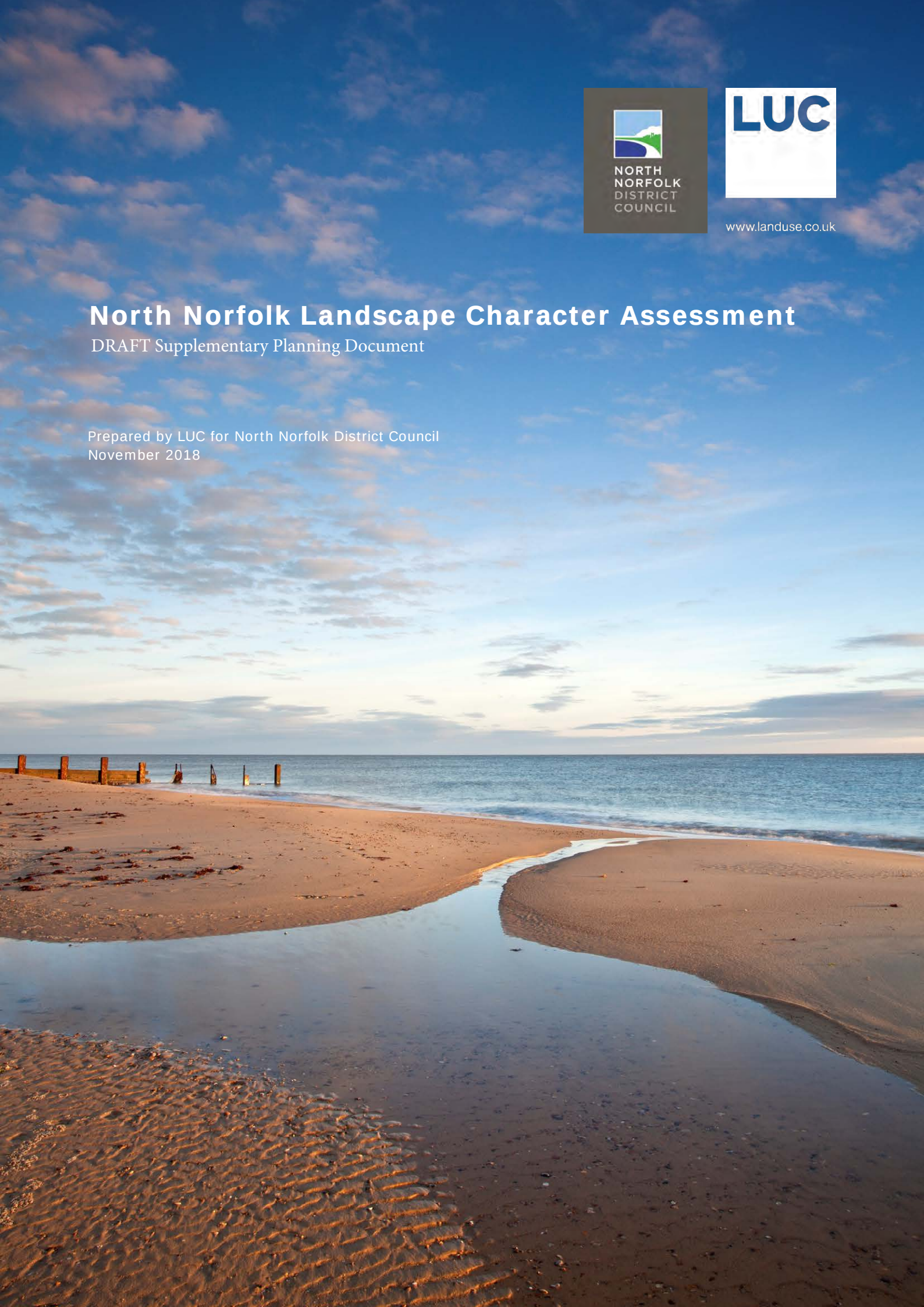

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North Norfolk Landscape Character Assessment

DRAFT Supplementary Planning Document

Prepared by LUC for North Norfolk District Council
November 2018

Project Title: North Norfolk Landscape Character Assessment

Client: North Norfolk District Council

Version	Date	Version Details	Prepared by	Checked by	Approved by
1.0	31.05.18	Draft report	Tom Forkan Richard Swann Rebecca Knight	Rebecca Knight	Rebecca Knight
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North Norfolk Landscape Character Assessment

Final Draft Report
Prepared by LUC for North Norfolk District Council
November 2018

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Contents

Part 1: Overview

Part 2: Landscape Character Type and Area Profiles

Tables

Figures

Part 1: Overview

1 Introduction

Background & Purpose of the Landscape Character Assessment

1.1 North Norfolk District Council commissioned LUC in February 2018 to review and update the existing landscape character evidence base, and produce an updated landscape character assessment. It is intended to provide context for policies and proposals within the emerging Local Plan, inform the determination of planning applications, and inform the management of future change. This character assessment updates the District's previous Landscape Character Assessment[1]. Some sections of text have therefore been imported from the previous report (written by North Norfolk District Council) where they are still relevant.

1.2 As acknowledged in the previous published assessment, the landscape is the result of the interaction between people and the environment that gives an area a local identity. **Landscape character** is defined as "*a distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements in the landscape that makes one landscape different from another, rather than better or worse*"[2]. The 'landscape wheel' at **Figure 1.1** below illustrates how the different natural, cultural and perceptual attributes of a landscape combine to produce character.

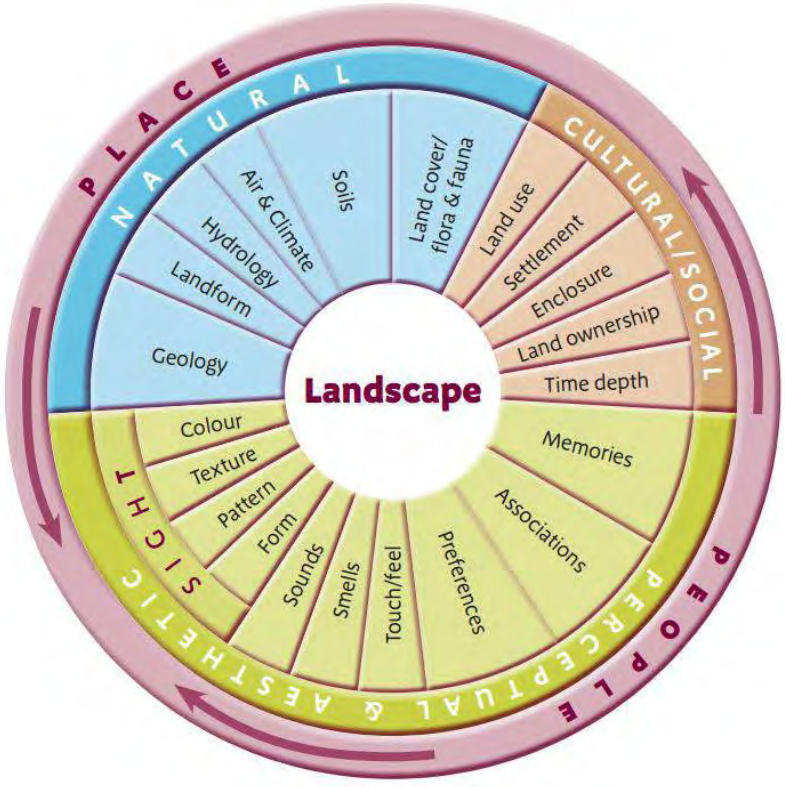

Figure 1.1: The 'landscape wheel' (Natural England, 2014)

1.3 **Landscape Character Assessment** is a tool to identify what makes a place unique, and can serve as a framework for decision making that respects local distinctiveness. It emerged in the 1980s as a process by which to define the character of the landscape – i.e. what makes one area distinct or different from another. It sought to separate the classification and description of the landscape from the evaluation process. During recent years, the techniques and

[1] North Norfolk Landscape Character Assessment, Supplementary Planning Document Adopted June 2009
[2] An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment" (Natural England, October 2014)

methodology have been refined, culminating in the publication of "An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment" (Natural England, October 2014).

1.4 Understanding the character of place and evaluating an area's defining characteristics is a key component in managing growth sustainably and ensuring that the inherent qualities of North Norfolk's landscape can continue to be celebrated, creating places that people can be proud of. Understanding of character can be used to ensure that any change or development does not undermine whatever is valued or characteristic in a particular landscape.

Context

1.5 North Norfolk District covers an area of 87,040 hectares (340 square miles) (excluding the Broads Authority Executive Area), with a 73km (45 mile) North Sea coastline. The location of the District in the context of the East of England region and neighbouring authorities is shown in **Figure 1.2**. A significant proportion of the District is included within the nationally designated Norfolk Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and the North Norfolk Heritage Coast. The eastern end of the District also adjoins The Broads, which has the status of a National Park.

1.6 The main settlements in the District comprise seven towns (Cromer, Fakenham, Holt, North Walsham, Sheringham, Stalham and Wells-next-the-Sea) and three large villages (Briston / Melton Constable, Hoveton & Mundesley), which accommodate approximately half of the District's population (101,149 at the 2011 Census).

1.7 The District's main road network comprises the A140 (Cromer to Norwich), the A148 (Cromer to King's Lynn - via Holt and Fakenham) and the A1065 (Fakenham to Mildenhall), as well as the more minor A1067, A149 and A1151. There is only one public rail service in the District, comprising the 'Bittern Line' linking Sheringham with Norwich.

1.8 The District has a strongly rural character with agriculture, in particular arable farmland, comprising by far the largest component of land use.

1.9 A network of Rights of Way crosses open fields, heathlands and woodlands. Many of the large areas of coastline, heathland and woodland have open access. The Norfolk Coast Path National Trail follows the entirety of the District's coastline, linking with the Peddars Way in the west and the Paston Way in the east.

1.10 There are many aspects of the North Norfolk environment to be positive about, such as:

- The stunning landscape of the North Norfolk Coast AONB, carefully managed by the Norfolk Coast Partnership to ensure it can be enjoyed by generations to come.
- The large number of internationally and nationally designated sites and nature reserves, home to many rare and protected species and landscapes.
- The wealth of archaeological and historic environment sites throughout the district, from the prehistoric to the Cold War.
- The rare arable plants thriving in pockets of North Norfolk farmland.
- The conservation groups, organisations and individuals working hard to record, protect and enhance the natural environment of North Norfolk.

How to use this report

1.11 This report can be used to consider landscape character when planning any type of change. The flow chart in **Figure 1.3** aims to assist in using the report and is arranged around a number of key stages, setting out a series of questions as prompts to assist in using available information to shape proposals / assist in planning decisions.

North Norfolk Landscape Character Assessment & Landscape Sensitivity Study

Figure 1.2: Location of District within the Region

- North Norfolk District
- Surrounding Local Authority boundary
- The Broads Authority area
- North Norfolk Heritage Coast
- Norfolk Coast AONB

0 4 8 km

Map Scale @A3: 1:220,000

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Source: BGS, Natural England, Environment Agency, NNDC

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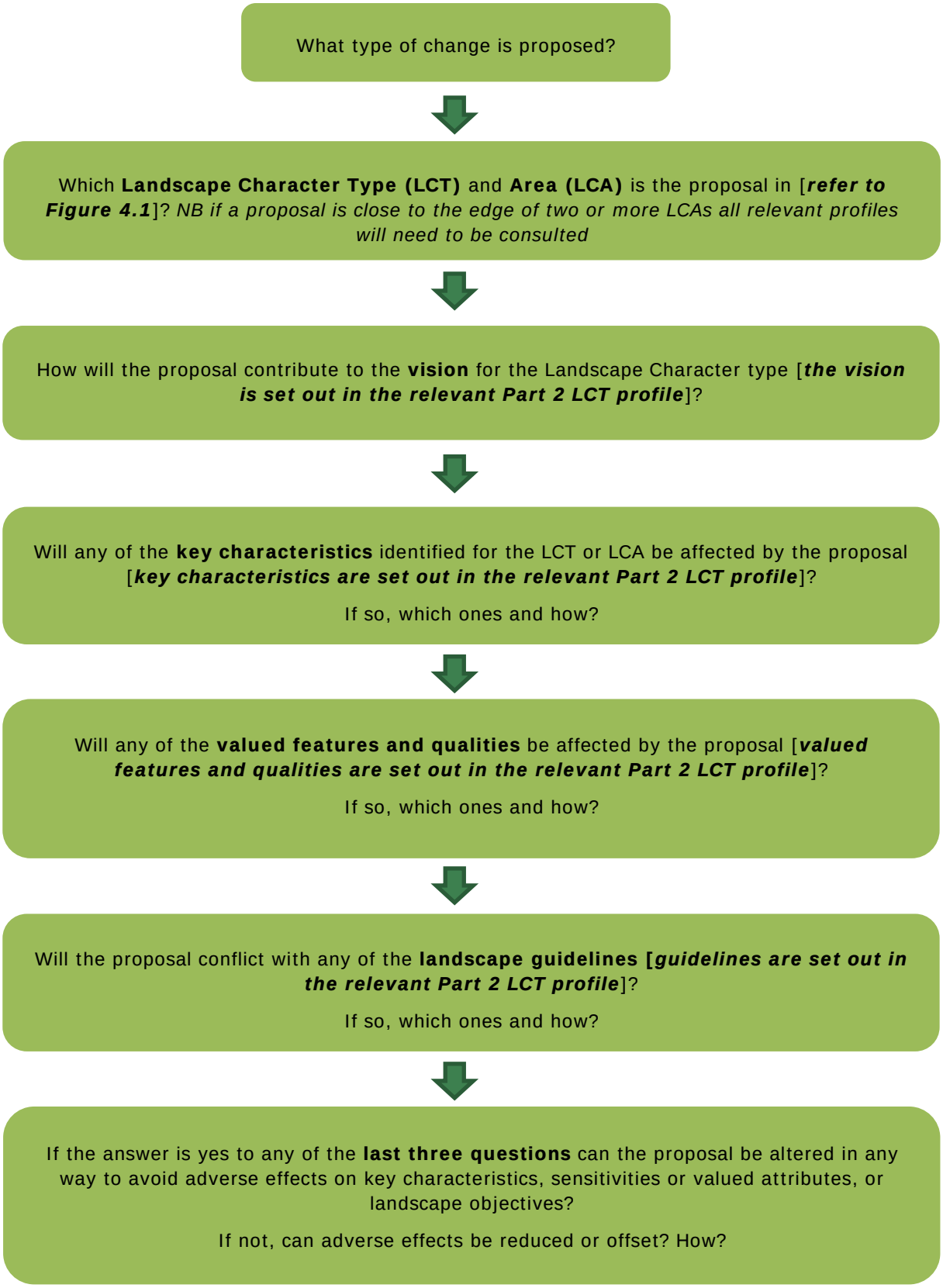

Figure 1.3: How to use this report

Structure of this report

1.12 This report is set out in two parts. **Part 1** provides an overview, comprising:

- **Section 1** presents an introduction, background and policy context.
- **Section 2** presents the methodology and approach to the landscape character assessment.
- **Section 3** presents the formative influences on the landscape.
- **Section 4** presents the landscape classification.

1.13 **Part 2** presents the landscape character of the landscape character types and areas through a series of 'profiles'.

1.14 The report is supported by the following appendices:

- **Appendix 1** provides a glossary of terms.
- **Appendix 2** presents the classification on a large fold-out 1:25,000 OS base map.

Policy Context

The European Landscape Convention

1.15 The European Landscape Convention (ELC) came into force in the UK in March 2007. It establishes the need to recognise landscape in law; to develop landscape policies dedicated to the protection, management and planning of landscapes; and to establish procedures for the participation of the general public and other stakeholders in the creation and implementation of landscape policies.

1.16 The ELC definition of 'landscape' recognises that all landscapes matter, be they ordinary, degraded or outstanding:

"Landscape means an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors"

1.17 The Convention puts emphasis on the whole landscape and all its values and is forward looking in its approach, recognising the dynamic and changing character of landscape. Specific measures promoted by the Convention, of direct relevance to this study include:

- the identification and assessment of landscape; and
- improved consideration of landscape in existing and future sectoral and spatial policy and regulation.

