the influence of surrounding urban areas
- The physical and visual **separation or 'gap' the area provides** between Tottenham and Walthamstow and the continuation and access to the wider Lee Valley landscape it provides
- The sense of place and time-depth provided by the reservoirs themselves and the historic buildings and structures which refer to the history of the large scale Victorian projects to improve water quality for London
- The series of water channels, which provides references to the history of this area as a transport corridor into London
- Recreational opportunities including the network of trails through the wetlands, bird hides and jetties which provide opportunities for passive pursuits, including walking and viewing wildlife. In addition the tow path following the River Lee Navigation provides access to, and enjoyment of, the landscape.
- Long views along the waterways framed by mature trees and featuring Stonebridge Lock, bridge crossings, canal boats and activity on the tow path
- Opportunities for recreation, including walking, fishing and bird watching provided by new and existing facilities, including the new wetlands Visitor Centre, providing a valuable and popular local recreational resource
- The smaller scale, semi-enclosed reservoirs softening views across open expanses of water

### Landscape Strategy

- 4.54 This area provides a very important landscape resource in terms of its nature conservation value, heritage and the opportunities it provides for informal recreation, which is particularly valuable due to the surrounding urban and complex context to this part of the valley.
- 4.55 There remain, however, localised areas, particularly at its peripheries to the south and east, that appear degraded and visually confusing for potential visitors.
- 4.56 The focus should be on maintaining the valued qualities of the area, such as the sense of openness, the variety of the open and enclosed spaces and the important bird life present there, as well as improving integration (physical, functional and visual) with the surrounding areas. This will further serve to enhance the experience of people visiting the area.

### Guidelines

- Conserve and enhance fringes of planting to maintain a sense of separation and screen views of detracting elements
- Continue positive management of the reservoirs, enhancing the habitat and recreational value whilst balancing this with operational requirements
- Protect areas where open skylines predominate as these are sensitive to development which may alter the skyline
- Protect the sense of seclusion and relative tranquillity along the enclosed waterways small and vegetated reservoirs

## LCA B3: Walthamstow Wetlands

- Seek to continue to improve connections with the surrounding communities within Waltham Forest, and Haringey, particularly seek to establish connections to Tottenham Marshes to enable access between the different parts of the Lee Valley which are currently severed from one another
- Seek opportunities to improve harsh or visually intrusive edges along Forest Road, Coppermill Lane and at Higham Hill by strengthening the landscape framework and improving the interface of developments with the valley landscape

# LCT C: Urban Valley Floor With Marshlands

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## LCT C: Urban Valley Floor with Marshlands



Walthamstow Marshes from Horseshoe Bridge

### Overview

- 4.57 This Landscape Character Type is largely concentrated towards the lower reaches of the Lee Valley, within the London boroughs of Haringey, Waltham Forest and Hackney. It is characterised by a broad, flat landform and dominated by a series of marshes: open areas of semi-natural grassland and scrub originally part of the natural floodplain of the River Lea and its tributaries.
- 4.58 Over the late 19th and 20th Century most of the marshes were modified for a mixture of recreation, landfill and light industry. Today they are characterised by large areas of open meadows, scrub and woodland, divided by a series of culverted water courses, navigations and flood relief channels.
- 4.59 The marshes, together with the adjacent areas of reservoirs and wetlands (LCT B: Urban Valley floor with reservoirs and wetlands) serve as a significant break between the densely populated urban areas adjacent to the valley: a green corridor providing important habitats for wildlife and a range of recreational opportunities for the large population resident in the surrounding urban areas.

### Physical Influences

- 4.60 The landscape forms part of a wide, flat valley floor contained by gentle terraces that rise to the east and west. Within the marshland there is limited topographic variation, with the steep embankments of the adjacent reservoirs forming pronounced landforms. The marshes are underlain by alluvial deposits composed of soft clay, silts, sand and gravels.
- 4.61 Key landscape features are the major water channels, the River Lee Navigation, the canalised Pymmes Brook and numerous flood relief channels.
- 4.62 Extensive woodland, which fringe the water bodies and water courses, often creates a sense of remoteness and relative tranquillity, although the noise of major roads intrudes in several areas. There is also a degree of visual intrusion where pylon lines pass through the valley floor and where larger scale industrial or suburban development occurs in adjacent areas.

### Natural Character

- 4.63 The semi-natural grassland supports important wetland habitats. Walthamstow Marshes is designated a SSSI and forms part of the Lee Valley

## LCT C: Urban Valley Floor with Marshlands

SPA, which provides a nationally important habitat for overwintering birds.

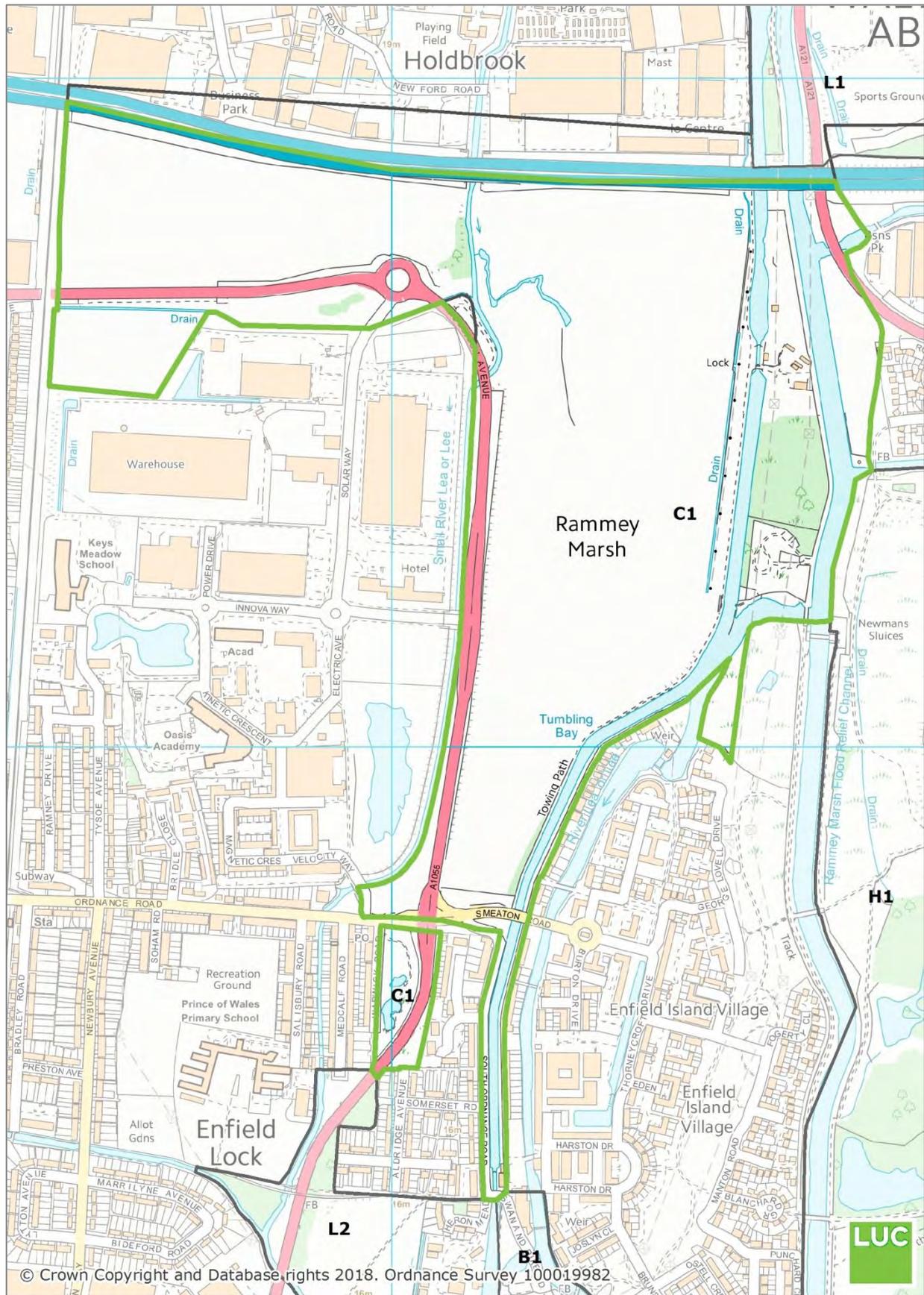
### Cultural Influences

- 4.64 The low-lying land of rich alluvial deposits supported a system of grazing, referred to as the Lammas system<sup>5</sup> from the Anglo-Saxon period to the end of the C19th. Grazing rights on the marshes were extinguished by the early C20th and a substantial proportion of the marshlands, with the exception of Walthamstow Marshes, were then modified by industrial activities and landfill, including the dumping of bomb rubble after WW2. In the 1950 and 60s the construction of flood relief channels ended the periodic inundation of the marshlands.
- 4.65 Communication routes through the valley floor proliferated over the C20th, including pylons, roads and railway lines mounted on embankments, but residential and industrial development remains largely confined to the margins.
- 4.66 Public access and recreation now characterises much of the marshlands, with some areas managed as nature reserves. However substantial infrastructure, such as the railway lines and flood relief channels and adjacent industrial development, means access through and into the marshes from surrounding urban areas is often severed. The tow-path following the River Lee Navigation provides a continuous link along the valley for visitors to enjoy the landscape.

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<sup>5</sup> A system of grazing whereby cattle was grazed only after the cutting and collection of hay

# LCA C1: Rammey Marsh



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Occasional long views out to wooded valley sides between riverside vegetation.



Residential properties overlooking the southern area across the Lea.



Visual and noise intrusion from M25 throughout the area.



Proximity to neighbouring industrial estate discernible despite the dense boundary vegetation.

### Location and Boundaries

4.67 Rammey Marsh, an area of former floodplain grazing marsh, is now an open expanse of grassland interspersed with areas of scrub, the eastern part of which is managed as public open space. It is located towards the centre of the LVRP, just south of the M25, which forms the northern boundary. An industrial park lies adjacent to the west with the A105 creating a hard boundary to the marshes. The River Lea and Navigation run along the eastern boundary with Enfield Island Village, formerly the site of the Royal Small Arms Factory (outside the Park boundaries) to the east. Gunpowder Park, part of the LVRP, occupies the rising valley slopes further to the east.



### Key characteristics

- A low-lying mosaic of meadow and amenity grassland on former floodplain, subject to gravel extraction with recreational access provided along mown pathways.
- The site can be distinguished between the east and west marshes separated by the course of the River Lea - the east marsh includes a short section of the River Lea and has more varied habitats with a richer biodiversity than the western marsh
- Flat floodplain with elevated topography in the north on a former landfill site with an exposed character and strong influences from the M25 motorway and long views across the valley.
- Semi-enclosed restored marshland in the south with mature willow trees along the perimeter creating a more secluded character compared to the more open landscape to the north.
- The waterways of the River Lee Navigation and River Lea, often lined with mature trees provide a sense of enclosure and form important linear features through the area with historic features at Enfield Locks providing a point of interest.
- An important site for biodiversity including pyramidal orchid and a colony of bee orchid, birds and mammals, reflected in its designation as a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation.
- Glimpsed views of the slopes of Gunpowder Park and the wooded ridgeline of Epping Forest outside the Park forms an important skyline to the east which contrasts with intensely urbanised areas often visible to the south and west.
- Recreational use, including angling on the river and Navigation with moorings for canal boats plus access points from the residential areas to the west connecting to the recreational resources of the wider Lee Valley and Gunpowder Park
- Large scale buildings and pylons outside the marshes punctuate the skyline in wide, elevated views in the north.

## Evaluation

### Landscape Quality & Condition

- 4.68 Rammey Marsh East is well managed as a recreation area with mown areas and pathways between large areas of meadow and scrub. Mature trees lining the watercourses remain largely intact and sometimes frame views to Gunpowder Park in the east and wider countryside views to the wooded ridge beyond. The boundary vegetation semi-encloses the area although glimpses of the neighbouring industrial estate and passing traffic and noise associated with the M25 impacts on landscape quality. The area is important for wildlife although the floodplain character is no longer discernible with the area having a more amenity land use and character. Rammey Marsh West has a more degraded character as a result of the M25 motorway and A1055 link road in close proximity. The large scale buildings at Innova Business Park in the south have a greater influence on this area due to the relatively elevated location and pioneer grassland species and semi-mature tree and scrub planting characterising the southern edge around the entrance to the business park. The M25 is prominent in the area with further industrial and commercial development beyond.

### Valued Features and Characteristics

- Areas of semi-natural grassland and the existing framework of trees are remnant floodplain riverine features.
- The small to medium scale landscape comprising a complex mosaic of wetland, meadow and woodland.
- Views to borrowed landscape of Epping Forest to the west.
- Recreational access and links including cross valley links to the country park at Gunpowder Park.
- Biodiversity interest represented by its designation as a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation.
- Historic features at Enfield Lock

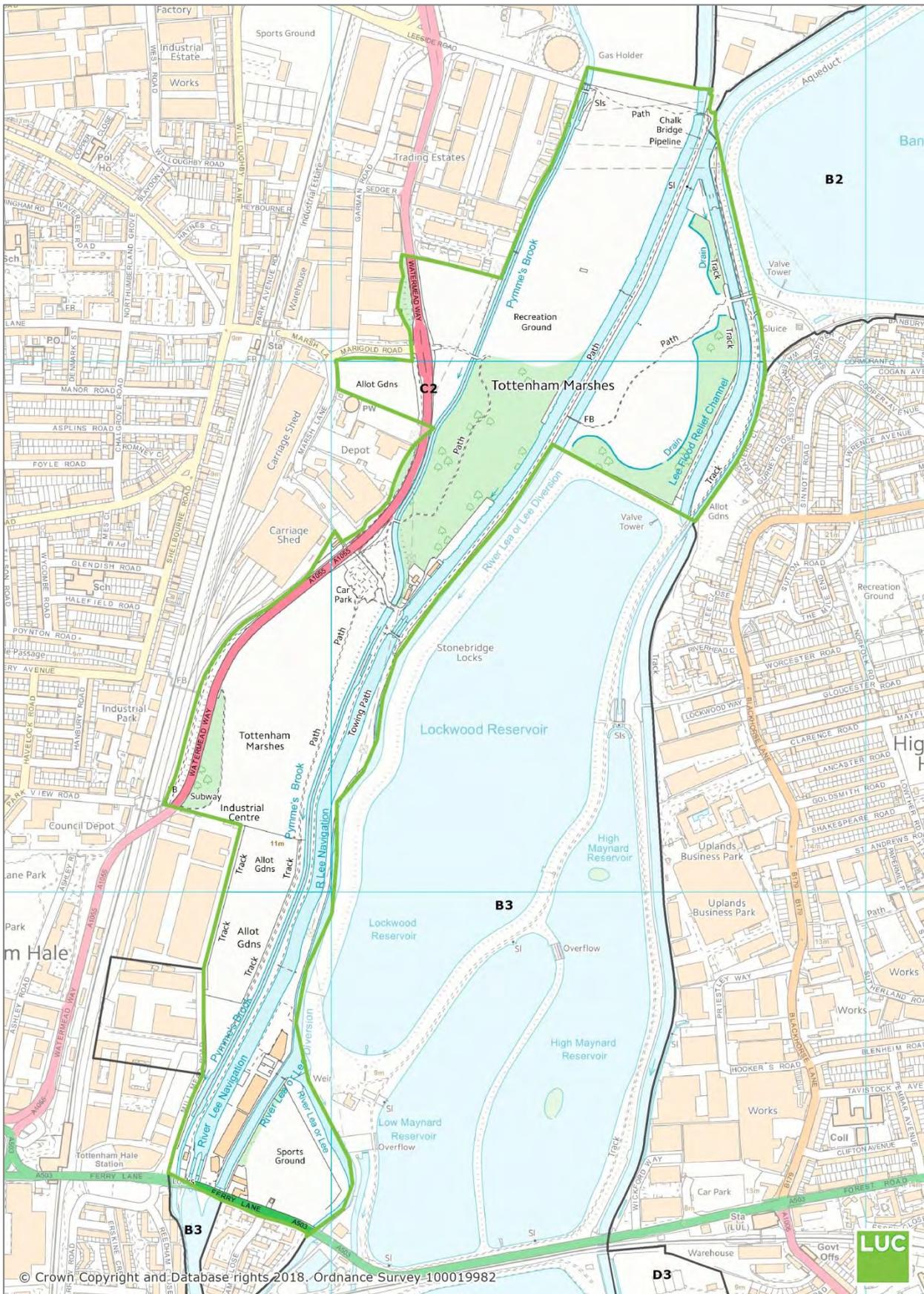
### Landscape Strategy

- 4.69 This area should be managed for its floodplain marsh character. The rich assemblage of important orchids on the eastern marsh in particular should be conserved and further celebrated as part of a coordinated recreational strategy whilst opportunities should be taken to screen visual detractors to create a more attractive setting. The western area of the marsh is currently inaccessible and in the longer term opportunities should be sought to improve the management of this area, both as a floodplain habitat and for recreation. There may however be significant pressures on this area relating to road improvement works along the M25 and the creation of a new junction which may cause additional severance and a reduction in the landscape quality of the site.

#### Guidelines

- Seek opportunities to restore semi-natural floodplain character through an updated and coordinated habitat management strategy.
- Maintain and enhance the diversity of habitats on the marshland connecting with the wider Lee Valley ecological network.
- Conserve the semi-enclosed character and consider opportunities for further tree planting along the motorway embankment, particularly in the north west of the marsh.
- Encourage greater recreational use and enhance connections between the eastern and west parts of the marsh, and adjacent settlement beyond.
- Any future road improvement works or development should ensure an adequate structure of trees and vegetation are delivered as part of the scheme to screen and soften any new and existing infrastructure and appropriate habitat mitigation measures implemented

# LCA C2: Tottenham Marshes





The overhead power lines and gas holder form prominent features on the skyline across the north of the area.



The River Lee Navigation towards Hale Warf, now the site of a large residential development



Channelled view along one of the flood relief channels.



The open marshes in the northeast of the area, where woodland and the large open spaces provide a sense of removal from the adjacent dense urban settlement

### Location and Boundaries

- 4.70 This area lies on the border between the London boroughs of Waltham Forest and Haringey, and is defined by the settlement edge of Walthamstow and the Lockwood Reservoir to the east and the Lockwood Industrial Park and the A1055 at the edge of Tottenham to the west. To the north the area is defined by Banbury Reservoir and industrial parks flanking the North Circular, which effectively reduce the LVRP to a narrow corridor following the River Lee Navigation. The southern boundary is defined by Ferry Lane (A503). The area comprises three distinct marshes: Clendish Marsh in Tottenham, lying south of Stonebridge Lock and to the north divided by the Navigation; Wild Marsh West; and Wild Marsh East, which lies below the level of the Navigation and the built development at Higham Hill. It also includes the Paddock Community Nature Reserve.



### Key characteristics

- Broad, expanse of floodplain, with little topographic variation apart from engineered reservoir embankments and a gentle ridge rising to the west at Higham Hill (at Walthamstow's north-western edge)
- Varied landscape pattern ranging from large areas of open grassland on former industrial areas, to smaller semi-enclosed spaces with a mixture of meadows and scrub fringed with woodland as well as allotments
- Predominantly a semi-natural landscape with a range of meadow, scrub and water habitats supporting kingfishers and field voles, scarce plant species including Bee Orchid and Wall Bedstraw as well as attracting large numbers of feeding birds in the autumn
- Larger pockets of wooded areas at the Paddock Community Nature Park and scrub in the north of Tottenham Marshes that have a semi-enclosed character of a smaller and more intimate scale compared to the open marshland
- Colour, texture and visual interest provided throughout the year by the meadow, scrub and tree species that include hawthorn, blackthorn, elder, buddleia, wild geraniums, and purple flowering comfrey
- Tree-lined River Lee Navigation and Pymmes Brook which form important recreational routes as well as corridors rich in wildlife, in particular supporting kingfishers and sand martins
- Physically fragmented in places, with a network of culverted water courses and flood relief channels as well as the presence of large reservoirs severing access east to west across the valley
- Strong influences from a complex urban and industrial context within the south around Tottenham Hale and in the north, approaching the North Circular, but an established framework of woodland and scrub helps to screen and reduce visibility of adjacent development through much of the remaining area
- Abrupt and visually detracting urban edges, particularly where residential areas and light industry back onto water courses (for example at Tottenham Hale and Higham Hill in Walthamstow) with little integration or consideration of the valley landscape

The influence on open skylines of tall infrastructure, including pylons within or outside the area, and the concentration of overhead power lines converging on two large converter stations are particularly dominant in views north

### Evaluation

#### Landscape Quality & Condition

- 4.71 This is an area with a mixed landscape character. It has some consistent features of large expanses of open and semi-open grassland, mixed with scrub and woodland and a series of engineered water channels, but its character is often fragmented by development at its peripheries and by localised pockets of degraded and unattractive structures and features, particularly around Stonebridge Lock. Large scale residential development around Tottenham Hale is visible above the tree line across a wide area and has significantly altered the skyline to the east in recent years. Areas of light industry adjacent to the west and surrounding areas of development are often poorly integrated into the landscape.
- 4.72 Where adjacent urban and industrial developments begin to intrude on views and diminish the sense of scale and openness that the marshland has, this affects the sense of the area as a semi-natural space, removed from and providing a break between the busy urban areas that abut it.
- 4.73 Parts of the area are visually fragmented by the steep engineered embankments of Banbury Reservoir and Lockwood Reservoir that contain views from the surrounding waterways. Access east to west across the area is restricted due to the presence of the reservoirs and flood relief

channel to the east, which severs the marshes from the residential areas within Waltham Forest that lie alongside it. In addition development, both residential and light industry is poorly integrated with the valley.

- 4.74 The area does however still serve as a significant break between the urban areas adjacent to the valley, and its importance as a resource for wildlife is reflected in its designation as SINC. Opportunities for formal recreation is provided along the waterways, but activities in the area are predominantly informal: walking, cycling and watching wildlife within Tottenham Marshes and the Paddock Community Nature Park.

### Valued Features and Characteristics

- The openness and sense of space provided by the expanses of meadows that contrast strongly with the dense and busy urban environments adjacent
- The ribbons of scrub and woodland which fringe the meadows and waterways, providing additional visual interest and texture, a sense of separation from development and an important environment for wildlife.
- Sense of remoteness and relative tranquillity within the wooded Paddock Community Nature Reserve, where the enclosure limits the influence of surrounding urban areas, providing a physical and visual **separation or 'gap' between Tottenham and Walthamstow**. The area provides continuation and access to the wider Lee Valley landscape.
- The River Lee Navigation, Stonebridge Lock and the intricate series of water channels, which provides references to the arterial history of this area as a transport corridor into London and a sense of place.
- Recreational areas including the network of trails through the marshes and Paddock Community Nature Reserve, provide opportunities for passive pursuits, including walking and viewing wildlife. In addition the tow path following the River Lee Navigation provides access to, and enjoyment of, the landscape.
- Long views along the waterways framed by mature trees and featuring Stonebridge Lock, bridge crossings, canal boats and activity on the tow path.

### Landscape Strategy

- 4.75 The surrounding urban areas provide a complex context to this part of the valley. Whilst the area provides an important landscape resource in terms of its nature conservation value and the opportunities it provides for informal recreation, there are localised areas within it, particularly at its peripheries in the north, that appear degraded and often hostile and visually confusing for potential visitors.
- 4.76 The focus should therefore be on maintaining the valued qualities of the area, such as the sense of openness, the variety of the semi-natural space and the diversity of flora and fauna present there, as well as improving integration (physical, functional and visual) with the surrounding areas. This will serve to enhance the experience of people visiting the area and encourage more people to use the area for recreation.

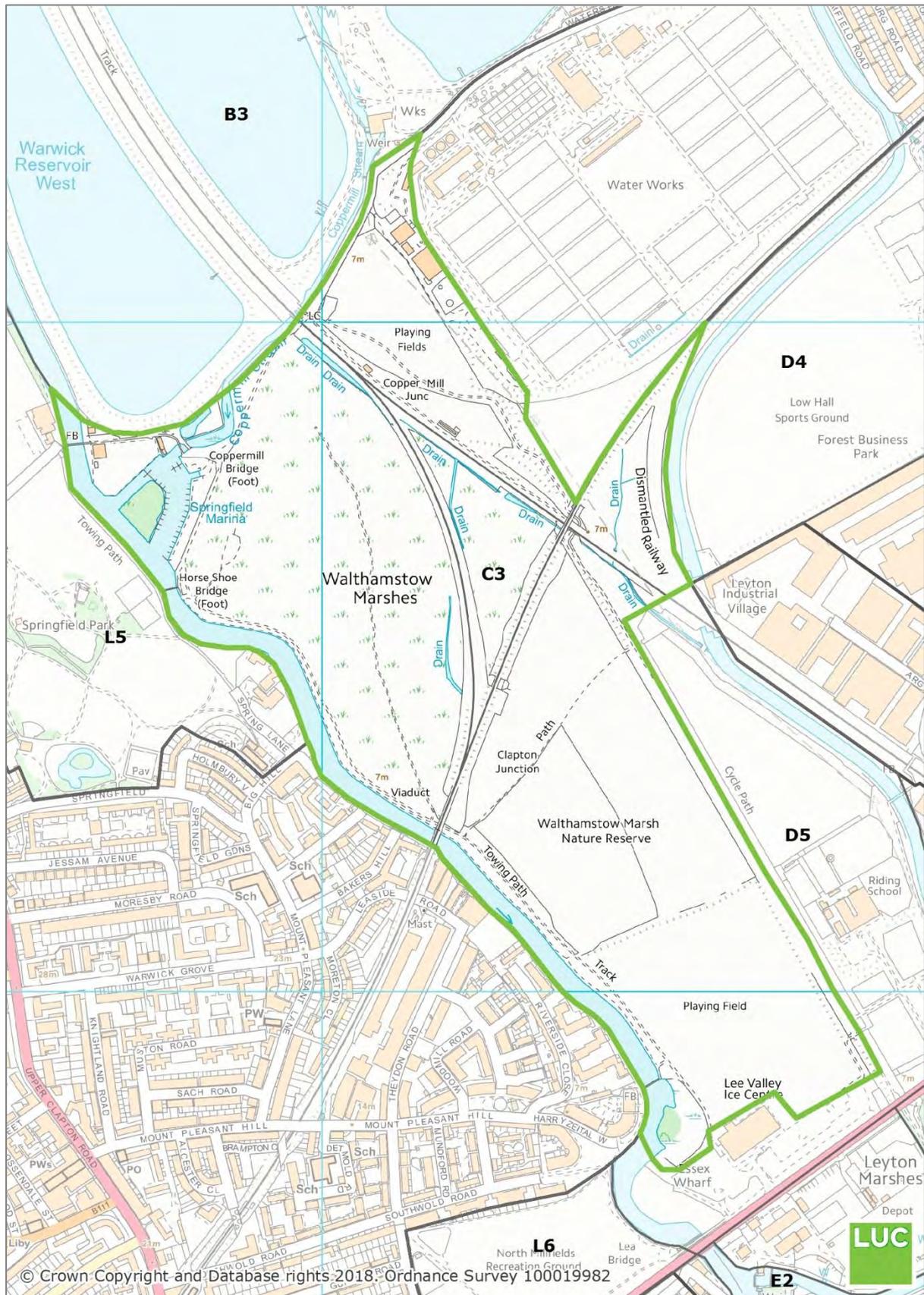
### Guidelines

- Continue positive management of the meadows and waterways, enhancing the habitat value and connectivity whilst also considering aesthetic interest and balancing this with provision of recreation and enjoyment of the landscape
- Protect areas where open skylines predominate as these are sensitive to development which may alter the skyline
- Protect the sense of seclusion and relative tranquillity along the enclosed waterways and within

the Paddock Community Nature Reserve

- Seek improved connections with the surrounding communities within Waltham Forest, Enfield and Haringey, through the sensitive design of existing and new entrance points along the western and north-eastern boundaries and the enhancement of the quality of the network of routes
- Seek to establish connections to Walthamstow Wetlands to enable access between the different parts of the Lee Valley which are currently severed from one another
- Seek opportunities to improve harsh or visually intrusive settlement edges at Higham Hill and Tottenham Hale by strengthening the landscape framework and improving the interface of developments with the valley landscape
- Seek opportunities to improve the quality of wayfinding and facilities in areas such as Stonebridge Lock which generally have higher visitor numbers
- Proposed development along the western edge should build on and enhance the existing landscape framework and be designed to sensitively integrate physically and visually with the Park
- The siting of development within the Park should respond and to and not undermine the open character and medium scale of the landscape and adequate provision for planting should be made to screen or soften views of the development from within the Park
- Any linear infrastructure development should be aligned with existing linear features in the west of the area and should include mitigation measures to contain effects on sensitive landscape features and character as well as ensure the area does not suffer from increased severance and dislocation

# LCA C3: Walthamstow & Leyton Marshes



## LCA C3: Walthamstow & Leyton Marshes



The western edge provides a distinctive setting to the area, with development well integrated, stepping down in scale to the river corridor.



The marshes contain picnic areas and a good network of paths, including board walks. Thickets of willow provide a sense of containment, screening views of surrounding development to the east.



The marshland within the nature reserve contains a range of vegetation, including grasses, reed swamp, sedges, and sallow scrub, providing seasonal interest and important habitats for insects and birds.



The skyline of the open marshland is distinctive, characterised by elevated railway lines and railway arches fringed with trees, together pylons and occasional glimpses of development at the edge of Walthamstow.

### Location and Boundaries

- 4.77 This is an area of floodplain marshland, located on the border between the London boroughs of Waltham Forest and Hackney, and is defined by the settlement edge of Walthamstow and the Lee Valley Riding Centre to the east and the River Lee Navigation at the edge of Clapton to the west. To the north the area is defined by Coppermill Stream and two large reservoirs (LCA B3 Walthamstow Wetlands). The southern boundary is loosely defined by the Lee Valley Ice Rink. The area comprises two distinct areas: Walthamstow Marshes, an area of intact marshland to the north, and Leyton Marsh to the south which has historically been filled with rubble from WW2.

LCA C3: Walthamstow & Leyton Marshes



### Key characteristics

- Broad, flat expanse of floodplain, with little topographic variation apart from engineered railway embankments and the reservoir embankments and a gentle ridge rising to the east at Springfield Park and Upper Clapton
- Simple but distinctive landscape of open grassland crossed by ditches and managed through grazing and mowing regimes, as well as marsh, reedbeds and willow thickets which are seasonally inundated
- A predominantly semi-natural landscape within a heavily urbanised context, where the meadows, scrub and tree species provide colour, texture and visual interest throughout the year
- Physically fragmented by railway lines on embankments, particularly to the north west, and by a network of culverted water courses and flood relief channels which sever access to communities within Walthamstow and in some areas serve to define distinct boundaries
- Strong influences from a distinctive urban context to the west, particularly Springfield Park and the buildings facing onto the River Lee Navigation, although woodland and scrub helps to screen and reduce visibility of development to the east within Walthamstow
- The influence on open skylines of tall infrastructure, including pylons within and outside the area

## Evaluation

### Landscape Quality & Condition

- 4.78 Walthamstow Marshes is notable as a particularly rare example of semi-natural wetland in Greater London. It has a diverse flora and invertebrate fauna that has benefited from ongoing conservation and management which has also contributed to its value as a recreational resource within a heavily urbanised context.
- 4.79 Across both marshes there is a consistent landscape character. Large expanses of open grassland fringed by scrub and thickets of willow predominate, but in the east are fragmented by water channels whilst elevated railway lines criss-cross through the area. Though the railway lines effectively sever parts of the area, they are an integral part of its character, which is removed from but still enveloped by its urban context. The movement of the trains above the marshes on the embankments are a feature of the skyline, whilst the edge of Upper Clapton, particularly the buildings fronting the Navigation and Springfield Park provide a distinctive setting.
- 4.80 There is a high concentration of activity, mostly on the Lee Navigation and along the tow path. However, parts of the area are physically and visually severed by the steep engineered embankments of the railway lines and cycle and pedestrian connections into the area from Walthamstow are particularly poor in quantity and quality.
- 4.81 The area serves as an important and significant break between the urban areas adjacent to the valley, and its high nature conservation value is reflected in Walthamstow Marshes designation as a SSSI. There is good provision for formal recreation, including the Springfield Marina, the Lee Rowing Club as well as facilities within the adjacent Springfield Park. It is also popular for walking, cycling and watching wildlife.

### Valued Features and Characteristics

- Rarity as one of the last remaining examples of semi-natural wetland in Greater London with a rich diversity of habitat, reflected in its designation as a SSSI, including several uncommon and rare plant and insect species
- The openness and sense of space provided by the expanses of meadows that contrast strongly with the dense and busy urban environments that lie adjacent
- The scrub and woodland which fringe the meadows to the north and east, providing additional visual interest and texture, a sense of separation from urban areas to the east and an important environment for wildlife
- Sense of relative tranquillity and 'naturalness', providing a physical and visual separation or 'gap' between Upper Clapton and Walthamstow. The area provides connectivity and access to the wider Lee Valley landscape.
- The River Lee Navigation which provides references to the history of the valley and a sense of 'time depth'
- Extensive provision for formal and informal recreation, including the network of trails through the marshes and picnic areas that provide opportunities for walking, cycling and viewing wildlife
- Wide, open views across the marshland and across the Navigation, featuring bridge crossings, railway arches, canal boats and activity along the tow path

### Landscape Strategy

- 4.82 Walthamstow Marshes provide an important landscape resource in terms of its nature conservation value as a very rare example of long standing area of marshland within London. In addition it is a well-used area for formal and informal recreational activities.
- 4.83 The focus should be on conserving and enhancing the valued qualities of the area, such as the sense of openness, the variety of the semi-natural space and the diversity of flora and fauna, as well as improving integration (physical, functional and visual) with the surrounding areas, particularly to the east where access is much more restricted by infrastructure. This will serve to enhance the experience of people visiting the area and encourage more people to use the area for recreation.