1.18 This updated Landscape Character Assessment will continue to make a key contribution to the implementation of the ELC in North Norfolk District. It helps to reaffirm the importance of landscape, co-ordinate existing work and guide future work to protect, manage and plan the landscapes of North Norfolk.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), 2018

1.19 The revised National Planning Policy Framework NPPF, published in 2018, states as a core principle that planning should recognise '*the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside…*' (paragraph 170.b).

1.20 The NPPF calls for valued landscapes to be protected and enhanced, stating '*Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by… protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality*)" (para 170.a). The greatest weight is given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) (para 172). This LCA needs to be mindful of the NPPF, particularly given the extent to which North Norfolk is designated as AONB. An up-to-date Landscape Character Assessment is also recommended in the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) to support planning decisions by local planning authorities.

Relationship to Published Landscape Studies

1.21 Landscape does not stop at administrative boundaries but continues seamlessly into surrounding administrative areas. Therefore, an aim of this assessment was to join up with the Landscape Character Assessments of adjacent authorities where possible, and sit within the existing hierarchy of landscape character assessments. The hierarchy of assessments is shown in the diagram in **Figure 1.4**.

1.22 Existing national character areas (the National Character Areas published by Natural England[3]) are shown on **Figure 1.5 –National Landscape Character Context**. Underneath this is the regional landscape typology for the East of England [http://landscape-east.org.uk/east-england-landscape-typology] which is shown in **Figure 1.6 – Regional Landscape Character Context**. There is no county-level Landscape Character Assessment for Norfolk.

1.23 At the local level, classifications for neighbouring authorities are illustrated on **Figure 1.7 – Neighbouring Character Areas**.

1.24 The Norfolk Coast AONB overlaps with North Norfolk District and also has its own landscape character assessment (AONB Integrated Landscape Guidance) which was published alongside the 5-year AONB Management Plan 2009-14, and developed in conjunction with the existing North Norfolk Landscape Character Assessment (2009). As such, they share broadly the same landscape classifications.

1.25 This assessment can also provide a framework in which more detailed assessments sit, such as local landscape character assessments produced to inform Neighbourhood Plans.

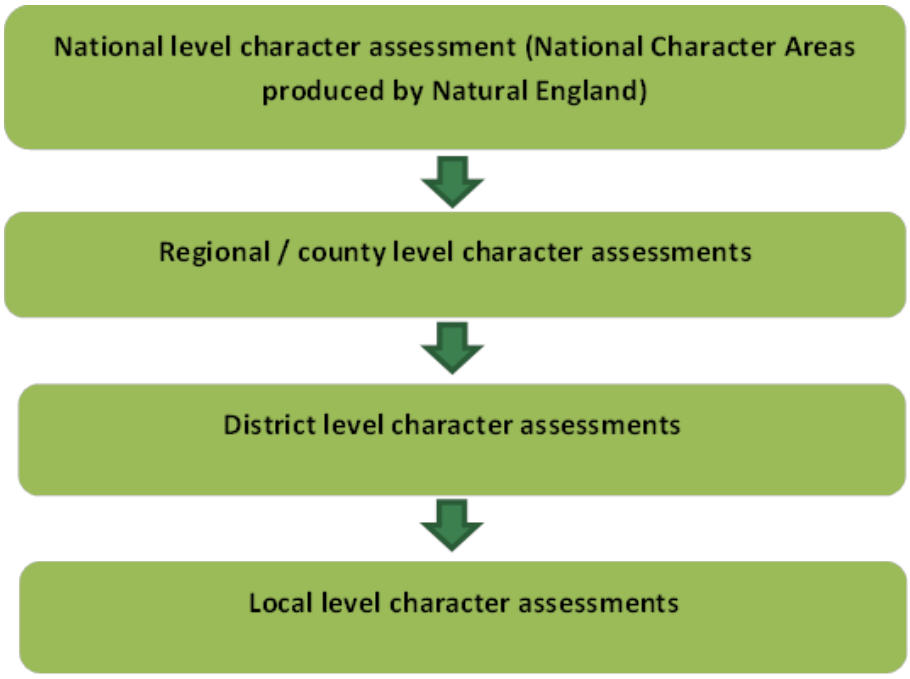

Figure 1.4: The hierarchy of landscape character assessments

[3] https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-character-area-profiles-data-for-local-decision-making/national-character-area-profiles

North Norfolk Landscape Character Assessment & Landscape Sensitivity Study

Figure 1.5: National Landscape Character Context

North Norfolk District

Surrounding Local Authority boundary

National Character Areas

- 76: North West Norfolk
- 77: North Norfolk Coast
- 78: Central North Norfolk
- 79: North East Norfolk And Flegg
- 80: The Broads
- 84: Mid Norfolk

0 4 8 km

Map Scale @A3: 1:220,000

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Source: BGS, Natural England, Environment Agency, NNDC

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North Norfolk Landscape Character Assessment & Landscape Sensitivity Study

Figure 1.6: Regional Landscape Character Context

North Norfolk District

Surrounding Local Authority boundary

East of England Landscape Typology

1. Coastal Dunes
2. Coastal Levels
3. Coastal Settled Farmlands
4. Estate Farmlands
5. Estate Sandlands
6. Lowland Settled Claylands
7. Plateau Estate Farmlands
8. Saltmarsh/Intertidal Flats
9. Valley Meadowlands
10. Valley Settled Farmlands
11. Wooded Estate Sandlands
12. Wooded Fen
13. Wooded Plateau Claylands
14. Wooded Sandstone Hills

Urban

DRAFT - not for circulation; will be updated subject to assistance from neighbouring authorities

0 4 8 km

Map Scale @A3: 1:220,000

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Source: NNDC

DRAFT - not for circulation; will be updated subject to assistance from neighbouring authorities. West Norfolk and Broadland LCTs are only scanned images.

North Norfolk Landscape Character Assessment & Landscape Sensitivity Study

Figure 1.7: Neighbouring District Landscape Classifications (Types)

- North Norfolk District
- Surrounding Local Authority boundary

Breckland LCTs

- A - River Valleys
- B - Settled Tributary Farmland
- D - The Brecks - Heathland with Plantation
- E - Plateau Farmland
- F - Chalk Rivers
- Urban

Great Yarmouth LCTs

- A: Rural Wooded Valleys
- C: Broads River Valley
- E: Dunes, Coastal Levels and Resorts
- G: Settled Farmland
- Settlement Extent

0 4 8 km

Map Scale @A3: 1:220,000

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Source: NNDC

Methodology for the Landscape Character Assessment

2 Methodology for the Landscape Character Assessment

Approach

2.1 The method for undertaking this Landscape Character Assessment follows the method promoted by Natural England through *'An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment'* (2014)[4], which embeds the principles of the European Landscape Convention (ELC) within it. This 2014 guidance 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.

2.2 The 2014 guidance lists the five key principles for landscape character assessment as follows:

- Landscape is everywhere and all landscape 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.

2.3 The assessment has been prepared within the framework set by Natural England's Natural Character Areas, and aims to join up with surrounding authorities' LCAs. It supersedes the previous North Norfolk Landscape Character Assessment (2009), but draws on information from the 2009 assessment where this remains relevant.

2.4 The process for undertaking the study involved four main stages, described below, namely:

- Desk study and classification;
- Field survey;
- Description;
- Evaluation.

2.5 GIS was used throughout the study as the tool for collating, manipulating and presenting data.

Process of Assessment

Desk Study and Classification

2.6 This stage involved the collation of a wide range of mapped information to 'sense-check' the existing landscape classification.

2.7 Data used within the report, including data collated in the GIS database, is shown in **Table 2.1.**

[4] https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/396192/landscape-character-assessment.pdf [accessed February 2015]

Table 2.1: GIS Data

Name	Source
Base OS mapping at 1:50K and 1:25K	Ordnance Survey
Terrain 50 Contour data	Ordnance Survey
Linear features, mass movement, artificial ground, superficial deposits and bedrock geology 1:50K	BGS
Administrative boundaries	North Norfolk District Council
National Character Areas	Natural England
Public Rights of Way	Natural England
River features & floodzones	Environment Agency
Agricultural Land Classification	Natural England
Nature conservation designations	Natural England (national datasets) and North Norfolk District Council (local datasets)
Priority habitats	Natural England
Historic Landscape Character Types	Norfolk County Council
Historic map **OS 1:25K 1881-1887** **OS 1:25K 1905-1906** **OS 1:10K 1886-1892** **OS 1:10K 1906-1908** **OS 1:10K 1929-1930** **OS 1:10K 1938-1952**	Ordnance Survey
Heritage designations	Historic England (national datasets) and North Norfolk District Council (local datasets)
Dark skies	CPRE
Infrastructure	North Norfolk District Council
Local Plan	North Norfolk District Council

Field Survey

2.8 A field survey was undertaken to check the classification. This specifically focussed on:

- verifying and fine-tuning the classification of the landscape types and areas identified;
- recording information on landscape character and characteristics and noting local variations in character;
- identifying key sensitivities and valued attributes; and
- assessing landscape quality (condition) i.e. the physical state of the landscape and its intactness.

Description

2.9 **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**.

2.10 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'.

2.11 For each **landscape character type** and component **character areas** a location map, a representative photo and **key characteristics** are provided. Key characteristics are the fundamental components and features within the landscape which combine to give that particular landscape its character. These characteristics can be both positive and negative in terms of their perceived impact on character.

2.12 This description is supplemented at character area level by more detailed maps and a summary of geology and soils, topography and drainage, land cover and habitats, and human influences on the landscape.

Evaluation

2.13 The “Approach to Landscape Character Assessment” document does not provide guidance on what should form part of an evaluation. This evaluation has been compiled so that the information can be applied in a number of ways. The components of the evaluation are:

- **Valued attributes and qualities**, i.e. the features and characteristics that are particularly valued for their positive contribution to character and for the ecosystem services they provide and which, if diluted or otherwise adversely affected, would detrimentally change the character of that particular landscape;
- **Forces for change / detractors,** i.e. past, present and potential future changes that have or could have a significant effect on landscape character;
- An overall **vision and landscape strategy**;
- **Guidance** to conserve and enhance character and achieve the vision.

Formative Influences

3 Formative Influences

3.1 The landscape of North Norfolk has evolved over millennia, through the interaction of the natural environment and human activities, in particular the combination of physical and cultural influences. Physical influences such as geology and landform, together with the overlying pattern of settlement and land use are key determinants of landscape character.

The Physical Dimension

Geology and Soils

3.2 Geology is a key factor in determining landscape as it influences landform, soil type, vegetation patterns, land use and settlement patterns. North Norfolk possesses a great range of 'geodiversity', with its solid and superficial geology shown in **Figure 3.1** (data from the British Geological Survey). The western half of the District is underlain by late Cretaceous chalk bedrock, and the eastern half by late Tertiary and Quaternary shallow marine deposits known as crag. Almost all of this solid geology is covered by superficial glacial deposits comprising glacial till, sand and gravel. These deposits directly influence the landform of the District, forming the hills which are expressed most dramatically by the glacial moraine (terminal moraine) known as the Cromer Ridge and its crumbling coastal cliffs, of glacial sands and gravels with some chalk exposures.

3.3 The east of the District benefits from large areas of deep, loamy and free draining fertile soils, giving rise to very good to excellent quality agricultural land (Grade 1 and 2 in DEFRA's agricultural land classification, see **Figure 3.2**). In the west of the District, underlying chalky till with coarser loamy over clayey and sandy soils give rise to good to moderate quality agricultural land (Grade 3).

Topography and Drainage

3.4 The glacial sediments overlying the chalk and crag bedrock give the majority of the North Norfolk landscape a gently undulating character. The Cromer Ridge forms the highest point in the District, and indeed the county, at Beacon Hill (103m AOD). To the west, the inland areas are dominated by the slightly elevated chalk plateau, which produces a gently rolling landform. To the east is a very low-lying, generally flat landscape bordering The Broads (see **Figure 3.3: Topography and Drainage)**.

3.5 Main watercourses within the District are chalk-fed and of high biodiversity value, including the Rivers Stiffkey and Glaven, which drain north to the coast around Blakeney Point, and in the far south of the District, the Rivers Wensum and Bure, which drain east to The Broads. The underlying chalk forms an extensive principal aquifer serving the wider region.

Land cover, habitats and natural heritage

3.6 The underlying geology and soils have a profound influence on the distribution of habitats across the District, with alkaline chalky subsoils and acidic sandy subsoils producing varied habitats ranging from heathland, mire, coastal grazing marsh and calcareous grassland to deciduous woodland, including some of the largest areas of ancient woodland in Norfolk to. The individual priority habitats and wildlife designations are outlined in more detail within the landscape character type and area profiles within Part 2.

3.7 Much of the North Norfolk Coast is highly valued for its unique inter-tidal habitats which are of international importance for their rarity and distinctive wildlife. This is one of the finest barrier coastlines in Europe.

North Norfolk Landscape Character Assessment & Landscape Sensitivity Study

Figure 3.1: Solid and Superficial Geology

North Norfolk District

Surrounding Local Authority boundary

Superficial deposits

- Alluvium
- Blown Sand
- Crag Group - Sand and Gravel
- Drift Geology Not Mapped
- Glacial Sand and Gravel
- River Terrace Deposits
- Till

Bedrock geology

- Chalk
- Crag Group

0 4 8 km

Map Scale @A3: 1:220,000

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Source: BGS, Natural England, Environment Agency, NNDC

North Norfolk Landscape Character Assessment & Landscape Sensitivity Study

Figure 3.2: Agricultural Land Classification

North Norfolk District

Surrounding Local Authority boundary

Agricultural Land Classification

- Grade 1 (excellent)
- Grade 2 (very good)
- Grade 3 (good - moderate)
- Grade 4 (poor)
- Non agricultural
- Urban

0 4 8 km

Map Scale @A3: 1:220,000

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CB:XX EB:Goosen_V LUC 10274_001_ooddpThemedMaps_A3L 31/05/2018

Source: BGS, Natural England, Environment Agency, NNDC

North Norfolk Landscape Character Assessment & Landscape Sensitivity Study

Figure 3.3: Topography & Drainage

North Norfolk District

Surrounding Local Authority boundary

Flood zone 3

Flood zone 2

Elevation (metres AOD)

High : 103.3

Low : -2.8

0 4 8 km

Map Scale @A3: 1:220,000

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CB:XX EB:Goosen_V LUC 10274_001_ooddpThemedMaps_A3L 31/05/2018

Source: BGS, Natural England, Environment Agency, NNDC

The Human Dimension

3.8 The landscape of North Norfolk today is a reflection of its varied physical attributes as well its use through history. Since prehistoric communities first cleared the native woodland to grow their crops, each generation has inherited from its forebears an historic landscape and has, in turn, transformed it, in some cases subtly, in others more drastically.

Cultural Heritage

3.9 The character of today's landscape displays the indelible, if not always easily legible, imprint of past use. The District contains a wealth of historic features including listed buildings, conservation areas, Scheduled Monuments and Registered Parks and Gardens associated with historic houses and estates.

3.10 Designated heritage assets within the District include a number of Registered Parks and Gardens, which include the Grade I Holkham Hall, and Grade II* Sheringham Hall, Felbrigg Hall, Melton Constable Hall and Gunton Park. Many of the historic estates, which are frequently accompanied by parkland, originated as medieval manors, associated with deer parks. The area became relatively wealthy from mixed farming during the 17th century, which is reflected in the large number of fine flint and pantile farmhouses of the period, which are frequently listed. The individual cultural heritage designations are outlined in more detail within the landscape character type and area profiles within Part 2.

Historic Landscape Character

3.11 The Norfolk Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) project (2004-2008) identified and grouped historic and other environmental attributes to form historic landscape types of distinct and recognisable common character, the distribution of which was then mapped and supported by written descriptions of the individual landscape types and the historical processes that they represent.

3.12 **Figure 3.4** shows the distribution of HLC landscape types within the District. The main patterns of historic character include areas of historically large field sizes of a largely geometric shape in the western part of the District (18th – 19th Century Enclosure), which have generally translated into modern intensive agriculture with relatively few hedgerow field boundary removals. This contrasts with a large central and eastern swathe of the District where open fields were enclosed at a much earlier date to create small, irregular fields which then experienced extensive hedgerow field boundary loss due to 20th Century agricultural intensification.

Settlement Pattern and Infrastructure

3.13 **Figure 3.5** shows the main settlements in the District, which comprise seven towns (Cromer, Fakenham, Holt, North Walsham, Sheringham, Stalham and Wells-next-the-Sea) and three large villages (Briston / Melton Constable, Hoveton & Mundesley), which accommodate approximately half of the District's population (101,149 at the 2011 Census). The District's main road network comprises the A140 (Cromer to Norwich), the A148 (Cromer to King's Lynn - via Holt and Fakenham) and the A1065 (Fakenham to Mildenhall), as well as the more minor A1067, A149 and A1151. There is only one public rail service in the District, comprising the 'Bittern Line' linking Sheringham with Norwich.

3.14 Away from the towns and main roads, the majority of the District enjoys relatively high levels of tranquillity, as shown on **Figure 3.6**. This is reflective of its strongly rural character, comparatively low population density and the relative remoteness of parts of the Norfolk Coast AONB, as well as some inland areas of farmland.

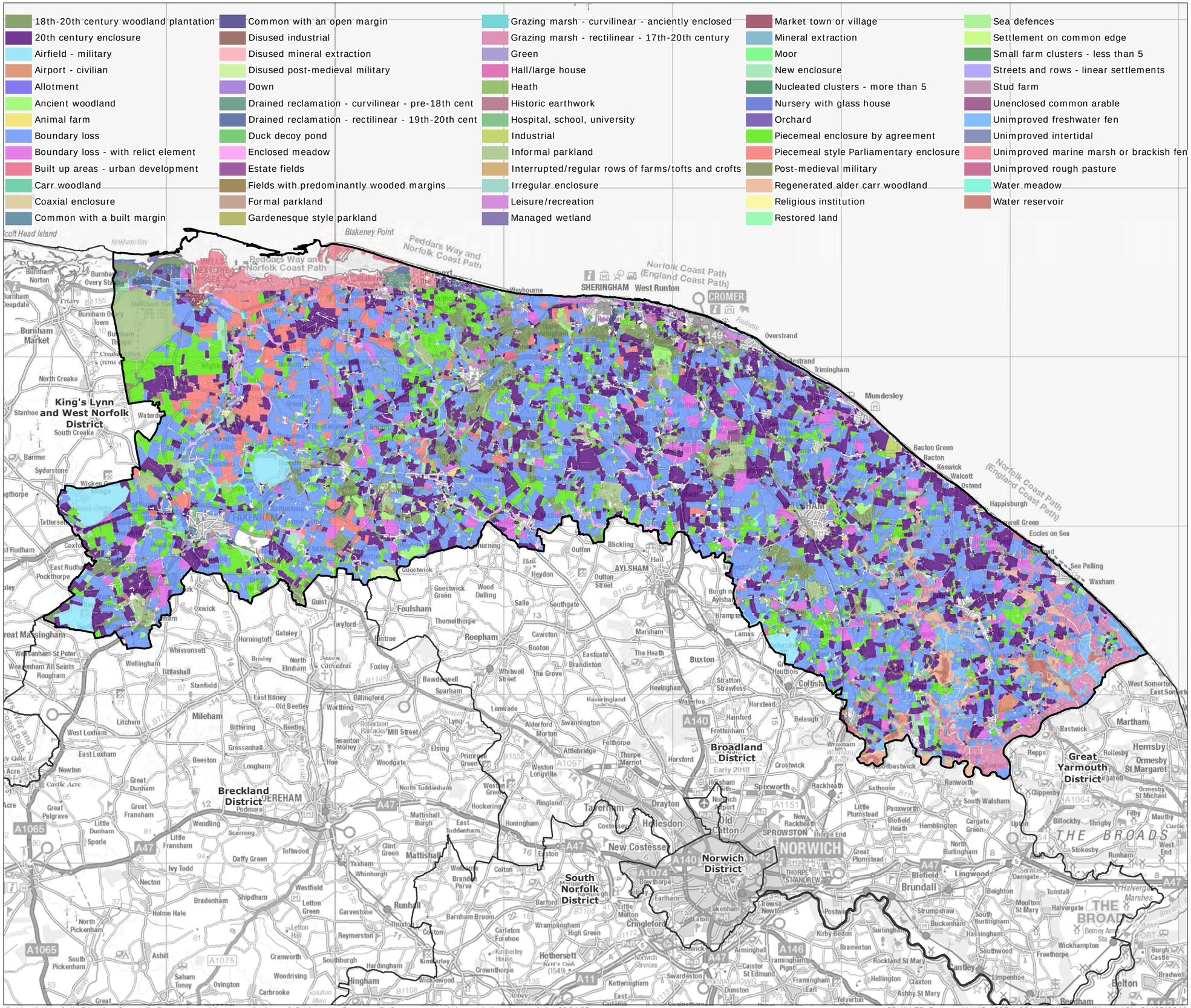
3.15 Following a similar pattern to the tranquillity data, **Figure 3.7** shows that outside the main settlements, the majority of the District enjoys dark or very dark night skies, with little light pollution. Dark skies can make an important contribution to people's perception and enjoyment of the landscape.

North Norfolk Landscape Character Assessment & Landscape Sensitivity Study

Figure 3.4: Historic Landscape Character Types

- 18th-20th century woodland plantation
- 20th century enclosure
- Airfield - military
- Airport - civilian
- Allotment
- Ancient woodland
- Animal farm
- Boundary loss
- Boundary loss - with relict element
- Built up areas - urban development
- Carr woodland
- Coaxial enclosure
- Common with a built margin
- Common with an open margin
- Disused industrial
- Disused mineral extraction
- Disused post-medieval military
- Down
- Drained reclamation - curvilinear - pre-18th cent
- Drained reclamation - rectilinear - 19th-20th cent
- Duck decoy pond
- Enclosed meadow
- Estate fields
- Fields with predominantly wooded margins
- Formal parkland
- Gardenesque style parkland
- Grazing marsh - curvilinear - anciently enclosed
- Grazing marsh - rectilinear - 17th-20th century
- Green
- Hall/large house
- Heath
- Historic earthwork
- Hospital, school, university
- Industrial
- Informal parkland
- Interrupted/regular rows of farms/tofts and crofts
- Irregular enclosure
- Leisure/recreation
- Managed wetland
- Market town or village
- Mineral extraction
- Moor
- New enclosure
- Nucleated clusters - more than 5
- Nursery with glass house
- Orchard
- Piecemeal enclosure by agreement
- Piecemeal style Parliamentary enclosure
- Post-medieval military
- Regenerated alder carr woodland
- Religious institution
- Restored land
- Sea defences
- Settlement on common edge
- Small farm clusters - less than 5
- Streets and rows - linear settlements
- Stud farm
- Unenclosed common arable
- Unimproved freshwater fen
- Unimproved intertidal
- Unimproved marine marsh or brackish fen
- Unimproved rough pasture
- Water meadow
- Water reservoir

- North Norfolk District
- Surrounding Local Authority boundary



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Map Scale @A3: 1:220,000

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Source: BGS, Natural England, Environment Agency, NNDC

North Norfolk Landscape Character Assessment & Landscape Sensitivity Study

Figure 3.5: Settlements and Infrastructure

- North Norfolk District
- Surrounding Local Authority boundary
- Train station
- Railway line
- B road
- A road
- Key settlement

0 4 8 km

Map Scale @A3: 1:220,000

NORTH NORFOLK DISTRICT COUNCIL

Source: BGS, Natural England, Environment Agency, NNDC

CB:XX EB:Goosen_V LUC 10274_001_ooddpThemedMaps_A3L 31/05/2018

North Norfolk Landscape Character Assessment & Landscape Sensitivity Study

Figure 3.6: Tranquillity

North Norfolk District

Surrounding Local Authority boundary

Tranquillity

Most tranquil

Least tranquil

0 4 8 km

Map Scale @A3: 1:220,000

CB:XX EB:Goosen_V LUC 10274_001_ooddpThemedMaps_A3L 31/05/2018

Source: BGS, Natural England, Environment Agency, NNDC

North Norfolk Landscape Character Assessment & Landscape Sensitivity Study

Figure 3.7: Dark Skies

North Norfolk District

Surrounding Local Authority boundary

Night Lights (NanoWatts/cm2/sr)

- >32 (brightest)
- 16 - 32
- 8 - 16
- 4 - 8
- 2 - 4
- 1 - 2
- 0.5 - 1
- 0.25 - 0.5
- < 0.25 (darkest)

0 4 8 km

Map Scale @A3: 1:220,000

CB:XX EB:Goosen_V LUC 10274_001_ooddpThemedMaps_A3L 31/05/2018

Source: BGS, Natural England, Environment Agency, NNDC

Classification

4 Classification

4.1 Classification is concerned with dividing the landscape into areas of distinct, recognisable and consistent common character and grouping areas of similar character together.

Landscape Types and Character Areas

4.2 9 landscape types and 16 landscape character areas have been identified as listed in **Table 4.1** below. The classification is shown on a 1:220,000 scale base map at **Figure 4.1** and in the context of landscape character classification in neighbouring Districts at **Figure 4.2**.

4.3 Note that this new classification is based on the old classification, but some landscape character areas have been amalgamated where they are geographically adjacent to each other and where the written descriptions apply equally to both.

Table 4.1: Landscape Character Types and Areas in North Norfolk District

Ref	Type	Area (s)	Change from previous classification
ROF	Rolling Open Farmland	ROF1 Holkham to Raynham	Combines ROF1 - 5
TF	Tributary Farmland	TF1 North Norfolk Tributary Farmland	Incorporates some of the 'Wooded Parkland' type within its boundaries.
LPF	Low Plains Farmland	LP1 North Norfolk Low Plains Farmland	Incorporates some of the 'Wooded Parkland' type within its boundaries. Stalham becomes part of Settled Farmland
RV	River Valleys	RV1 River Wensum and tributaries	Combines large and small valleys. Formerly LV1 and SV9.
		RV2 River Bure and tributaries	Combines large and small valleys. Formerly LV5, SV8 and SV4.
		RV3 River Ant and tributaries	Combines large and small valleys. Formerly LV4, SV5 and SV7.
		RV4 River Stiffkey and tributaries	Combines large and small valleys. Formerly LV2, SV1 and SV2.
		RV5 River Glaven and tributaries	Combines large and small valleys. Formerly LV3 and SV3.
		RV6 Mundesley Beck	Formerly SV6.
SF	Settled Farmland	SF1 Stalham, Ludham and	Formerly Settled Fen.

		Potter Heigham	Stalham moved within SF, from LPF
CP	Coastal Plain	CP1 Bacton to Waxham	Combines CP1 and CP2
CS	Coastal Shelf	CS1 Weybourne to Mundesley	Combines CTV1-3, but also includes the area around Cromer Hall that was formerly in WP2
WGR	Wooded Glacial Ridge	WGR1 Wooded Glacial Cromer Ridge	Largely contiguous with the former WP2 area, excluding land at the eastern end which is now classified within CS (the area around Cromer Hall) and TF (the area south and east of the Great Wood at Felbrigg). Excludes at its western end some land now in RV5
RHA	Rolling Heath and Arable	RHA1 Blakeney, Salthouse & Kelling	Mostly contiguous with the former RHA type, combining RHA1 and RHA2. The coastal edge of the area near Weybourne is now part of CS
DCM	Drained Coastal Marshes	DCM1 Holkham Drained Marshes	No change
		DCM2 Blakeney, Wiveton, Cley and Salthouse Drained Marshes	One very small easterly marsh outlier subsumed within GR2
OCM	Open Coastal Marshes	OCM1 North Norfolk Open Coastal Marshes	Combines OCM1, 2 and 3 (because these are one continuous geographical area)

The Status, Meaning and Limitations of Boundary Lines

4.4 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 1:25,000 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.

4.5 In reality landscape character does not change abruptly at the boundaries. Boundaries therefore often represent transitions rather than marked changes on the ground.

North Norfolk District

Surrounding Local Authority boundary

King's Lynn and West Norfolk District

Breckland District

Broadland District

South Norfolk District

Norwich District

Great Yarmouth District

0 4 8 km

Map Scale @A3: 1:220,000

North Norfolk Landscape Character Assessment

Figure 4.1: North Norfolk Landscape Classification

Landscape Character Types & Areas

* Click on key Landscape Character Type * to go to Landscape Type Profile

Coastal Plain

CP1: Bacton to Waxham

Drained Coastal Marshes

DCM1: Holkham Drained Marshes

DCM2: Blakeney, Wiveton, Cley and Salthouse Drained Marshes

Coastal Shelf

CS1: Weybourne to Mundesley Coastal Shelf

Low Plains Farmland

LPF1: North Norfolk Low Plains Farmland

Open Coastal Marshes

OCM1: North Norfolk Open Coastal Marshes

River Valleys

RV1: River Wensum and tributaries

RV2: River Bure and tributaries

RV3: River Ant and tributaries

RV4: River Stiffkey and tributaries

RV5: River Glaven and tributaries

RV6: Mundesley Beck

Rolling Open Farmland

ROF1: Holkham to Raynham

Settled Farmland

SF1: Stalham, Ludham and Potter Heigham

Tributary Farmland

TF1: North Norfolk Tributary Farmland

Rolling Heath and Arable

RHA1: Blakeney, Salthouse & Kelling

Wooded Glacial Ridge

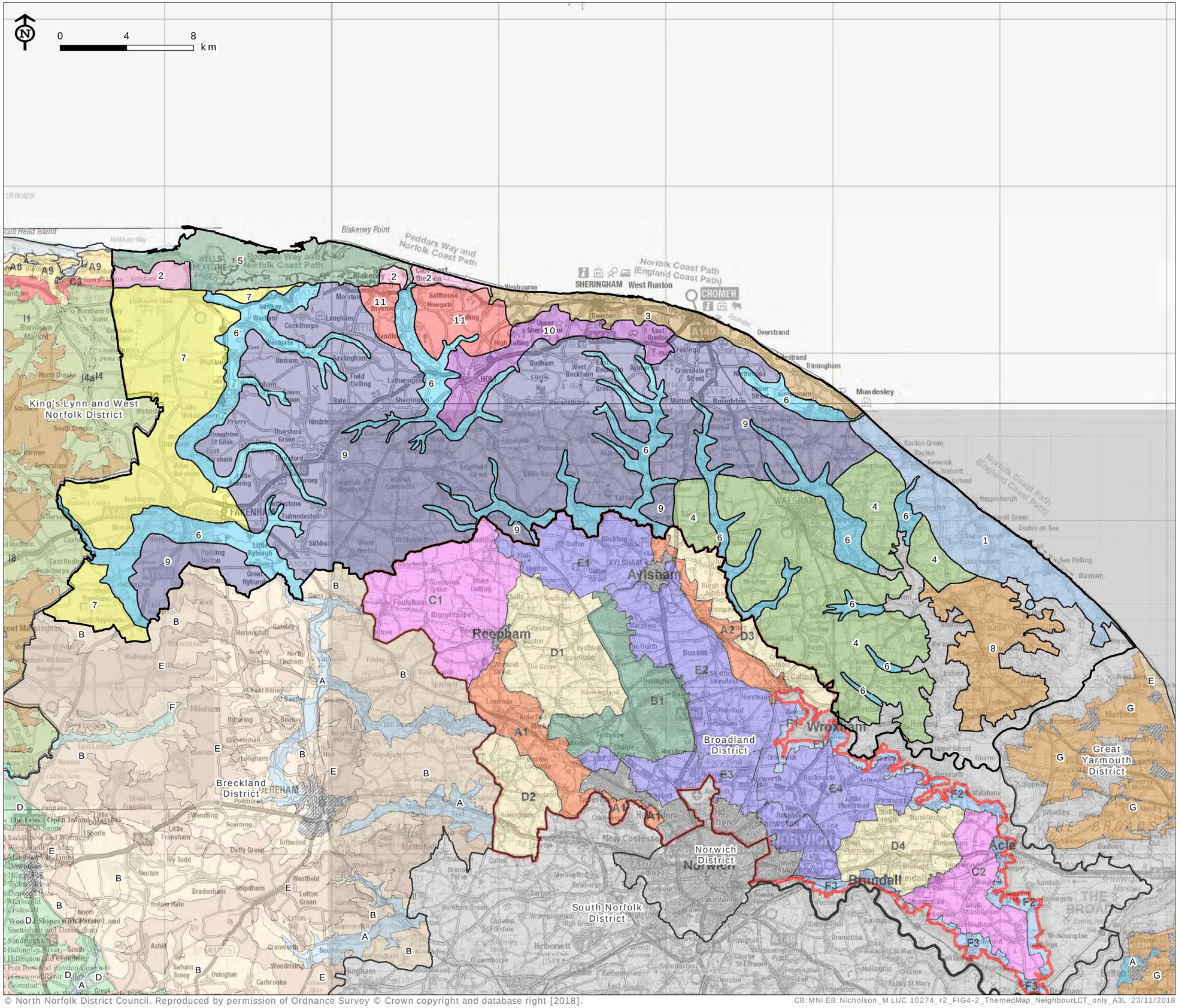
WGR1: Wooded Glacial Cromer Ridge

CB:MNi EB:Nicholson_M LUC 10274_r2_FIG2-2_ThemedMap_NorfolkLCT_only_A3L_2 10/10/2018