### Guidelines

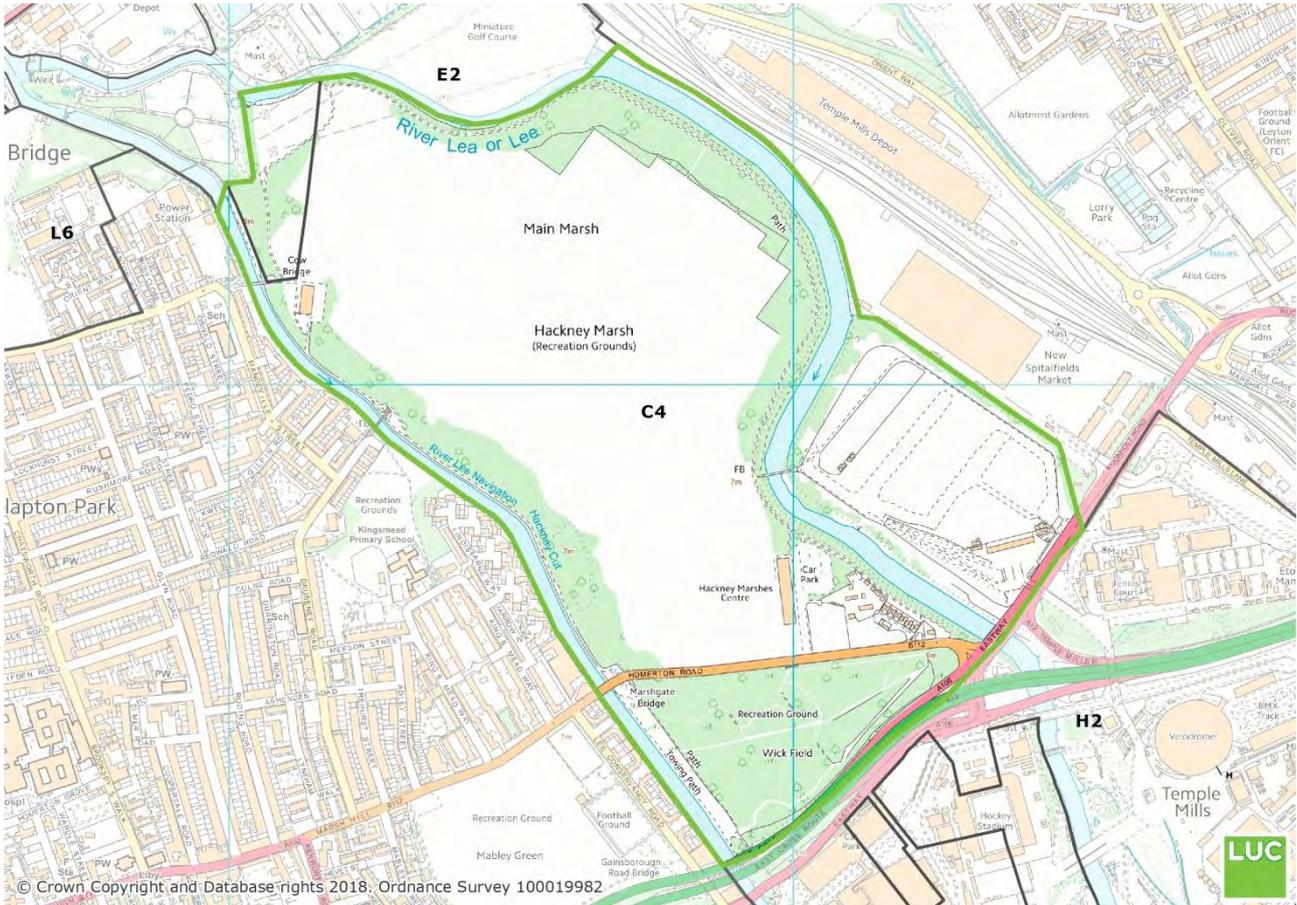
- Continue positive management of the meadows and waterways, enhancing the habitat value and connectivity whilst also considering aesthetic interest and balancing this with provision of recreation and enjoyment of the landscape
- Protect areas where open skylines predominate as these are sensitive to development which may alter the skyline, particularly the distinctive skyline formed by the hill on which Springfield Park lies – tall development here would adversely affect the setting of the church and views from the marshes
- Seek improved connections with the surrounding communities within Waltham Forest and Hackney, through the sensitive design of existing and new entrance points along the western and north-eastern boundaries and the enhancement of the quality of the network of routes
- Seek opportunities to improve connections to Walthamstow Wetlands to enable access between the different parts of the Lee Valley which are currently severed from one another
- The siting of any future development within the Park should respond to the open character of the landscape and adequate provision for planting should be made to screen or soften views of the

## LCA C3: Walthamstow & Leyton Marshes

development from within the Park

- Any linear infrastructure development (such as underground infrastructure, services and pipelines) should be aligned with existing linear features, such as the waterways, and should include mitigation measures to contain effects on sensitive landscape features and character as well as ensure the area does not suffer from increased severance and dislocation

# LCA C4: Hackney Marshes



## Location and Boundaries

4.84 This area is located towards the lower valley, within the London Borough of Hackney at the boundary with Waltham Forest. It is a flat area of open grassland defined by the Old River Lea at the edge of the Water Works Nature Reserve to the north and east (LCA E2 Essex and Middlesex Filter Beds) and the Lee Navigation to the west. To the north-west the Old River Lea follows part of the boundary together with the former Temple Mills sidings, now New Spitalfields Market. The A12 creates a hard edge at the southern boundary, beyond which lies the Olympic Park.

## LCA C4: Hackney Marshes



View across the Main Marsh towards the corten steel-clad Hackney Marshes Centre, backed by woodland



Path through the Wick Field woodland in the south west of the area with small information board



View over the south-western pitch with recent development within Matchmakers Warf beyond the LVRP boundary within Homerton



Open views across the open pitches are characteristic



### Key characteristics

- Broad, flat expanse of former marshland now comprising extensive areas of open amenity and recreational spaces, partly based on levelled rubble dumped on the marshland during World War II – a sense of openness and space within the urban area
- Formerly Lammas land, used over the 20<sup>th</sup> Century as recreation ground, now with a simple landscape pattern dominated by a series of sports pitches (including 54 football pitches associated with Sunday League Football) and facilities concentrated at the edges, set within substantial vegetated boundaries
- Surrounding urban and industrial context discernible, but woodland and vegetation ensures a degree of separation, with woodland within Wick Field in particular forming an important visual buffer between the major road network around the A12 to the south
- The most important area of biodiversity within the Borough of Hackney, despite the main interest being concentrated in the margins surrounding the amenity grassland areas - including woodland, scrub, meadows and riparian habitats adjacent to the watercourses, designated as SINCS
- Tidal Old River Lea and Lee Navigation form distinctive features - fringed by thick belts of trees and with pockets of marginal plants and reeds which provide important wildlife corridors
- Woodland within Wick Field and belts of native and specimen trees, including poplars, oak, plane, lime ash, willow and the rare black poplar provide an important habitat for birds as well as providing colour, texture and visual interest throughout the year
- Well established network of footpaths and cycle routes, linking across the marshland and to the wider valley, including to the Olympic Park to the south (via the Lee Navigation which passes under the A12) and Leyton Marshes to the north
- The influence on open skylines of buildings and tall infrastructure, including pylons to the north and buildings within the Olympic Park and Homerton to the south
- Tree belts and the pocket of woodland at Wick Field has a semi-enclosed character of a smaller and more intimate scale compared to the open marshland, although tranquillity is limited by the A12

## Evaluation

### Landscape Quality & Condition

- 4.85 Despite substantial modifications over the 20th Century, Hackney Marshes retains characteristics associated with the former marshlands. The openness and sense of space remain, as do the links to the water channels which still form significant features throughout the area. There is degree of fragmentation within the south of the area, where roads and small scale pockets of development at the peripheries have begun to intrude on the landscape, but otherwise the area is a relatively cohesive open greenspace with a consistent character and relatively well connected to surrounding areas and the Olympic Park to the south.
- 4.86 Large expanses of the area are today given over to over 50 football pitches, but margins of meadow as well as substantial tree belts and Wick Field provide more natural and ecologically diverse spaces. These have been identified as forming the largest area of biodiversity interest within the London Borough of Hackney and are designated as part of the Lee Valley SINC.
- 4.87 Therefore, as well as being of value as a substantial sports facility, the area also serves as a significant area of green space within Hackney Borough and a significant break between the urban areas adjacent to the valley. There are good opportunities for informal recreation, including the sign-posted trails and bird-hides which makes it popular for walking, cycling and watching wildlife.

### Valued Features and Characteristics

- The openness and sense of space provided by the expanses of pitches and grassland set within a substantial framework of trees, which contrast strongly with the dense and busy urban environments that lie adjacent
- The woodland which enclose the fields, providing visual interest and texture, a sense of separation from urban areas to the east and an important environment for wildlife
- The margins of more natural grassland and meadow and the riparian habitats following the water channels (within the SINC designated area) which provide biodiversity interest area as well as visual and textural diversity
- Sense of relative tranquillity and 'naturalness' within the substantial tree belts particularly along the Old River Lea
- The sense of contrast with the complex urban surroundings, with more secluded areas providing a sense of separation from them
- The River Lee Navigation, which provides a continuous recreational and wildlife corridor, references to the history of this area and a sense of place
- Recreational areas including the network of trails around the area that provide opportunities for walking, cycling and viewing wildlife

### Landscape Strategy

- 4.89 Hackney Marshes are an important landscape resource in terms of its recreational and amenity value as well as its nature conservation value in a complex urban context. The focus should be on maintaining the valued qualities of the area, essential to preserving its openness, the diversity of the spaces surrounding the sports pitches, as well as improving integration (physical, functional and visual) with the surrounding areas. This will continue to support the biodiversity interest of the area and encourage more people to use the area for informal recreation.
- 4.90 A management strategy for Hackney Marshes is set out in the Hackney Marshes Management Plan 2017 – 2021, prepared by the London Borough of Hackney.

### Guidelines

- Continue positive management of the woodland margins, meadows and the waterways, enhancing the habitat value and connectivity whilst also considering aesthetic interest and balancing this with provisions for recreation and enabling the enjoyment of the landscape
- Protect areas where open skylines predominate as these are sensitive to development which may alter the skyline
- Seek to establish functional and physical connections to the Water Works Nature Reserve to enable access between the different parts of the Lee Valley which are currently severed from one another
- Any future development should respond to and not undermine the open character and should include mitigation measures to screen or soften views of the development from within the Park and contain effects on sensitive landscape features and character as well as ensure the area does not suffer from increased severance and dislocation

# LCT D: Valley Floor With Leisure Facilities

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## LCT D: Urban Valley Floor With Leisure Facilities



Douglas Eyre Playing Fields

### Overview

- 4.91 This Landscape Character Type is concentrated in the southern half of the LVRP within the London Boroughs of Enfield and Waltham Forest. The landscape is dominated by sports pitches and built recreational facilities and has few natural features. Usually closely associated with surrounding urban development, these areas often have an urban edge character and a limited relationship to its wider context in the LVRP.

### Physical Influences

- 4.92 The landscape type generally occurs at the edges of the valley floor on reclaimed marshland, adjacent to areas of urban development. Built facilities, including sports centres and clubs often provide a central focus to the landscape type with associated infrastructure including tall fencing, flood lighting and car parks further contributing to an urban character.

### Natural Character

- 4.93 The landscape is predominantly formed of amenity grassland and sports pitches with very limited habitat interest, although some areas have small belts of trees or more diverse grasslands around the outer edges. The limited biodiversity interest is reflected in the absence of nature designations. However, the River Lee Navigation is a consistent feature for most areas within the type, usually running along the outer boundaries and forming a continuous and important wildlife corridor, and designated as a Site of Metropolitan Interest for Nature Conservation.

### Cultural Influences

- 4.94 The leisure facilities found within this landscape provide a valuable provision for sport and formal recreation, serving both regional and local communities.

# LCA D1: Lee Valley Athletic Centre & Ponders End Lake



## LCA D1: Lee Valley Athletic Centre



Urban character contrasts with more rural character of wider LVRP



View across the Lee Valley Caravan Park from one of the small earth bunds lining the access road through the area.



Four tower blocks local landmark within golf course



Bird Hide looking over Ponders End Lake

### Location and Boundaries

- 4.95 The **Pickett's Lock Leisure** Centre is an area of mixed recreational land, built leisure uses including a golf course, camp site and large scale buildings comprising a cinema and athletics centre. It is located towards the centre of the LVRP on the western edge of the William Girling Reservoir extending the LVRP boundary westwards and surrounded on three sides by urban development. The River Lee Navigation runs along the foot of the reservoir embankment and forms the eastern boundary. The A1055 and adjacent railway creates a strong physical separation between the area and the settlement of Ponders End. A road providing access to the adjacent business park marks the northern extent whilst Pymmes Brook Trail separates the area from a sewage plant in the south.

# LCA D1: Lee Valley Athletic Centre



### Key characteristics

- A mix of recreational land uses including a cinema, athletics centre, camping and caravan site, golf course and birdwatching facilities.
- Linear swathes of woodland and tree belts flank intensively managed areas of grassland with more irregular blocks of woodland around Ponders End Lake.
- Large expanse of car parking interspersed by straight lines of semi-mature trees. A single lane lined with small earth bund loops around an unmanaged area of rough grassland and scrub to the north.
- Modern large scale urban buildings form distinctive elements at the centre and act as locating feature from within the golf course.
- Generally enclosed by woodland and trees as well as reservoir embankment to the east although some glimpses to higher ground to the east are afforded from undulations within the area.
- Noise from nearby road and railway discernible throughout, only quietening as a result of intervening vegetation and landform.
- Four tower blocks near to Ponders End train station form distinctive landmarks on the skyline in northerly views.
- Ponders End Lake provides an attractive and biodiverse setting to the Lee Valley Golf Course.

## Evaluation

### Landscape Quality & Condition

- 4.96 The landscape character is fragmented and is influenced by urbanising elements in and around the area. It is isolated by the A1055 and rail line from the surrounding urban area mainly accessed by road. Strongly defined boundaries to the camp site, golf course and athletics centre create small, distinct areas with little relationship or unifying features between them. There is considerable noise intrusion from the A1055 and adjacent railway, and the prevalence of pylons along the eastern edge introduces visual detractors. The lake has relative tranquillity and therefore higher landscape quality but signs of fly tipping throughout the area further detract from this. The Pymmes Brook Trail is a local route linking the wider urban area to the Lee Valley Walk with the community of Lower Edmonton.

### Valued Features and Characteristics

- Ponders End Lake with its concentration of biodiversity and relative tranquillity.
- The mixed woodland cover creating an semi-enclosed character and visual variety.
- Value for recreation including the links to the wider urban context via the Pymmes Brook Trail.

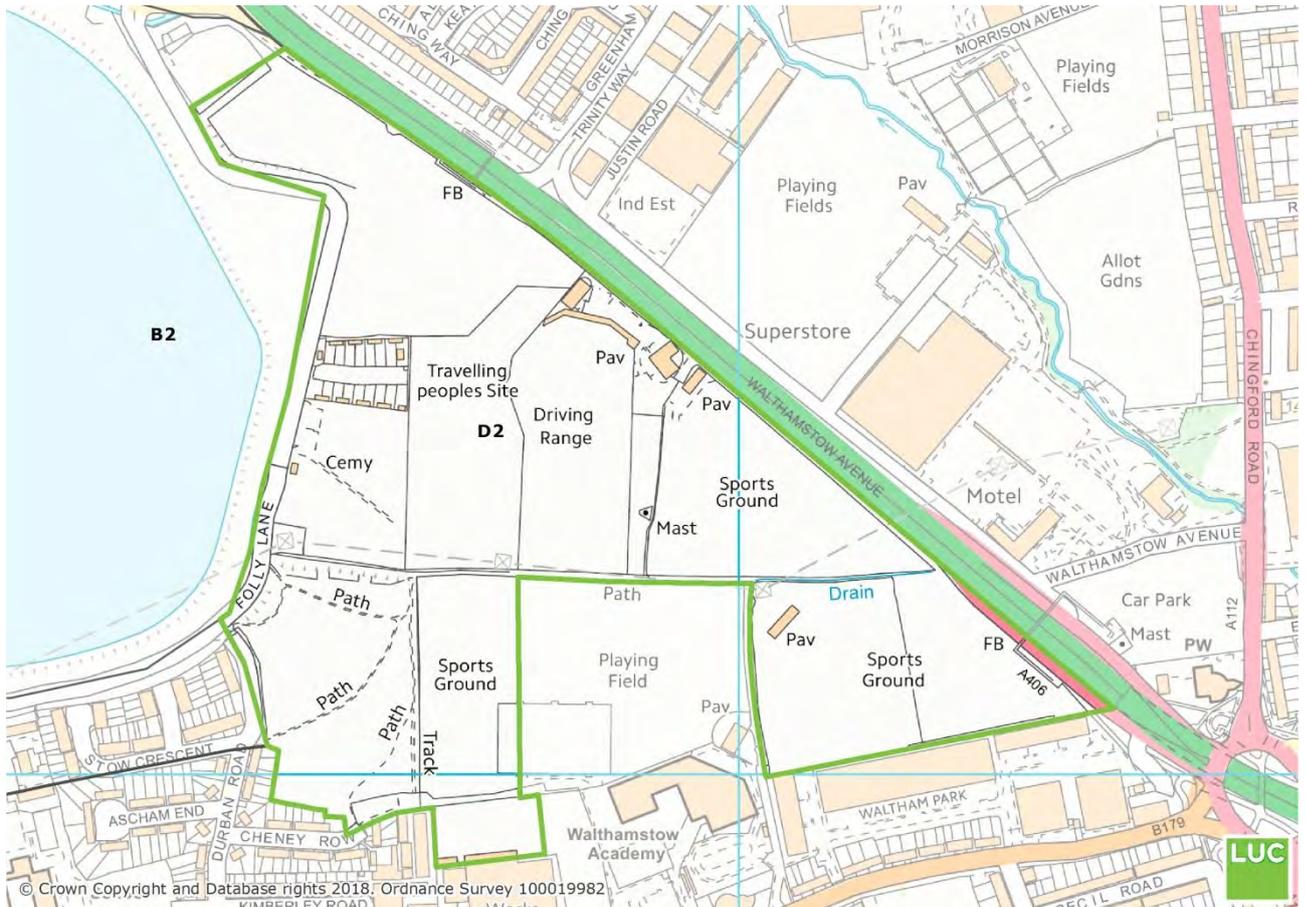
### Landscape Strategy

- 4.97 The strategic focus for LCA D1 is to maintain the balance between a popular recreational and leisure destination and an ecological asset, given its location adjacent to the Chingford Reservoirs SSSI. Areas of intact wetland habitat should be appropriately managed for the conservation of important bird species and better integrated with the existing recreation facilities. Better physical connections should also be sought utilising the proximity of the Long Distance Footpath that passes along the edge of the area.

### Guidelines

- Seek to maintain bird watching facilities at Ponders End Lake and seek opportunities for developing visitor facilities to encourage further recreational use of the area.
- Consider sustainable management principles within the golf course with potential to links to Ponders End Lake
- Develop wayfinding strategy across the site and consider opportunities for further pedestrian/cycle access to Ponders End/Lower Edmonton..
- Seek to protect areas of rich ecological habitat and concentrate any new development around the existing built form, integrating with the landscape framework.
- Enhance the Pymmes Brook Trail including the A1055 crossing and promote as access point to the LVRP

## LCA D2: Folly Lane Playing Fields



### Location and Boundaries

- 4.98 Folly Lane Playing Fields are located within the centre of the LVRP at the northern edge of Walthamstow, within the London Borough of Waltham Forest. The A406 North Circular forms the north-eastern boundary and Folly Lane along the western edge marking the boundary with Banbury Reservoir (LCA B2). To the south and southwest the boundary is defined by residential roads, Walthamstow Academy and a residential development.

## LCA D2: Folly Lane Playing Fields



View from the entrance to the recreation area behind Cheney Row looking north towards the pylons that cross the area.



View across recreation area adjacent to Cheney Row – new residential development is visible on the left overlooking the area.



Informal track through the northern part of the area dominated by scrub and succession woodland.



View along Folly Lane, with the grassed berms of Banbury Reservoir on the left and the entrance to the Muslim Cemetery to the right.



### Key characteristics

- Series of fields bound by hedgerows and trees comprising a diverse mixture of former playing fields, managed playing field associated with Walthamstow Academy, a long-standing Traveller Site, a cemetery, a restaurant and mini-golf course and driving range.
- Characterised by open grassland and succession scrub and trees with pockets of hardstanding and buildings in the north and west with associated metal fencing and car parking.
- Low tranquility with constant noise from the A406 North Circular audible across the area
- Provides access via a Public Right of Way and therefore connectivity between the urban edge and Banbury Reservoir and to Tottenham Marshes and the wider Lee Valley
- Influence from surrounding development and over-head power-lines as well as tall elements associated with the A406 such as pedestrian overpasses and lighting columns.
- Views generally short and contained by tall hedgerows and surrounding development and infrastructure, including the reservoir embankment to the west.

### Evaluation

#### Landscape Quality & Condition

- 4.99 The Folly Lane Playing Fields has a fragmented character and an impression of being an **unmanaged 'left-over' area of land at the margins of the urban area**. The area is heavily influenced by the presence of the A406 immediately to the northeast, which although largely screened by vegetation is a source of constant noise. Development on the peripheries has not always been well integrated and has compounded the fragmented character of the area overall.
- 4.100 Only parts of the area are actively managed as playing fields, with most areas gradually succeeding to scrub through lack of management. This and the hedgerows which have been allowed to grow out, does increase the habitat interest, but fly-tipping and a generally degraded appearance reduces its value for informal recreation. Whilst this creates current barriers, there is the potential for parts of this area to the south to function as an accessible green space linking the northern edge of Walthamstow to the wider valley floor at Tottenham Marshes.

#### Valued Features and Characteristics

- Remnant field boundary structure dating from at least the 19<sup>th</sup> Century that provides a historical link to when the wider valley consisted of open fields and farmland
- An open space separating the urban area at the north of Walthamstow and the busy A406 North Circular, acting as a buffer
- Scrub and unmanaged grassland provide valuable habitat interest within a heavily urbanised context

### Landscape Strategy

- 4.101 The strategic focus for LCA D2 is to improve and enhance the quality of the area as an open green space and recreational resource for local residents and as a valuable area of scrub and grassland habitat within the main valley floor in the west. The focus should be on enhancing connectivity with the wider valley and improving the amenity of the area as well as the quality of entrance points and footpaths, particularly the experience along the footpath that links Billet Road and along Folly Lane itself.

#### Guidelines

- Protect the historic field patterns that still exist across the area
- Seek to improve the quality of entrances and pedestrian routes across the area, with the aim of improving connectivity between Billet Road, Tottenham Marshes and the northern entrance to Walthamstow Wetlands via Folly Lane
- Seek to increase the habitat interest through positive management of areas not currently used as playing fields
- Consider opportunities to improve detracting areas and areas where access to the surrounding residential areas is poorly configured or lacking
- Seek opportunities to integrate the pockets of development in the north more sympathetically into the wider area

# LCA D3: Douglas Eyre Playing Fields



## LCA D3: Douglas Eyre Playing Fields



View of the entrance to sports centre on Coppermill Lane where the dominating features include fencing and car parking.



View along the canalised Lee Flood Relief Channel and Dagenham Brook, which bounds the playing fields to the west.



View of the sports centre building.



View north across the sports pitches towards Blackhorse Lane.

### Location and Boundaries

- 4.102 Douglas Eyre Playing Fields are located towards the centre of the LVRP, at the western edge of Walthamstow, extending between Forest Road and the Overground railway line to the north and Coppermill Lane to the south. Along its western edge runs the Lee Flood Relief Channel and narrower Dagenham Brook, which segregates the area physically from the rest of the valley floor to the west. To the east housing backs onto the playing fields forming a distinct boundary.

## LCA D3: Douglas Eyre Playing Fields



### Key characteristics

- Large open area comprising a series of football and cricket pitches and associated sports center, enclosed by palisade and tall chain-link fencing
- Characterised by a wide, open grassed field with dominant features including metal fencing, car parking, flood lighting columns and the built facilities
- Vegetation limited to a small number of shrubs at the western boundary and a small area of enclosed scrub within the north
- Isolated physically from surrounding areas, with public access restricted to a single southern entrance which also contributes to the limited connectivity between the urban edge and the reservoirs of Walthamstow Wetlands to the west
- Strong urban influences from surrounding built development, including residential development to the east and south, railway lines to the north and larger scale mixed use development beyond around Blackhorse Lane
- Low levels of tranquility, particularly in the north, with constant noise from passing trains and traffic on Forest Road
- Views generally contained by surrounding housing and infrastructure, including the railway embankment to the north, with short views out to the west towards the long, low reservoir embankment fringed with trees

## Evaluation

### Landscape Quality & Condition

- 4.103 Owned and managed by the London Playing Fields Foundation, the playing fields and facilities provide a valuable resource for sporting activities for local as well as wider communities. As a landscape unit within the wider context of the lower Lee Valley however, the area is limited in terms of its quality and not well integrated into the surrounding valley landscape. Although open in nature, the playing fields and the water channels to the west physically severs the valley from the urban area to the east and contributes to the fragmented character that predominates the wider valley at this eastern edge. The entrance at the south is not very well integrated into the residential street of Coppermill Lane.
- 4.104 The features that most strongly influence its character are naturally those associated with the running of the facility (tall fencing, flood lighting columns and the sports centre) and more natural features are very limited. Due to the function of the area as playing fields, the area is essentially a monoculture of amenity grass, providing very little habitat for wildlife, with limited diversity of vegetation and very few trees. The noise from the traffic on Forest Road also detracts from landscape quality of its northern edge.

### Valued Features and Characteristics

- An open space within the valley floodplain, which together with the reservoirs within Walthamstow Wetlands, provides a separation between the densely urbanised areas of Walthamstow and Tottenham
- Well-used and valued sports facilities for the surrounding urban population

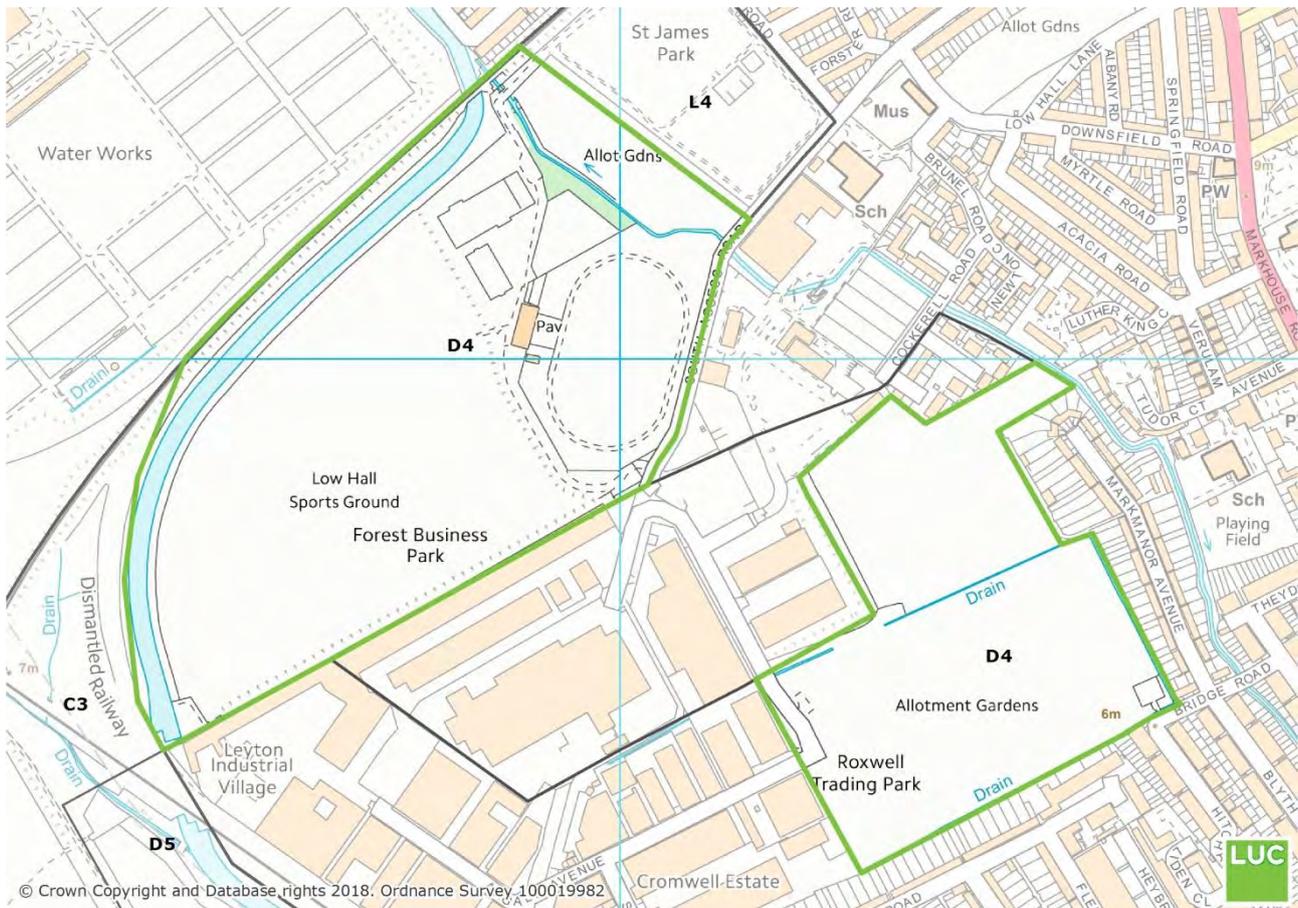
### Landscape Strategy

- 4.105 The strategic focus for LCA D3 is to improve physical links from the urban area to the east and the wider valley floor, particularly between the transport node at Blackhorse Road and Walthamstow Wetlands to the north and seek to improve the integration of the facilities in the south with the surrounding residential streets.

#### Guidelines

- Seek to improve pedestrian and cycle routes across the north of the area, with the aim of improving connectivity between Blackhorse Road and Walthamstow Wetlands
- Seek to increase the diversity of vegetation and habitats found in the area where practical, through tree planting and diversifying the grass sward around the edges of the pitches and in the areas of rougher grassland within the north of the area
- Consider opportunities to improve visually detracting edges, such as the main entrance at the south which would benefit from better design and integration with the street and adjacent Coppermill Park playground

# LCA D4 Low Hall Sports Ground



## Location and Boundaries

4.106 Low Hall Sport Ground is located at the western edge of Walthamstow, between Coppermill Lane Water Works to the north and an industrial complex, Leyton Industrial Village, to the south. The Chingford to London Liverpool Street Overground railway line defines the area to the north and the Lee Flood Relief Channel to the west. Along its eastern edge, on the other side of Dagenham Brook, lies a small area of allotment gardens, beyond which lies St James Park. The area also includes a further two areas to the southeast, including further allotments gardens and a small area of open flood meadow, inaccessible from surrounding streets.

## LCA D4: Low Hall Sports Ground



View southwest across the open playing fields towards the large industrial units to the south.



View west, with the marshlands and River Lea screened from view by vegetation and intervening railway lines - rising land at Clapton and Springfield Park visible on the skyline.



Dagenham Brook, which although part-canalised, still follows its natural course



The pavilion at the eastern extent of the grounds, backed by a small area of woodland

### Key characteristics

- Flat, open floodplain, formerly part of farmland associated with Low Hall Manor, now comprising a series of football and cricket pitches and associated sports center and car parking
- Enclosed by margin of trees and scrub at the northern and western boundaries and a small area of woodland following Dagenham Brook to the east, which provides a habitat for wildlife and a more semi-natural space for informal recreation –designated as a SINC
- Physically and visually severed from Walthamstow Marshes and wider Lee Valley to the west by railway lines and a flood relief channel
- Main access via South Access Road, with informal public access along a track to the northeast, connecting the area to St James Park and residential streets on the edge of Walthamstow
- Areas of allotments leased by the Walthamstow Allotments Association and well used by the local community
- A small area of open grassland fringed by scrub, with no formal access from surrounding streets providing more diverse habitat for wildlife locally - a flood meadow and a Site of Grade II Borough Importance to

Nature Conservation (identified in the Waltham Forest Biodiversity Action Plan)

- Strong urban influences from surrounding built development, particularly the industrial units that back onto the area to the south, railway lines to the north and housing within Clapton which forms a prominent skyline to the west
- Relative tranquility, located away from major roads, with occasional trains passing on the railway embankments to the north and northwest

## Evaluation

### Landscape Quality & Condition

- 4.107 Owned and managed by Waltham Forest council, the playing fields and facilities provide a valuable resource for sporting activities for local communities. It also provides opportunities for more informal recreation, linked as it is to St James Park and with informal paths through the woodland, following Dagenham Brook to the east.
- 4.108 The area itself has a simple character, with more natural features occurring at the margins, including trees and shrubs and at the eastern edge where woodland follows Dagenham Brook. It is however set within a complex and fragmented area at the edge of the Lee Valley which has been severed from the central swathe of marshlands, reservoirs and the River Lea by successive linear infrastructure developments, including railway lines and flood relief channels. This means the area is poorly integrated with the wider valley and isolated physically and visually. It never the less still serves an important function
- 4.109 Although the area is essentially a monoculture of amenity grass due to its use as playing fields, it does provide some habitat for wildlife at the edges, which contribute to the connectivity of habitat across the wider valley. The vegetation also contributes to the setting of the playing fields, which are otherwise heavily influenced by large scale industrial units, overhead power lines and infrastructure associated with the railway lines.