Source: NNDC

North Norfolk Landscape Character Assessment & Landscape Sensitivity Study

Figure 4.2: North Norfolk and Neighbouring District Landscape Classifications (Types)



North Norfolk LCTs

- 1: Coastal Plain
- 2: Drained Coastal Marshes
- 3: Coastal Shelf
- 4: Low Plains Farmland
- 5: Open Coastal Marshes
- 6: River Valleys
- 7: Rolling Open Farmland
- 8: Settled Farmland
- 9: Tributary Farmland
- 10: Wooded Glacial Ridge
- 11: Rolling Heath and Arable

Breckland LCTs

- A - River Valleys
- B - Settled Tributary Farmland
- D - The Brecks - Heathland with Plantation
- E - Plateau Farmland
- F - Chalk Rivers
- Urban

Great Yarmouth LCTs

- A: Rural Wooded Valleys
- C: Broads River Valley
- E: Dunes, Coastal Levels and Resorts
- G: Settled Farmland
- Settlement Extent

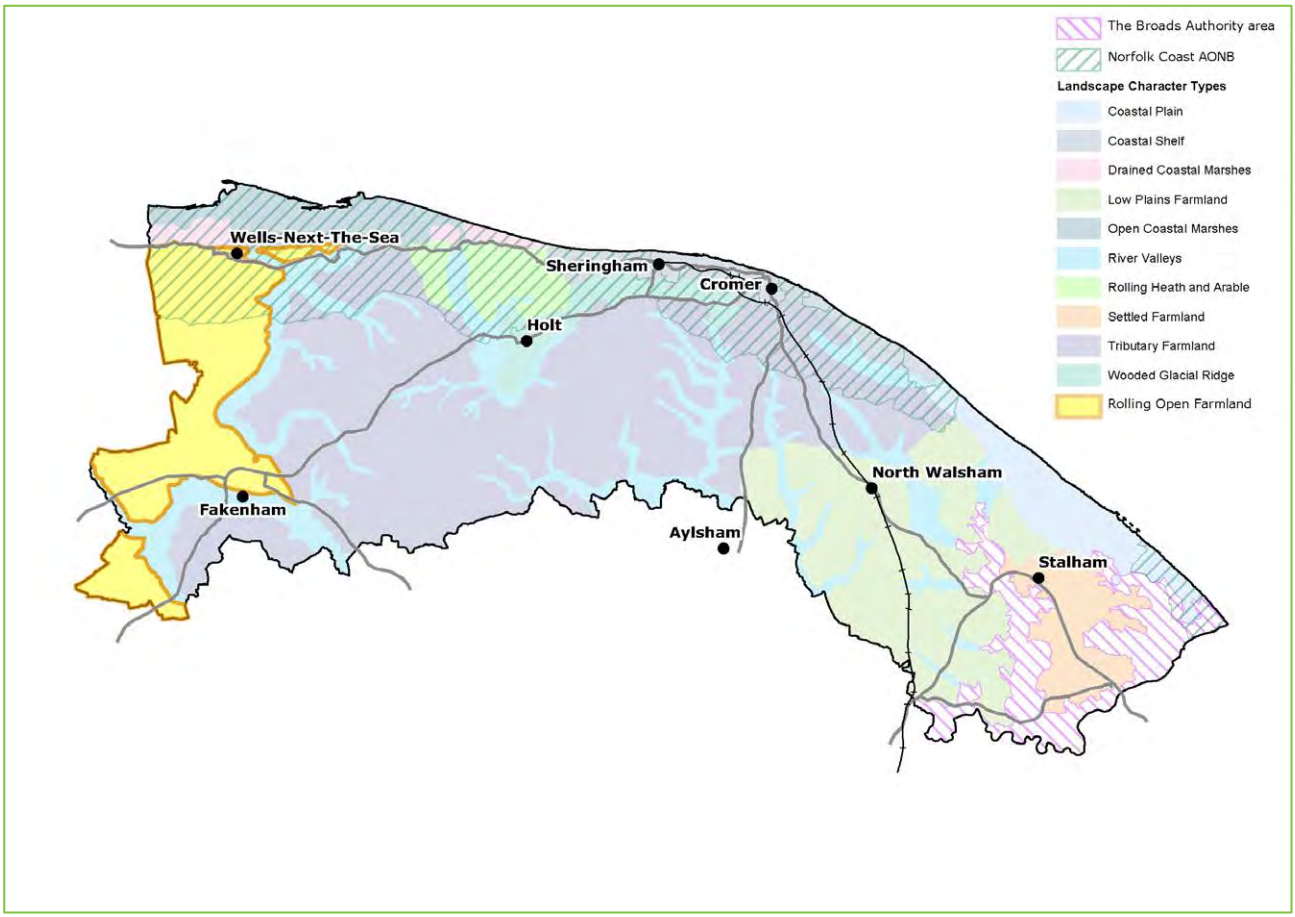
Map Scale @A3: 1:220,000

CB:MNi EB:Nicholson_M LUC 10274_r2_FIG4-2_ThemedMap_NeighbourLCT_only_A3L 23/11/2018

Data Source: NNDC, Breckland and Great Yarmouth LCT indicative data based on online PDF reports.

Part 2: Landscape Character Type and Area Profiles

Rolling Open Farmland (ROF)



Rolling Open Farmland (ROF)

SUMMARY

The Rolling Open Farmland Type extends from the coast to the southern edge of the District and is characterised by high level open, gently rolling arable farmland with relatively large, geometric fields enclosed by hedgerows. With the exception of the Holkham estate there is limited woodland cover and relatively few field/hedgerow trees. Flatter plateau areas are associated with former airfield sites. Settlement is focused principally on river valleys that pass through and alongside the Rolling Open Farmland – the Stiffkey Valley to the east and the Wensum Valley which cuts through the southern part of the area – which are assessed as a separate Landscape Type. There is little habitation within the Type other than farmsteads, small hamlets, development associated with airfields and two towns: Wells-next-the-Sea and Fakenham.

The Type extends across the western District boundary into King's Lynn and West Norfolk District, where it transitions to the Plateau Farmland type. In the south, the Type transitions to Settled Tributary Farmland and Plateau Farmland within Breckland District. In the north, around Holkham and Wells-next-the-Sea, the Type abruptly changes to Drained and Open Coastal Marshes Types where the land drops down to meet the coast. To the east, beyond the Stiffkey Valley, the Type subtly transitions to Tributary Farmland, where the influence of the chalk diminishes and the landscape becomes more wooded, with areas of heavier soils and a more ancient, enclosed settlement and field character. The coastal edge of the Type falls within the Norfolk Coast AONB, together with a smaller coastal area which is within the North Norfolk Heritage Coast.

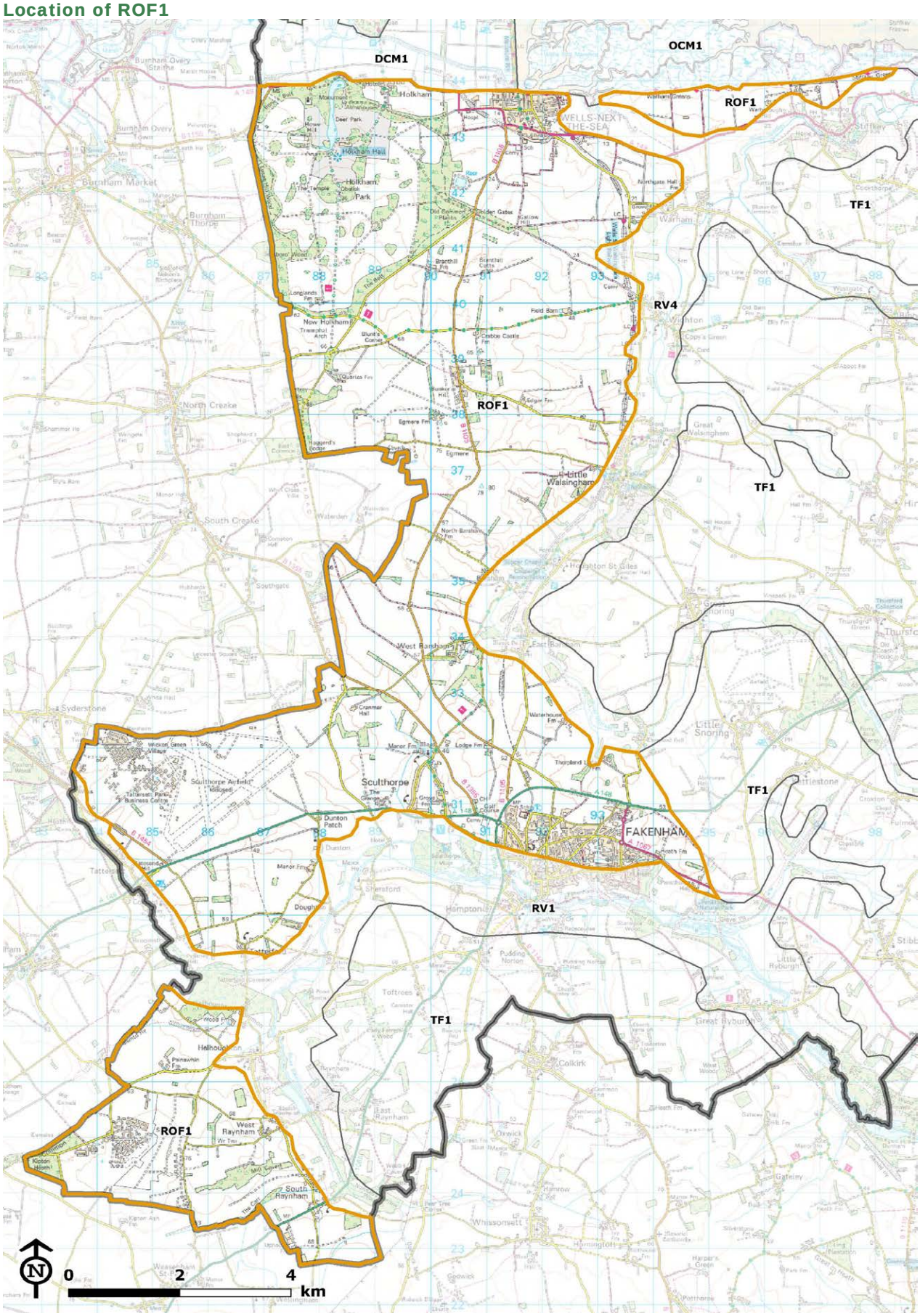
Component Areas

There is one area of Rolling Open Farmland in North Norfolk, in the west of the District:

ROF1 - Holkham to Raynham

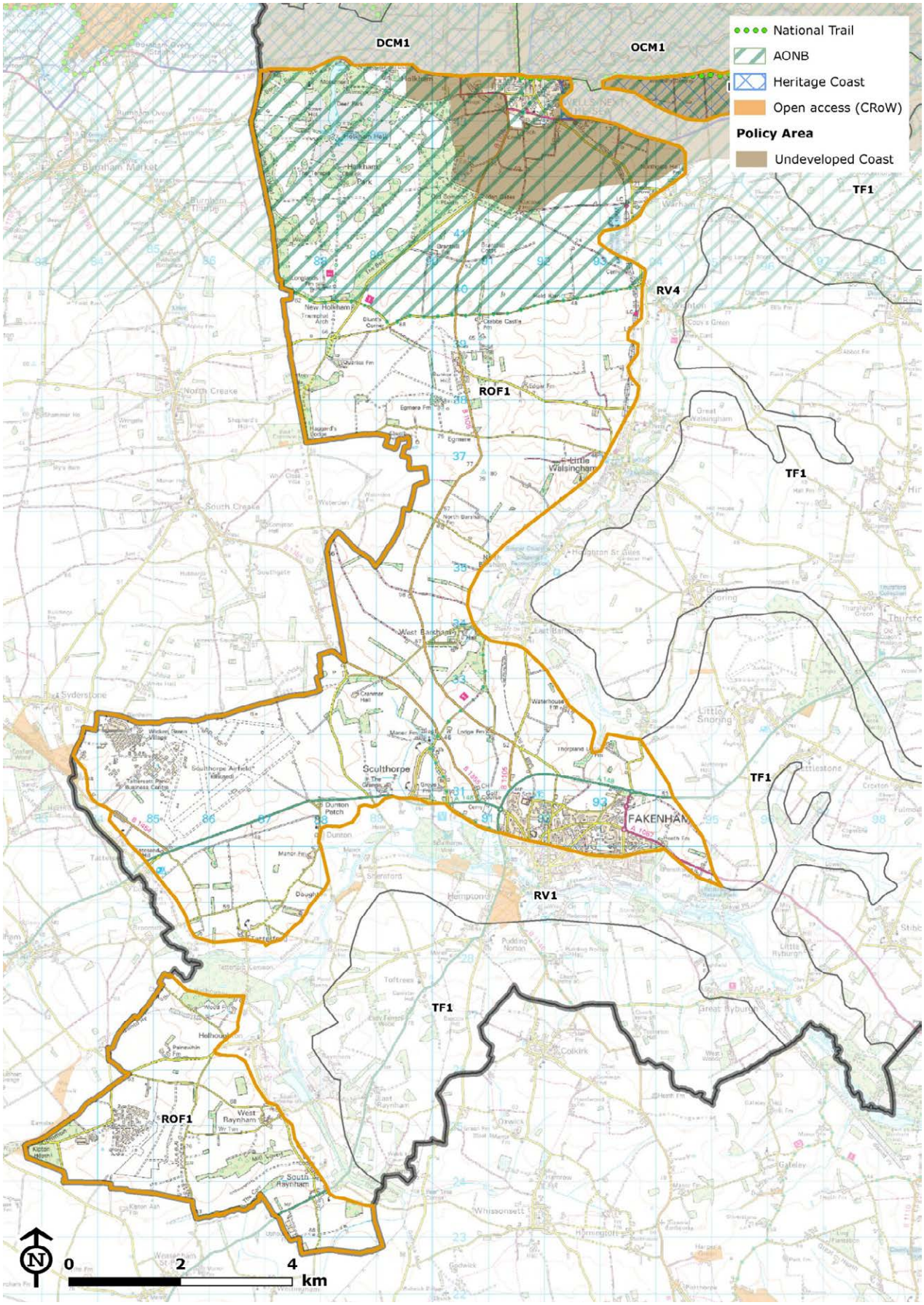
Rolling Open Farmland (ROF)