### Valued Features and Characteristics

- An open space within the valley floodplain, which together with the Walthamstow Marshes, provides a separation between the densely urbanised areas of Walthamstow and Clapton
- Well-used and valued sports facilities for the surrounding urban population, plus allotments providing opportunities for local food growing
- Small area of woodland and Dagenham Brook to the east, which provides a more natural space for informal recreation and an important habitat corridor
- Area of grassland and scrub within the flood meadows, providing a greater degree of habitat diversity, although severed from the sports ground and wider valley



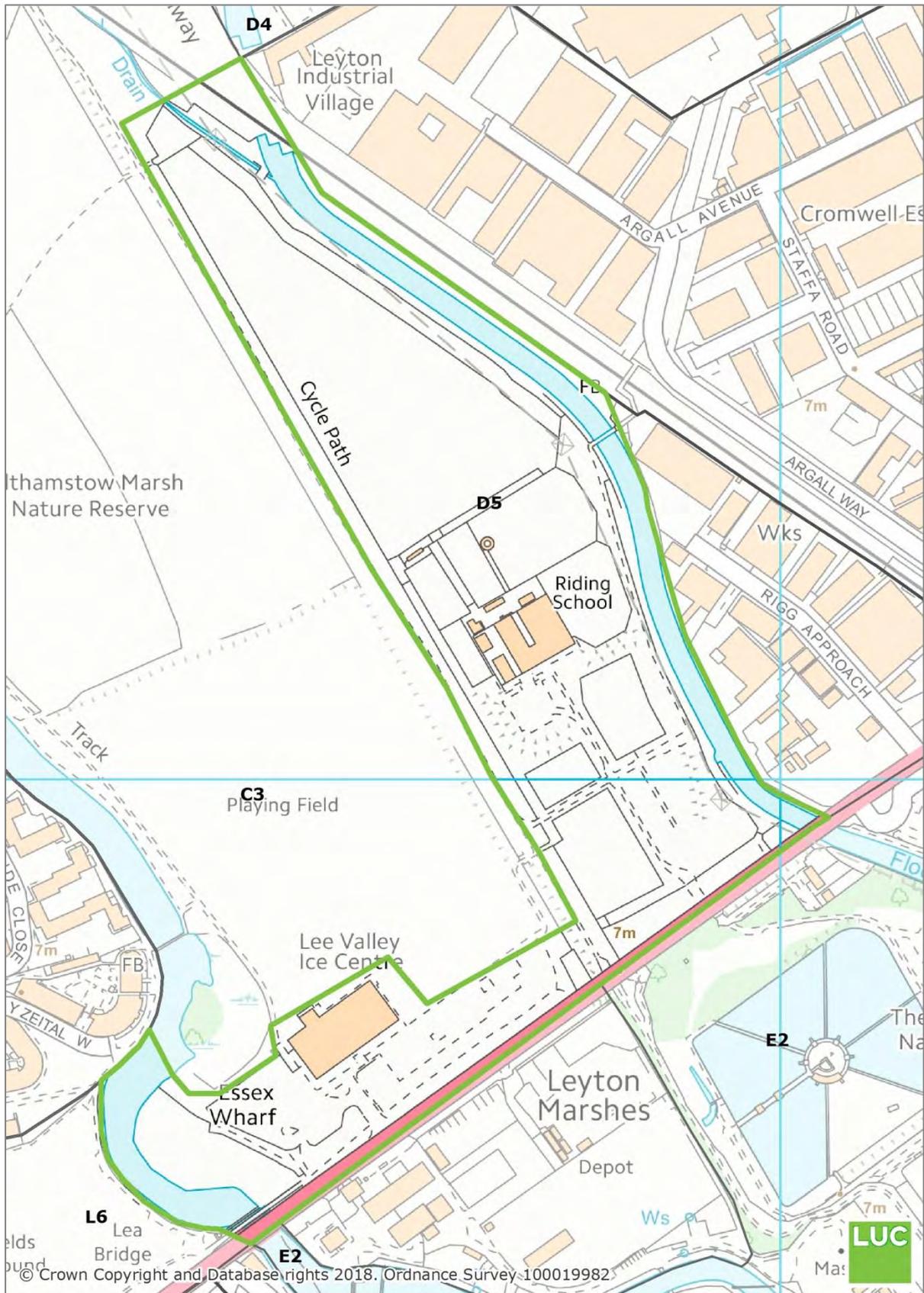
## Landscape Strategy

4.110 The strategic focus should be to enhance the nature conservation interest of the margins where possible and to reconnect the area to Leyton and Walthamstow Marshes, to re-establish access east-west across the valley.

### Guidelines

- Seek opportunities to reconnect the area with Walthamstow and Leyton Marshes, introducing an access link which would improve access across the Lee Valley
- Seek to increase the diversity of vegetation and habitats found in the area where practical, through tree planting and diversifying the grass sward around the edges of the pitches and in the areas of rougher grassland
- Consider opportunities to improve visually detracting edges, such as the industrial units to the south where further tree planting would improve the visual setting and increase habitat connectivity across the area
- Maintain and enhance the quality of Dagenham Brook and the area of woodland to the east, improving its function as a habitat corridor and recreational space
- Conserve opportunities for local food growing

# LCA D5: Lee Valley Ice Centre & Riding Centre



## LCA D5: Lee Valley Ice Centre & Riding Centre



The Lee Valley Ice Centre is a prominent building within the flat and open marshland, visible from the A104 and formed of white corrugated steel sheeting.



Planting around the Ice Centre help to integrate the development into the landscape although the car park around the Ice Centre restricts pedestrian and cycle access along the valley.



Rectilinear horse paddocks defined by post and rail fencing characterise the eastern portion of the area with urban influences from pylons and the overlooking industrial estate.



The flood relief channels create physical separation between the area and adjacent settlement. Tree planting within the riding school providing some visual containment.

### Location and Boundaries

- 4.111 The Lee Valley Ice Centre and Riding Centre is located in the south of the LVRP between Upper Clapton to the west and Walthamstow to the east. An area of former marshland, the area now includes two built venues, the Ice Centre and Riding Centre.. The River Lea and Navigation run along the north eastern and south western boundaries respectively providing separation between the marsh and adjacent development. Lea Bridge Road (A104) is an important crossing point over the valley and forms a clearly defined boundary to the south east whilst the remainder of the area is demarcated from the more open and semi-natural Leyton Marsh to the east by a mixture of post and wire fencing and boundary planting.

# LCA D5: Lee Valley Ice Centre & Riding Centre



## LCA D5: Lee Valley Ice Centre & Riding Centre

### Key characteristics

- Mixture of leisure facilities and horse paddocks with a peri-urban character on former broad expanse of marshland with little topographic variation
- Open spaces to the northeast comprising rectilinear horse paddocks defined by post and rail fencing contrasting with an area of development in the west occupied by the Ice Centre and associated car park
- Well-vegetated boundaries along the watercourses and around the Ice Centre provide some visual containment
- Network of small pathways connecting with the wider Walthamstow and Leyton Marshes to the north
- Modern residential development and the distinctive Lee Valley Ice Centre create an urban edge to the south of the area
- Strong urban influences from surrounding built development overlooking the marshes, constant noise from passing trains on viaduct and embankment as well as traffic on the Lea Bridge Road
- Relatively open views out from the boundary with Leyton Marsh with adjacent development visible above trees to the north beyond the riding school, including low-rise industrial estates
- Pylons punctuate the skyline and are prominent elements in many views

### Evaluation

#### Landscape Quality & Condition

- 4.112 Although most of the area is open in character, both the curtilages of the Ice Centre and the Riding Centre create a degree of physical and visual severance across the valley, with pedestrian access across the Ice Centre car park in particular limiting natural circulation between the Marshes to the north and the Water Works Nature Reserve to the south. Mature trees along the boundary to the riding centre and paddocks as well as surrounding the Ice Centre and car park help to soften views of adjacent development and help to maintain the visual separation. Although perceived as a distinct area, the Ice Centre and residential development in the south has an urbanising influence over the wider landscape. The noise and visual intrusion from the traffic on Lea Bridge Road also detract from landscape quality.

## LCA D5: Lee Valley Ice Centre & Riding Centre

### Valued Features and Characteristics

- Well-vegetated boundaries along the water channels and around the Ice Centre which provide a degree of visual containment
- Valued formal recreation facilities for the surrounding urban population

### Landscape Strategy

4.113 The strategic focus for LCA D5 is to improve physical and visual links across the valley and seek to improve the integration of the development within and outside it to reduce the urban influences. Enhancements to the road frontage should be sought as part of a coordinated programme to the recent cycleway development to further soften the edge of the character area and restore a sense of separation between the adjacent settlements. There are also opportunities to better integrate development into the existing landscape framework. The remnant estate parkland character within the riding school contributes to the setting of Leyton Marsh and should be retained with mature trees.

### Guidelines

- Seek to improve pedestrian and cycle routes to connect with wider Lee Valley recreational areas to the north and south
- Seek to better integrate development into the landscape utilising the landscape pattern whilst retaining open areas important to the wider setting of the marshes.
- Open up vistas across Lea Bridge through selective tree removal and improved landscape management
- Conserve the intimate scale of the landscape including the regular fields around the Riding School defined by mature trees and wooden rail fencing.
- Consider opportunities to improve abrupt or visually detracting edges to development through further planting
- Seek opportunities to improve harsh or visually intrusive development edges around the Lea Bridge and at the eastern edge of the area by strengthening the landscape framework and improving the interface of developments with the valley landscape
- Seek opportunities to improve the quality and design of pedestrian paths and cycle routes and wayfinding around the Lee Valley Ice Centre complex to reduce the severance created by it and the Lea Bridge Road
- Proposed development within and adjacent to the Park should build on and enhance the existing landscape framework and be designed to sensitively integrate physically and visually with the character of the marshlands to the north
- The siting of development within the parklands should respond to the open character and scale of the landscape and adequate provision for planting should be made to screen or soften views of the development from within the Park

# LCT E: Valley Floor With Post-Industrial Parks



## LCT E: Valley Floor With Post-Industrial Parks



Middlesex Filter Beds

### Overview

- 4.114 This Landscape Character Type occurs throughout the Park and is particularly distinctive and unique to it. These are areas that have been regenerated from former industrial sites, and comprise an intricate mosaic of woodland, meadow and wetland, often managed as nature reserves. Within them the features and structures remaining from former industrial activities are still prominent or discernible in the landscape and often interpreted to provide insight into the heritage of the Lee Valley.
- 4.115 In their present-day form these landscape character areas are semi-wild spaces where the vestiges of former infrastructure and industrial activities provide a rich habitat for wildlife. They are accessible to the public and serve as spaces for informal recreation for the surrounding communities.

### Physical Influences

- 4.116 The character type occurs within the valley floodplain on areas of former marshland which historically have been heavily modified by a variety of activities, ranging from 17<sup>th</sup> Century gunpowder mills at Waltham Abbey to Victorian filter beds and coal yards in the lower valley. This has resulted in a varied landcover, although areas of succession

woodland, grassland and wetlands are common to most.

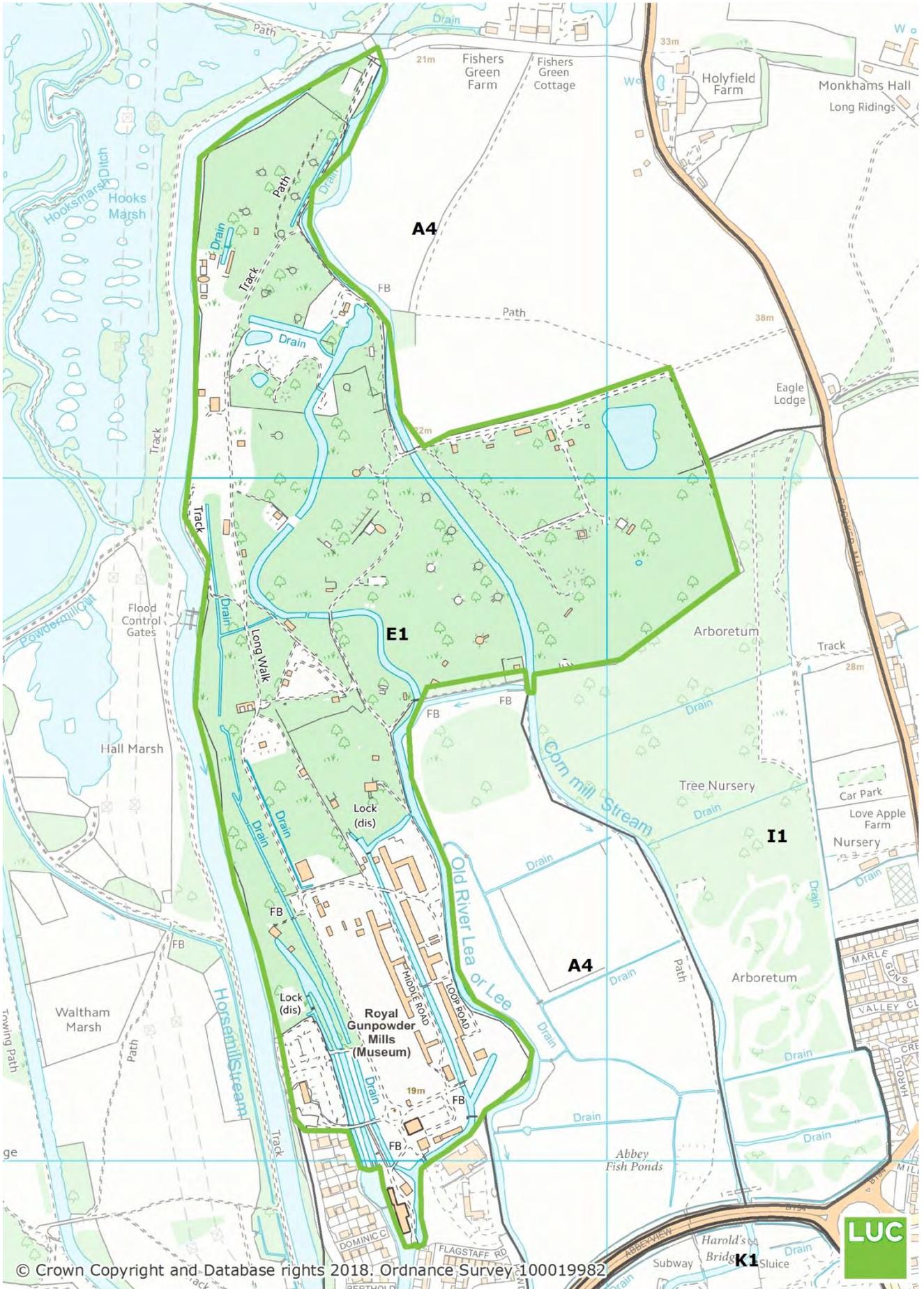
### Natural Character

- 4.117 The mixture of woodland, meadow and wetland habitats present in these areas are particularly important as most occur within a heavily urbanised context. Within the upper valley, parts of the type are nationally designated as a SSSI and within the lower valley (LCA E2, E3 and E4) they are locally designated as Site of Metropolitan Importance.

### Cultural Influences

- 4.118 The extent of the surviving fabric and features of the former activities on these areas, which include a range of listed and unlisted heritage assets, are a strong influence on character. The Royal Gunpowder Mills encompasses a Scheduled Monument and several Grade I to II listed buildings.
- 4.119 This landscape type provides a legible narrative of how the creation of the Park in the 1960s facilitated and drove the transformation of redundant industrial sites into wild-life rich semi-natural spaces that can be enjoyed by the surrounding communities.
- 4.120 Most areas are now publically accessible and all are managed as nature reserves or have management plans in place to maintain and enhance their habitat value

# LCA E1: Royal Gunpowder Mills



# LCA E1: Royal Gunpowder Mills



One of the many surviving collection of buildings and structures on the site



View across the man-made lake in the east of the site, where material was taken to



One of the water channels used to transport materials around the site

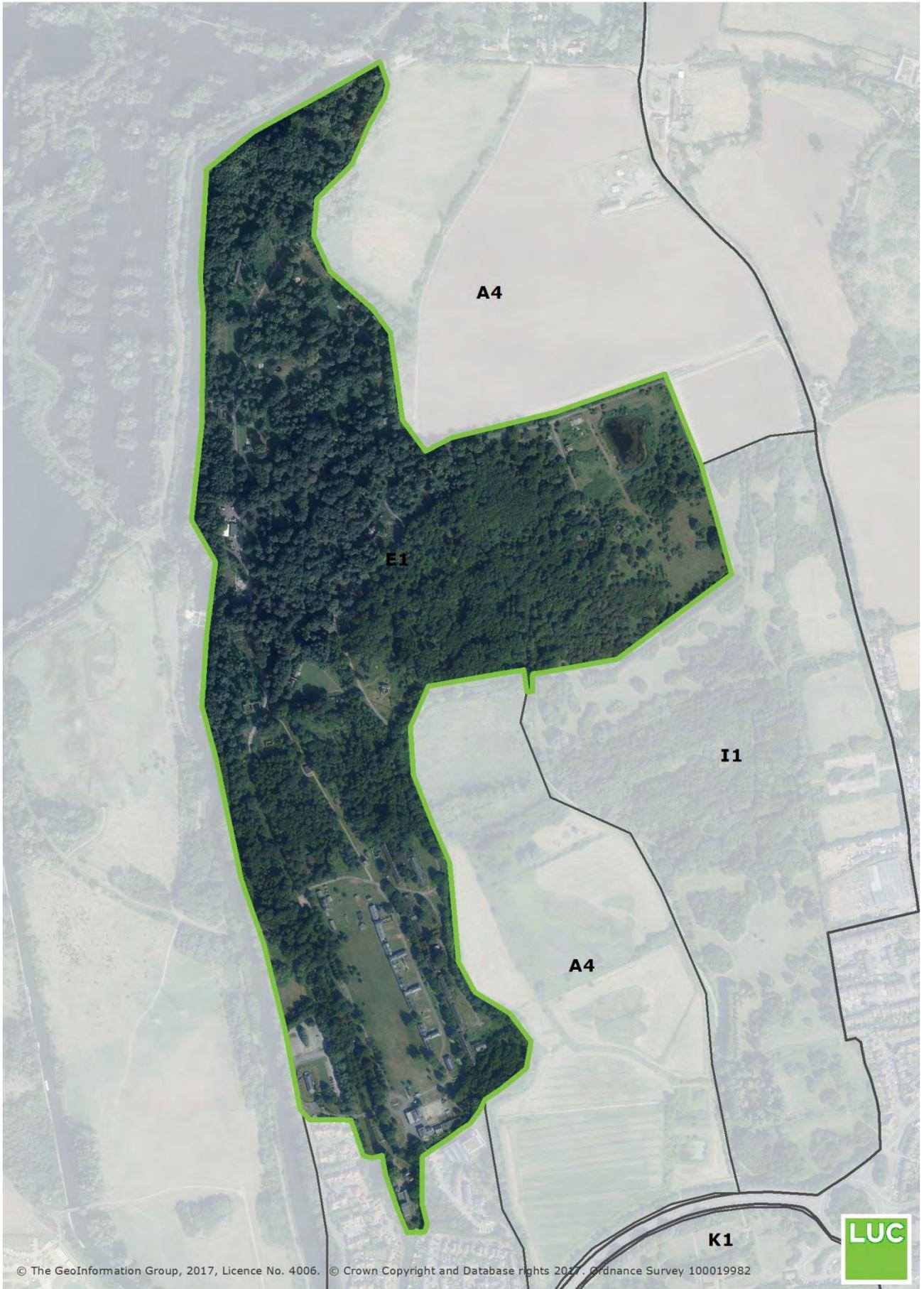


The open area within the south containing several listed buildings – a cordite press is visible in the foreground to the right and one of the distinctive semi-circular bridges that followed the water courses

## Location and Boundaries

4.121 The Royal Gunpowder Mills is located within the upper Lee Valley, north of Waltham Abbey. The area is defined by the site formerly occupied by the Royal Gunpowder Mills and is differentiated from the surrounding area of valley floor with wetlands (LCA A4: Kings Weir to Waltham Town Lock) by the predominance of continuous woodland cover. The River Lea follows the western boundary of the area, whilst sections of Coppermill Stream and tributaries of the River Lea flow along the eastern boundary. To the south the area transitions into a housing development at the edge of Waltham Abbey without a distinct boundary.

# LCA E1: Royal Gunpowder Mills



# LCA E1: Royal Gunpowder Mills

## Key characteristics

- Set within a valley floor with an underlying glacial-fluvial geology and damp alluvial soils
- Complex history associated with the evolution of different manufacturing processes for explosives and the shift in use from production to research in high explosives – most of the area is designated as the Waltham Abbey Royal Gunpowder Factory Scheduled Monument
- Strongly influenced by the large number of listed and un-listed historic assets present – an extensive collection of historic buildings and structures, including laboratories, testing sites, remains of several guncotton drying stoves and blast walls, linked by a network of transport and power systems, including water channels and steam pipes
- A predominantly wooded landscape of Alder, Crack Willow, Ash, Buckthorn and Elder, regenerated from coppice stools planted in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century and managed up until the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century to supply the mills with charcoal
- Views generally short and contained within the site, with longer views only available in the south around the central complex of buildings, including several Grade II listed buildings
- Rich habitat for wildlife provided by a mixture of woodland, meadows, streams, and several small, man-made watercourses and water bodies - designated as part of the Waltham Abbey SSSI
- Small scale, intimate landscape with strong naturalistic qualities and limited influence from surrounding urban areas due to the extensive woodland cover
- Tranquil landscape with limited intrusion from roads and other sources of noise

## Evaluation

### Landscape Quality & Condition

- 4.122 The landscape encompasses a wealth of historical interest associated with its use for the manufacture of gunpowder and later high explosives. The area has a strong sense of place and time-depth resulting from the survival of a large number of buildings and structures, linked by a network of transport and power systems. The majority of the site is included within the Waltham Abbey Royal Gunpowder Factory Scheduled Monument. The Scheduled Monument citation states that the significance of the site is three-fold - ***because “many of the processes used in this international industry were invented and developed at Waltham, because the works survive in a remarkably complete state and because many of the structures themselves are rare nationally and internationally”***<sup>6</sup>.
- 4.123 The area also encompasses a range of valuable habitats, including alder woodland, open water bodies and meadows, which are being actively managed to enhance the natural conservation interest of the site.
- 4.124 Whilst parts of the site are periodically opened to the public for events and educational activities, the majority of the area remains inaccessible due to the hazards posed by the remaining contaminated areas as well as the stability of some of the buildings and structures.
- 4.125 Although the area has a strong and consistent, mostly wooded character, it is partly fragmented in the south by development. The housing development to the southwest is poorly integrated into the valley landscape, presenting a harsh edge with very limited vegetation to soften or filter views.

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<sup>6</sup> Historic England, Waltham Abbey Royal Gunpowder Factory List Entry Summary [accessed on 10<sup>th</sup> October 2017]

# LCA E1: Royal Gunpowder Mills

## Valued Features and Characteristics

- Unique sense of place and identity associated with the long history of site as a place for innovation and the manufacture of explosives
- **Distinct qualities as an industrial landscape 'reclaimed' by natural elements** - an intimate landscape within which a rich array of unusual buildings and structures are set
- A strong sense of tranquility and isolation from adjacent urban areas
- Range of woodland and grassland habitats which are important for wildlife and which also provide diversity and visual interest
- Number and rarity of the heritage assets (within the Waltham Abbey Royal Gunpowder Mill Scheduled Monument as well as individually listed buildings) which reveal the significance of **Waltham Abbey's heritage and also provide features and points of interest** throughout the landscape
- The area contributes to the continuity of (if not access to) the wider Lee Valley landscape north of Waltham Abbey - particularly the marshes and wetlands to the north and west, Cornmill Stream and its surrounding wetlands to the south (LCA A4 Kings Weir to Waltham Lock), and the tree park to the east (LCA I1 Arboretum)

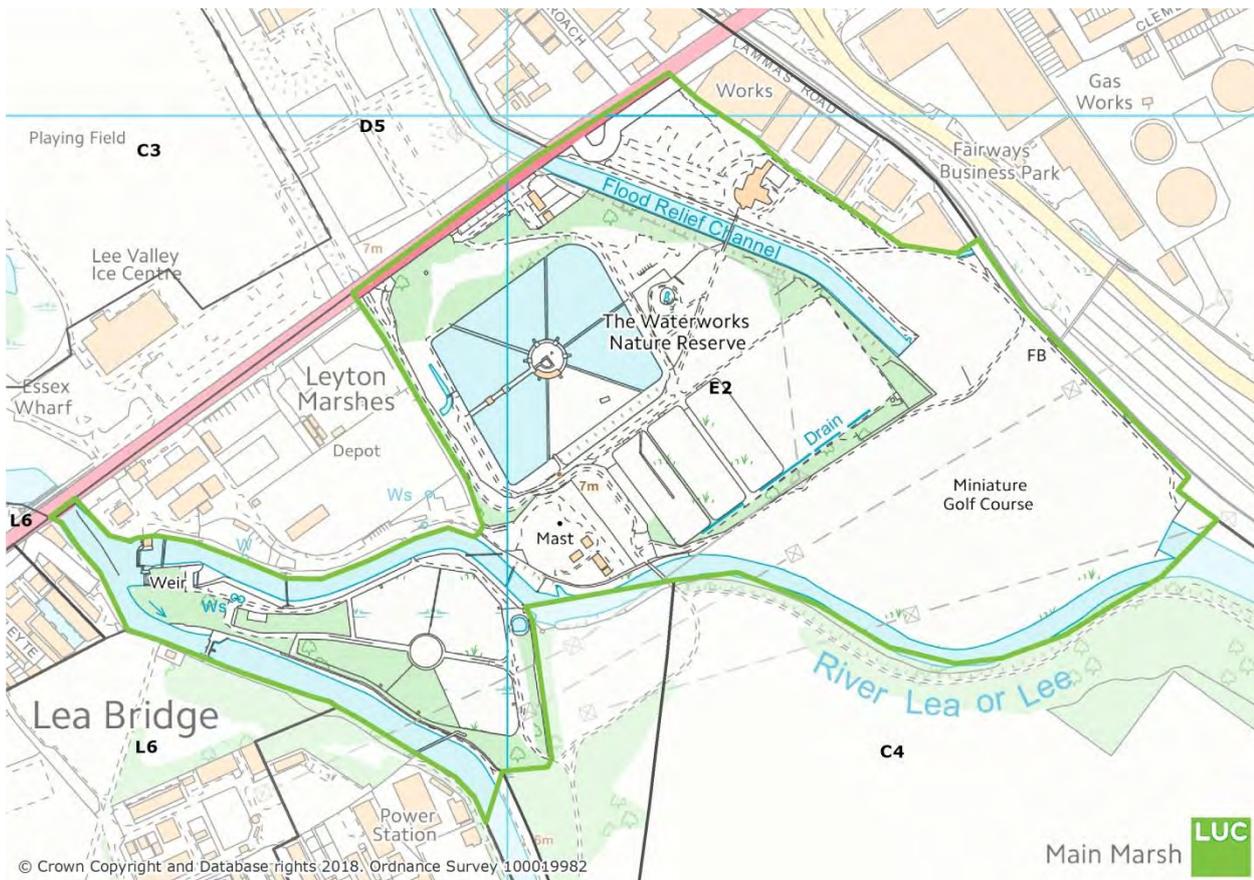
## Landscape Strategy

- 4.126 The landscape has potential to provide a unique and valuable resource for the local and wider communities, integrated into the diverse sequence of landscapes found in this part of the Lee Valley. The strategic focus for this area should therefore be to protect the important heritage and nature conservation interest of the site whilst seeking opportunities to enable public access, engagement and enjoyment of the landscape, its heritage and its wildlife, in a safe and sensitive way.

## Guidelines

- Ensure the stability and protect the integrity of the assemblage of listed and un-listed heritage assets, whilst balancing this with provision for access, recreation and enjoyment of the landscape
- Continue positive management of the woodlands and landscape features, enhancing habitat value and connectivity
- Seek to improve connections with the surrounding communities within Waltham Abbey through the sensitive design of new entrance points and bridges to the east, west and north, and enhance entrance points and wayfinding at the southern boundary
- Seek to establish connections to adjacent areas within the LVRP to enable access between the different parts of the Lee Valley which are currently severed from one another
- Manage change arising from future diversification of the site and ensure it can be accommodated without detriment to the valued attributes and sense of place
- Protect the sense of seclusion and relative tranquillity that characterises the area
- Protect areas where undeveloped skylines predominate as these are sensitive to development which may alter the sense of separation from the nearby urban area that predominates
- The siting of any future development within or adjacent to the park should respond to and not undermine the integrity of the predominantly undeveloped, intimate and intricate pattern of the landscape
- Take opportunities to plan for the improved integration of existing urban edges to the southwest, including improved boundary treatment and the introduction of adequate tree and shrub planting to soften harsh edges

# LCA E2: Middlesex Filter Beds & The Water Works Nature Reserve



## Location and Boundaries

- 4.127 The Middlesex Filter Beds and Water Works Nature Reserve are located on the boundary between the London Boroughs of Hackney and Waltham Forest within the lower Lee Valley. To the north Lea Bridge Road forms a strongly defined boundary between the area and LCA D5 Lee Valley Ice Centre (and beyond LCA C3 Walthamstow and Leyton Marshes). The large expanse of Hackney Marshes (LCA C4) opens out beyond the River Lea to the southeast of the area. To the southwest the area is bounded by the Lee Navigation and to the north east the area is defined by a small industrial estate flanking the railway line and Temple Mills Depot.
- 4.128 The area is bisected by the River Lea, creating two distinct areas the Middlesex Nature Reserve to the south and the Water Works Nature Reserve to the north.

## LCA E2: Middlesex Filter Beds & The Water Works Nature Reserve



View from within the Middlesex Filter Beds to the National Grid transformer station visible above the tree line to the southwest



Across the Lee Navigation to the turbine house adjacent to the weir that divides the river in two, marking the beginning of the Hackney Cut of the Lee Navigation (built in the 1790s).



View towards the central well-head of the Middlesex Filter Beds.



One of the filter beds colonised by vegetation

### Key characteristics

- Modified landscape associated with a Victorian water works set within a flat valley floor
- Varied landscape structured by a series of concrete-lined radial and rectilinear filter beds dating from the 1860s, some in-filled others containing various wetland features
- Characterised by a predominance of succession and planted woodland and scrub, with areas of open grassland and meadow as well as wetland features associated with the filter beds
- Distinctive features and structures in-situ relating to the treatment and supply of water to Hackney including narrow gauge railway tracks, sluice winding mechanisms, and trolleys
- Historic buildings relating to the evolution and modification of the course of the River Lea and the valley landscape, including the octagonal turbine house adjacent to the weir that divides the river in two, marking the beginning of the Hackney Cut of the Lee Navigation (built in the 1790s)
- Rich habitat for birds and invertebrates provided by wetland features created within the former filter beds, including open water-bodies, willow carr, wet woodland, reed beds, and meadows
- More recent infrastructure installed to assist with interpretation and encourage visitors include a large bird hide within the Essex Filter Beds, interpretation boards, sculptures and a visitor center and car park serving the Water Works Nature Reserve in the north
- Small scale, intimate landscape with strong natural qualities and limited influence from surrounding urban areas due to views being contained by trees and the adjacent development being situated predominantly below the tree-line
- Wooded and small semi-enclosed areas contrast with the more open areas of grassland within the south (formerly used as a mini-golf course) and an area of hard-standing (presently Thames Water Depot Yard)

## LCA E2: Middlesex Filter Beds & The Water Works Nature Reserve



### Evaluation

#### Landscape Quality & Condition

- 4.129 The Middlesex Filter Beds and the Water Works Nature Reserve have unique qualities and a strong sense of place derived from the distinctive filter beds and associated concrete structures which have been converted into a rich reserve for wildlife. The area has a sense of time-depth resulting from the retention of the key features of the Victorian water works together with a sense of wildness and seclusion provided by the woodland and scrub that contain the sites. The beds are managed in order to maintain the different succession habitats, and this provides habitat diversity important for wildlife but also diversity and interest for visitors.
- 4.130 The area is however fragmented by the presence of the Thames Water Depot which lies towards the centre of the floodplain. There is no direct public access between the two reserves. The Lee Navigation and the Thames Water Depot severs the two nature reserves and visitors must walk a distance along Lea Bridge Road to move between the two. The Middlesex Filter Beds is the more accessible of the two areas although it has less biodiversity interest and can be reached from Hackney Marshes and Lea Bridge Road via the Lee Navigation Towpath.

## LCA E2: Middlesex Filter Beds & The Water Works Nature Reserve

### Valued Features and Characteristics

- The intimate and strong natural qualities of the landscape and a sense of separation from surrounding urban areas
- Strong sense of place and identity associated with the remnants of the Victorian waterworks **'reclaimed' by natural elements**
- Range of woodland and wetland habitats which are particularly important for wildlife within a heavily urbanised context and which also provide diversity and visual interest for visitors
- Listed and non-listed **heritage assets which reveal the significance of the area's industrial heritage as a place of innovative Victorian engineering, developed in response to the need to supply clean water to east London**
- Facilities and the network of trails and board walks through the area, providing opportunities for informal recreation, including walking and viewing wildlife
- Open, largely uninterrupted skylines where tall development is limited to the converter station to the south but otherwise does not intrude on the natural, secluded qualities
- Succession planting beds within the Essex filter beds

### Landscape Strategy

- 4.131 This landscape provides an important resource for the surrounding urban population in terms of its nature conservation value and the opportunities it provides for recreation and learning. This area is however fragmented, with several barriers to access. These barriers are physical, such as the Thames Water Depot and the water channels running through and around it, as well as perceptual, with entrances and areas that may appear hostile and visually confusing for potential visitors. Whilst there is a need to balance nature conservation and enhancement with visitor access and experience, there is at present a lack of integration and connectivity between the two areas of nature reserve and the wider landscapes to the north and south that limits access for surrounding populations.
- 4.132 The focus should be on maintaining the integrity and valued qualities of the area, such as the **sense of history and 'wildness' and the diversity of flora and fauna present there, as well as** improving connectivity (physical, functional and visual) with the surrounding areas. This is likely to serve to enhance the experience of people visiting the area and encourage a greater appreciation of the history of site and its present day ecological value.

### Guidelines

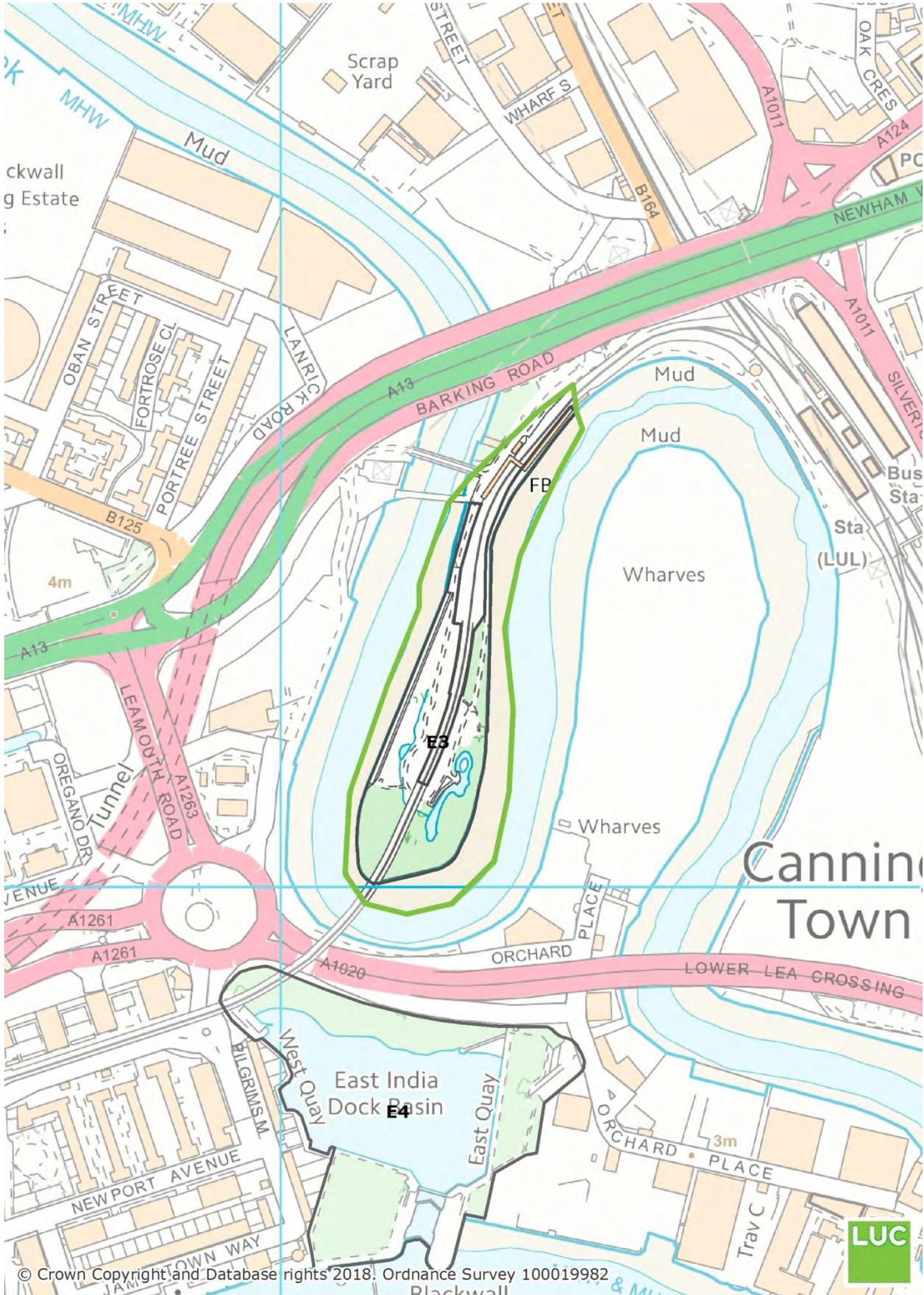
- Continue positive management of the former filter beds and waterways, enhancing the habitat value and connectivity, maintaining the stability and integrity of heritage assets whilst balancing this with provision of recreation and enjoyment of the landscape
- Conserve the integrity and ensure the stability of the historic fabric of the site, whilst balancing this with provision for access, recreation and enjoyment of the landscape
- Protect the integrity and openness of the greenspace and the sense of seclusion and relative tranquillity within the nature reserves
- Protect areas where undeveloped skylines predominate as these are sensitive to development which may alter the sense of seclusion and removal from the surrounding urban areas
- Seek to improve connections with the surrounding communities within Waltham Forest and Hackney, through the sensitive design of new entrance points between the two reserves, and enhance entrance points and wayfinding along the southern boundary with Hackney Marshes and along Lea Bridge Road
- Seek to establish connections to Walthamstow and Leyton Marshes to the north and Hackney Marshes to the south to enable access between the different parts of the Lee Valley which are currently

## LCA E2: Middlesex Filter Beds & The Water Works Nature Reserve

severed from one another

- The siting and scale of development within or adjacent to the parklands should respond to the integrity of the green open spaces within the valley and the small, intimate and intricate scale of the landscape. In addition, adequate provision for planting should be made to screen and soften views of the development from within the Park and maintain open skylines

# LCA E3: Bow Creek Ecological Park



## LCA E3: Bow Creek Ecological Park



Limited crossing points over the River Lea create an island effect.



High rise buildings including renowned London landmarks provide a strong urban setting.



A range of aquatic habitats within a series of ponds controlled by a coordinated water system.



Small scale footpaths enclosed by dense areas of vegetation provide a sense of intimacy within the park.

### Location and Boundaries

4.133 The Bow Creek Ecological Park is located in the London Borough of Newham at a tight meander in the lower Lea near the mouth where it meets the Thames. It forms an area of open space within a largely built up area, strongly defined by the River Lea which wraps almost entirely around the area. The A13 and Barking Road form the northern boundary and The Docklands Light Railway bisects the park, connecting with Canning Town station in the north east.

# LCA E3: Bow Creek Ecological Park



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### Key characteristics

- A small park set within an 'island' created by the bow-shaped meander of the River Lea – a heavily modified site originally Osier Beds, reclaimed in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> Century and used as an iron works and later for landfill
- A mosaic of rich habitats including wetlands, trees and scrub as well as meadow and grassed banks recognised through its designation as a Site Important for Nature Conservation
- Areas of open water with interconnecting channels and ponds and wet meadow areas and tidal mudflats in the Lea provide an ecological focus to the park
- Strong urban influences dominated by the Docklands Light Railway running through the area and the strong presence of high rise buildings in the local area
- Small areas of Willow coppice are present which reflects the former Osier Beds used for weaving craft.
- Feature entrance gates and outdoor meeting space with mural designed by Jan Rosser and Penny Sadubin
- A simple looped footpath with smaller, more enclosed paths and boardwalk create a sense of intimacy away from the influences of built development in the north

## Evaluation

### Landscape Quality & Condition

- 4.134 Bow Creek Ecological Park is generally well-managed with evidence of regular habitat management. The landscape pattern is simple with a wide looping footpath lying between grassed railway banks and the wetland ponds. A boardwalk area and wet meadow area add visual interest and overall quality although this is impacted slightly by modern repairs and litter. The constant tone of nearby traffic and regularly passing trains act as a constant reminder of the city context in this isolated area of semi-natural landscape.

### Valued Features and Characteristics

- The small scale landscape forming part of the last remaining semi-natural areas in Lower Lea
- The concentration of semi-natural habitats within a heavily built up area playing an important part in the Lee Valley migration route, reflected in SINC status
- The water system with interconnected channels and small ponds supporting a range of aquatic habitats and providing a variety of visual experiences
- The mural and community space in the center of the park provides opportunities for education and community involvement

## Landscape Strategy

- 4.135 This landscape provides a diverse range of wetland habitats providing opportunities for the community to be involved with its continued management. The strategy is to protect and enhance the conservation value of Bow Creek Ecology Park whilst continuing to encourage community involvement and public access.
- 4.136 The *Bow Creek Ecology Park Management Plan 2017-2022*, prepared by the LVRPA, sets out a vision and detailed management plans for the park.

### Guidelines

- Conserve existing wetland habitats and consider greater reed management to encourage more areas of open water
- Encourage greater community involvement in the park and consider reinstatement of willow coppice for willow craft
- Promote further recreational uses including coordinated signage, integrating with the wider Lee Valley network.

# LCA E4: East India Dock Basin



## Location and Boundaries

- 4.137 The East India Dock Basin is the last remnant of the old East India Dock System and is located on the northern bank on the River Thames, opposite the O2 Arena at Greenwich. It is one of few open spaces within an extensively urbanised area of residential and industrial development, with the A1020 Lower Lea Crossing delineating the northern extent. A small scale housing development defines the area to the west whilst medium to large scale warehouses and sheds lie to the east.

## LCA E4: East India Dock Basin



Remaining features from the area's use as docklands provide a sense of place and time-depth.



Large lock gates and machine pits at Blackwall Pier provide a rich frontage from the Thames.



Panoramic, uninterrupted views are available across the Thames and towards the city skyline.



The dock basin is rich with birdlife with a number of hides situated throughout the park.

### Key characteristics

- Small park created around a historic dock basin, formerly the entrance port to the main East India Dock, now comprising an area of open water enclosed by brick walls and backed by areas of open meadow, succession woodland and scrub
- Strongly influenced by remaining historic fabric, including listed capstans and machine pits adjacent to the Lock gates
- Historic maritime associations dating back to the early 17<sup>th</sup> century when the Virginia Settlers set off from Blackwall Stairs and later with Thames Iron Works and Shipbuilding Company including the nearby Canning Town Station used to transport equipment and supplies
- Open waters and dense scrub of mixed native species important for birds including fire crest and white throat which is reflected in its designation as a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation
- The dock is tidal with occasional flooding at high tides contributing to a valuable salt marsh habitat established on the northern shore of the basin, significant for being the westernmost found on the Thames
- Blackwall Pier and entrance lock to former East India Dock Basin inhibit a rich river frontage remnant of the operational dock and is Grade II listed
- Dominated by Canary Wharf which forms a backdrop to the west and other modern high-rise development emerging to the north and east.
- Expansive, panoramic views of the Thames available from the waterfront at Blackwall Pier
- Sculptural gates with maritime influences produced by Sir Antony Caro Salome as part of an art commission



## Evaluation

### Landscape Quality & Condition

4.138 A well-managed wetland area that supports a diverse range of habitats and bird species and allows for expansive riverside views. There is evidence of regular habitat management which is reflected in the bird activity in the basin. The landscape is popular with the local community providing an attractive area for informal recreation within a well-built up area. Some areas of amenity grassland are of poorer quality reflecting the heavy recreational use that this area receives.

### Valued Features and Characteristics

- An enclosed and contained character contrasting with expansive, panoramic views of the Thames
- One of few remaining disused docks with preserved dock features which have been retained for nature conservation, and with SINCS status
- The most westerly area of salt marshland on the Thames and the only area to be found in the Lee Valley providing valuable habitat for many bird species including the Black Redstart
- Feature gates providing a strong sense of arrival and reflecting the former maritime uses

## Landscape Strategy

4.139 The East India Dock Basin should continue to be managed for its wetland habitat supporting important bird species. Informal recreational uses should be carefully coordinated to minimise

disturbance and maintain the rich assemblages of aquatic habitats and the well-preserved dock features.

4.140 A vision and detailed management plan for the park is provided in the *East India Dock Basin Management Plan 2017-2022* prepared by the LVRPA.

### Guidelines

- Conserve the integrity of the historic fabric of the park, including the listed and non-listed features
- Conserve the remaining areas of open river frontage with associated views and seek enhancement opportunities for further connectivity along the river corridor
- Enhance the site to encourage more informal recreational and educational opportunities
- Conserve the integrity of important wetland habitats and continue to manage the area positively as a locally valuable habitat for wildlife

# LCT F: Peri-Urban Valley Floor



## LCT F: Peri-Urban Valley Floor



View along the Lee Navigation from the A406 North Circular

### Overview

- 4.141 This Landscape Character Type represents a narrow area of the Park where industrial development and major transport infrastructure come together. The area comprises remnants of former industrial activity and built development bisected by a visually prominent road viaduct.
- 4.142 Pioneer scrub and grassland vegetation has since established on derelict sites and along the edges of the linear waterways that run through the area and delineate recreational routes continuing along the valley floor.

### Physical Influences

- 4.143 The character type occurs along the valley floor on areas of reclaimed marshland which has been fragmented by a range of former land uses and the introduction of major highways and flood relief channels. Succession scrub and grassland occupy a large part of this disturbed landscape and the banks of the River Lea.

### Natural Character

- 4.144 Although much of the area suffers from pollution and contamination caused by former industrial activities that have not

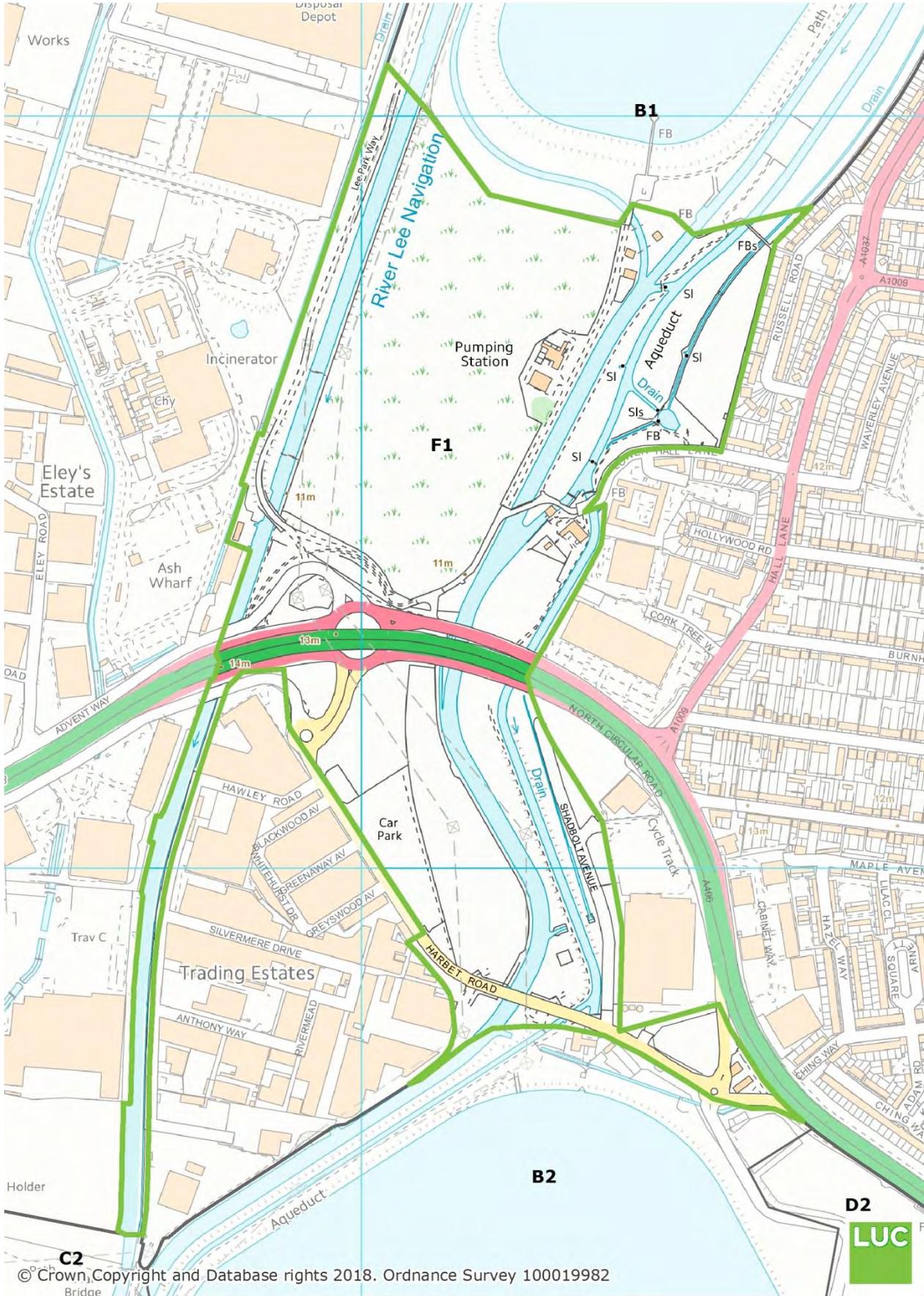
been remediated and extensive dumping of waste, the broad areas of pioneer grassland and linear swathes of woodland and scrub on former industrial sites and along waterways are important due to the heavily urbanised context in which they are situated.

- 4.145 The landscape therefore forms an important link for birds between the reservoirs and wetlands within the lower valley and much of the area falls within the Lea Valley SINC, in this case a Site of Metropolitan Importance for nature conservation.

### Cultural Influences

- 4.146 Heritage assets associated with the series of Victorian and 20<sup>th</sup> century reservoirs nearby reflect the former industrial activity in and around the area. This includes the Grade II listed Chingford Mill Pumping Station.
- 4.147 The abundance of industrial development past and present, isolates the area from the wider landscape and from residential areas, whilst major roads and waterways create further barriers to access. The current recreational opportunities are severely restricted to activities associated with the Lee Navigation.
- 4.148 There are also low levels of tranquillity as a result of the crossing of elevated roads, tall, overlooking buildings and structures as well as overhead powerlines present in the majority of views.

# LCA F1: Edmonton





Pockets of regenerating scrub and woodland provide a degree of enclosure around more open areas of ground more recently disturbed by industrial activities



Trees and scrub along the River Lee Navigation provide linear wildlife and access corridor, channelling long views through the valley



Extensive fly-tipping and un-checked dumping of waste is a source of pollution and detracts from the character of the area



Pylons and engineered embankments are prominent features across the area

### Location and Boundaries

- 4.149 This area of previously developed open space at the edge of Edmonton falls within Enfield and Waltham Forest, and extends along the valley floor between the William Girling Reservoir and Banbury Reservoir. The A406 and associated slip roads and roundabouts, partly raised on a viaduct, bisect the area from east to west, severing the north and south. The character area is strongly defined by neighbouring industrial areas fringing the A406, the reservoir embankments in the north and residential streets at the edge of Chingford to the east.



## Key characteristics

- Wide, flat river valley floor, comprising reclaimed former marshlands with succession woodland, scrub and grassland on areas previously used by Thames Water utilities
- Complex, industrialised character, strongly influenced by recent industrial activities within the site and the proximity of major roads, large scale water utilities infrastructure, large industrial estates and the London Eco Park
- History of industrial development backing onto the area has isolated it from residential communities in the wider area, in Edmonton and Chingford
- Mixed landscape pattern ranging from broad, open areas of regenerating grassland on former industrial sites, to smaller semi-enclosed spaces with a mixture of regenerating scrub fringed with woodland
- The waterways of the River Lee Navigation and Lee Diversion Channel form largely continuous recreational and wildlife corridors, with long, channeled views created by the lines of trees and scrub fringing them
- Low levels of tranquility due to the proximity of the A406 and overhead power lines through the valley floor are a prominent feature in nearly all views
- Fragmented character with roads and flood relief channels creating barriers to access across the area and former industrial and utilities activities still evident giving the area a despoiled appearance
- Heritage assets linked to the history of the development of the network of Victorian and 20<sup>th</sup> Century reservoirs, including the Grade II Listed Chingford Mill Pumping Station
- Most of the area forms part of the Lea Valley SINC (in this case a SMINC), proving an open green space forming a link between the series of wetlands and reservoirs within the lower valley which are internationally important for birds

## Evaluation

### Landscape Quality & Condition

- 4.150 The landscape is heavily fragmented by the major roads and water utilities infrastructure that sever the landscape; within the center of the area ongoing industrial activities give it a despoiled appearance. Due to the very limited access to the area, the opportunities for recreation are currently limited to walking and cycling along the Lee Navigation. However, within a heavily urbanised and industrialised context, the area serves as a significant area of open, undeveloped **'green' space, with the regenerating grassland and scrub as well as the trees lining the waterways** providing biodiversity interest. It provides a break between the urban areas adjacent to the valley and contributes to the continuity of green spaces along the valley floor.

### Valued Features and Characteristics

- Value as a habitat for wildlife within an industrial and urban context – reflected in most of the area being included in the Lea Valley SINC
- **An open 'green' space forming an important link along the valley floor** –contributing to the continuity of the LVRP and providing a link between the series of wetlands and reservoirs within the lower valley
- Listed and non-listed heritage assets which provide links to the area's industrial heritage

## Landscape Strategy

- 4.151 The surrounding area to the southeast is likely to undergo a large transformation in the coming years in relation to Meridian Water – a large scale regeneration project which will include the re-development of the area to the west of the LVRP within Enfield for housing and mixed use. This landscape is therefore likely to become important as a gateway to the wider valley landscape, including popular and high-profile recreational areas such as the Walthamstow Wetlands.
- 4.152 The long term strategy for the area is therefore to take the potential opportunities that future growth associated with Meridian Water could provide to transform the area, with a focus on maximising its ecological, biodiversity, and recreational value and improving access. The long-standing severances that have characterised this part of the LVRP and its marginal status should be addressed to provide a multi-functional landscape serving the needs of the new communities whilst supporting a rich diversity of flora and fauna.

### Guidelines

- Ensure any future development protects existing valued features and enhances the landscape framework across the area – it should demonstrate careful design that integrates development physically, visually and functionally into the wider LVRP landscape
- The siting of development within or adjacent to the Park should respond to and not undermine the integrity of the existing open spaces within the valley
- Ensure future development provides a strong framework of trees and vegetation to screen and soften views of development from within the Park
- Seek to enhance habitat value and connectivity whilst balancing this with provision of recreation and enjoyment of the landscape
- Protect the stability and integrity of listed and non-listed heritage assets and seek to improve the setting of Grade II Listed Chingford Mill Pumping Station
- Seek improved connections with the existing surrounding communities within Edmonton, through the sensitive design of new entrance points, and enhance entrance points and wayfinding from Tottenham Marshes and Banbury Reservoir
- Seek to establish connections to the wider Lee Valley, particularly to the south, to enable access between the different parts of the Lee Valley which are currently severed from one another

# LCT G: River Terraces with Farmland

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## LCT G: River Terraces with Farmlands



View over valley from Roydon Park

### Overview

4.153 This Landscape Character Type is located in the north of the LVRP within the districts of East Herts and Epping Forest. It is characterised by distinctive rolling hills rising up from the flat floodplain. This type has origins as estate parkland with well-defined hedgerows and specimen trees scattered throughout.

### Physical Influences

4.154 The landscape comprises a distinct change in landform sloping up from the valley floor and a more regular field pattern defined by mature hedgerows which forms a rural backdrop in views from the Lee Valley. There are some influences from adjacent villages and roads crossing the landscape, although intervening tree cover allows the type to retain a sense of tranquillity. This is reinforced by cross-valley views across open waterbodies. Medium scale arable and pastoral fields with scattered veteran trees are key features and result in a remnant parkland character.

### Natural Character

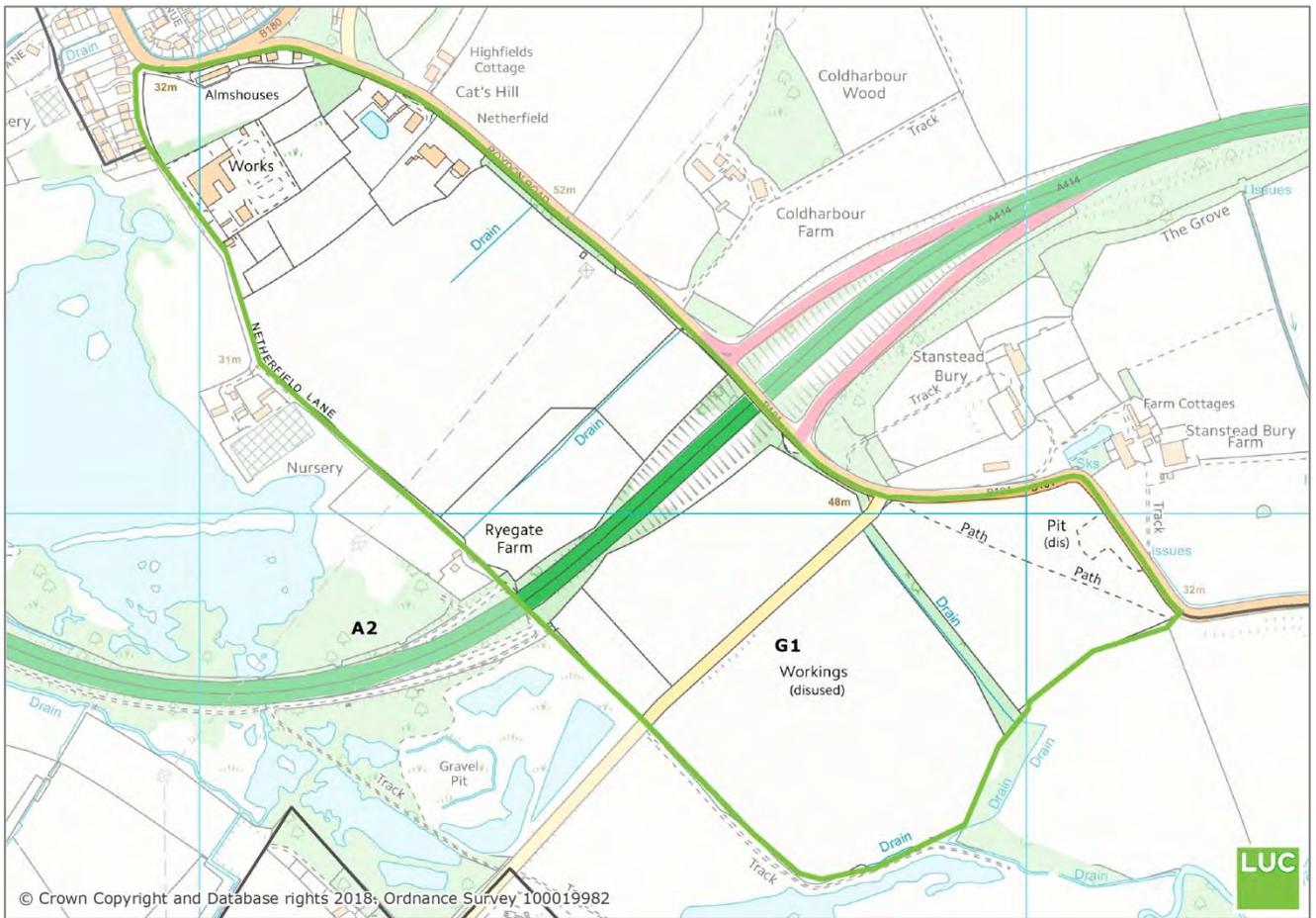
4.155 The mature trees interspersed in open fields are an important feature to the natural character of this Landscape Character Type. Small irregular blocks of deciduous woodland also occupy the sloping land and are recognised as a Priority Habitat. No nature conservation designations cover this area.

### Cultural Influences

4.156 Some large country houses, including Grade II Listed Netherfield House are found near to Stanstead Abbots and the remnant semi parkland character extending from Stanstead Bury Park (Grade II) immediately to the east of the Landscape Character Type. The Grade II listed Downe Hall is also located to the south west of Roydon and the removal of hedgerows around Roydon was a result of 19<sup>th</sup> century enclosure of common land.

4.157 The Stort Valley Way and Three Forests Way run along the lower slopes and provide a key gateway into the Stort and Lee Valley.

# LCA G1: Ryegate Farm/Terbets Hill



View towards the low Terbetts Hill from the eastern edge of Rye Meads

### Location and Boundaries

4.158 Terbets Hill is located to the north of the LVRP at the confluence of the Rivers Stort and Lea. It is a distinct terrace landform rising up from the flat floodplain. The B181 runs along the northern and eastern boundary with the settlement of Stanstead Abbots lying immediately adjacent to the north. The southern and western extent is defined by hedgerows and tree belts and the change in landform, from Rye Meads on the floodplain. It is cut by the A414 Stanstead Abbots bypass. The area is within East Herts District.

#### Key characteristics

- Rounded slopes of open farmland and tree-lined roads creating the appearance of wooded ridges in views from the floodplain.
- A managed agricultural landscape with a strong rural character and largely undeveloped skyline and backdrop to the floodplain.
- Predominantly pasture fields with some isolated specimens trees reflecting its historic origins as parkland and creating a strong parkland character.
- Small to medium scale field pattern defined by post and wire fencing, hedgerows and isolated blocks of woodland. Strips of deciduous woodland are associated with the bypass.
- Some large country houses, including Grade II Listed Netherfield House enclosed by tree clumps and belts near to Stanstead Abbots and remnant semi parkland character including Stanstead Bury Park (Grade II) immediately to the east of the area.
- Noise and visual intrusion from nearby transport corridors, notably the Stanstead Abbots by pass that cuts across the terrace, and planes departing and arriving at Stanstead Airport.
- Line of pylons cuts across the slopes and across the valley floor.
- Long views from the valley slopes across open bodies of water and wetlands within the Lee Valley floor towards the urban edge of Hoddesdon.



### Evaluation

#### Landscape Quality & Condition

- 4.159 The landscape of this area has been subject to intensive farming with associated field enlargement and loss of boundaries and landscape structure. It has also been severed by the A414 although recent woodland planting limits the wider visual influence of the road. A pylon line crossing the hills and descending to the valley is a prominent vertical feature. Intact tree belts defining small scale fields in the south east provide a sense of enclosure, and contrasts with the open views over the Lee Valley from more elevated land. Overall this area provides a rural wooded backdrop and enclosure to the valley floor and apart from the pylons a largely uninterrupted skyline.