Location of ROF1



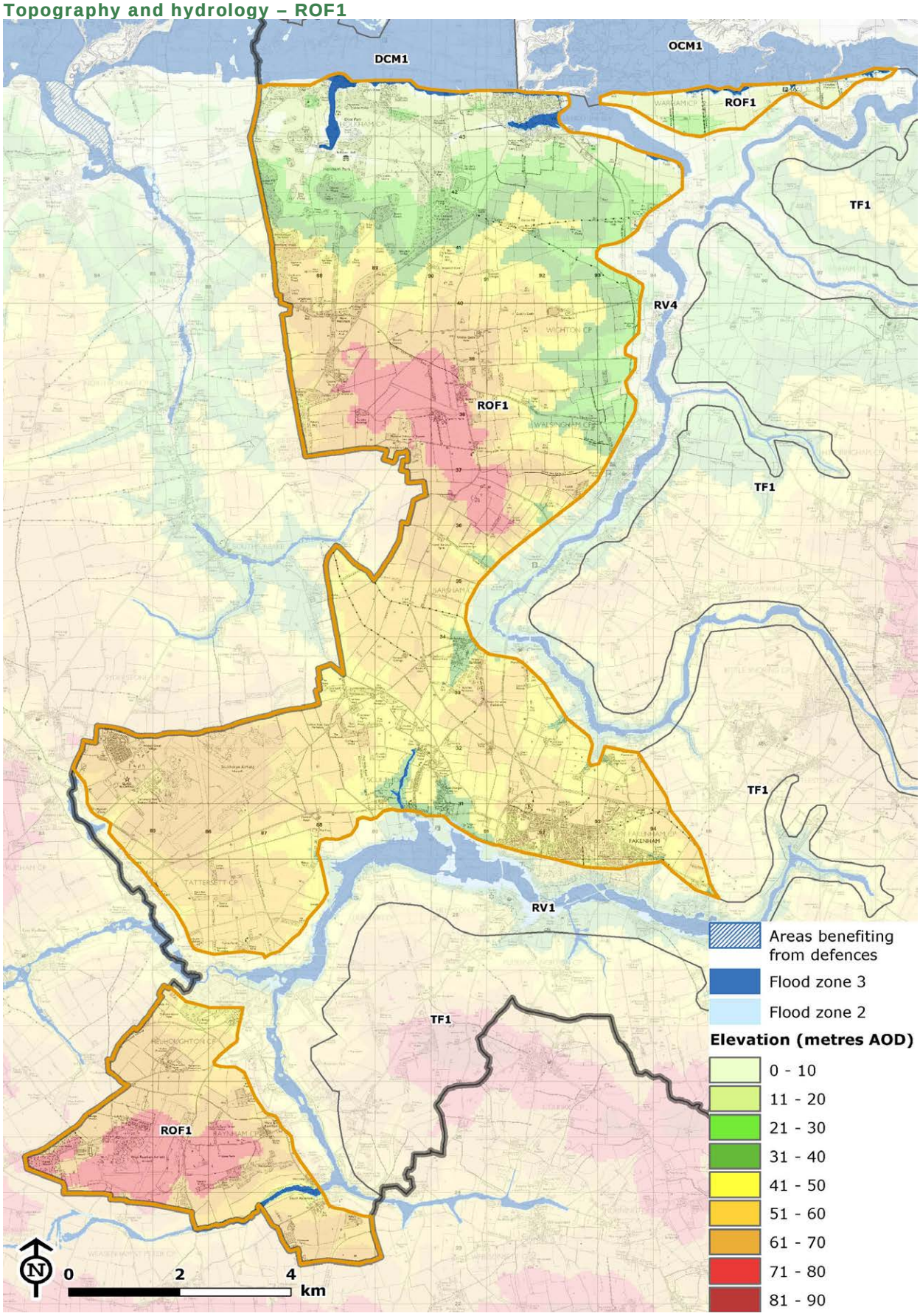
Rolling Open Farmland (ROF)

Landscape designations and policy area – ROF1



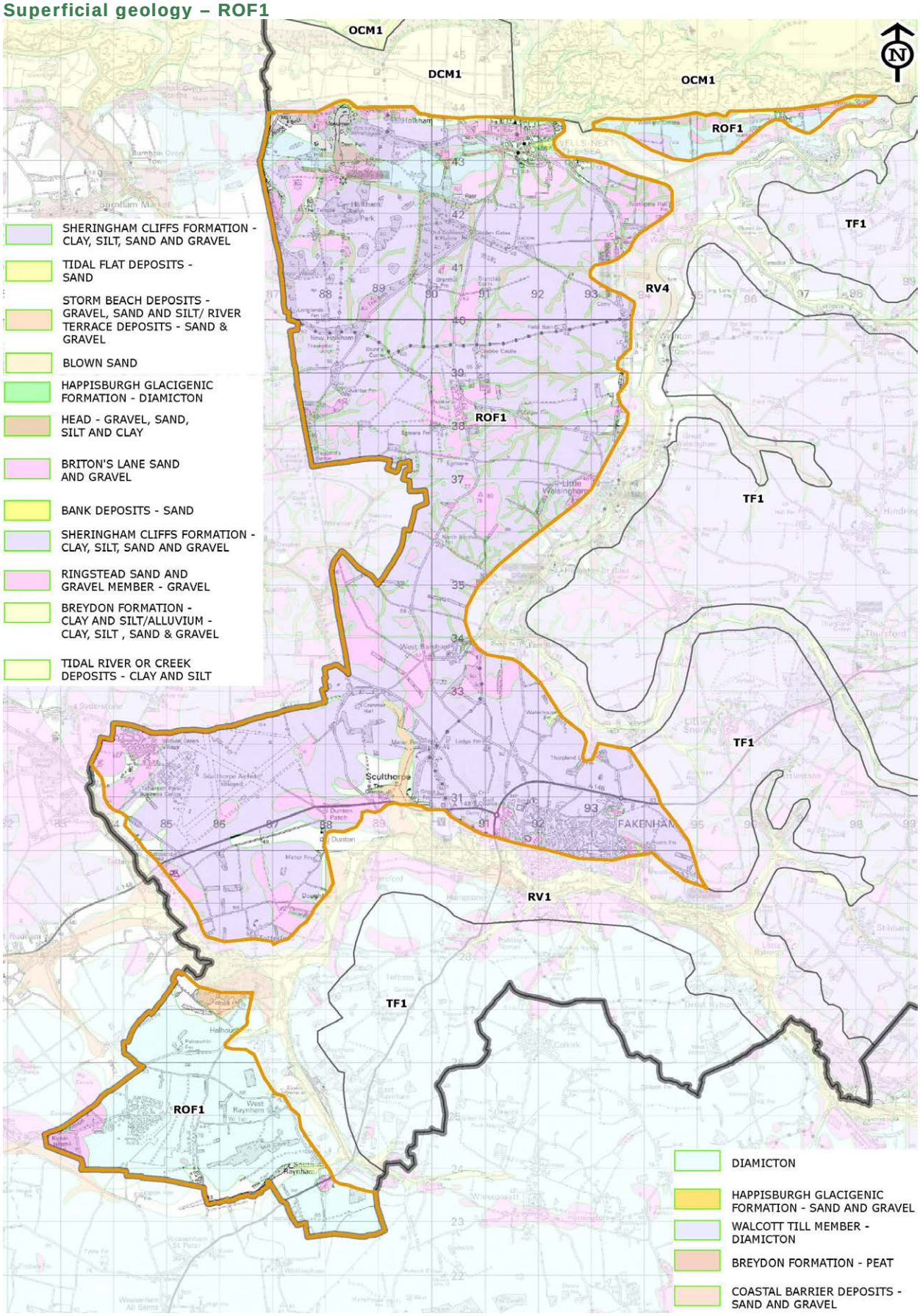
Rolling Open Farmland (ROF)

Topography and hydrology – ROF1



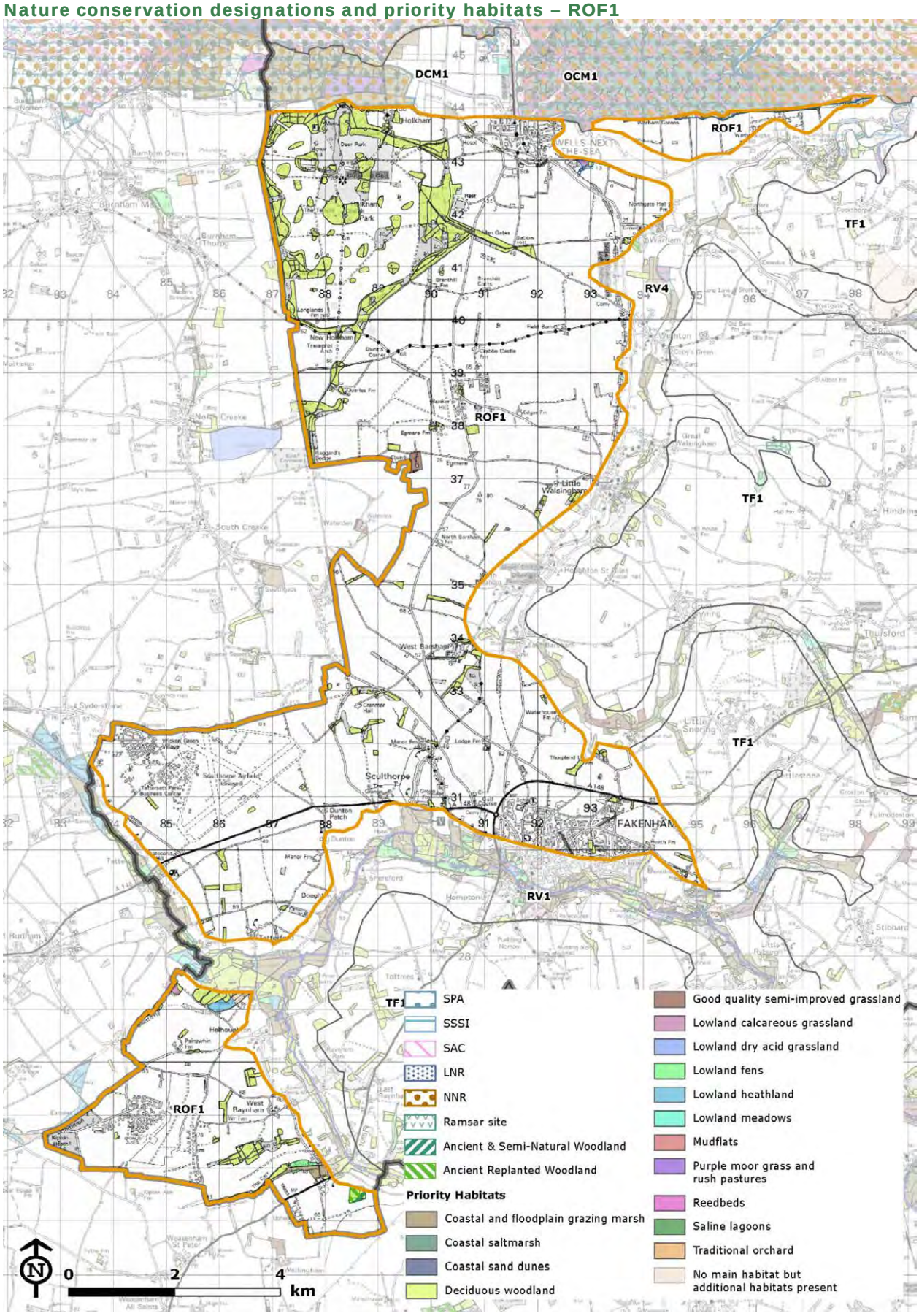
Rolling Open Farmland (ROF)

Superficial geology – ROF1



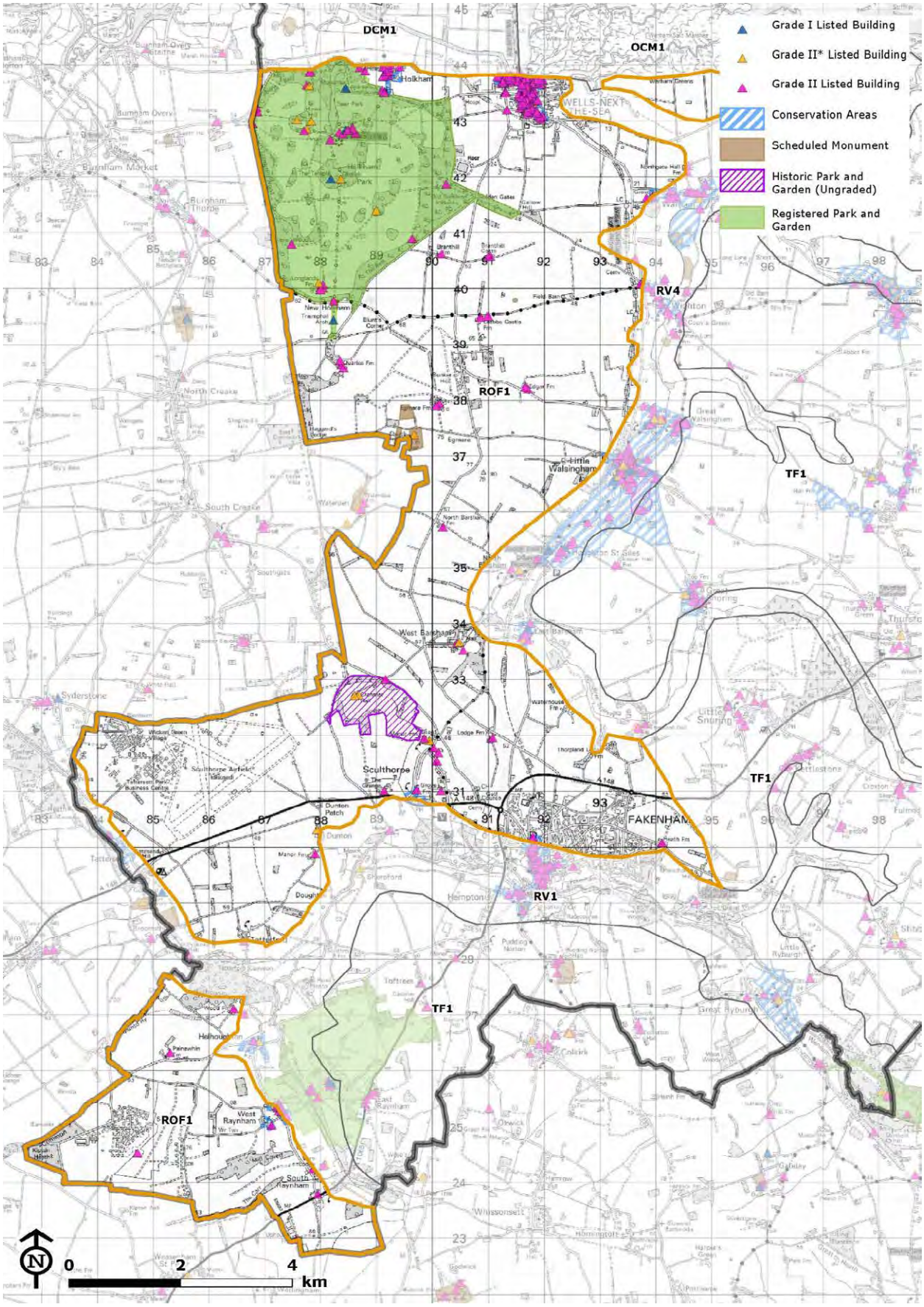
Rolling Open Farmland (ROF)

Nature conservation designations and priority habitats – ROF1



Rolling Open Farmland (ROF)

Cultural heritage designations – ROF1



Rolling Open Farmland (ROF)

KEY CHARACTERISTICS

1) Gently rolling terrain sloping down to river valleys and the coast

Sloping down to river valleys and to coastal marshes, the area forms a domed, gently rolling plateau which gives a feeling of height, with occasional dry valleys and small streams. Glacial tills, sands and gravels, typically thin and patchy, overlay chalk bedrock.

2) Arable land use with large, geometric fields and low hedges

Land use is predominantly arable farmland. Fields are medium to large, with geometric and regular boundary hedgerows (sometimes banked) which tend to be single species, reflecting large landholdings that have existed here since the mid-18th Century and lending an ordered and regulated character to the landscape

3) Relatively low level of woodland cover

With the exceptions of Holkham Park and the area around West Raynham, which have a relatively wooded character, there is a low level of woodland cover, and that which does exist typically conforms to the geometric field pattern. Many woodlands are relatively modern in origin, often post-WW2 coniferous plantations.

4) Holkham Hall parkland

Holkham is one of England's principal landscape parks, reflected in its Grade I designation on Historic England's Register A walled boundary encloses a substantial area of planned woodland, arable farmland, grassland and formal park and gardens, together with Holkham Hall and many other 18th Century neo-classical buildings. The estate, including its adjacent planned village, is a major tourist attraction, and the wooded parkland forms a significant backdrop element in views within the area.

5) Former airfields are prominent features

Three airfields constitute prominent features in this landscape and have development associated with them which is particular to their character. Egmere and Raynham both closed some years ago and have converted to commercial use, including large solar farms. Sculthorpe airfield remains in MOD use but most of the associated land and buildings are in private residential and commercial use. Sculthorpe, Raynham and Egmere account for the only sizeable areas of grassland (including beneath the solar panels) in the Rolling Open Farmland Type aside from Holkham Park.

6) An open, homogeneous character with expansive views

Typically low-cut hedgerows, high level topography, a lack of woodland, large field sizes and sloping plateau terrain combine to form a very open landscape.

7) Sparse, strongly nucleated settlement pattern

Historical landownership of the area tended to concentrate land workers within settlements, so aside from the airfield settlements and the traditional village of Sculthorpe there are only occasional houses and farmsteads outside of the valley villages and hamlets. Fakenham, which has a valley-side historic core, and Wells-next-the-Sea, which originated as a port, are the only sizeable settlements. The principal roads run along the coast (the A149) and through Fakenham; a relatively sparse minor road network reflects the general lack of settlement elsewhere.

8) Modern development at Fakenham

Fakenham's historic core is on the slopes of the Wensum Valley (in the adjacent River Valley character area), but development over the course of the 20th century has expanded the town significantly northward onto Rolling Open Farmland. Housing, industry, out of town shops, nurseries, storage buildings, a golf range and new road layouts have transformed the character of the landscape in this area.

Rolling Open Farmland (ROF)

9) Wells-next-the-Sea is a major tourist attraction

Wells retains a strong historic character, with compact layers of settlement around a central core. Distinctive malthouses reflect its historic role as a port and major exporter of brewing malt, and a former granary warehouse occupies a prominent central quayside location. The undeveloped coastal surrounds of the town, and its contained setting to the south, are important to its character and appeal. Mature tree cover within the urban area is also an important component in settlement character.

10) Limited habitat diversity

This landscape has a limited diversity of habitats compared to neighbouring Types such as River Valleys and Tributary Farmland, with few older tree assemblages or field boundaries, veteran trees, ponds, isolated grasslands and heathland outcrops near the coast.

Wells-next-the-Sea harbour and historic granary building

VALUED FEATURES AND QUALITIES

1) Open, expansive, rural character with a sense of remoteness and tranquillity

Landform and land cover combine to form a very open landscape, with long, uninterrupted high level views and expansive skies. Lack of population across most of the area means that there are large areas of quiet rural farmland and dark skies at night.

2) Undeveloped coastal character

The contained form of Wells and Holkham means that built development has little influence along most of the coastline, contributing to the character of the Norfolk Coast AONB. Wells and Holkham are attractive settlements with strong historic character.

Rolling Open Farmland (ROF)

3) Holkham Park

Holkham Park is a distinctive and cohesive designed landscape of Grade I designation associated with distinctive C18th neo-classical listed buildings, including Holkham Hall, Model Farms and Farm buildings,Gatehouses and Obelisk which, due to extensive land ownership has also had a significant influence on the development and character of the surrounding landscape. It has historical, recreational and biodiversity value.

4) Managed, ordered character

The geometric hedgerow network, consistent character of farmland and infrequent, nucleated settlement pattern add a sense of order and calm to the landscape.

5) Remnant semi-natural habitats

Grassland, deciduous woodland (at Holkham Park and West Raynham), isolated heathland outcrops on terminal moraines near the coast, and heath (Helhoughton Common) are valued for their scarcity in this landscape.

6) Other valued features include:

The abandoned medieval village of Egmere (a Scheduled Monument), with its ruined church; the historic interest of the former airfields, and views of Fakenham church tower from across the Wensum Valley.

Many of the Valued Features and Qualities of the Rolling Open Farmland are considered to contribute positively to Key Qualities of Natural Beauty of the Norfolk Coast AONB, as set out within the current AONB Management Plan. These Key Qualities include:

- Strong and distinctive links between land and sea
- Diversity and integrity of landscape, seascape and settlement character
- Sense of remoteness, tranquillity and wildness
- Richness of archaeological heritage and historic environment, particularly that relating to the coast and its character.

FORCES FOR CHANGE / DETRACTORS

1) Modern agricultural practices

Due to its historically large field sizes, the landscape was able to make the transition to intensive arable agriculture with fewer hedgerow removals than neighbouring Types. However, biodiversity and habitat loss has still occurred. In more recent years there has been a trend towards ecological improvement resulting from agri-environment grants, such as wider field margins and set-aside, and the reinstatement or improvement of woodlands and hedgerows, although there is uncertainty regarding how such schemes will be affected following the UK's departure from the EU. Whilst such changes may have some localised impact on visual openness they would be unlikely to be considered negative impacts on landscape character. Ash dieback is likely to have a significant impact on the composition of woodland and hedgerow trees within the District and the Type, but not on the general extent of tree cover.

Increased demand for biofuel crops may potentially alter the homogeneous appearance of much of the landscape.

2) Changes in estate management

The area is experiencing an increasing trend towards the diversification of income streams for larger estates, such as Holkham and Raynham, which can involve the use and/or conversion of estate buildings and land for retail outlets, holiday lets, restaurants, business premises and events venues. Estates are becoming tourist/visitor destinations in their own right, resulting in

Rolling Open Farmland (ROF)

increases in traffic and visitors to the area.

3) Conversion of agricultural buildings and scale of new storage structures

Conversion of barns from rural working buildings to residential and leisure uses has had an effect on rural and historic landscape character. Such conversions can introduce 'suburban' features such as surfaced drives / domestic style gates and fences / garden style planting and parking areas / overly large windows and external lighting. There is also continued pressure for construction of large agricultural storage buildings to replace older barns. New agricultural buildings, often large in scale and of non-traditional materials such as steel, concrete and aluminium cladding, sited in locations away from or prominently within existing farm complexes can be very prominent features in this open landscape, detracting from the prevailing landscape character.

4) Settlement expansion and infill to meet housing demand

New residential and other built development within and outside settlements, often of a generic nature with little sense of place, has the potential to undermined traditional character and the cohesive vernacular style and materials. There is continued pressure for new housing within existing settlements, increasing density to the potential detriment of character and along with the potential edge of settlement development in the larger towns eroding the historic strongly nucleated settlement pattern.

In Wells there is continuing pressure for additional housing, which is difficult to integrate whilst conserving the compact, cohesive settlement pattern and sensitive landscape setting. Recent development has included the construction of approximately 120 dwellings on the allocated housing site at Market Lane, on the southern edge of Wells, which display a largely generic character with little adherence to the local vernacular style and materials such as flint. Fakenham has significant planned increases in growth, most notably to the north of the town bounded by the by-pass. Links to green infrastructure networks will be essential in successful accommodation of new settlement into this landscape.

The increasing wealth in the area has resulted in existing properties being enlarged / improved and sub-divided, affecting the appearance and character of settlements; changes include fencing replacing hedged boundaries, the loss of large gardens with mature trees and extensions to properties which overly enlarge or gentrify rural settlements / locations.

5) Demand for isolated new homes

Isolated new homes, particularly those with a non-traditional character and those with lighting that is prominent in otherwise sparsely populated areas, can adversely affect the area's sense of remoteness and historic, rural character.

6) Renewable energy development

The growth in renewable energy has resulted in continued pressure for wind turbines, including in offshore areas which may be sufficiently close or large enough to 'enclose' or create a 'limit' to the skyline and horizon, with a resultant detrimental effect on the perception of remoteness and wilderness in this Type. Substantial wind turbines within recently operational wind farms in neighbouring King's Lynn and West Norfolk District are visible within parts of the Type, introducing a modern element to sparsely developed, rural landscapes. There is also a continuing pressure for solar PV developments on farmland and within the former airfield areas. Anaerobic digestion plants associated with farms are substantial and often visually intrusive features that can be difficult to integrate within this open landscape.

7) Development on former airfields

Decommissioning of airfields has created opportunity for large-scale commercial development, including solar energy schemes, but given the openness of ROF there are potential difficulties with integrating and screening large-scale development in these open, elevated, sparsely populated areas. Industrial and solar PV development around the former Egmere Airfield is screened to some extent by existing woodland cover but has proved difficult to fully integrate into the open landscape. At Tattersett, built development associated with the airfield (housing and

Rolling Open Farmland (ROF)

former hangars) has degraded to a poor condition, exacerbating the stark contrast of the utilitarian airfield character with the surrounding rural character of the landscape. Development there has the potential to detract from the landscape due to the slightly elevated position and wide open views.

A recent (post-2015) solar farm development occupies the entirety of the former airfield runway area at Raynham, and is generally not a dominant feature within the surrounding landscape due to the elevated and flat topography. The former RAF station includes housing, and West Raynham Business Park is a focus for potential future development.

8) Tourism, in particular in the coastal area

The compact, tightly knit and cohesive settlement of Wells has experienced recent pressure for additional housing. High visitor numbers exacerbate traffic and car parking problems within and outside the town, eroding historic character.

The developments within the village of Holkham, particularly the development of the Victoria Hotel and Ancient House and Holkham Estate have, together with the adjacent Holkham Beach area, changed the character of this area from one of a quiet historical backwater to a busy, bustling and modern visitor attraction. Growth in local housing as well as visitors coming from further afield have the potential to increase visitor impacts if not carefully managed. Tourism also brings development pressures for facilities such as visitor centres, caravan and camp sites, woodland adventure courses, music festivals and leisure/retail outlets. Road traffic at peak times on the major routes in particular along the coast has an impact on tranquillity.

9) Telecom masts

Telecom masts in prominent locations can result in visual intrusion on the skyline, and erosion of rural character.

10) Climate change

Climate change could result in the need for new crops, changes in farming practices, the introduction of new pests and diseases affecting native species, increased demand for / efficiency of renewable energy types, and increased extents and impact of flooding. Issues such as Sudden Oak Death could be exacerbated by a changing climate, and non-native, drought tolerant species such as Holm Oak outcompeting native trees resulting in a change in woodland composition and associated impacts on biodiversity.

Rolling Open Farmland (ROF)

New housing on the southern edge of Wells.

The anaerobic digestion plant at Egmere.

Rolling Open Farmland (ROF)

LANDSCAPE VISION

The vision for this landscape type is of a sustainably managed and actively farmed rural landscape that makes the most of field margins for biodiversity to provide a network of semi-natural features, and where increasing visitor numbers are managed in a sensitive and co-ordinated manner. New development within the existing settlements will reinforce traditional character and incorporate green infrastructure to provide visual screening and integration, improved habitat connectivity and recreational links to the countryside and neighbouring settlements via pedestrian and cycle routes. A wild coastal edge with semi-natural habitats with opportunities to enjoy the landscape and the scenic long views along the coast, and dark skies at night.

LANDSCAPE GUIDELINES

1) Conserve and expand non-arable areas

Reinstate hedges, grassland, ponds and watercourses where these have been lost and enlarge areas of pasture, woodland, scrub, heathland and arable margins, with a focus on re-connecting fragmented habitats at the landscape scale to join up with those in the more biodiverse neighbouring landscape types (e.g. Large and Small Valleys and Tributary Farmland). There is significant scope to increase landscape variety and ecological connectivity without detrimentally reducing the open, expansive, rural character of the area. Isolated planting of copses or reinstatement of individual closely managed hedgerows has relatively less benefit.

2) Conserve openness, tranquillity and rurality

This open, tranquil and strongly rural landscape area is particularly sensitive to increases in built development, such as wind turbines, telecom masts, housing and industrial activity. Capacity to visually contain development in this context is limited.

Ensure the redevelopment of redundant barn complexes both within, on the edge and especially outside settlement boundaries, is sensitively undertaken avoiding use of suburban features such as surfaced drives, domestic style gates and fences, ornamental planting, overly large windows or excessive / invasive external lighting.

Impact both by day and night should be a consideration, to maintain the rural character and dark skies. Consider opportunities to address adverse light pollution by means of replacement downlighting or complete removal of lighting, taking into account the appropriateness of the latest lighting technologies, e.g. different types of LEDs.

Maintain the rural character of lanes by protecting roadside hedgerows, hedgerow trees and biodiverse verges. Avoid widening that would result in their loss, and urbanising features such as kerbs, lighting and excessive signage.

3) Conserve the nucleated character of settlements

Avoid linear sprawl, in particular along the undeveloped coast. The former railway embankment that loops around the southern edge of Wells is a distinctive feature in the landscape to the south west of the town, although some built form, including a school and recent allocated housing development at Market Lane, goes beyond this. Retain the compact character of development at the former RAF Raynham, to avoid impinging on the remote, rural character of the surrounding landscape.

4) Integrate existing/proposed settlement fringe development into surrounding landscape

Conserve large mature gardens and smaller fields on the edges of villages, and retain mature trees which contribute to the setting of the village / buildings. Ensure any new development is well integrated into the landscape and does not form a harsh edge.

Improve the existing hard edges of settlements by using new development that responds to local vernacular and planting appropriate to character to integrate them into the surrounding

Rolling Open Farmland (ROF)

landscape. Landscaping should actively blend with existing features rather than simply trying to screen new development.

Promote landscape and green infrastructure led opportunities to help integrate recent built development around Fakenham town into the surrounding landscape and contribute to residents' quality of life. This could include new woodland of a meaningful scale, ecologically-focussed landscaping and new allotments on the outer edge of the town, particularly in the context of the development of the very large allocated mixed-use site north of Rudham Stile Lane.

Opportunities to reduce the light pollution from the driving range and the supermarket would make a significant difference to the overall visual night-time impact of Fakenham on the wider countryside.

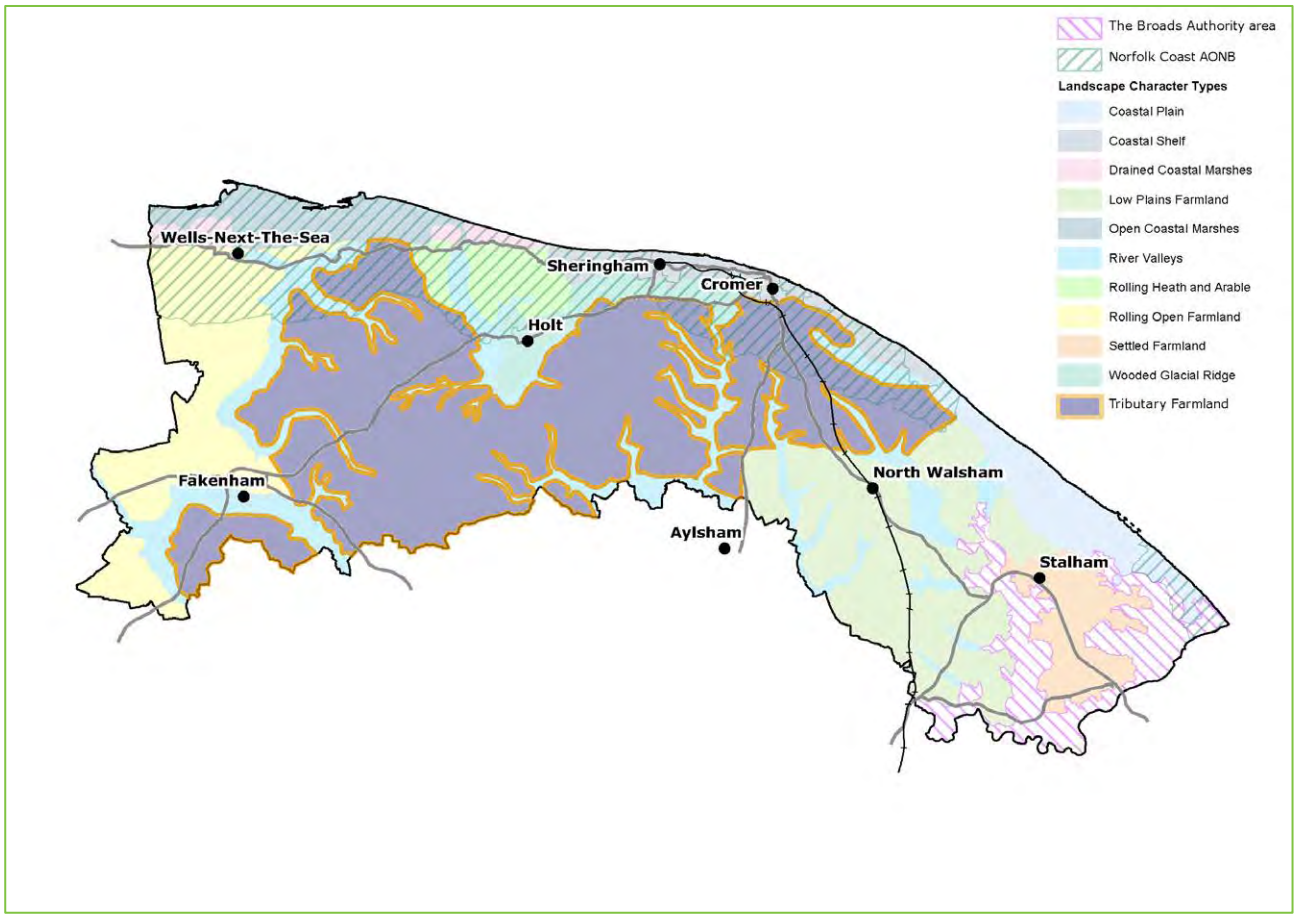
5) Improve landscape integration at Sculthorpe Airfield

The airfield could benefit from a programme of strategic landscaping to integrate, screen and provide amenity (public open spaces of worth and usability) could be effective as the original character of the landscape has been largely erased. The wide and open grassland area is a very important habitat for birds which should be preserved. Opportunities for enhancement and linkage with other areas of biodiversity should be explored.