### Valued Features and Characteristics

- Specimen trees within fields reflecting the historic parkland origins and abundance of tree cover associated with field boundaries on the lower slopes transitioning with the floodplain
- Open cross-valley views over large water bodies on the floodplain
- Strong rural character which persists across the area, away from the A414
- Role as a rural backdrop and undeveloped skyline to views from the floodplain

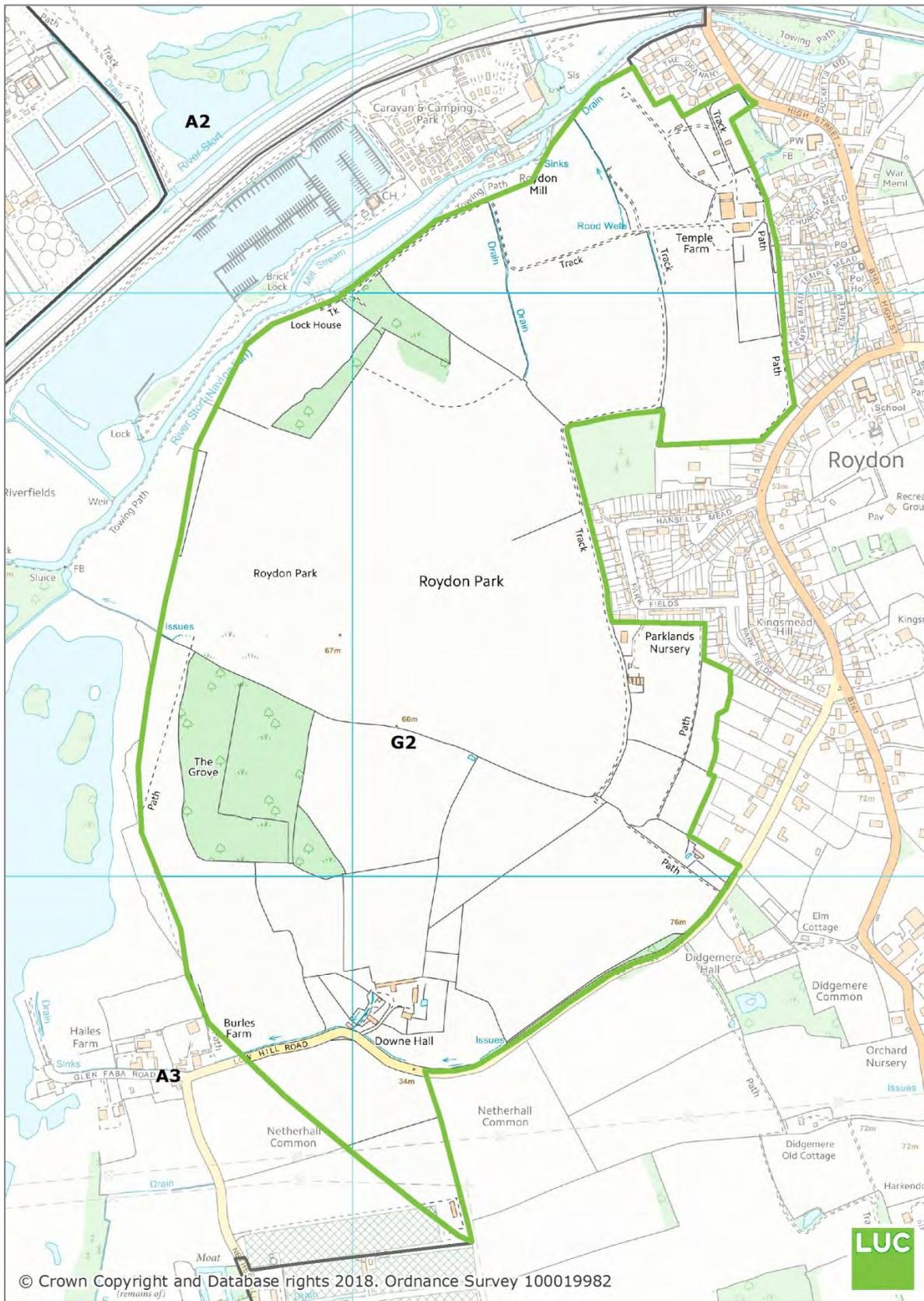
### Landscape Strategy

4.160 The aim for this area is to retain its function as a rural backdrop and skyline in views from the floodplain, in this northern part of the LVRP. There is an opportunity to explore and perpetuate historic parkland character in new planting.

#### Guidelines

- Retain existing hedgerows and encourage the replanting of hedges along historic field boundaries using locally indigenous species to retain function as wooded skyline
- Manage small wooded areas for their diversity and seek to continue to manage and extend new woodland planting around the A414
- Consider parkland history and opportunities to perpetuate the parkland character with specimen trees in new planting
- Maintain the rural character limiting development particularly further tall structures which create a more interrupted skyline in views from the valley

# LCA G2: Roydon Park





View along field boundary with the valley visible beyond



View over the valley with glasshouses visible on the edge of the valley floor and the power station at Hoddesdon visible in the distance

### Location and Boundaries

4.161 Roydon Park is located to the north of the LVRP forming a distinctive rounded hill above the 30m AOD contour to the east of the flat Lea floodplain and contained by the Stort Navigation to the north. It is a prominent and unique partly wooded hill within the LVRP boundary. It is within Epping Forest District.

#### Key characteristics

- Rounded slopes of open arable farmland defined by mature hedgerows and interspersed with small blocks of deciduous woodland and some veteran trees indicative of medieval parkland origins.
- Small woodland copses occupying the slopes create localised areas of enclosure and create a strong rural backdrop in views from the valley floor
- A relative sense of tranquility forming a rural setting to Roydon.
- A patchwork of small to medium scale arable fields and small woodlands reflecting the largely intact historic field pattern
- Long distance, framed and panoramic views across the Stort and Lee Valleys with prominent buildings and structures within industrial estates on the western valley side at Hoddesdon



## Evaluation

### Landscape Quality & Condition

- 4.162 The landscape is well-managed as farmland and remains largely intact with only a small number of field boundaries within Roydon Park having been lost. There is a relatively strong rural character with an absence of large scale built development in and around the area and the open, cross valley views from elevated land and a sense of tranquillity. The area forms a valuable rural wooded backdrop to the Lea and Stort Valleys.

### Valued Features and Characteristics

- Hedgerows and small woodland copses defining the historic field pattern and providing a coherent ecological network connecting with the river corridors and valley floor.
- Veteran trees persisting in hedgerows and contributing to historic character and medieval parkland origins.
- Framed and open views into the corridor of the River Stort and over the Lee Valley with open waterbodies and vast tree cover.
- An undeveloped, rural and wooded hillside backdrop framing views from the valley floor which is unique in the context of the LVRP.
- The relatively strong sense of tranquillity free from considerable urbanising influences and contrasting with the industrial development on the west side of the valley.
- Range of recreational access including the Stort Valley Way and Three Forest Way providing varying experiences of the valley and connections to adjacent settlements.
- A rural setting to Roydon.

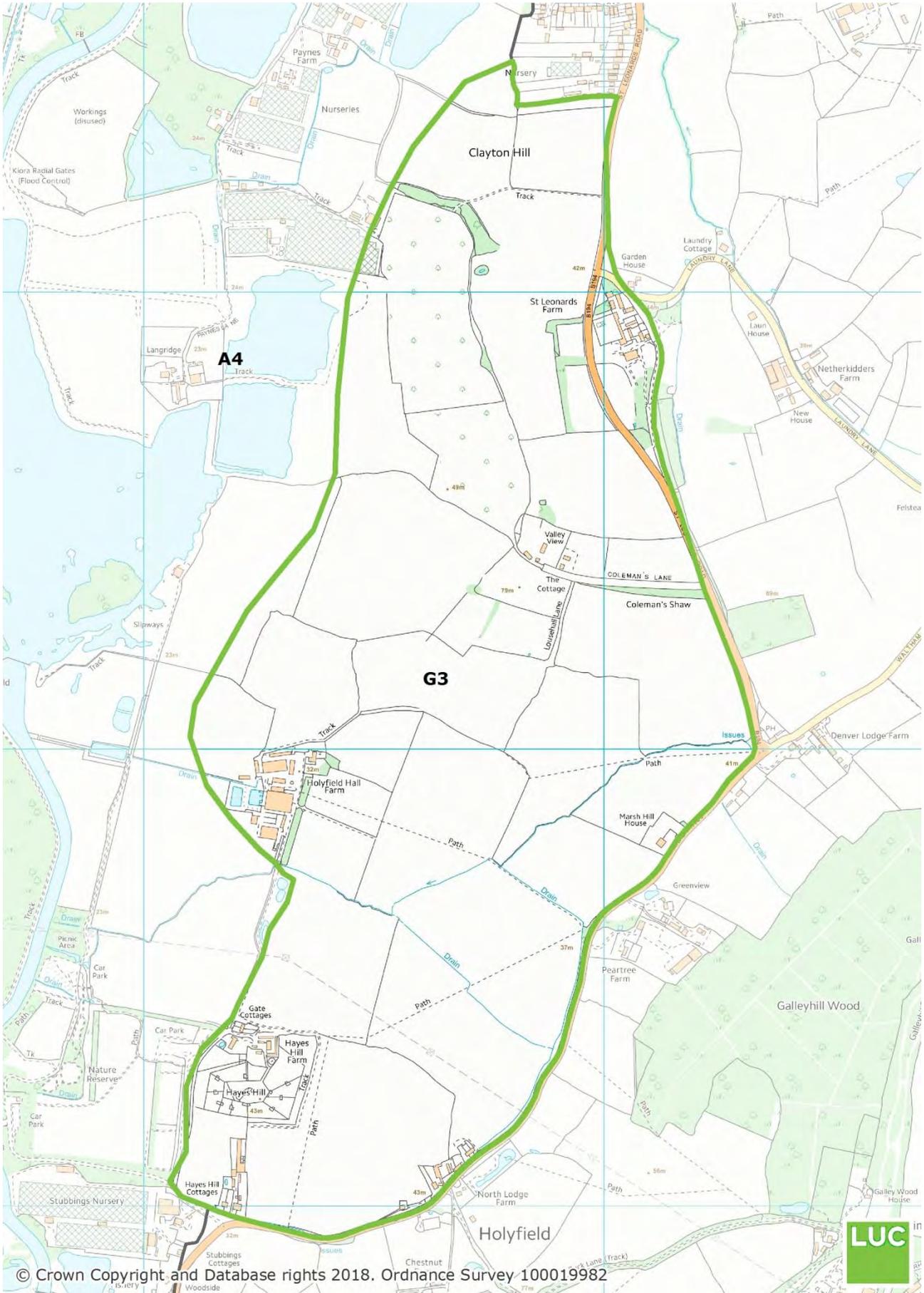
### Landscape Strategy

4.163 The Roydon Park area should continue to provide a prominent wooded rural backdrop to this part of the LVRP, providing enclosure in views from the valley floor and framed and panoramic views out over the floodplain. Its historic character including intact field pattern and veteran trees should be conserved and perpetuated. It should continue to provide a rural setting to the valley and Roydon.

#### Guidelines

- Conserve and enhance the distinctive wooded character created by the blocks of woodland and intact field boundaries, and consider opportunities to reinstate the historic parkland character.
- Conserve, enhance and perpetuate veteran trees and seek to promote growth of new generations of mature trees.
- Conserve the predominantly rural character and role as landscape setting to the valley and to Roydon.
- Maintain characteristic views across farmland and into the valleys of the Stort and Lea.
- Conserve and enhance the existing hedgerow pattern and strengthen through planting using local species.
- Establish species rich field margins within arable fields as habitat and prevent the further loss of hedgerows.
- Conserve the sense of tranquillity and absence of development in this area which contrasts with the more industrial western side of the valley.
- Conserve the rural undeveloped skyline ensuring any development is below the tree canopy and avoiding development of tall/vertical structures in this location.
- Conserve opportunities for recreational access and enhance connections with the valley.

# LCA G3: Clayton Hill





North from Coleman's Shaw - mature oak trees within the arable fields are a feature of the rolling farmland.



South along public path running along the ridgeline with mature trees and field margins sown with flowering meadows species.



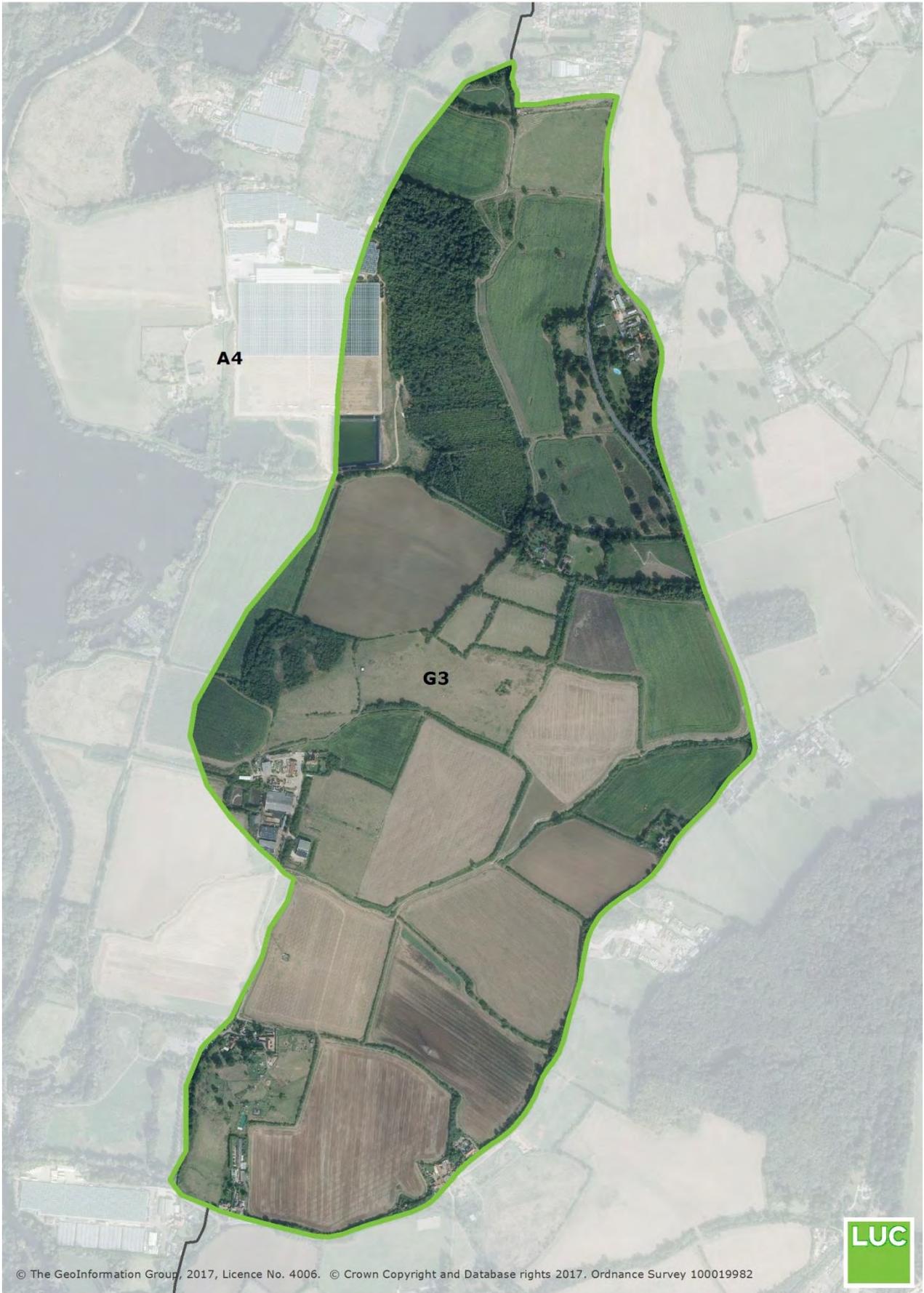
View from ridge towards Clayton Hill overlooking the valley floor and glasshouses around Lower Nazeing.



Nazeing Marsh towards Coleman's Shaw which forms a rural back-drop to the valley.

### Location and Boundaries

- 4.164 Clayton Hill is situated towards the north of the LVRP within Epping Forest District and lies along the eastern Park boundary between Lower Nazeing in the north and Holyfield in the south. It comprises a series of gently sloping hills rising up to the east of Nazeing Marsh differentiated from LCA A4 on the valley floor by the 25m contour. The LVRP boundary, broadly defined by St Leonards Road (B194), forms the eastern extent of the study area, although the landscape type continues further into the Epping District.



### Key characteristics

- Series of low, rounded hills rising up from the River Lea floodplain to the west, underlain by London Clay
- A managed agricultural landscape with a strong rural character providing an undeveloped skyline and backdrop to the floodplain
- Mixture of small to medium scale arable fields, irregular in pattern, with a strong network of hedgerows and occasional field trees in the north, including mature and veteran oaks
- **Blocks of deciduous woodland on hill slopes, such as Coleman’s Shaw, providing important landscape features and a wooded backdrop to parts of the valley floor**
- Isolated farmsteads on the western slopes, including Hayes Farm housing Lee Valley Park Farm
- Occasional cottages, including Grade II listed Chestnut Cottage
- Some noise from nearby transport corridors to the west, but generally high levels of tranquility
- Strong rural and undeveloped character, although glasshouse developments in the north and a line of pylons cutting across the slopes in the south reduce this locally
- Wide, far reaching views **available from the ridgeline between Coleman’s Shaw and Clayton Hill across open bodies of water and wetlands within the Lee Valley floor,** to the urban edge of Cheshunt

## Evaluation

### Landscape Quality & Condition

- 4.166 The area has a rural character with an absence of large scale built development and a strong landscape structure of hedgerows and woodland which contributes to the rural setting of the valley floor. Although subject to intensification, the area retains an irregular field pattern and some mature field trees, and in some areas strips of wild-flower meadows have been sown around field margin to increase biodiversity interest.
- 4.167 Overall this area serves an important role providing a rural wooded backdrop and enclosure to the valley floor and with the exception of the pylon lines crossing the south, an uninterrupted skyline. Open, cross valley views are available from the elevated ridges, providing orientation, with these viewpoints served by well maintained public rights of way.

### Valued Features and Characteristics

- Strong rural character providing a distinctive setting to the valley floor, including the undeveloped skyline provided by the wooded hillside at **Coleman's Shaw**
- Mature field oaks, strong structure of hedgerows and pockets of woodland provide important wildlife corridors between the valley floor and the wider landscape
- Locally distinctive and topographic features in the valley, both within and outside the LVRP which **contribute to the area's setting**
- Vantage points along the ridgetops, allowing for extensive cross-valley views
- Small to medium scale, largely intact field pattern giving the impression of a lightly settled landscape character
- Sense of tranquility and dark night skies, contrasting with the urbanised western setting to the LVRP at Cheshunt

## Landscape Strategy

- 4.168 The area should continue to provide a prominent wooded and rural backdrop to this part of the LVRP, providing undeveloped skylines in views from the valley floor and framed and panoramic views out over the floodplain. Its intact field pattern and veteran trees should be conserved and opportunities for the further enhancement of its nature conservation interest sought.

### Guidelines

- Conserve the openness of the more elevated locations on the valley sides and retain the wooded skyline
- Conserve and enhance the distinctive wooded character created by the blocks of woodland and intact field boundaries, planting where appropriate and considering opportunities to reinstate the historic parkland character
- Conserve, enhance and perpetuate veteran trees and seek to promote growth of new generations of mature trees
- Conserve the predominantly rural character and role as landscape setting to the valley
- Maintain vantage points where views across farmland into the Lee Valley are available, through appropriate management of woodland where it screens views from these points
- Conserve and enhance the existing hedgerow pattern and strengthen through planting using local species
- Maintain and seek further opportunities to introduce species rich field margins within arable fields as habitat and prevent the further loss of hedgerows
- Conserve the sense of tranquility and absence of development in this area which contrasts with the more industrial western side of the valley
- Conserve the rural undeveloped skyline ensuring any development is below the tree canopy and avoiding development of tall/vertical structures in this location
- Conserve opportunities for recreational access and enhance connections with the valley

# LCT H: Terraces With Industrial Legacy Parkland



## LCT H: Terraces With Industrial Legacy Parkland



Characteristic skyline of the Olympic Park –temporary planting in the foreground, adjacent to a plot awaiting development

### Overview

4.169 This Landscape Character Type occurs in two areas of the Park: the Gunpowder Park (LCA H1) at Waltham Abbey and the Olympic Park (LCA H2). These are large scale areas regenerated from heavily industrialised sites, although in contrast to the smaller scale LCT E Valley Floor With Post Industrial Parks, there are few original built or landscape features remaining from former industrial activities. These are landscapes that have been transformed by large scale remediation work required to decontaminate them, and in the case of the Olympic Park, are still undergoing significant change through ongoing regeneration working within and around them.

### Physical Influences

4.170 The character type occurs within different geographic contexts although both extend across the valley floor and its terraces. The main determinant of this landscape type is the transformation and regeneration these areas have undergone following intensive industrial use, to become large areas of publically accessible open parkland. Consistent physical features that occur across the areas despite differing geographical contexts include large scale man-made earthworks and landforms and extensive areas of re-created habitats, including

grasslands and flowering meadows, reed beds, wet woodland and woodland.

### Natural Character

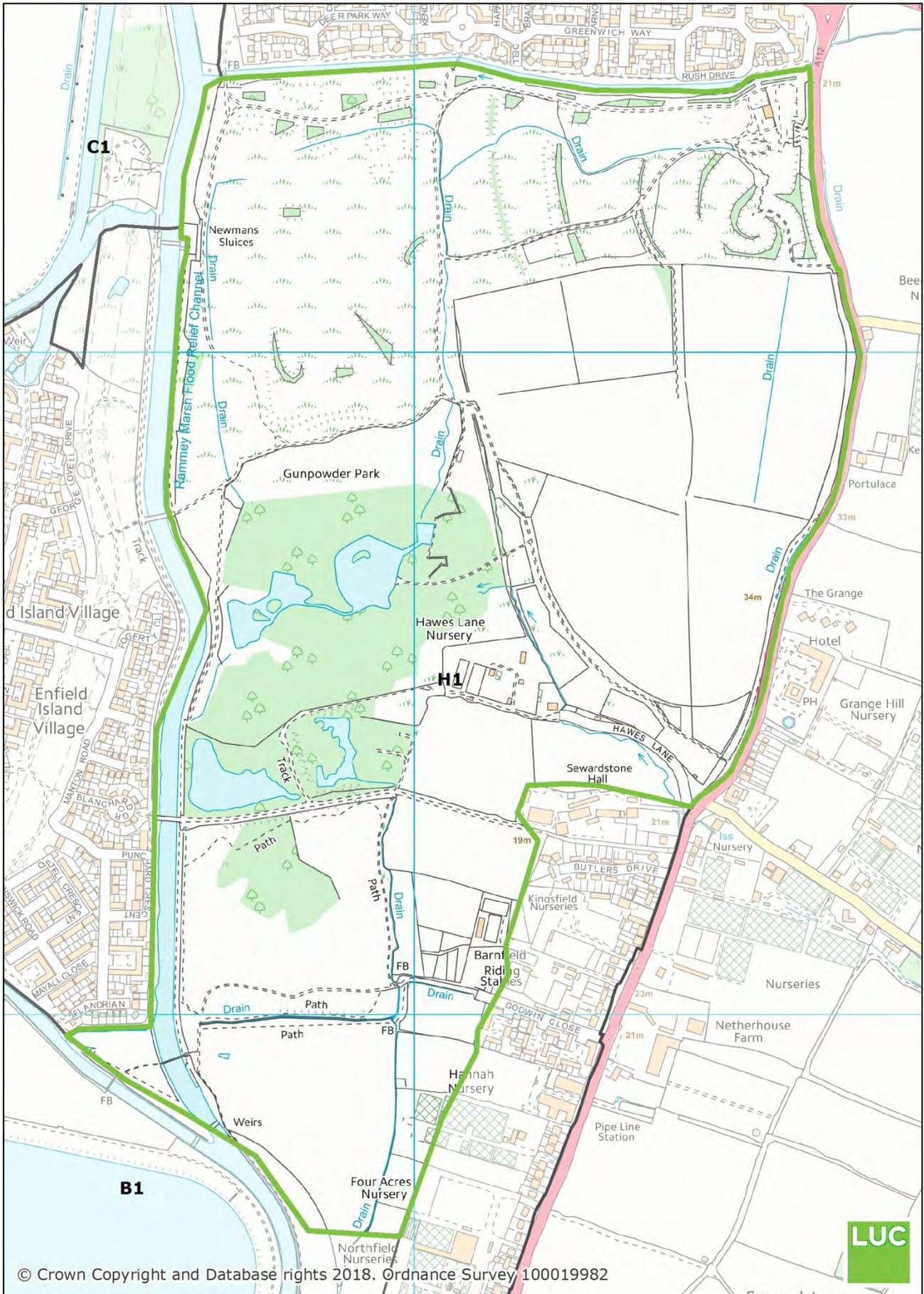
4.171 The mixture of woodland, meadow, plots of land temporarily planted with mixtures of herbaceous plants, and wetland habitats present in these areas are particularly important where they occur within a heavily urbanised context. Within the central valley, parts of the type are designated as a SINCs and Country Wildlife Sites (LCA H1).

### Cultural Influences

4.172 Although there are very few heritage assets and few standing features remaining from the former industrial uses, these landscapes provide indirect narratives of how the Lee Valley has undergone several phases of transformation. Through a complex period of industrialisation to regeneration for public enjoyment and recreation alongside the re-instatement of semi-natural habitats that were once common throughout the valley.

4.173 Most areas are now publically accessible (although privately owned in the case of the Olympic Park) and are managed as parks with management plans in place to maintain and enhance their habitat value. Paths and trails have been created which provide important links through the valley for visitors to enjoy the landscape.

# LCA H1: Gunpowder Park





The Field Station located at the main entrance in the northeast, with a series of sculptural mounds planted with Guelder rose in the foreground



Framed view from the meadows on the elevated slopes over the valley floor



The urban edge is visible to the north, with an incongruous mixture of recent housing development and large scale warehouses



Hides within the enclosed wet woodland carr created on Ossier Marsh

### Location and Boundaries

- 4.174 Gunpowder Park is an area of open amenity parkland located towards the centre of the LVRP, almost immediately south of the M25 and Waltham Abbey. The area is broadly defined by the extent of the Gunpowder Park Country Park that lies east of the Rammey Marsh Flood Relief Channel. To the north, the Meridian Village housing development is separated from the Park by **the 'Black Ditch' and** to the east Sewardstone Road and the edge of Sewardstone Village form the boundary. To the south the area is defined by a channel of the River Lea as it meets the edge of **Sewardstone, just north of King George's Reservoir.**



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### Key characteristics

- Parkland comprising 115 hectares of regenerated green space on the site formerly used for large scale munitions production, with parts of the former agricultural landscape still evident in the field pattern in the south
- Occupying a gently sloping valley side, extending from the flat valley floor east and rising to approximately 30m AOD
- Mixture of open meadows and agricultural fields interwoven with coppice blocks and scrub on valley sides and smaller scale, more enclosed mosaic of water-filler gravel pits, reed swamp, wet grasslands and wet woodland within the valley floor
- Few features or remnants of the Royal Ordinance munitions works evident – a landscape shaped by the remediation works rather than the original Ordinance Site established in the 1885 as an extension to the Royal Gunpowder Mills (LCA E1 Royal Gunpowder Mills)
- **Crossed by several ditches, including the 'Black ditch' along the north boundary, formally used to transport goods to the ordinance factory from the Lea and one of the few features remaining of the works apart from three pill boxes which also remain in-situ**
- Evidence of remedial and decontamination works including distinctive earthwork features (created above capped contaminated areas to allow tree planting) and pools and wetlands created in Ossier Marsh from the removal of contaminated land
- Wide views available from more elevated and open valley sides to the east of the park, extending along the valley to the cityscape of east London in the far distance
- Open rolling farmland forms a rural setting to the east, with low wooded ridgelines in the distance at Epping Forest forming an important skyline in the distance – in contrast with the urban areas visible to the north and west
- Encompassing a wide range of habitats, reflecting a transition from wooded valley sides and grassland to the wetlands and riparian habitats of the valley floor - providing important biodiversity and nature conservation interest
- Designated as a SINC and as part of the Sewardstone and Ossier County Wildlife Site – the wet woodland on Ossier Marsh of particular note as one of the few remaining areas in the Lee Valley
- Constant noise from the M25 audible throughout the area
- Limited visual connection with the waterways of the Rammey Marsh Flood Relief Channel which follows the western boundary due to presence of trees and scrub, although weirs and bridge crossings providing visual interest locally
- Network of paths, cycle paths, trails, and boardwalks within the Park allow access to and exploration of the different areas, with wider links established west to Enfield Island Village, south to Sewardstone and north to Meridian Village



View to the southeast towards the wet woodland of Ossier Marsh and Epping Forest on the skyline beyond

## Evaluation

### Landscape Quality & Condition

- 4.175 Gunpowder Park is a diverse landscape, comprising several different areas with different qualities and characteristics, from the elevated, open meadows with distinctive landforms to the intimate and atmospheric wet woodland and small marshes to the south. The area is well maintained and the quality of the landscape is consistent, although the presence of a densely developed housing estate backed by a vast warehouse to the north presents a harsh and incongruous northern edge, close to the main entrance.
- 4.176 There is very little evidence left of the Royal Ordinance munitions works to provide a tangible record of the heritage, with all above ground buildings and infrastructure having been removed when the area was cleared and decontaminated in the 1990s. The decontamination works have **however left a number of distinctive features that imply the area's past as an explosives testing site**, including the earthworks and pools within Ossier Marsh.
- 4.177 The area is oddly disconnected from the main water channels running through the valley, with the Rammey Marsh Flood Relief Channel being screened in views from within the park by vegetation along the western boundary, despite abutting the park. Whilst there are some connections to the wider landscape and communities immediately adjacent to the Country Park, the area is poorly linked to the larger settlement of Waltham Abbey to the north and the valley landscapes beyond.

### Valued Features and Characteristics

- Intricate mosaic of wetlands, woodland and grasslands which provide a sense of naturalness, provide visual diversity (a variety of colours and textures and changing seasonal interest), and a setting for recreation and enjoyment of the landscape
- The man-made sculpted landforms, the series of ditches and water features which provide links to the industrial heritage of the landscape and a sense of place
- Contrast of wider, open views from elevated points at the edge of the Park over the valley floor and beyond and the shorter, unfolding views within the lower valley floor framed by small clearings in trees and shrubs
- Mosaic of important habitats that give the valley its distinctive character
- Localised areas of relative wildness with a sense of tranquility, removed from roads and the visual influence of settlement, which provide an environment for flora and fauna as well as an escape from the urbanised parts of the valley to the north and west
- Network of well-maintained footpaths and trails, which provide an important recreational resource for the local and wider communities and connectivity to the wider valley landscapes

- The belts of woodland and mature trees which help to filter views to the adjacent developed areas

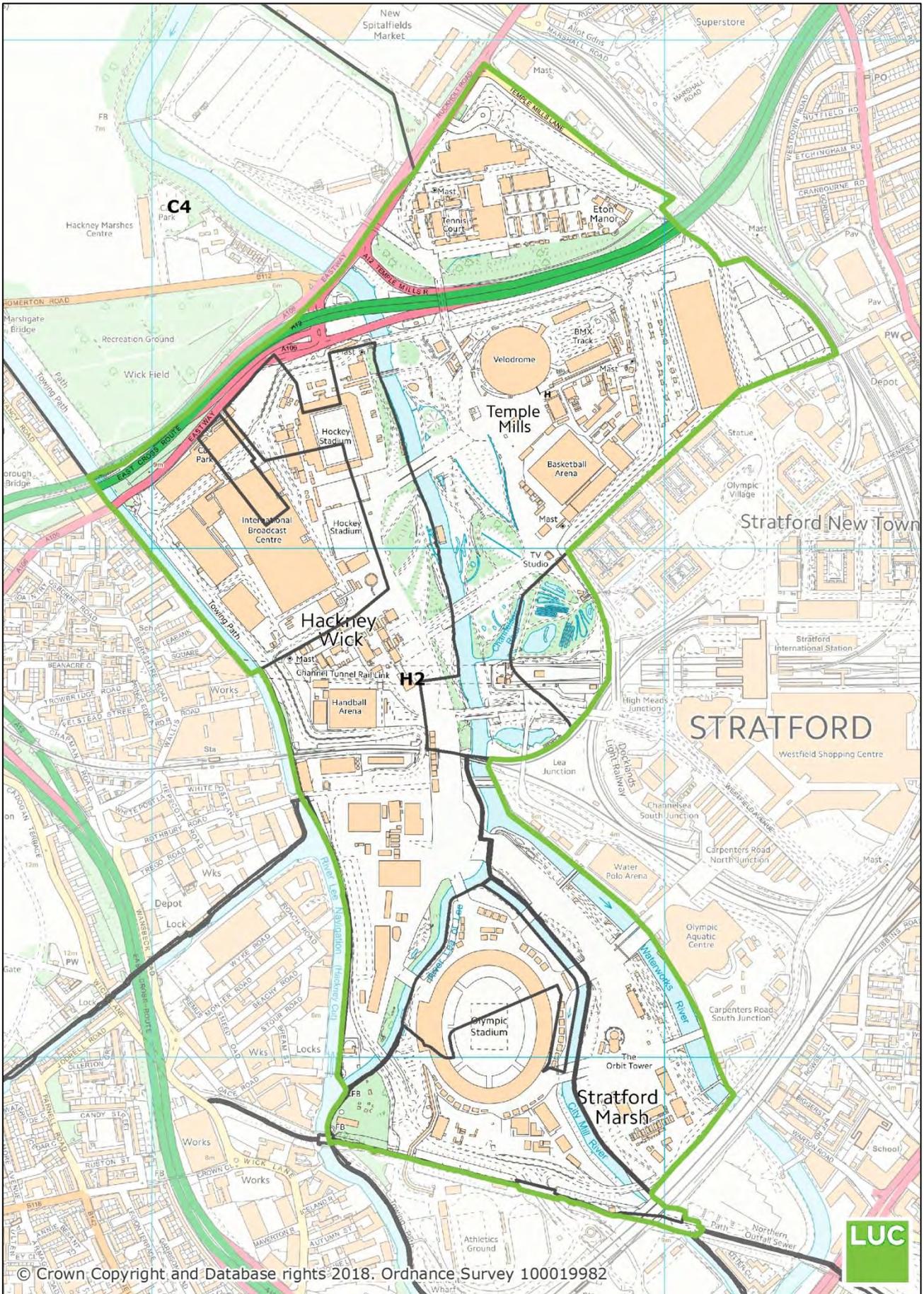
### Landscape Strategy

4.178 This character area provides an important landscape resource in terms of its nature conservation value and the opportunities it provides for informal recreation. It is an area with a largely cohesive landscape character, linked to an industrial past, with semi-natural and rural qualities. The focus should be on conserving and enhancing these valued qualities in the long term and ensuring it continues to support a diverse range of flora and fauna as well as opportunities for people to enjoy the valley landscape.