6) Reduce pressure on coastal access / movement

Work to sustainably manage visitor pressure by developing improved public transport connections (bus routes) and new recreational footpaths and cycle routes with enhanced interpretation of the landscape and nature, providing choice and encouraging people to explore inland as an alternative to the coastal strip and raising awareness of wildlife issues though partnership working.

Tributary Farmland (TF)



Tributary Farmland (TF)

SUMMARY

The Tributary Farmland Type is characterised by generally open and rolling/undulating rural farmland with some elevated plateau areas and a rich diversity of minor settlement, woodland and historic estates. As the name suggests, it forms the catchment area for a number of watercourses feeding into the main river valleys of the Stiffkey, Glaven and Bure. The presence of some of the highest land in the District leads to long range, uninterrupted panoramic views and a prominent skyline. The Wooded Glacial Ridge Type to the north is frequently visible on the horizon and exerts a strong influence on this landscape.

The Type extends over a large central portion of the District, bounded in the west by the distinct landform and character of the Stiffkey Valley, beyond which is the Rolling Open Farmland Type. The north west area of the Type extends to the coast at Morston where it meets the Coastal Marshes Types. A large northern swathe of the Type is framed by the prominent Wooded Glacial Ridge Type, and further east it transitions into the Coastal Shelf Type which separates the Tributary Farmland from the Coast. Heading south eastwards, the Type gradually transitions to the lower landscapes of the Low Plains Farmland and Coastal Plains Types. To the south, the Type extends to the District boundary, where it continues in parts as (Settled) Tributary Farmland within Breckland District and Plateau Farmland/ Wooded Estatelands Types in Broadland District. Parts of the Tributary Farmland Type in the vicinity of the coast also fall within the Norfolk Coast AONB and the North Norfolk Heritage Coast.

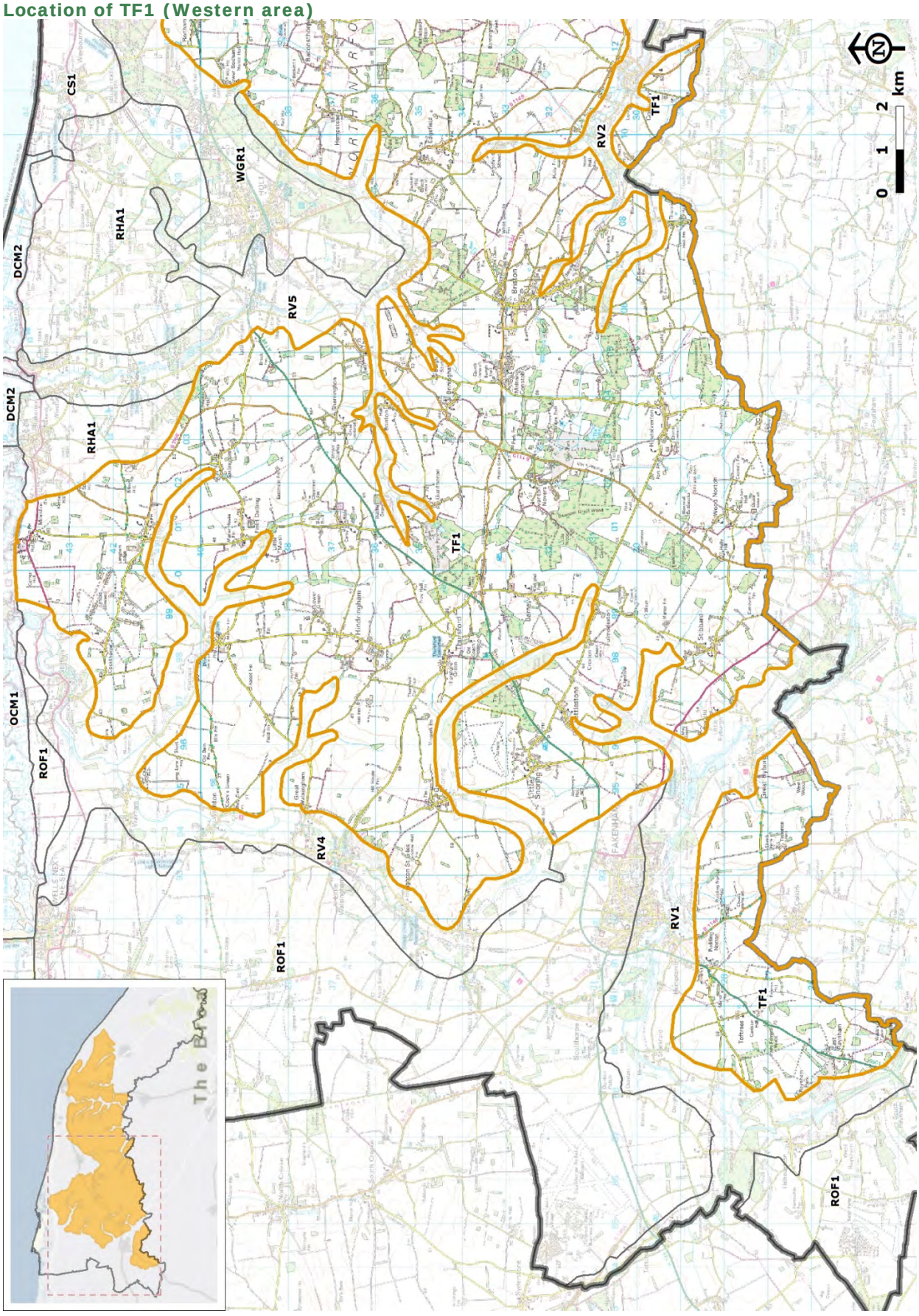
Component Areas

There is one large continuous area of Tributary Farmland in North Norfolk:

TF1 - North Norfolk Tributary Farmland

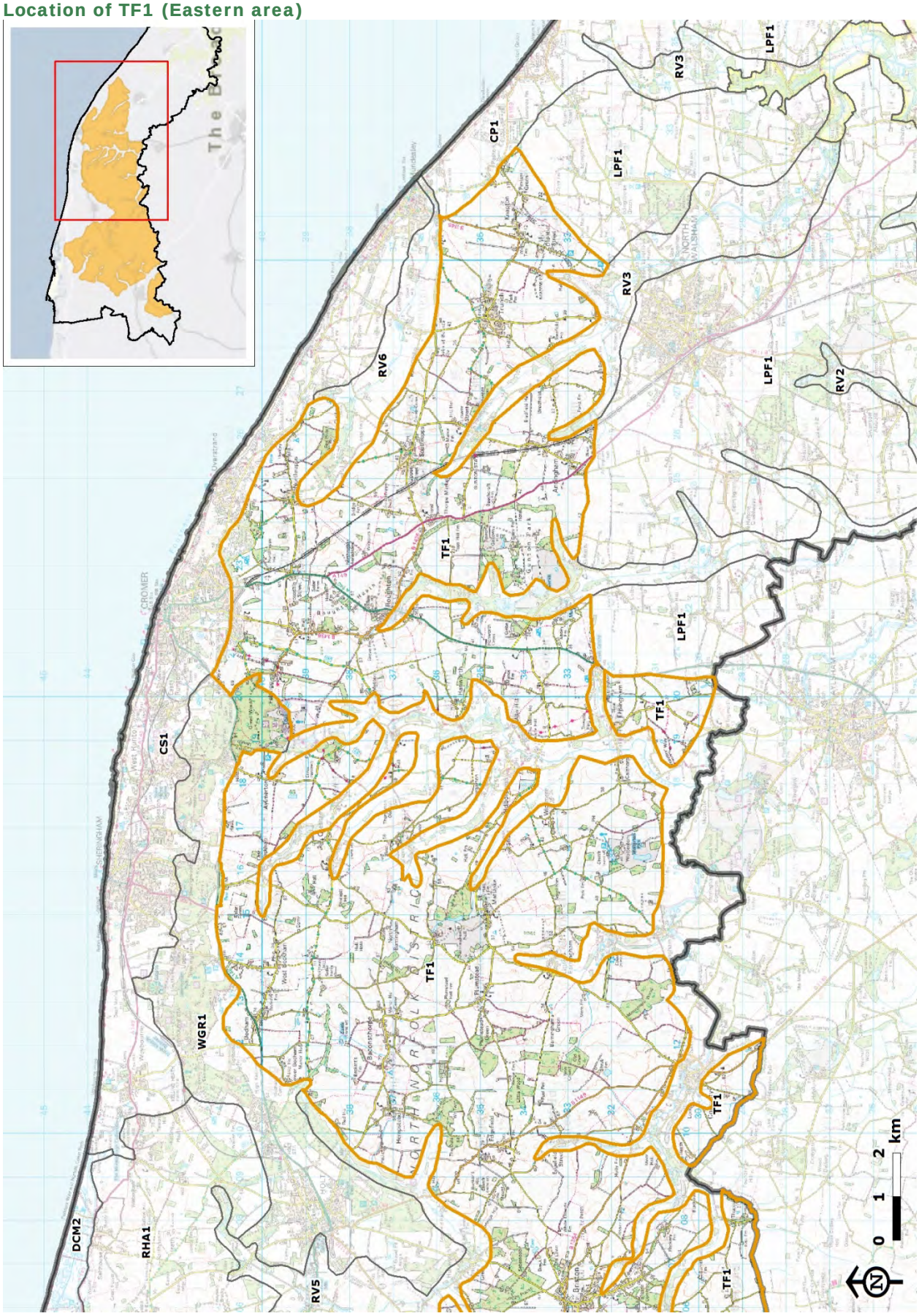
Tributary Farmland (TF)

Location of TF1 (Western area)



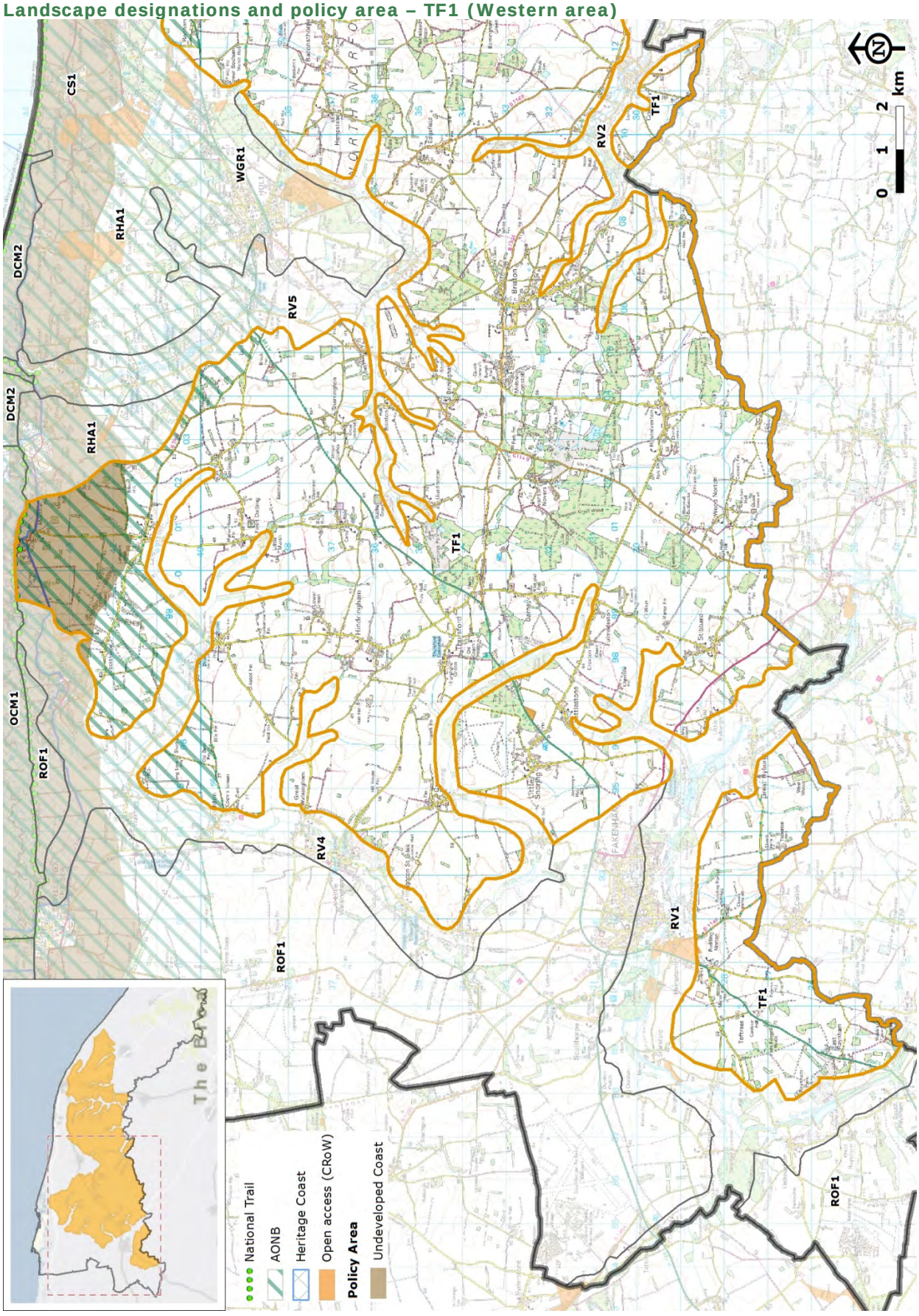
Tributary Farmland (TF)

Location of TF1 (Eastern area)