#### Guidelines

- Continue the positive management of important wetland, woodland and grassland habitats and other features of ecological value, maintaining a balance with the need to provide provision for recreation and enjoyment of the landscape
- Maintain the diversity of high quality spaces and encourage greater integration with the wider landscape, particularly to the west and north, to provide a consistent visitor experience for users of the LVRP
- **Look to enhance the interpretation of the area's industrial heritage, such as giving greater prominence to remaining features in the landscape or re-instating lost features and structures if opportunities arise**
- Take opportunities to plan for the improved integration of existing urban edges to the north, through screening the built development with typical native species
- Take opportunities to plan for the improvement of connections with Waltham Abbey and the wider LVRP beyond, via the Lee Valley Navigation
- Ensure the integration of any further future development into the landscape to maintain the impression of a largely rural setting to the floodplain landscape, through careful siting and consideration of scale and materials
- Protect the rural setting and open skylines to the east that characterises the area
- Take opportunities to re-integrate the major water channels visually with the park, particularly within the north, through selective clearance of boundary vegetation and the improvement of boundary features such as fences

# LCA H2: Olympic Park





The restored River Lea with a wetland basin and surrounding artificial terraced landforms.



Stronger structure of vegetation within the north of the park, with smaller and more intimate spaces.



Plots of land awaiting development have been sown with rich, experimental mixtures of herbaceous plants to provide temporary visual interest and habitats



Large roads and a complex of railway lines cross the area. The former Olympic stadium and the Orbit Tower provide focal points.

### Location and Boundaries

4.179 This character area is located within Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park in the lower Lee Valley, extending between Stratford and Hackney Wick. It includes areas both within the LVRP boundary and areas outside it that clearly form part of the parkland, gardens and green spaces of the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park. The northern boundary is strongly defined by A12 and the Eastway whilst the River Lee Navigation provides the distinction between the Olympic Park and Hackney to the west. The eastern edge is loosely defined by development at the edge of Stratford. The London Greenway forms the southern boundary.



### Key characteristics

- A large scale parkland landscape associated with Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park comprising a mixture of formal parkland with extensive hard landscape and ornamental planting, wetlands, permanent and temporary flowering meadows, wildlife gardens and playgrounds
- Pronounced artificial landform stepping down to the River Lea, which forms the focus and central feature of the park, created as part of the large scale remediation and landscaping works for the 2012 Olympic Games
- Range of interlinked recreational areas of differing scales and complexity: a larger scale southern area dominated by hard landscaping intended for events; smaller and more complex parkland in the northern area with a stronger structure of trees, wetlands and planting
- Rich habitat for birds and invertebrates provided by large areas of herbaceous planting, flowering meadows and wetland features created within the re-formed water channels, including wet woodland, ponds and reed beds
- Crossed by a large complex of roads, railway lines which fragment the area, although the railway lines also provide a link to the historic industrial uses of the area
- A landscape shaped by the remediation works and design for the Olympic Park, with very limited time-depth and little sense of the landscape's historic uses, with the exception of a small number of features retained (including a historic iron bridge)
- Strong presence of contemporary architecture and prominent landmarks in and around the park such as at the Arcelor Mittal Orbit Tower and London Stadium in the south
- Prominent Olympic legacy in the form of former event buildings and interactive signage
- Wide views available from bridge crossings and more elevated valley sides, extending along the valley framed by a complex cityscape on either side

## Evaluation

### Landscape Quality & Condition

- 4.180 **The Olympic Park is a large scale, heavily modified and 'designed' landscape which is continuing to evolve with ongoing large scale development in adjacent areas exerting a strong influence on its character.** The distinctive landform and the integration of more semi-natural wetland features provide a sense of place, with the water courses, the series of crossings over the water courses and railway lines, and the London Stadium and ArcelorMittal Orbit tower providing distinctive focal features throughout the park.
- 4.181 The Park has a mixed landscape character, from very large scale, open spaces dominated by hard-landscaping around the London Stadium, to smaller, more intimate and naturalistic spaces in the north, such as around the Tumbling Bay playground. Generally the area comprises high quality spaces, mostly well-integrated with adjacent built development.
- 4.182 Parts of the area are dominated by large roads and a complex of railway lines that crisscross the valley, but most of the parkland is accessible and relatively well connected by footpaths. The southern area of parkland, when not being used for events, can seem empty and bleak, the large areas of hard landscape over-sized, and dominated by the surrounding buildings.

### Valued Features and Characteristics

- Range of high quality open spaces, planted gardens, meadows and wetland habitats which are particularly important for wildlife within a heavily urbanised context and which also provide diversity and visual interest for visitors
- Facilities and the network of paths through the area, providing opportunities for sports and informal recreation, including natural play areas which provide opportunities for climbing, water and sand play
- Unfolding views of focal features, such as the River Lea, the London Stadium and ArcelorMittal Orbit tower, framed by landforms and avenues of trees contributing to the strong sense of place

### Landscape Strategy

- 4.183 This is an area which will continue to evolve and be shaped by the large scale development planned in and around the Park. The sense of openness and sometimes emptiness that characterise the parkland at the moment is likely to change as the parkland becomes more enclosed by large buildings and as increasing numbers of people come to live and work in the area.
- 4.184 The landscape within the Olympic Park should continue to manage the implementation of the Olympic legacy whilst maintaining the high quality parkland character and community engagement. The balance between providing public recreational spaces and enhancing biodiversity should be conserved as a key feature to the parkland. In addition, careful design of new built development at its peripheries and a strong landscape structure of trees and vegetation should be maintained to ensure the spaces within the park do not become secondary to the built development and just spaces in between the buildings.

### Guidelines

- Manage wetland habitats and other areas of ecological value and seek to maintain balance between biodiversity and amenity
- Maintain the range of high quality spaces and encourage greater integration with the wider landscape to provide a consistent visitor experience for users of the Regional Park
- Seek to maintain and strengthen the structure of trees, vegetation and wetland features
- Maintain open cross valley views and the sequential views along the valley floor
- Ensure any new development as part of the Olympic Park legacy responds positively to the wider Regional Park

# LCT I: Terraces with Woodland and Pasture

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## LCT I: Terraces with Woodland and Pasture



View along a main path through the former arboretum

### Overview

- 4.185 This Landscape Character Type occurs in a single area: the Arboretum, which is located adjacent to Cornmill Meadows to the northeast of Waltham Abbey.
- 4.186 This area, also known as the Tree Park and formerly as 'the Wake Estate', comprises a mixture of parkland dotted with specimen and groups of trees, dense woodland & coppice areas, a visitor car park and open meadows.

### Physical Influences

- 4.187 The character type occurs within low-lying terraces of the valley sides and the topography is flat to gently sloping. The area contains large blocks and smaller groups of mixed broadleaf trees separated by glades and areas of more open meadow grassland with some small amenity grassland areas surrounding the parkland.

### Natural Character

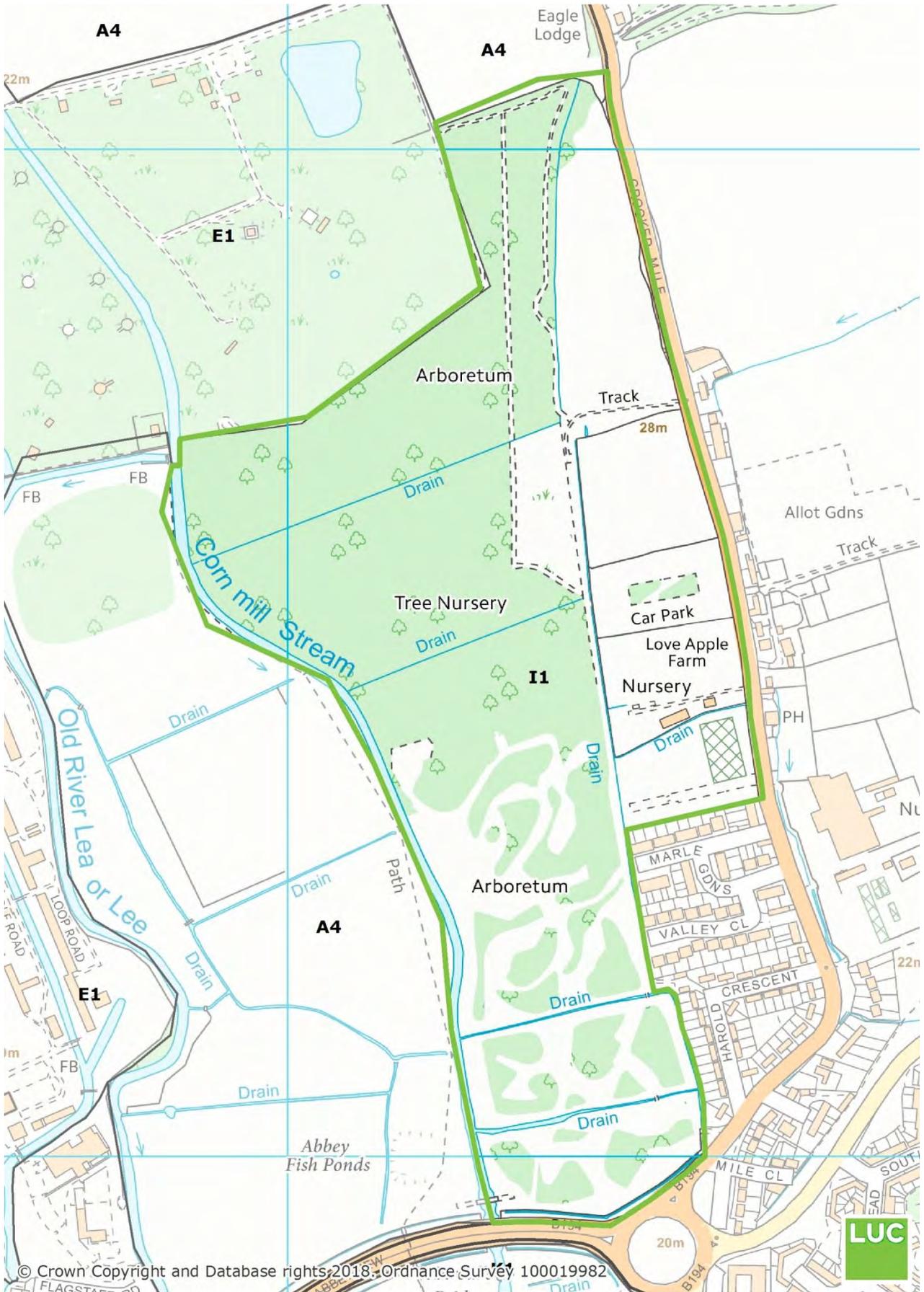
- 4.188 The Arboretum character area lies immediately adjacent to the Cornmill

Stream and Old River Lea SSSI and the mature trees, scrub, small clearing and meadows provides a transition of habitats from wetland to woodland as well as important biodiversity interest in their own right.

### Cultural Influences

- 4.189 The area was originally planted in the C20th with specimen trees to be used by the Greater London Council for street and ornamental planting. The area was then further planted by the LVRPA, establishing the blocks of woodland currently on site.
- 4.190 The Greenwich Meridian (Meridian Line) runs through the Arboretum, the line marked out through a wide mown strip created in the open hay meadow. A monolith sculpture by Paula Haughney entitled 'Travel and Discovery' carved from granite recovered from London Bridge was installed at each end of the line within the site in 1994. The Greenwich Meridian Trail (long distance footpath) runs through the site along this line and is clearly waymarked.

# LCA I1: Arboretum





Framed view along long linear paths which occur in a number of areas throughout



Views remain short and largely contained with the site – here the view extends along the north western boundary



Cornmill Stream marks the western boundary into the area from the southwest



Small clearings surrounded by semi-mature trees are a characteristic feature

## Location and Boundaries

4.191 The Arboretum, otherwise known as the Tree Park, is located on the low-lying eastern valley terraces north of Waltham Abbey, towards the centre of the LVRP. The western boundary is defined by the Cornmill Stream, which separates the area from the site of the Royal Gunpowder Mills (LCA E1). The eastern boundary is defined by the LVRP boundary, which follows the Crooked Mile and the built edge of Waltham Abbey. To the north the extents of the Royal Gunpowder Mill and the open fields within LCA A4 defines the boundary.



### Key characteristics

- Very gently sloping, extending from the valley floor with an underlying glacial-fluvial geology and damp alluvial soils gently rising from the north east up to approximately 30m AOD
- A predominantly wooded landscape comprising a wide mixture of species, planted and managed throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> Century to supply the local authority with tree stock
- Rich habitat for wildlife provided by the complex pattern of woodland and small glades and clearings, which together with the adjacent Cornmill Stream contributes to a rich mosaic of habitats across this part of the valley floor
- Small scale, intimate landscape with views contained by woodland
- Predominantly tranquil landscape, although there is some intrusion from the Crooked Mile along the eastern boundary

## Evaluation

### Landscape Quality & Condition

- 4.192 There is a simple but consistent character across the area, with strong rural and semi-natural qualities predominating. Interest and diversity is provided by the mixture of tree and shrub species and the complex pattern of enclosed wooded areas and small glades, with framed views **along long linear 'avenues' created through the trees.**
- 4.193 The area forms part of the Lee Valley Country Park and there is a good network of paths and trails linking across it to Waltham Abbey to the south and the wider Country Park to the north. There is however no access to the Royal Gunpowder Mills, which restricts connectivity east-west across the valley, although there may be scope in future to connect across this site.

### Valued Features and Characteristics

- Complex pattern of deciduous and mixed woodland and small grassy glades and clearings which are important for biodiversity, and provide habitat and visual links to woodland to the west (within LCT E1 Royal Gunpowder Mills)
- Access gateway and connectivity between the Waltham Abbey and the Lee Valley Country Park and wider valley
- Tranquility and sense of naturalness and seclusion
- Publicly accessible footpaths linked to Waltham Abbey, particularly through a sequence of woodland and clearings which enable local communities to enjoy the landscape

## Landscape Strategy

- 4.194 The strategy for the Arboretum should be maintaining the valued qualities of the area, including protecting and enhancing the quality and diversity of the tree stock in the long term, and enhancing connections to the wider Lee Valley, with opportunities for improving recreational links to the west and biodiversity interest to enhance its character.
- 4.195 The area is included within Lee Valley Country Park Management Plan 2014 – 2019, prepared by the LVRPA.

### Guidelines

- Conserve the balance of woodland and opening and clearings, to maintain the diversity of habitats as well as the visual and experiential interest it provides
- Conserve the rural character of the area, including features that contribute to this character such as the small glades, ditches, hedgerows and diverse mixture of deciduous trees
- Ensure robust boundary treatment established as part of any future development to the southeast of the area
- Conserve and enhance biodiversity interests and connectivity with the wider Lee Valley
- Continue to promote the area as a gateway to the LVRP and improve connectivity with the communities within Waltham Abbey
- Proposed development within and adjacent to the Parklands should build on and enhance the existing landscape framework and be designed to sensitively integrate with and reflect the intricate pattern and character of the woodland and meadows
- The siting of development within or close to the Parklands should respond to and not undermine the open character and small to medium scale of the landscape - adequate provision for planting should be made to screen or soften views of the development from within the Park

# LCT J: Lower River Backwaters

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## LCT J: Lower River Backwaters



The London Greenway

### Overview

- 4.196 This Landscape Character Type is located in the south of the LVRP within the London Boroughs of Newham and Tower Hamlets. It is characterised by linear routes including canals, footpaths and cycleways running through heavily developed areas and converging at the Olympic Park.

### Physical Influences

- 4.197 The linear routes are set within a heavily urbanised and often industrialised context, with their character varying according to the scale and urban grain of adjacent areas. Typically they are flat, although canal lock gates represent localised changes and sudden rises in height. Sequential views to high-rise buildings also contribute to the urban setting of the landscape.

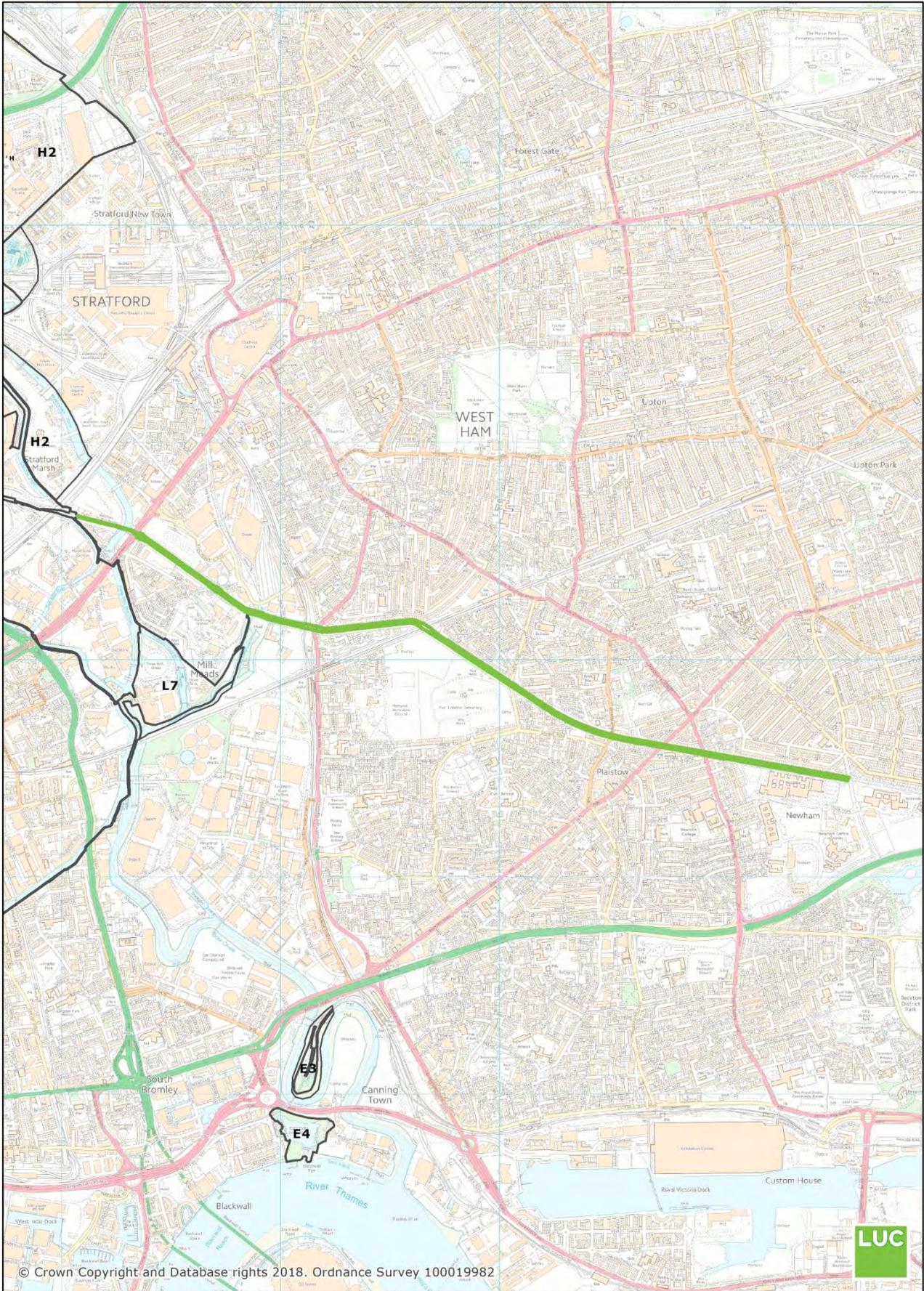
### Natural Character

- 4.198 Trees and scrub survive along the fringes of the character type and provide some valuable habitat space in a predominantly urban landscape. The water of the rivers and canals form unifying features and provide connections with the wider landscape including the River Thames. No nature designations are present in the lower river backwaters.

### Cultural Influences

- 4.199 A number of historic bridges and lock gates are found regularly along the Hertford Union Canal, River Lee Navigation and the Limehouse Cut. These include Three Colts Bridge and Parnell Road Bridge which are both Grade II\* listed and Scheduled Monuments. The Grade II listed Top Lock is also located along the Hertford Union Canal.
- 4.200 Limehouse Cut is also designated as a Conservation Area and includes several buildings beyond the LVRP boundary.

# LCA J1: London Greenway





Distinct signage and street furniture around the Olympic Park provide clear gateways into the London Greenway.



Wide, industrial bridges lack visual interest and distinctiveness.



Wide footpaths fringed by short grass with scrubby tree planting buffering residential properties adjacent.



The elevated position predominantly overlooks residential properties and allows long distance views to city skyline.

### Location and Boundaries

4.201 The London Greenway comprises a permitted footpath and cycleway built on embankment over the Northern Outfall Sewer; it connects Stratford to Beckton. It forms part of the Jubilee Greenway Network, completed in 2012 to mark the Queen's Diamond Jubilee and the London 2012 Games. This section lies within the London Borough of Newham and extends from the Olympic Park eastwards to Beckton.

# LCA J1: London Greenway



Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS, USDA, USGS, AeroGRID, IGN, and the GIS User Community

### Key characteristics

- A wide, flat pedestrian and cycle path with short grass margins running along a raised embankment through a heavily developed urban setting
- Character determined by influences from adjacent areas, including industrial areas, residential gardens and scrubby vegetation as well as concrete bridges fitted with green metal railings
- Gateway signage and street furniture made from old sewage pipes and timber salvaged from riverbanks form clear locating features and focal points along the Greenway
- Views mostly limited to back gardens of adjoining residential properties although scrubby vegetation often opens up to views of local landmarks such as Abbey Mills pumping station
- Glimpsed views to the city skyline and Olympic Park in the west contrast with the indistinct skyline to the east to give a sense of location
- A reoccurring smell of sewerage emitting from breather vents in the surface of the path provide a constant reminder to the sewer below

## Evaluation

### Landscape Quality & Condition

4.202 The London Greenway forms a continuous linear route, strongly influenced by the urban setting and often with a lack of visual variety and ecological diversity. The gateway signage provides unifying features where the path is severed by a number of roads, but the route otherwise has few features or focal points to provide orientation. The smell of sewerage and presence of graffiti also detracts from the overall quality.

### Valued Features and Characteristics

- Gateway features providing focal points from along the linear pathway
- Popular pedestrian and cycle link providing connections to the Olympic Park from densely populated residential areas forming an important urban greenway
- Trees and scrub occupying the embankment sides provide valuable local habitat

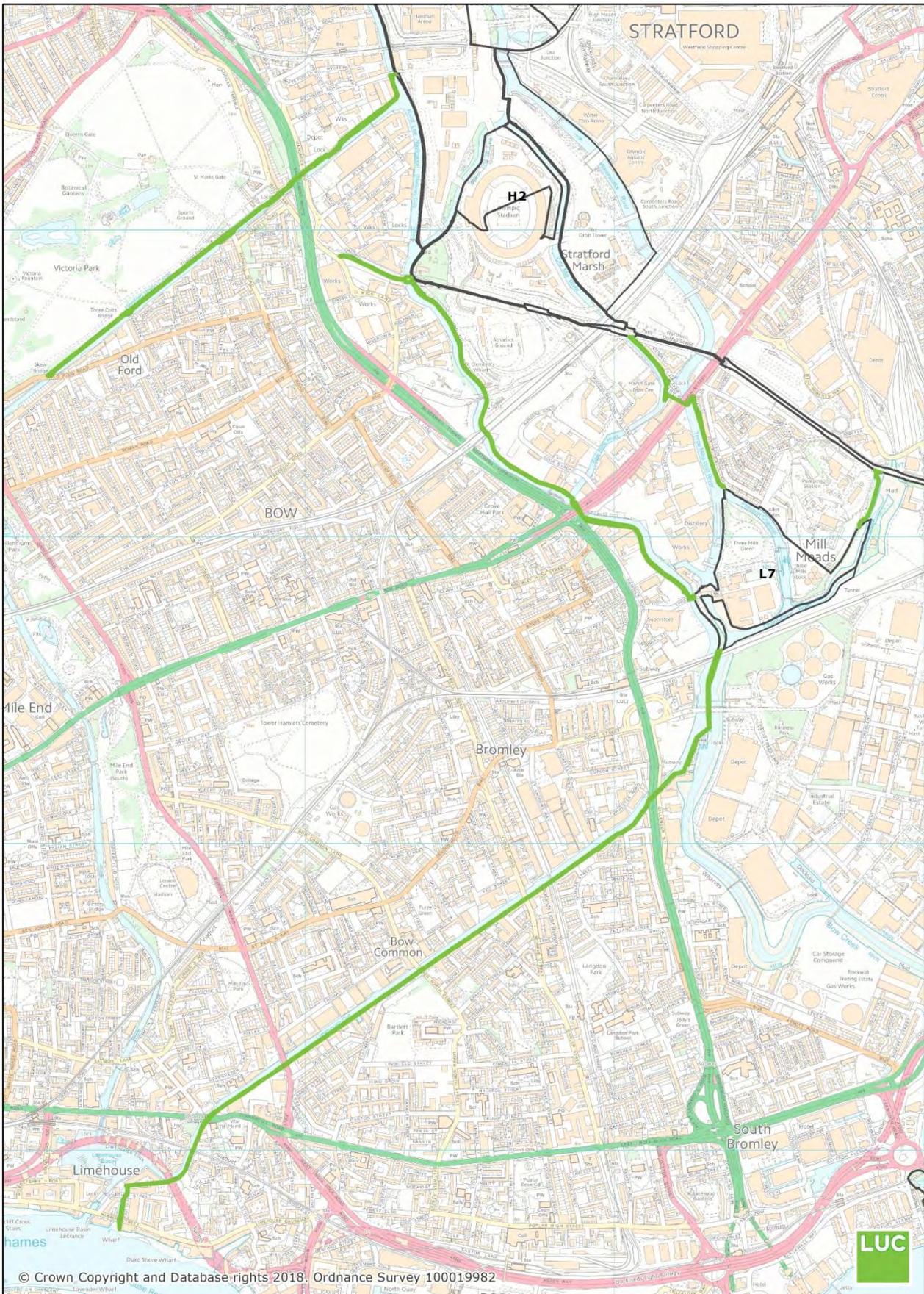
## Landscape Strategy

4.203 The London Greenway has potential to provide a high value green infrastructure asset. The linear route should be managed and enhanced to create a more appealing experience for users and encourage greater diversity of flora and fauna.

### Guidelines

- Manage existing habitats to improve biodiversity and consider further habitat creation along the whole route
- Maintain gateway features and consider using a more coordinated street furniture with lighting, potentially linking with the Olympic Park
- Conserve and enhance existing connectivity to local destinations including Three Mills and consider visual amenity improvements to encourage greater use of the landscape

# LCA J2: Lee Navigation, Limehouse Cut and Hertford Union Canal



## LCA J2: Lee Navigation, Limehouse Cut and Hertford Union Canal



Varying river frontages including residential gardens and industrial facades.



Overhead road bridges introduce noise and movement into the relative calmness and stillness of the canal.



Moored boats and strong presence of graffiti street art provide colour and activity to the industrial setting.



Low bridges over the Hertford Union Canal create confined spaces along the tow path.

### Location and Boundaries

4.204 This character area follows the network of waterways that form part of the LVRP in the lower Lee Valley. **They include two main 'arms':** the section of the Hertford Union Canal that runs south of Victoria Park from the Lee Navigation in Hackney Wick; and the three waterways that converge on Three Mills Island (LCA L6 Three Mills) and join with Limehouse Cut, connecting with Limehouse Basin. It is largely within the LB of Tower Hamlets.

# LCA J2: Lee Navigation, Limehouse Cut and Hertford Union Canal



## LCA J2: Lee Navigation, Limehouse Cut and Hertford Union Canal

### Key characteristics

- The Hertford Union Canal, the Lee Navigation and the Limehouse Cut form a continuous corridor linking the Olympic Park to the Thames at the Limehouse Basin and to Victoria Park
- Historic system of canals, constructed during the late 18th and early 19th Century to provide connections between the Lee Navigation and the Thames avoiding the difficult Bow Back Rivers
- Varying canal widths and waterside frontages with intact locks marking distinct transitions in character from along the towpath
- An abundance of historic features including intricate brick detailing, iron railings and historic cranes and Grade II\* listed bridges, falling within Limehouse Cut Conservation Area
- Strongly influenced by overhead roads introducing noise and movement in a relatively calm and tranquil urban landscape
- The proximity of Victoria Park, also a Conservation Area, creates a more open and green setting to the canal
- Popular and busy access route for pedestrians and cyclists with physical and visual connections with the Olympic Park including the National Cycle Network (NCN) Route 1 at Hackney Wick.
- Channeled views along the canal to historic bridges and locks

## Evaluation

### Landscape Quality & Condition

- 4.205 The Lee Navigation includes a great number of intact canal features which portray the industrial heritage of the landscape. The use of stone lining the canalside with intricate brick detailing in bridges and around lock gates form unifying features from along the towpath. Views of the watercourses and the sound of water passing through the lock gates contribute to the strong sense of place.

### Valued Features and Characteristics

- Intact lock gates providing focal points from along the tow path contribute to the sense of place of the landscape
- Historic associations reflected in the presence of well-preserved canal features such as listed bridges and dockside cranes
- The different types of water frontages providing a variety of visual experiences to users of the canal and towpath
- The towpath provides a popular route for cyclists and pedestrians, allowing easy access and connections to a key parks and open spaces within Tower Hamlets

## LCA J2: Lee Navigation, Limehouse Cut and Hertford Union Canal

### Landscape Strategy

- 4.206 The Lee Navigation character area should be conserved and enhanced to preserve its heritage importance and historic associations. The present day use of the tow paths serve local communities as recreational corridors, linking to the Olympic Park, Victoria Park and Three Mills. Opportunities should continue to be sought to enhance the experience to the users of the paths.
- 4.207 Between the Olympic Park and the Three Mills, sections of the Lee Navigation form part of the Leaway, a linear park under long term development as part of the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park legacy. A *Lea River Park Design Manual* (2017) has been prepared for the Leaway on behalf of the London Legacy Development Corporation and this should form the reference point for any future changes in the area and for adjacent developments.

#### Guidelines

- Seek opportunities to overcome severances along the waterways and between the waterways and surrounding communities
- Conserve historic features and seek to ensure that any necessary repairs or development are sensitive to their heritage importance
- Improve the safety of access along canal towpaths through better gateway features and signage
- Seek opportunities to improve and enhance the quality of the towpaths and adjacent walkways and strips of greenspace, particularly in respect of materials and additional planting

# LCT K: Historic Gardens

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## LCT K: Historic Gardens



Myddleton House gardens of the Enfield Market Cross

### Overview

- 4.208 This Landscape Character Type occurs within two areas: Waltham Abbey Gardens in the north of the Park; and the outlying Myddleton House, which is located just outside the valley.
- 4.209 These are two areas comprising historically important gardens with strong associations with the development of the Lee Valley and the LVRPA.

### Physical Influences

- 4.210 The character type occurs within different geographic contexts both within the valley floodplain and within the wider urban peripheries of the valley sides. The main determinant of this landscape type is its historic land use as a garden. There are therefore some consistent but small scale physical features across the character areas despite these differing geological and topographical contexts. Key landscape features include managed lawns and herbaceous borders, mature ornamental trees and water features.

### Natural Character

- 4.211 The mature trees and variety of herbaceous plants provide local biodiversity interest with the Abbey Gardens creating an important link between the wider valley floor landscapes through the urban area of Waltham Abbey.

### Cultural Influences

- 4.212 The gardens have origins ranging from medieval monastic gardens to a garden designed for an early 19<sup>th</sup> Century villa.
- 4.213 They contain and provide the landscape setting to heritage assets of national significance as well as being significant in their own right. This is reflected in the designation of Waltham Abbey Gardens as a Scheduled Monument and Myddleton House Gardens as a Grade II Registered Park and Garden.



## LCA K1: Waltham Abbey Gardens



Waltham Abbey from the western boundary, with Cornmill Stream in the foreground.



View across the moat into the orchard.



Grade II listed 14<sup>th</sup> Century arched gateway.



View south across the gardens towards the Abbey.

### Location and Boundaries

4.214 Waltham Abbey Gardens is located within the upper Lee Valley, to the north of the M25, London Orbital, immediately adjacent to the Abbey Church of Waltham Holy Cross and St Lawrence. The B194 bounds the area to the north, the Crooked Mile road to the east and development within the town of Waltham Abbey to the south. The area comprises the gardens to the north of the Abbey Church which are designated as part of the Waltham Abbey, including gatehouse and Stoney Bridge Scheduled Monument (which also includes an area in between the Cornmill Stream and River Lea north of the B194).

# LCA K1: Waltham Abbey Gardens



### Key characteristics

- A small area comprising open amenity grass and gardens, a moated orchard, a visitor centre and car park set at the edge of the town of Waltham Abbey, within the valley floor
- Important habitats provided by the historic walls and water features which include the Cornmill Stream which flows through the northwest, and the moat, believed to be of medieval origin, which is seasonally inundated by ground water
- Habitat interest also provided by mature trees and the more diverse areas of grassland that are managed as meadow, such as within the orchard
- Complex and richly layered history associated with the medieval Abbey and subsequent uses as legible in the landscape
- Views mostly contained within the gardens by the framework of trees, hedges and boundary walls, although the B194 is audible across the area

## Evaluation

### Landscape Quality & Condition

- 4.215 The landscape forms part of the historic Augustinian Abbey complex and forms an important landscape setting to the built and buried remains of Waltham Abbey. The importance of the historic aspects of the site is reflected in its designation as a Scheduled Monument and it contains several significant heritage assets including the Grade II listed Gatehouse and several Grade II listed walls.
- 4.216 The area generally has a consistent character, and a strong sense of place. It also offers facilities for access and recreation which are valued by the local and wider communities. The quality and condition of the area as a park and garden is however mixed, with some herbaceous borders and infrastructure such as paths, benches and entrances in poor repair, which detract from the overall character of the area.
- 4.217 The area is also strongly influenced by the presence of the B194 which severs it from the wider valley landscape to the north. The framework of trees and boundary walls do however serve to screen surrounding detracting features from view, including roads and development to the west.

### Valued Features and Characteristics

- Time-depth and long history of the site as part of the Waltham Abbey Scheduled Monument
- Wildlife and biodiversity interest provided by the mature trees, water features, historic walls and areas of meadow
- Access gateway and connectivity between the urban environment and the wider valley to the north of the B194

## Landscape Strategy

- 4.218 Waltham Abbey Gardens is an important place of historic interest and gateway to the Lee Valley. The complex **of standing features and remnants from the different periods in the Abbey's history** provides a strong sense of place. The focus should be on maintaining the valued qualities of the area, including the historic interest and sense of openness, and enhancing the quality of the space

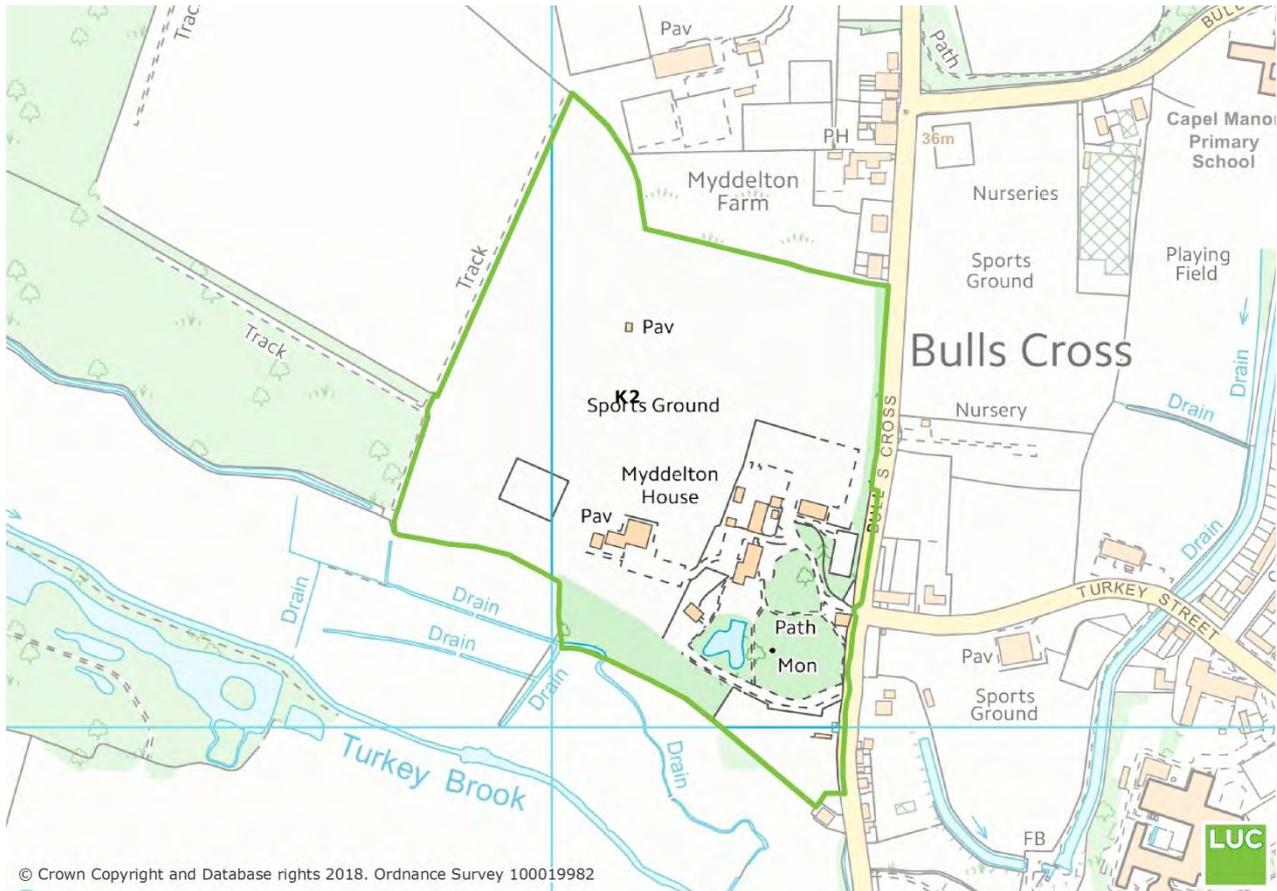
as a public garden. The area could also benefit from increasing the habitat interest across the site, which would also contribute to character.

- 4.219 A management strategy for the gardens is set out in the Waltham Abbey Gardens Management Plan 2012 – 2017 (Updated 2016), prepared by the LVRPA.

### Guidelines

- Protect and conserve the considerable heritage assets and archaeological interest of the site which also **contribute to the area's distinctive character and sense of place**
- Continue positive management of the gardens as set out in the Waltham Abbey Gardens Management Plan
- Conserve and enhance valued recreational facilities and functions, including the fabric and infrastructure of the gardens
- Protect the role of the area as a green space linked to the wider Lee Valley to the north, ensuring new tall/unsympathetic development does not intrude on undeveloped skylines in views north
- Conserve and enhance biodiversity and nature conservation interests and connectivity with the Lee Valley
- Continue to promote the area as a gateway to the LVRP and connection with the wider surrounding urban communities

## LCA K2: Myddelton House



### Location and Boundaries

- 4.220 Myddelton House Gardens is an isolated character area located approximately 3km west of the LVRP, to the north-east of Enfield Town in Bull's Cross, in the London Borough of Enfield. The area is bounded by the Forty Hall estate to the west and south, Bull's Cross (the A105 road) to the east, and Myddelton Farm to the north. The site comprises the listed Myddelton House and gardens and a series of playing fields to the west, now occupied as the Tottenham Hotspur training academy.



View from main approach towards the Grade II listed Myddelton House



The visitor centre, converted from a Grade II listed stable block



View west across the lake from the ornamental garden



The Enfield Market Cross, located towards the centre of the gardens within the rose garden

### Key characteristics

- A small area centred on the Grade II listed Myddelton House (built in 1818 and today used as the LVRPA headquarters) comprising a series of ornamental gardens, lawns, a Grade II listed brick stable block converted into a visitor centre and museum, a car park as well as fields and sports pitches to the west and northwest
- Very gently sloping ground, falling from north to south, with steeper slope in the meadows in the south
- History associated with E A Bowles, the Victorian gardener and plantsman responsible for the detailed design of the planting within the gardens - Surviving layout of paths and structural planting from the mid- 19<sup>th</sup> Century gardens (pre-dating Bowles' involvement)
- The gardens provide an area of tranquility within an urban context
- Important habitats provided by the 19<sup>th</sup> Century walls, pond, mature trees and the diverse range of flowering plants and shrubs within the garden area
- Views mostly contained within the gardens by the framework of mature trees, although views are available from the higher ground within the north, extending southwards towards the Forty Hall estate



### Evaluation

#### Landscape Quality & Condition

- 4.221 The garden areas were restored as part of a Heritage Lottery Fund-supported project in 2011 and are maintained to a high standard. They are contained and secluded, due to the long-standing framework of mature trees and shrubs, and provide many points of historical and horticultural interest.
- 4.222 The area as a whole is however mixed in character, with the fields to the west, north-west and north of the gardens used as sports pitches (forming part of the Tottenham Hotspur training ground) since the late 20<sup>th</sup> Century. They contain a few remaining mature trees and boundary tree belts to the north and east, but overall the pitch areas are much more open in character with limited vegetation cover. The sports pitches in particular contrast with the scale and intimacy of the area of historic gardens.

#### Valued Features and Characteristics

- History associated with gardening and E A Bowles in particular, as well as its association with the establishment of the LVRP
- The diversity of plants which provide a range of seasonal interest and links to E A Bowles' legacy
- Wildlife and biodiversity interest provided by the mature trees, water features, historic walls and areas of meadow
- Amenity and recreational value of the sports pitches

## Landscape Strategy

- 4.223 The focus should be on maintaining the valued qualities of the area, including the quality and **integrity of the historic features and the garden's horticultural interest, as well as enhancing the area's biodiversity, particularly around the margins of the playing fields to the north.**

### Guidelines

- Continue positive management of the gardens to maintain their historic and horticultural interest
- Conserve and promote the valued visitor facilities and recreation/educational interest of the gardens
- Conserve and enhance biodiversity and connectivity to the wider network of green spaces in the local area
- Maintain the character and sense of tranquility of the gardens, and ensure any future modifications or development within the area of sports facilities to the north does not adversely affect these

# LCT L: Urban Parks

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## LCT L: Urban Parks



View across Springfield Park towards the river valley

### Overview

- 4.224 The Urban Parks Landscape Character Type is concentrated towards the lower reaches of the Lee Valley, within the London Boroughs of Haringey, Waltham Forest and Hackney, with the exception of Town Mead in Epping Forest District. It is formed by a series of individual urban parks, each managed by the relevant local authority. They are mostly on the edges of the valley and closely related to their surrounding urban communities.
- 4.225 The parks are an important resource and a significant break within the densely populated urban areas adjacent to the valley, and provide a focus and gateway for people to access the wider LVRP.

### Physical Influences

- 4.226 The main determinant of this landscape type is its land use as an urban park. As such there are few consistent physical features with individual character areas occurring on the low lying floodplain, the adjacent river terraces and hills overlooking the valley. Key landscape features are the expanses of open

grassland and framework of mature trees that create a strong sense of openness and separation from the surrounding dense urban areas.

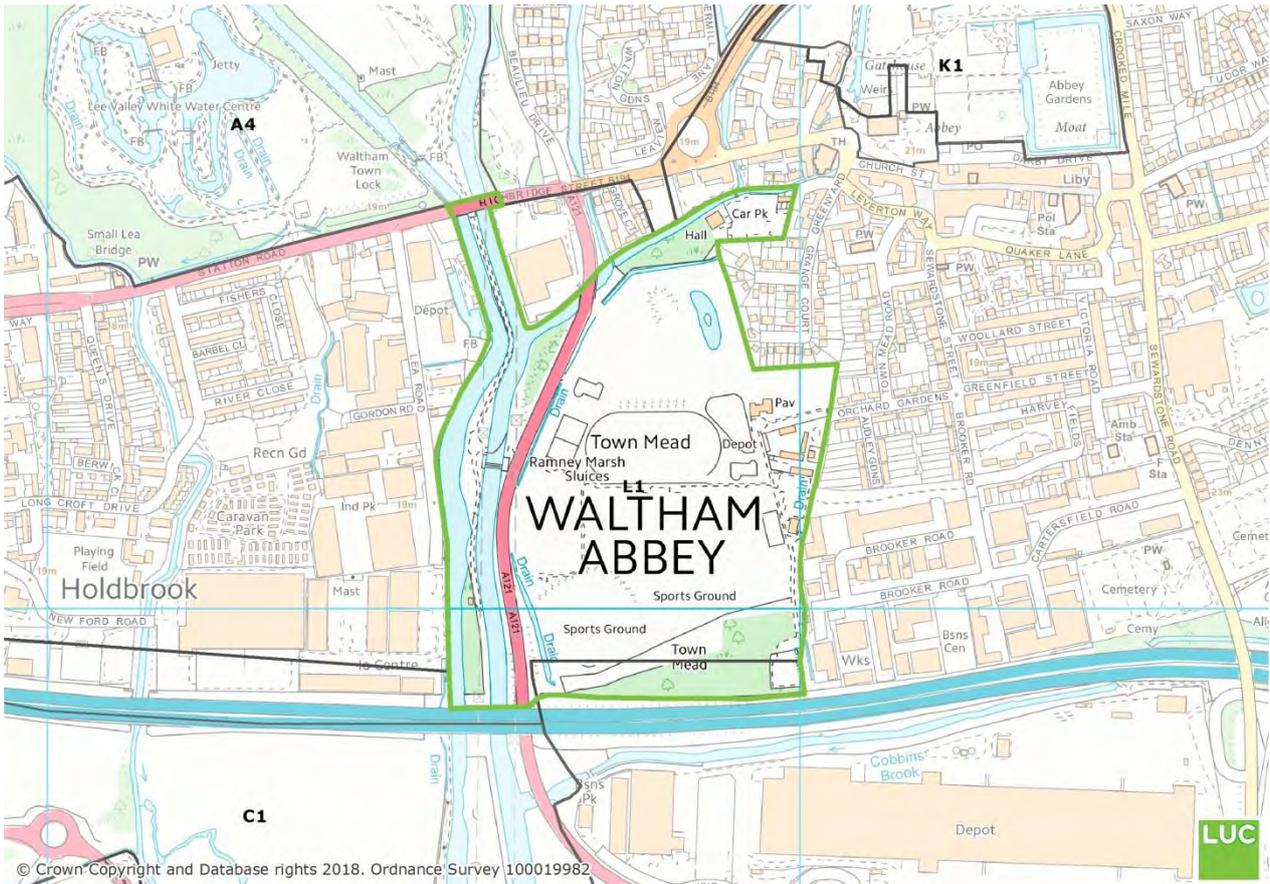
### Natural Character

- 4.227 The parks frequently provide local biodiversity interest creating a link between the urban areas and the biodiversity of the LVRP.

### Cultural Influences

- 4.228 The parks were created (London County Council) in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century to provide recreation facilities for the rapidly expanding urban population – a function that they continue to perform. Historic origins as Lammas land or gardens of Victorian villas are evident in the character of a number of the parks today, despite modern overlays of facilities.

# LCA L1: Town Mead



## Location and Boundaries

4.229 Town Mead lies immediately south of the historic core of Waltham Abbey and extends southwards towards the M25. It is defined by the River Lea to the north, the Lee Navigation to the west and the M25 to the south. To the east residential streets and industrial units back onto the park.



View of the entrance from Orchard Gardens.



View north towards the pond and prominent security cameras.



View south towards fenced courts, playground and Town Mead Bar – the M25 is visible on a raised embankment along the length of the southern boundary and large warehouses beyond.



Waltham Abbey forms a landmark in views north.

### Key characteristics

- A managed urban parkland landscape, offering recreational opportunities including football pitches, athletics track, a tennis courts, a play area, and a skate park
- Some habitat interest including specimen trees, small areas of trees and scrub along the northern boundary, meadow grassland and a pond
- Physically and visually disconnected from the wider LVRP by large roads (the A121 and M25 London Orbital) and the urban edge of Waltham Abbey, with very limited sense of being within a valley
- The Lee Navigation, fringed with trees, falls within the area but is separated from the park by the A121 – it forms an important corridor for access and wildlife through Waltham Abbey
- Set within a busy and complex urban context – with adjacent residential areas backing onto the park and views south characterised by moving traffic on the M25, elevated on an embankment
- Abbey Church of Waltham Holy Cross and St Lawrence is visible above adjacent housing to the north, forming a distinctive landmark



## Evaluation

### Landscape Quality & Condition

4.230 Town Mead is severed from the wider valley by major roads which also affect the setting and the perceptual aspects of the park. The A121 is screened by a belt of trees and shrubs along the **western boundary, which helps to reduce the road's influence, but the M25 is highly visible and audible** along the length of the southern boundary, raised on an embankment and flanked by an insubstantial line of trees. Whilst the area does contain features that provide opportunities for a range of recreational activities, the quality of the fabric of the park and the presentation of the area overall is generally poor. Tall palisade fencing, entrances poorly integrated with the surrounding residential streets and several sets of security cameras mounted on prominent towers all detract from the character of the area.

### Valued Features and Characteristics

- The openness and sense of space within an urban context
- Wildlife interest provided by the pond, grassland and trees
- Role as a green space providing a degree of continuity of the LVRP through Waltham Abbey
- Provision of outdoor sports and recreational facilities for the local community

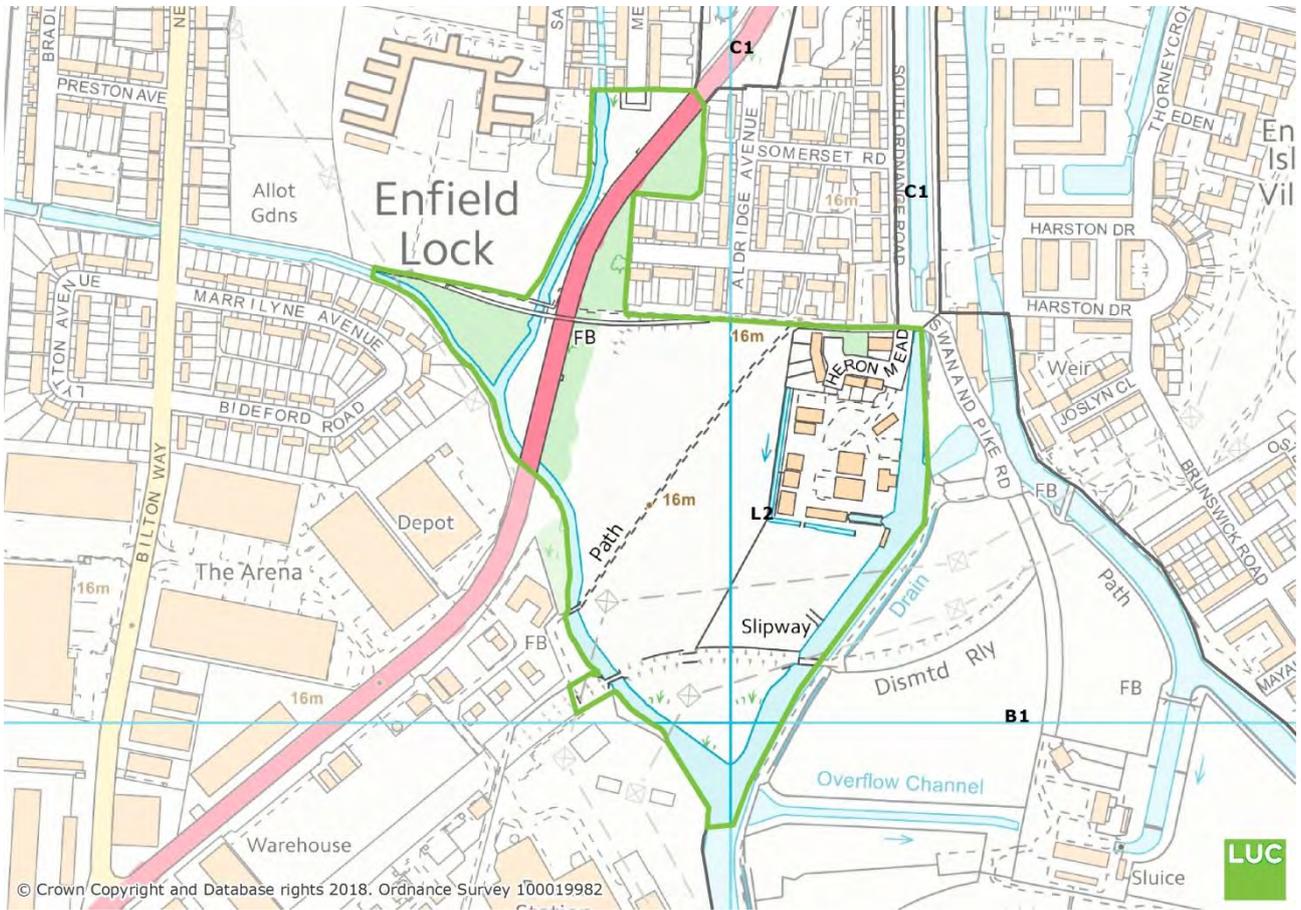
## Landscape Strategy

- 4.231 The focus should be on maintaining the valued qualities of the area, including the openness and recreational function of the area whilst enhancing the setting of the park, the quality of its fabric and features and the **area's biodiversity interest**. The area has the potential to link to the wider Lee Valley to both the north and south, via the River Lee Navigation, if connectivity to the Navigation could be established.

### Guidelines

- Conserve and enhance valued recreational and sports facilities and functions
- Conserve and enhance biodiversity and connectivity to the wider network of green spaces
- Protect the role of the area as a green open space within Waltham Abbey, ensuring new development does not affect its integrity or further impact on its setting
- Seek opportunities to reduce the influence of the M25 across the area through planting of an adequate tree belt and understory planting along the southern boundary, which would enhance the quality of the area as a space for recreation
- Seek opportunities to enhance the biodiversity interests and habitat connectivity with the wider Lee Valley
- Seek opportunities to provide connectivity to the wider LVRP, creating a gateway to the LVRP via the River Lee Navigation from within Waltham Abbey, that will improve access for the urban community to both the wetland landscapes to the north (LCA A4) and Rammey Marsh (LCA C1) and Gunpowder Park (LCA H1) to the south

# LCA L2: Prince of Wales Open Space



## LCA L2: Prince of Wales Open Space



View south across a public playground with Enfield Power Station and electricity pylons forming prominent features.



View north towards the residential properties showing pedestrian connections into the area.



View east showing the well-treed boundaries along the Lee Navigation.



View west demonstrating the wooded bunding screening the A1055 beyond.

### Location and Boundaries

- 4.232 The Prince of Wales Open Space is located at Enfield Lock and forms much of the extent between **King George's Reservoir and Rammey Marsh**. The boundaries are defined mostly by the urban edge with residential properties and Prince of Wales Primary School at Enfield to the north and an industrial estate of Brimsdown to the south. The Lee Navigation also provides a well-defined eastern boundary.
- 4.233 The A1055 severs the open space in the west as it runs between the adjacent urban areas.

## LCA L2: Prince of Wales Open Space



### Key characteristics

- Area of poor cohesion including the fenced areas of open reclaimed marshland.
- Soft landscape of trees and meadows provides the setting for the structures associated with the river and its navigation branch.
- The Turkey Brook and Mollison Avenue are largely concealed by trees and undergrowth.
- **Gateway to the marsh and meadows which border the north west edge of King George's Reservoir.**
- Collection of buildings of historical interest at Enfield Dock making an important contribution to the conservation area.
- Popular towpath offering views back to the lock framed by mature trees with dockside business and abundance of narrow-boats creating a hive of activity.
- Variety of visual experiences with linear riverside views close to smaller more intimate wooded prospects within the open spaces.
- **The pumping station to the north of the King George's Reservoir and pylons interrupt** fine views along the Lea **Navigation's tree and bush-lined** banks to Swan and Pike Wood and towards open fields and trees.
- Geometric blocks of deciduous woodland priority habitat are mostly concentrated around the built edge and along the watercourses.
- Enfield Lock Conservation Area recognises the lively combination of the infrastructure associated with the lock and Lee Navigation as well as the semi-rural views across fields and waterways.

## Evaluation

### Landscape Quality & Condition

- 4.235 This area has small pockets of rich heritage associated with Enfield Lock and the Lee Navigation but is greatly influenced by adjoining tall buildings and structures as well as the A1055 which bisects the landscape. The Enfield Power Station is a prominent detractor in views from the playing fields. The influences of modern building styles and materials within the adjoining settlement edge in combination with the unremarkable playground at the centre of the playing fields also impart a poor landscape quality.
- 4.236 The Navigation Tow Path as well as the London Loop traverse the Prince of Wales Open Space and provide recreational connections between the nearby properties and the wider Lee Valley. Linear swathes of trees provide a strong definition to the LCA and a clear separation between the playing fields and the tow path, where intact dock buildings contribute to a rich water frontage.

### Valued Features and Characteristics

- A lively combination of infrastructure associated with the lock and Lea Navigation and attractive semi-rural views across fields and waterways and into Swan and Pike Road
- The Canals & Rivers Trust depot site contains a number of 19<sup>th</sup> century industrial buildings of robust character, which have been retained and successfully combined with newer buildings of sympathetic design as well as the former Lea Conservancy office which provides an important focus on entry to the area
- The west bank of the Lea Navigation contains some surviving riverside industry which acts as a link with the industrial history of the area

## LCA L2: Prince of Wales Open Space

- Swan & Pike Pool, the lock approach along the towpath and Swan & Pike Road combine to form an area of attractive contrasts with small enclosed spaces having views out across the meadows
- There are good vantage points for viewing the two waterways at the lock and from the disused railway bridge
- The Conservation area provides an important focus on the Lea Valley Walk and the London Loop, which intersect at this location. The area around the lock and pool is managed as a leisure site and provides opportunities to enjoy the history and wildlife of the area for visitors and residents.

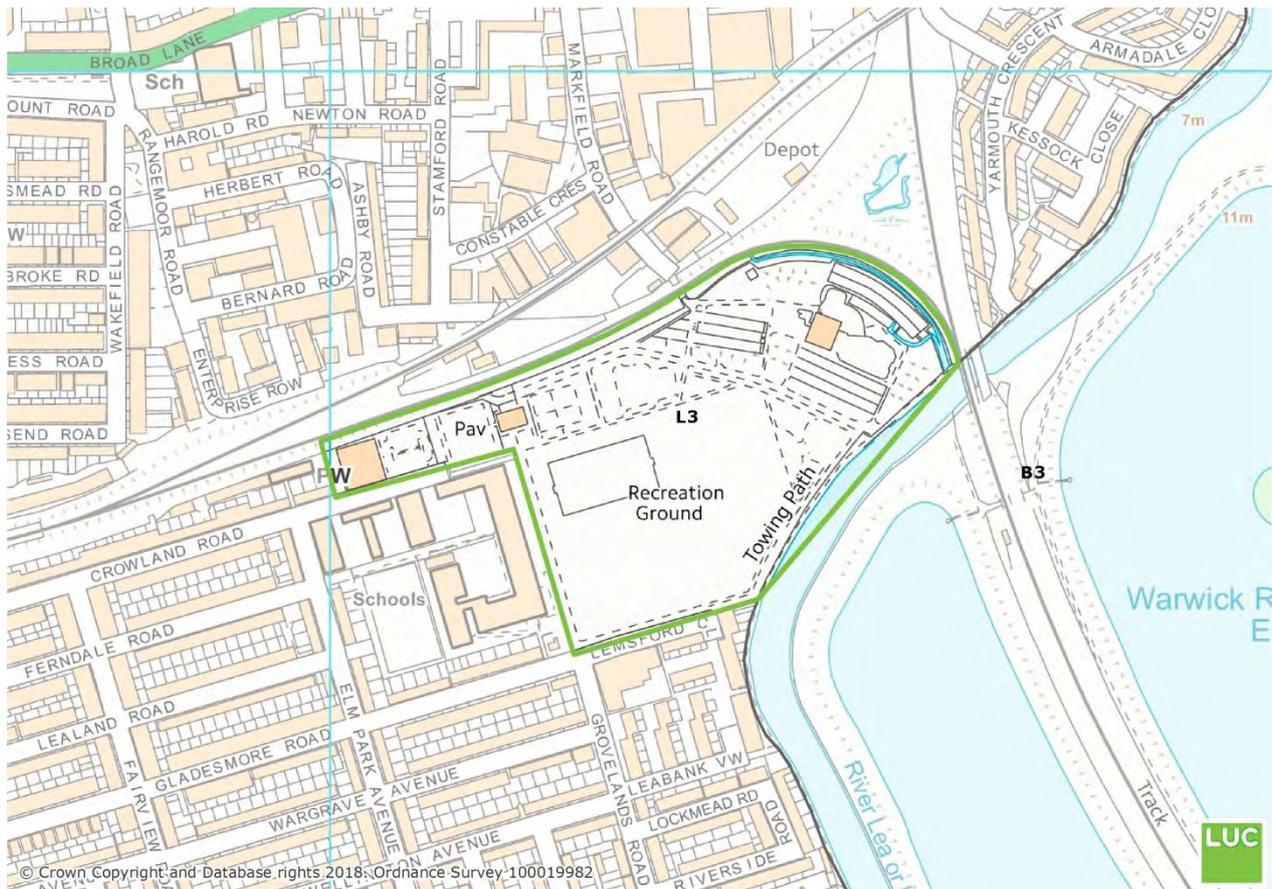
### Landscape Strategy

- 4.237 The Prince of Wales Open Space provides a sense of openness in a heavily urbanised setting and opportunities for access and recreation which are locally valued by the surrounding communities. The presence of dockside buildings serves as an important link to the Lee Navigation and an extension of the heritage associated with Enfield Lock.
- 4.238 The focus should be on maintaining the valued qualities of the area, notably the harmony of modern and historic industrial buildings and structures, the buzz of activity along the canal and the wider recreational and ecological connections to the rest of the Lee Valley.

#### Guidelines

- Conserve and enhance the canal infrastructure that contributes to the historic setting to Enfield.
- Conserve and enhance biodiversity and connectivity to the wider network of green spaces and Navigation.
- Seek opportunities to diversify the habitats within the park, including diversifying the types of grassland through management and introducing understory shrubs and plants.
- Seek opportunities to enhance recreational facilities and functions.

## LCA L3: Markfield Park



### Location and Boundaries

4.239 Markfield Park is a small area of urban parkland adjoining the Walthamstow Reservoirs in the southern part of the LVRP within and managed by the London Borough of Haringey. It is a gateway to the main corridor of the lower Lee Valley and forms an element within the surrounding townscape. It is located to the west of the Lee Navigation, which forms its eastern boundary. The Gospel Oak to Barking railway line, raised on an embankment, borders the area to the north and northeast. The boundaries to the south and west are formed by roads and fronted by residential areas.



The entrance to the park towards the Old Pump Station which houses the Beam Engine Museum and the Markfield Project Community Centre



Framed view towards the Lee Navigation



The graffiti walls in the north of the park - the walls and structures of the Victorian Sewage Works still evident



Open playing fields within the south of the park, with surrounding residential streets screened from view by trees

### Key characteristics

- Small urban park set with the site of the decommissioned Tottenham Sewage Works, that operated from the mid-18th Century to the 1960s – with **facilities in the north, including a children’s play area and café**
- Open, flat floodplain, formerly Lammas Land, today comprising a single large open area of grassland framed by mature trees in the south
- Historic use of the area as a Victorian Sewage Works evident in the fabric of the park in the north – area structured by remnants of the former concrete settlement tanks and filter beds, today reused as a series of walled community gardens, graffiti walls and a BMX track
- Major features of the former works also include the original pump houses, one containing the recently restored Beam Pumping Engine (both Grade II listed)
- Habitats provided by the 19<sup>th</sup> Century walls, pond, mature trees and the range of flowering plants and shrubs within the walled gardens
- Views mostly contained within the park by the framework of mature trees and hedges at the perimeter, with framed views directed along the network of paths, including east towards the Lee Navigation
- Residential edges are generally well integrated by mature tree cover
- River Lee Navigation borders the park to the east and links it to Springfield Park and Walthamstow Marshes to the south and Tottenham Hale and Walthamstow Wetlands to the north



## Evaluation

### Landscape Quality & Condition

- 4.240 Although relatively small in scale, this area has an urban parkland character providing an important sense of space and openness in the context of a densely urbanised townscape. It has a number of features that have been retained in-situ from the Victorian sewage works providing a link to local history and heritage as well as the industrial history of the River Lea to which the park is strongly related. The reuse of the filter beds and settling tanks also provide a varied topography and sense of enclosure within the north.
- 4.241 Overall, it has a varied but coherent character of open grassland framed by mature trees alongside a more enclosed and complex area of gardens and facilities in the north. Views from within the park are generally framed and filtered by the framework of mature trees, with surrounding residential development mostly screened from view. Whilst there is limited natural surveillance, particularly in parts of the northern area, the presence of the café, museum and other facilities in the north means that as a whole it feels safe.
- 4.242 The park offers a range of recreational and play facilities which are well used as well as opportunities for involvement in the community gardens.

### Valued Features and Characteristics

- Features linked to the history of the area as a Victorian Sewage Works, including the original pump houses and Beam Engine ( Grade II listed) and remains of the filter beds and settling tanks, providing important links to the heritage of the area and a sense of time-depth
- Wildlife and biodiversity interest provided by the mature trees, community gardens, historic walls and areas of meadow
- The openness and sense of space provided by the expanses of open grassland framed by trees that contrast with the adjacent urban environment
- Role as parkland setting and gateway/access to the Lower Lea, including connections to, and experience of, the river and navigation
- Strong landscape structure with avenues of mature London plane trees.
- Range of recreational facilities valued by the local community and which have a role in contributing to community cohesiveness

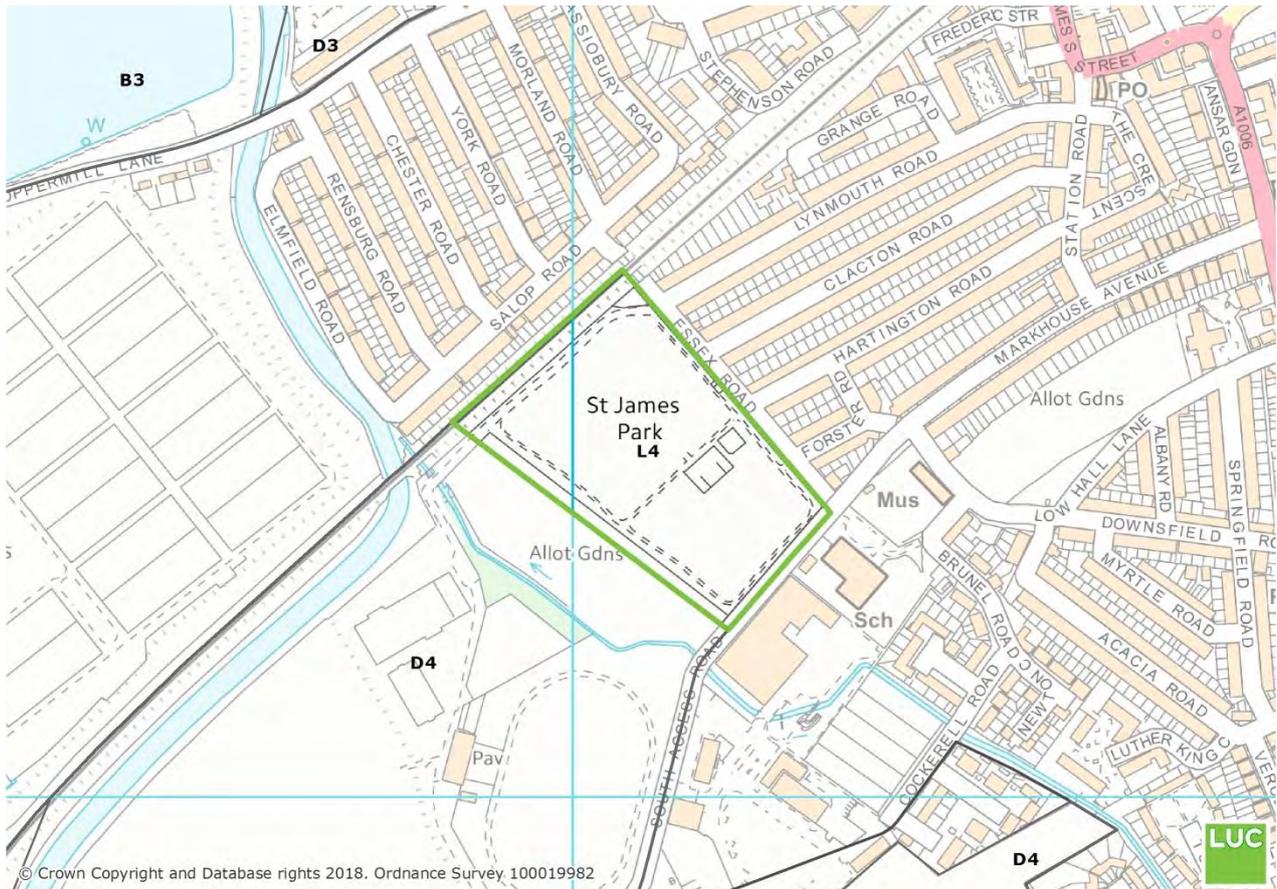
### Landscape Strategy

- 4.243 Markfield Park provides a sense of openness in the townscape, and offers facilities for access and recreation which are valued by the local community as well as people accessing the tow path along the River Lee Navigation. The presence of the Engine Room Museum provides an important link to the heritage of the local area and the lower Lea.
- 4.244 The focus should be on maintaining the valued qualities of the area, notably the sense of time-depth and openness, and connections to the Lee Valley, in terms of access and biodiversity.
- 4.245 A strategy for the park is set out in the *Markfield Park Management Plan 2013–2016*, prepared by the London Borough of Haringey.

### Guidelines

- Continue positive management of the park to maintain its historic and nature conservation
- Conserve valued visitor facilities
- Conserve and enhance biodiversity and connectivity to the wider network of green spaces
- Continue to promote the area as a gateway to the LVRP and connections with the surrounding communities in Tottenham
- Maintain the sense of openness experienced within the park - ensure the framework of mature trees which provide separation from adjacent urban environment are maintained in the long term

## LCA L4: St James Park



### Location and Boundaries

4.246 St James Park is a small park on the outskirts of Walthamstow, within the southern part of the LVRP, managed by the London Borough of Waltham Forest. It is located to the east of Dagenham Brook, a small tributary of the River Lea which formerly marked the eastern extent of Leyton Marshes. The Chingford to Liverpool Street railway line, raised on an embankment, borders the area to the north. The boundaries to the northeast and west are formed by roads and fronted by residential areas, a school and the E17 Walthamstow Pumphouse Museum, the latter a direct link to the Lee Valley's industrial heritage..



The entrance to the park on Essex Road – the lines of mature lime trees create a prominent boundary feature



View along lane leading to the allotments and Low Hall Sports Ground – the railway embankment in view to the right



View from the northwest towards the residential area facing the park along Essex Road



View across the northern area of open grassland, framed by mature lime trees, towards the children's play area

### Key characteristics

- Small urban park set within a flat floodplain with a simple landscape pattern of two large open spaces of grassland framed by lines of mature lime trees, planted in the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century, and a play area at the centre
- Former farmland associated with Low Hall Manor, a medieval manor which occupied land south of Forest Road and west of Blackhorse and Markhouse Road, enclosed as a public park in 1910 by unemployed workers as part of a local distress relief scheme
- Views mostly filtered by the framework of mature trees and hedges at the perimeter
- Some nature conservation value provided by the mature lime trees and small areas of scrub at the northern peripheries
- Residential edges are generally well integrated by the lines of mature trees
- Detached visually and physically from the wider valley, with allotments and Low Hall Sports Ground to the west containing views and the network of railway lines and flood relief channels severing the area from the wider valley and River Lea



## Evaluation

### Landscape Quality & Condition

- 4.247 Small in scale and simple in pattern, this area has a sense of space and an open parkland character providing an important resource within the adjacent townscape. It is valued as an open green space that has some continuity with the wider Lee Valley through the Low Hall Sports Ground to the west.
- 4.248 It has a coherent and consistent character of open grassland framed by mature trees, although it has limited nature conservation interest because of a lack of diversity of vegetation. There is also very limited connectivity, visually and physically with the wider Lee Valley. A small track provides access to Low Hall Sports Ground to the west, but a series of railway lines and a flood relief channel severs the area from Walthamstow Marshes, severely limiting access to it. There is therefore a sense of the whole area being cut off from the main valley, although there remains the potential for habitat links.

### Valued Features and Characteristics

- The openness and sense of space provided by the expanses of open grassland framed by trees that contrast with the adjacent urban environment
- Strong landscape structure with lines of mature lime trees forming a particularly distinctive feature
- Links to the formal rural character of the historic farmland, retained in the landscape structure
- Strong landscape structure with avenues of mature London plane trees
- Informal recreational and play facilities valued by the local community

## Landscape Strategy

- 4.249 St James Park provides a sense of openness in the townscape, and offers a resource for informal recreation which is valued by the local community. The long term strategy should be to maintain the valued qualities of the area, notably the sense of openness, and to seek opportunities to re-connect it to the Lee Valley bringing with this improvements to recreational links east-west across the valley and enhanced biodiversity interest.

### Guidelines

- Continue positive management of the park to maintain its mature framework of trees and open character experienced within the park
- Conserve valued visitor facilities
- Conserve and enhance biodiversity and habitat connectivity to the wider network of green spaces to the west
- Seek opportunities to re-connect the area to Walthamstow and Leyton Marshes, to promote the area as a gateway to the LVRP for surrounding communities in Walthamstow
- Seek opportunities to diversify the habitats within the park, including diversifying the types of grassland through management and introducing understory shrubs and plants

# LCA L5: Springfield Park





View from high point within the park looking east over the river valley and the wooded ridge west of Woodford visible on the skyline



View eastwards from within the park characterised by mature trees

### Location and Boundaries

- 4.250 Springfield Park is listed as a Grade II Park on the Historic England Register of Parks and Gardens of historic interest. It is within, and managed by, the London Borough of Hackney. Located on one of the few hills in the borough, the park commands extensive views east over the Walthamstow Marshes and the Lee Valley to the east creating a strong link between the urban environment and the valley. It offers a range of recreational facilities set within the framework of the historic park and is well used by the local community, as well as providing visual and physical connectivity with the wider LVRP.
- 4.251 The park was created from the gardens of three Victorian villas by the London County Council in 1904. Two villas were demolished with Springfield Mansion House and a former lodge remaining as important built features and facilities in the park. **It was London's first regionally important Geological Site (RIGS)** and designated as a Local Nature Reserve for its unusual geology which tells the story of the erosion and deposition of the River Lea. The sand and gravel river terraces in the upper park are highly permeable creating a distinctive seasonal springline on the slopes, where they meet the impermeable London Clay. It is also an important wildlife haven, designated as Site of Nature Conservation Importance providing a diversity of habitats including woodland, acid grassland and a pond.



### Key characteristics

- Distinctive hill forming a striking green backdrop when viewed from the flat valley floor and commanding extensive views over the adjacent valley and marshes to the wooded ridge west of Woodford;
- Geological interest of permeable sand and gravel terraces over London clay giving rise to springs at the junction;
- A managed urban parkland landscape, well used by the local community and offering a variety of valued recreational opportunities including a bowling green, cricket square, tennis courts, trim trail, play areas, band stand etc;
- Grade II Registered Park and Garden Listed - created from the gardens of three Victorian villas by London County Council in 1904.
- Some habitat interest including secondary woodland, acid grassland and a pond;
- Physical and visual connectivity to the LVRP including links along the tow path which is immediately to the east of the Park;
- Urban context – with adjacent residential areas largely screened by trees and views out across the marshlands **creating a tangible 'rural' context and the hill itself forming a green backdrop and setting in views from the marshes.**

## Evaluation

### Landscape Quality & Condition

- 4.252 Springfield Park is described in the Management Plan<sup>7</sup> (2012 – 2017) as “one of Hackney’s finest Green spaces and is listed as Grade II on the English Heritage Register of Parks and Gardens of Historic Interest. **The park is well loved by the local community and is one of Hackney’s true hidden gems.**” The area has a strong historic parkland character and associated mature landscape structure. It is generally in good condition and there are few detractors, with enhancement and restoration currently being taken forward through a Heritage Lottery Funded project.

### Valued Features and Characteristics

- The openness, sense of space and extensive uninterrupted views over the marshes of the LVRP;
- The heritage and historic character – Grade II Registered Park and including associated Listed Buildings;
- Geological interest demonstrating geological history of erosion and deposition of the River Lea;
- Wildlife interest providing a diversity of habitats and designated as a Site of Nature Conservation importance;
- Role as green backdrop and setting to the River Lea and adjacent marshlands;
- Access gateway and connectivity between the urban environment and the LVRP;
- Diverse recreational facilities well used and valued by the local community.

## Landscape Strategy

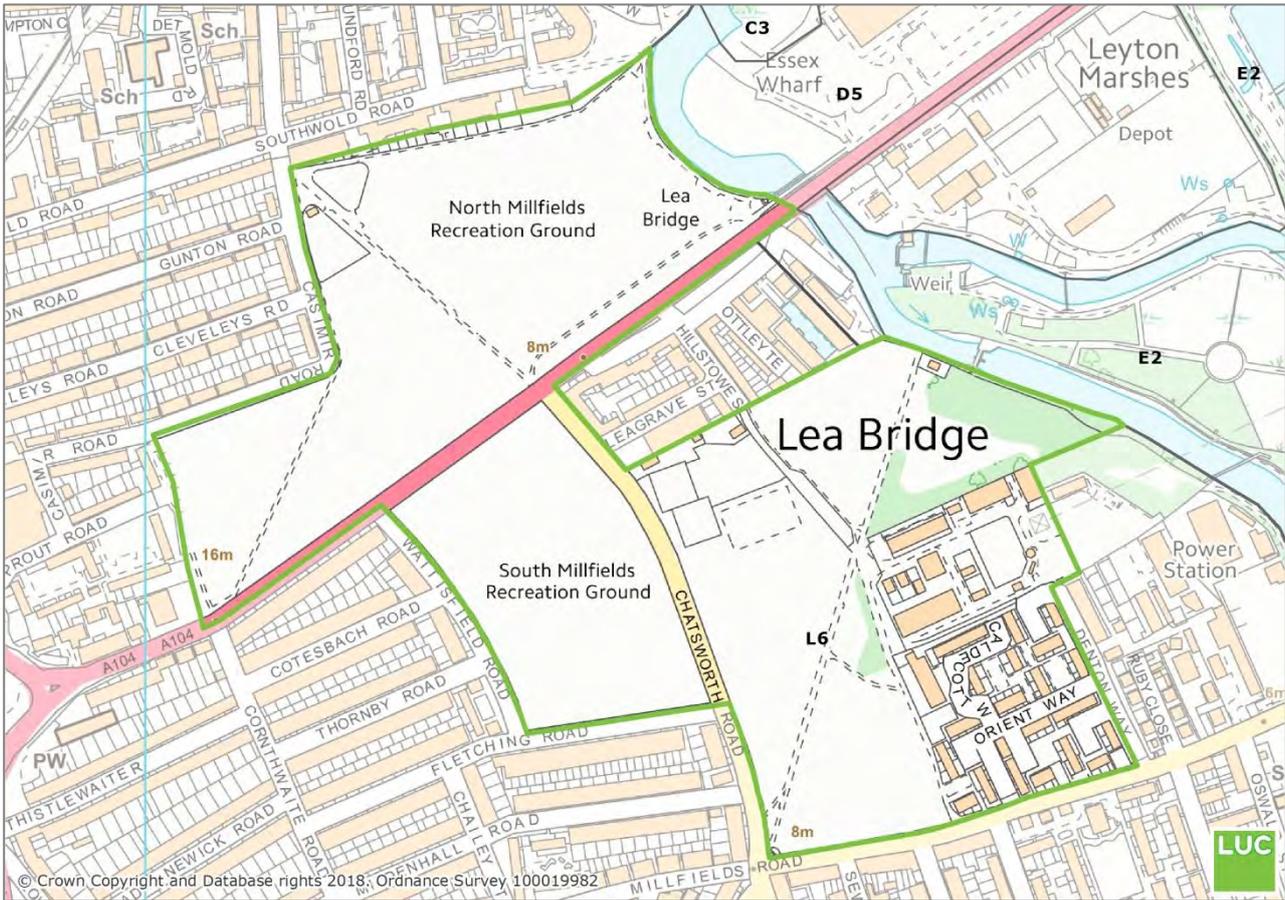
- 4.253 Springfield Park is an important focus and gateway to the Lee Valley for the surrounding urban population of Hackney. The mature parkland provides a sense of space and openness in the townscape, commanding extensive views over the marshes and a distinctive green backdrop in views from the valley. It offers a range of facilities for access, recreation which are valued by the local community.
- 4.254 The focus should be on maintaining the valued qualities of the area, including the sense of openness and historic interest, and enhancing connections to the Lee Valley, with opportunities for improving recreational links and biodiversity interest to enhance its character as an integral part of the LVRP. A strategy for the park is set out in the *Springfield Park Management Plan 2012 – 2017 (Updated 2017)*, prepared by the London Borough of Hackney.

### Guidelines

- Continue positive management of the park as set out in the *Management Plan*.
- Conserve and enhance valued recreational facilities and functions.
- Protect the role of the area as a green backdrop and skyline to the Lee Valley, ensuring new tall/unsympathetic development does not punctuate the distinctive skyline in views from the LVRP.
- Maintain the extensive views out over the marshes from the park including the largely undeveloped skylines to the wooded ridge west of Woodford.
- Conserve and enhance biodiversity and geological interests and connectivity with the Lee Valley.
- Continue to promote the area as a gateway to the LVRP providing access to and connection with the wider surrounding urban communities.

<sup>7</sup> Springfield Park Management Plan, 2012 – 2017, updated January 2017

# LCA L6: Millfields Park





View from northwest corner of the park looking east towards Lea Bridge



Mature avenues of trees are a distinctive feature of the park



View of Lee Navigation with sculpture in the foreground



View of the Lee Navigation and new development on the eastern side

## Location and Boundaries

- 4.255 Millfields Park is a distinct area of urban parkland in the southern part of the LVRP within and managed by the London Borough of Hackney. It is a formal parkland setting and gateway to the main corridor of the Lower Lee Valley and provides an important feature of the surrounding townscape offering open space and a range of recreation opportunities. It is located at one of the major crossing points of the Lee Navigation (Lea Bridge Road). The park is made up of three large open spaces dissected by the Lea Bridge and Chatsworth Roads framed by avenues of mature London plane trees. The Lee Navigation borders the park to the east and links it to Springfield Park to the north and Hackney Marshes to the south. Other boundaries are formed by roads and fronted by residential areas (Victorian and early Edwardian).
- 4.256 Previously Lammas land (entitling commoners to pasture following harvest), the area has a historic rural character and connection to the Lee valley. It became known as Mill Fields after a corn mill on the river. Today, the extensive flat grassland areas bordered by trees create a strong sense of openness within the urban fabric. The park includes a variety of features including small areas of woodland, a community orchard, sports and play areas providing an important recreational resource for the adjacent urban population.



### Key characteristics

- Broad, flat expanse of floodplain, providing a formal urban parkland setting and gateway to the main corridor of the Lower Lee Valley.
- Formerly Lammas land, now with a simple landscape pattern of three large open spaces of grassland framed by avenues of mature London plane trees.
- Lee Navigation borders the park to the east and links it to Springfield Park to the north and Hackney Marshes to the south and the wider LVRP.
- Physically fragmented into three separate areas by the Lea Bridge and Chatsworth Roads.
- Includes small areas of woodland, a community orchard, sports and play areas providing an important recreational resource for the adjacent urban population.
- Residential edges are generally well integrated by mature tree cover with the only detracting intrusion being the Electricity substation in the southern part of the park.

## Evaluation

### Landscape Quality & Condition

- 4.257 This area has an urban parkland character providing an important sense of space and openness in the dense residential townscape. It has retained the character of the original field system providing a link to local history and heritage. This is especially strong on the north eastern boundary of the site adjoining the River Lea and Navigation providing views across and experience of the watercourses and their industrial history. Overall, despite being fragmented by roads, it has a coherent and consistent character of expansive areas of grassland framed by mature trees. Traffic and noise on the Lea Bridge Road is the main detractor being invasive in the northern part of the park and severs the area into two areas North Millfields and South Millfields which are physically and visually disconnected.
- 4.258 Generally, views from within the area are framed and filtered by the avenues of mature trees, with the only detracting intrusion being the Electricity substation in the southern part of the park. Good sightlines, surrounding residential development which fronts onto the park create natural surveillance over much of the area and as a whole it feels safe. It offers a range of recreational facilities which are well used, although offering opportunities to improve quality and conditions in some instances. There are also opportunities to fine tune management regimes to support biodiversity objectives.

### Valued Features and Characteristics

- The openness and sense of space provided by the expanses of open grassland framed by trees that contrast strongly with the dense and busy urban environments adjacent.
- The rural historic character of Lammas fields which has been retained in the landscape structure.
- Role as parkland setting and gateway/access to the Lower Lea, including connections to, and experience of, the river and navigation.
- Strong landscape structure with avenues of mature London plane trees.
- Local nature conservation interest, as a SINCP and as a habitat corridor linked to the river valley.
- Range of recreational facilities valued by the local community and role in contributing to community cohesiveness

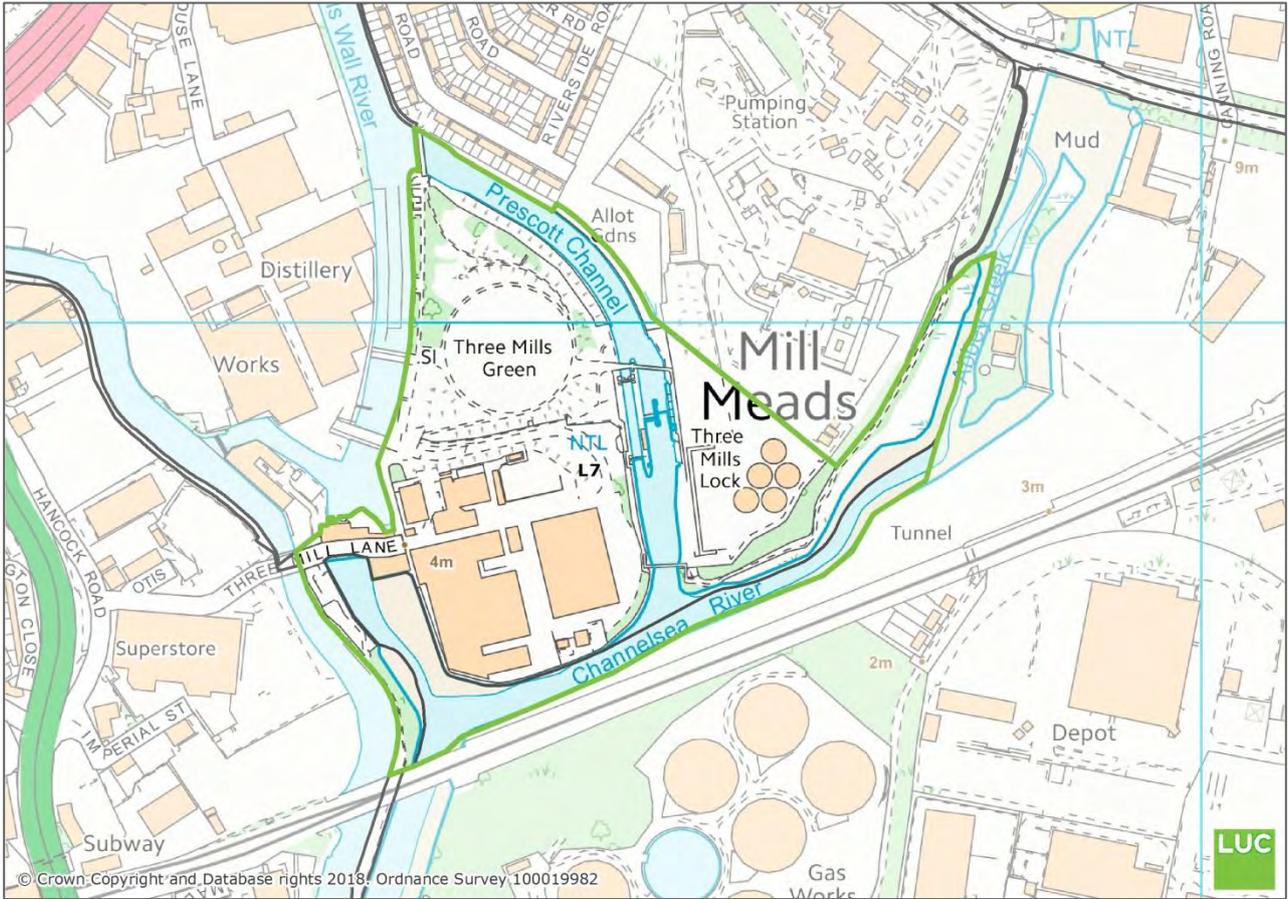
## Landscape Strategy

- 4.259 Millfields Park is an important gateway to the Lee Valley for the surrounding urban population of Hackney. It provides a sense of space and openness in the townscape, and offers facilities for access, recreation which are valued by the local community.
- 4.260 The focus should be on maintaining the valued qualities of the area, notably the sense of openness, and enhancing connections to the Lee Valley, with opportunities for improving recreational links and biodiversity interest to enhance its character as a floodplain landscape forming an integral part of the LVRP.
- 4.261 A strategy for the park is set out in the *Millfields Park Management Plan 20-15 – 2020 (Updated 2017)*, prepared by the London Borough of Hackney in partnership with the Millfields User Group.

### Guidelines

- Continue positive management of the park as set out in the Management Plan.
- Conserve, restore and enhance biodiversity interest and historic interest as Lammas land and connectivity with the wider Lee Valley floodplain and Navigation.
- Conserve and enhance valued recreational facilities and functions.
- Continue to promote the area as a gateway to the LVRP and connections with the surrounding communities in Hackney.
- Conserve the avenues of mature London plane which frame the areas of open grassland and reinforce a sense of separation from the urban area.
- Maintain the sense of openness experienced within the park - ensure that the mature trees which provide separation from adjacent urban areas are not overtopped by tall development.

# LCA L7: Three Mills





The Grade I listed House Mill imparts a strong influence at a key gateway into site.



The clock tower and drying kilns (Grade II listed) form distinct local landmarks from the river.



Recreational ground in the north - with a circular path and sculpted landform.



Abbey Mills Pumping Station with its distinctive domed roof, within an industrial context.

### Location and Boundaries

4.255 Three Mills Island is located to the south of Stratford and west of West Ham within the London Borough of Newham. It is defined by the River Lea to the north and west, as well as the eastern branch of the Lea to the south. The Prescott Channel severs the area from north to south. The character area falls within the Three Mills Conservation Area and also includes a tidal reed bed and wetland to the south of Abbey Mills Pumping Station.



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### Key characteristics

- A public open space centered on a collection of historic buildings on the Three Mills 'island', the site of three former working tidal mills surrounded on all sides by river channels
- A concentration of heritage assets associated with former milling activities, designated as a Conservation Area and including the Grade I listed House Mill and Grade II listed Clock Mill
- The House Mill comprising the earliest surviving mill dating back to the late 18<sup>th</sup> – early 19<sup>th</sup> century with the richly textured granite cobbled causeway
- The Clock Mill exhibits special architectural features including a clock tower and distinctive drying kilns which form focal points from the river
- A large circular grassed recreation ground with sculpted landform allowing for panoramic views across the city skyline
- A strong physical and visual relationship with Abbey Mills Pumping Station
- A distinct contrast to the surrounding area, defined by an intimate and historic scale of development at the Green
- Some habitat interest provided by scrub, dominated by Hazel and Buddleia, encloses a riverside path wrapping around the Pumping Station beyond 3 Mills Lock
- Key site forming part of the Lea River Park and Leaway linking the Park south to the River Thames
- Gas holders of Bromley Gas Works form a prominent feature on the skyline above a distinctive row of Sycamore trees
- Narrow boats moored along the Three Mills Wall River contribute to a busy and active corridor alongside the area
- Views to the north are channeled along the river and are punctuated by landmark buildings and structures within the Olympic Park

## Evaluation

### Landscape Quality & Condition

- 4.256 The landscape has two distinct public areas, divided by the row of sycamore trees along the access road to 3 Mills Studios: the sculpted landform which provides an enclosed recreational area with clear and attractive gateways; and the collection of historic buildings within the south. The spaces in Three Mills Green are well-managed and provide a number of opportunities for informal recreation. The historic mills and their associated architectural features are well-preserved and result in a high quality landscape.

### Valued Features and Characteristics

- A compact landscape, with an intimate and contained spatial character strongly influenced by the historic buildings on the site recognized as a Conservation Area
- Intact historic mill buildings and cobbled street listed as a conservation area provides a strong sense of place
- A memorial along the riverside commemorating the former mill workers killed in 1901 provides a symbol of the past and focal point from the tow path
- A well-defined and popular community park with opportunities for informal recreation
- Variety of visual experiences with open views from the riverside and more contained and filtered views within the parkland

### Landscape Strategy

- 4.257 The Three Mills should be managed and celebrated for its historic importance with the Clock Mill and House Mill providing a strong focal point at a key gateway into the area. The historic character should play a key role in providing interest and encouraging greater community engagement with the landscape.

#### Guidelines

- Preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area
- Ensure that all listed buildings and historic streetscape features are protected and positively integrated
- Seek to ensure that any development within or beyond the area respects the important views in and out of the character area
- Manage and preserve key historic features which contribute to the strong character and provide an attractive setting to the public open space

## Appendix 1 **Glossary of Terms**

Term	Definition
Amenity	A feature that increases attractiveness or value
AOD	Above Ordnance Datum (sea level).
Ancient woodland	Woods that are believed to have been continuous woodland cover since at least 1600 AD.
Alluvium	Loose soil or sediments, which has been eroded, reshaped by water in some form, and redeposited in a non-marine setting.
Arable	The growing of crops
BC	Before Christ, used to indicate a date before the Christian era
Biodiversity	The measure of the variety of organisms present in different ecosystems.
Clayey	Clay soils
Condition	A judgement on the intactness and condition of the elements of the landscape.
Coniferous woodland	Woodland comprised of coniferous trees often having needle like leaves. They are usually evergreen.
Coppice	A traditional form of woodland management where trees (commonly hazel) are cut regularly on a cycle to promote growth from their bases.
Copse	A small group of trees
Deciduous woodland	Woodland where the majority of tree lose their leaves at the end of the growing season
Drift	The name for all material of glacial origin found anywhere on land or at sea, including sediment and large rocks.
Enclosure	The placing in private hands of land to which there was previously common rights; the merging of strip fields to form a block surrounded by hedges.
Floodplain	The area that would naturally be affected by flooding if a river rises above its banks, or high tides and stormy seas cause flooding in coastal areas.
Flood alleviation	The act of reducing flooding by various means
Forces for change	These are both positive and negative factors that are known to or have potential to act on the landscape, including agricultural management issues, policy and development pressures.

GIS	Geographic Information System
GPS	Global Positioning System
Green Belt	An area of open land around a city, on which building is restricted.
Ha	Hectares
Habitat	The natural home or environment of an animal, plant, or other organism
Hydrology	The science dealing with the occurrence, circulation, distribution, and properties of the waters of the earth and its atmosphere
Intactness	Not changed or diminished
Lammas land	Historically land that was common between Lammas Day in August and Lady Day in March
Land cover	The physical material at the surface of the earth.
Landscape character	The distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements that occurs consistently in a particular landscape and how these are perceived. It reflects particular combinations of geology, landform, soils, vegetation, land use and human settlement.
Landscape character areas (LCAs)	Single unique areas that are the discrete geographical area of a particular landscape type.
Landscape character types (LCTs)	Distinct types of landscape that are relatively homogenous in character. They are generic in nature in that they may occur in different areas in different parts of the country, but share broadly similar combinations of geology, topography, drainage patterns, vegetation, historic land use and settlement pattern.
Landscape Strategy	Principles to manage and direct landscape change for a particular landscape type or character area including identification of any particular management needs for specific elements.
Loamy	Soil composed mostly of sand and silt, and a smaller amount of clay
Local Plan	A development plan prepared by local planning authorities
LWS	Local Wildlife Site
Medieval	Relating to the Middle Ages
MOL	Metropolitan Open Land – a designation protecting areas of open land within London. These areas are afforded the equivalent level of protection as Green Belt
NCA	National Character Area – defined within the <b><i>National Character Area Study, Natural England (2013)</i></b> - NCAs divide England into 159 distinct natural areas. Each is defined by a unique combination of landscape, biodiversity, geodiversity, history, and cultural and economic activity.
OS	Ordnance Survey

Parish	A small administrative district typically having its own church and a priest or pastor.
Perceptual	The ability to interpret or become aware of something through the senses.
Permeable	Allowing liquids or gases to pass through it.
Plateau	An area of fairly level high ground
Prehistoric	The period before written records
Protect	Strategy where the emphasis is conservation of existing character and of particular features that contribute to this character.
RAMSAR site	A wetland site designated as being of international importance under the Ramsar Convention
Rarity	The state or quality of being rare
Remnant	A part or quantity left after the greater part has been used, removed, or destroyed.
Rural	Relating to or characteristic of the countryside
Scheduled Monument	Nationally important archaeological sites or historic buildings, given protection against unauthorised change
Sensitive	The response to change or influence
Settlement pattern	The shape of a settlement
Silty	Fine earth matter carried by moving or running water and deposited as a sediment.
Skyline	The outline of a range of hills, ridge or group of buildings seen against the sky.
SAC	Special Area of Conservation
SPA	Special Protection Area
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest
Subsoils	Soil lying immediately under the surface soil
Superficial deposits	Geological deposit from the Quaternary age, may include stream channel and floodplain deposits. All pre quaternary deposits are known as bedrock.
Topography	The arrangement of the natural and artificial physical features of an area, often relating to topography
Veteran Trees	Exceptional due to the trees age, rarity, ecological, aesthetic or cultural interest.
SINC and SMINC	Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation - designations used by local authorities for sites of local nature conservation value. In the

	Park this includes SMINC – Sites of Metropolitan Importance for Nature Conservation, the most important category
Strength of character	A judgement on how distinctive and recognisable the pattern is that defines the character of the landscape. This includes the combination of physical and cultural attributes and the sense of place that they evoke.
Time-depth	The extent to which something reflects or reveals different periods of time.
Valued attributes	Positive features and characteristics that are important to landscape character.

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**NB Also refer to Table 2.1 for GIS Data sources used**

# Appendix 3 **Example Survey Form**

# LCA.....

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## Location and boundaries

## Key Characteristics

## Valued features

## Detractors

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**Landscape condition/quality**

**Strategy**

**Guidance**



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