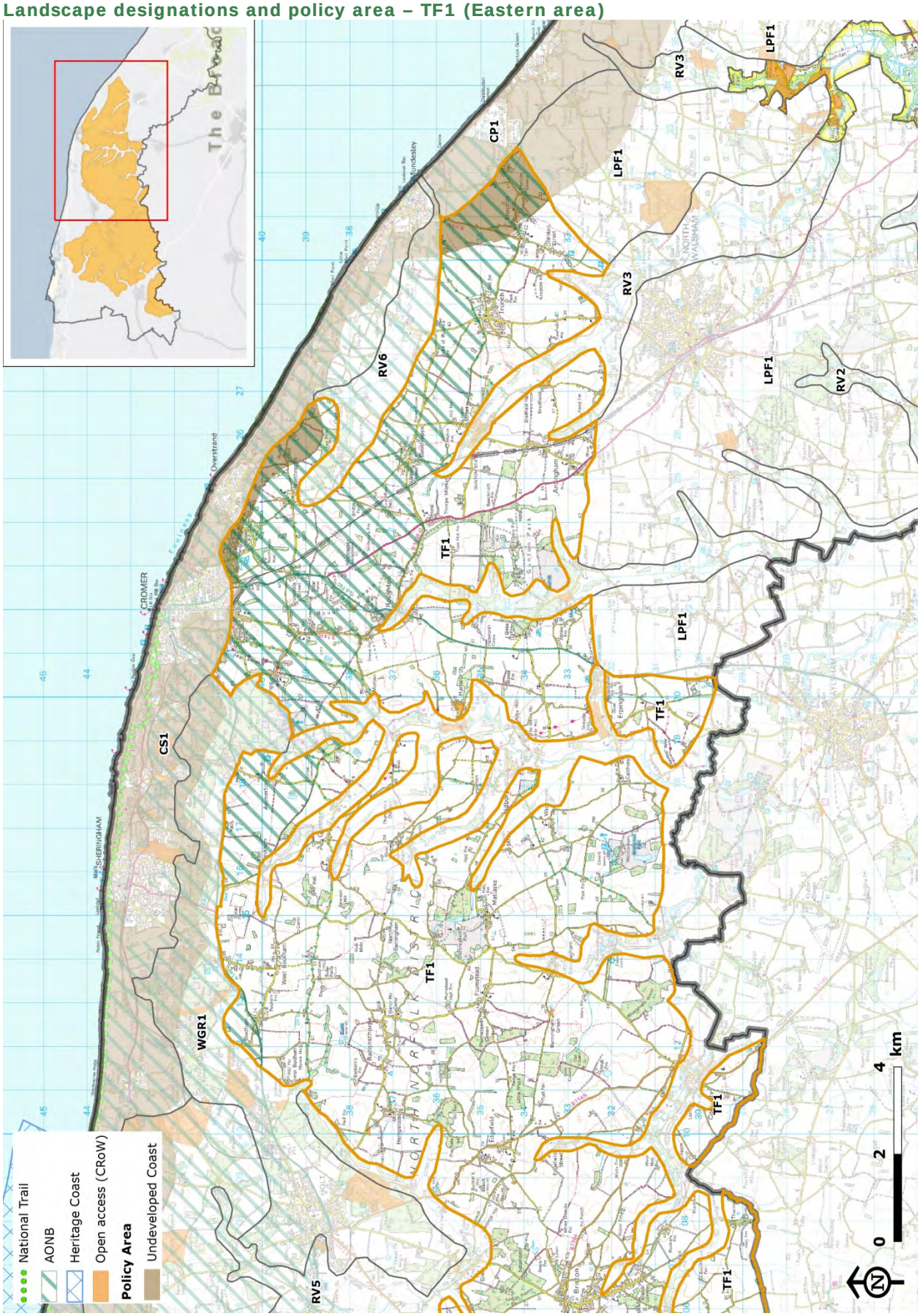
Tributary Farmland (TF)

Landscape designations and policy area – TF1 (Western area)



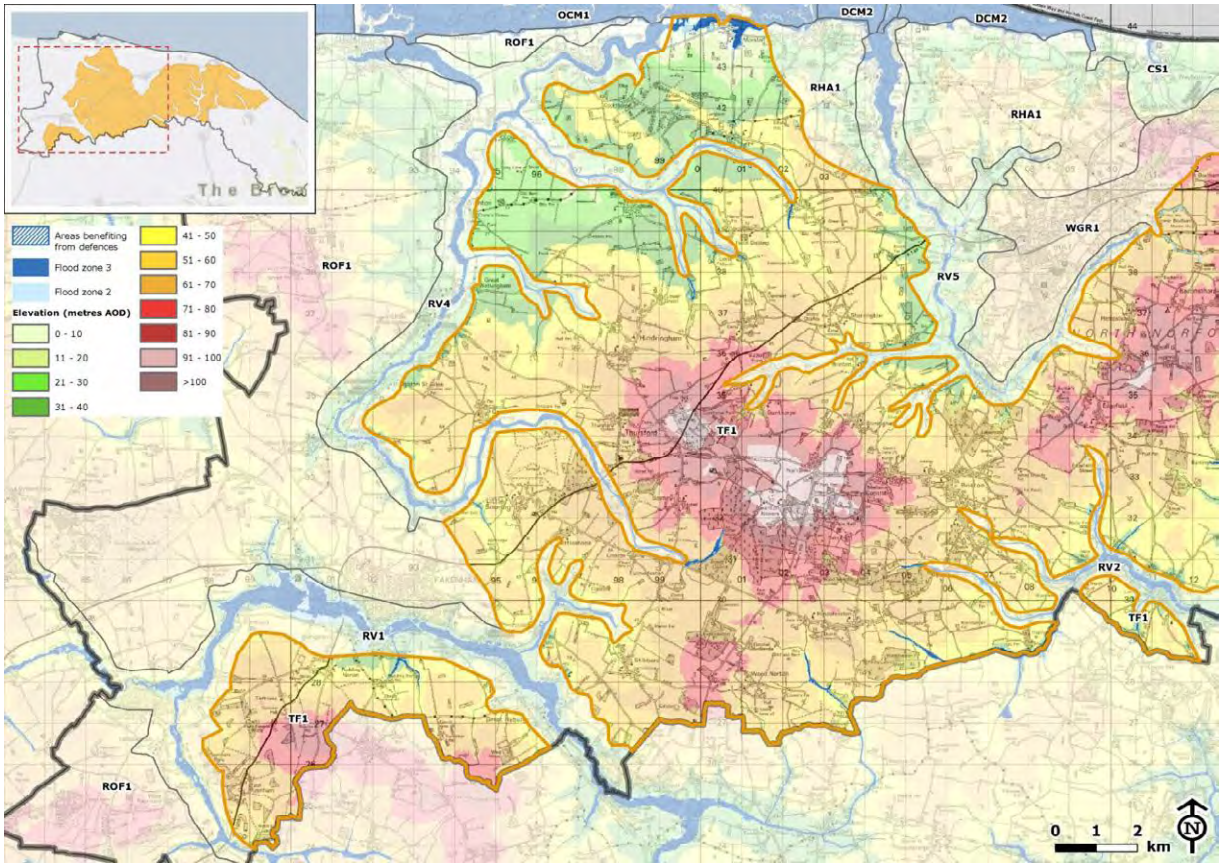
Tributary Farmland (TF)

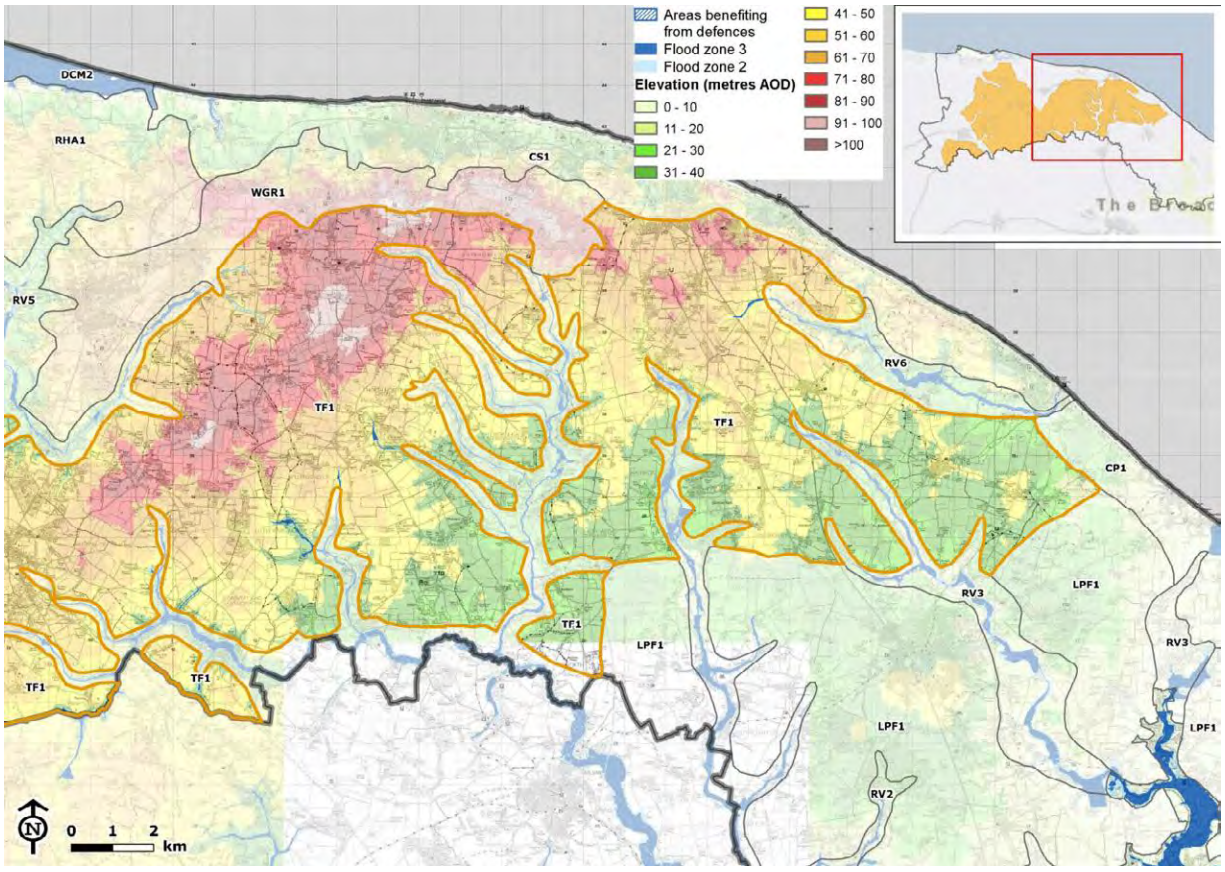
Landscape designations and policy area – TF1 (Eastern area)



Tributary Farmland (TF)

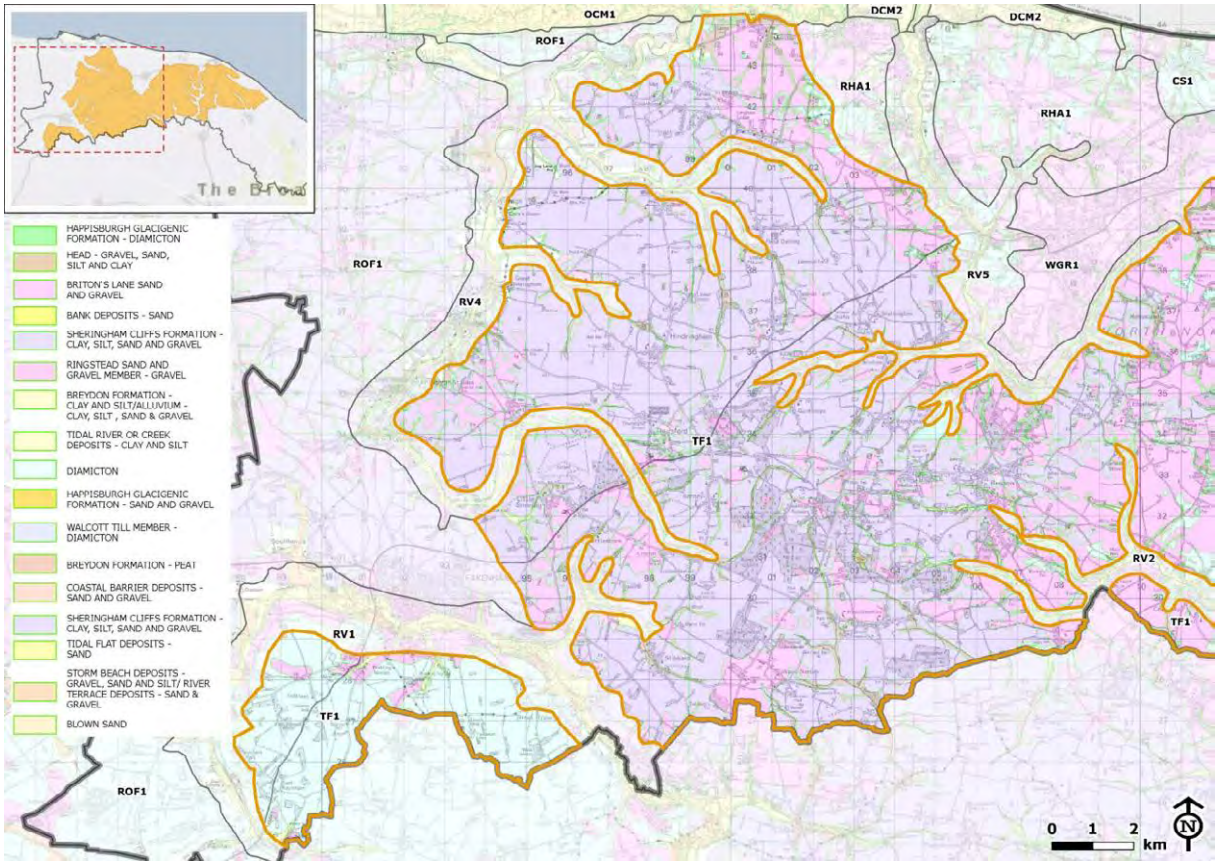
Topography and hydrology – TF1 (top = west, bottom = east)

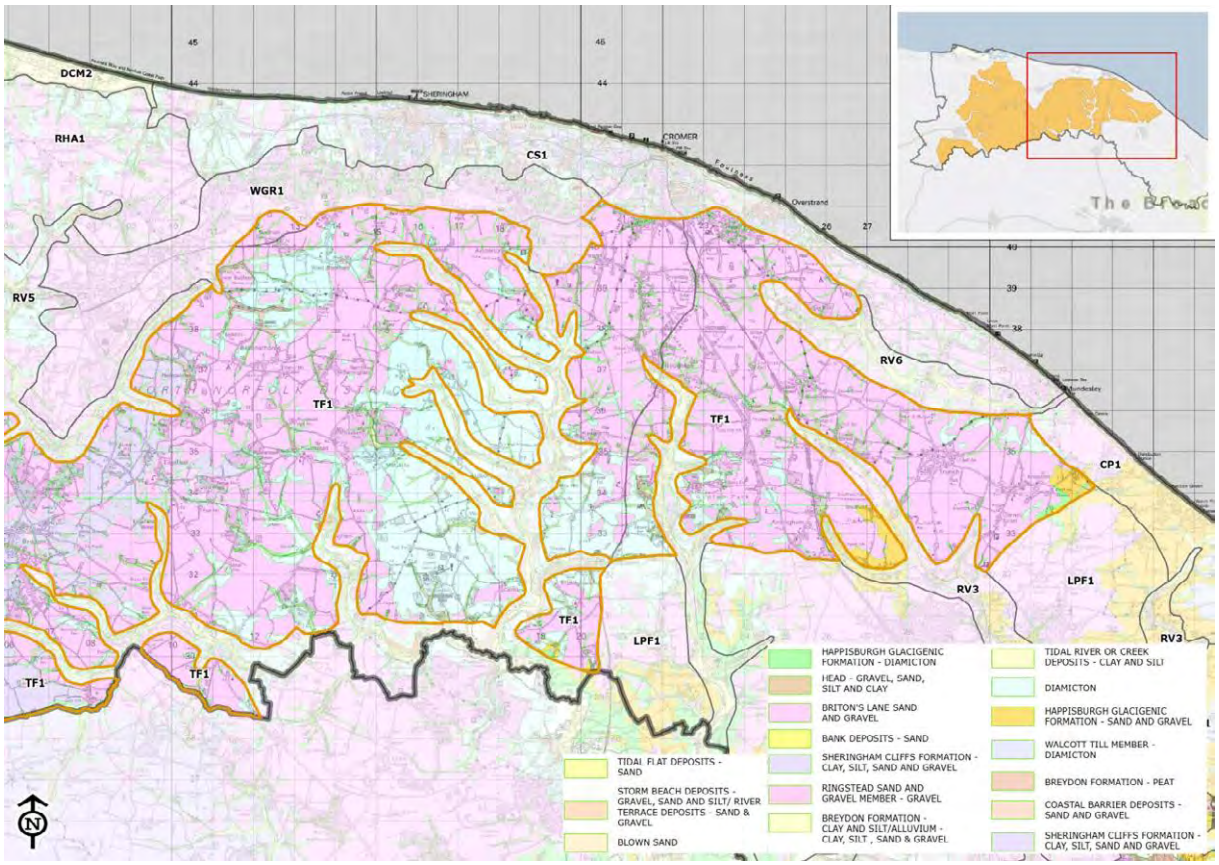




Tributary Farmland (TF)

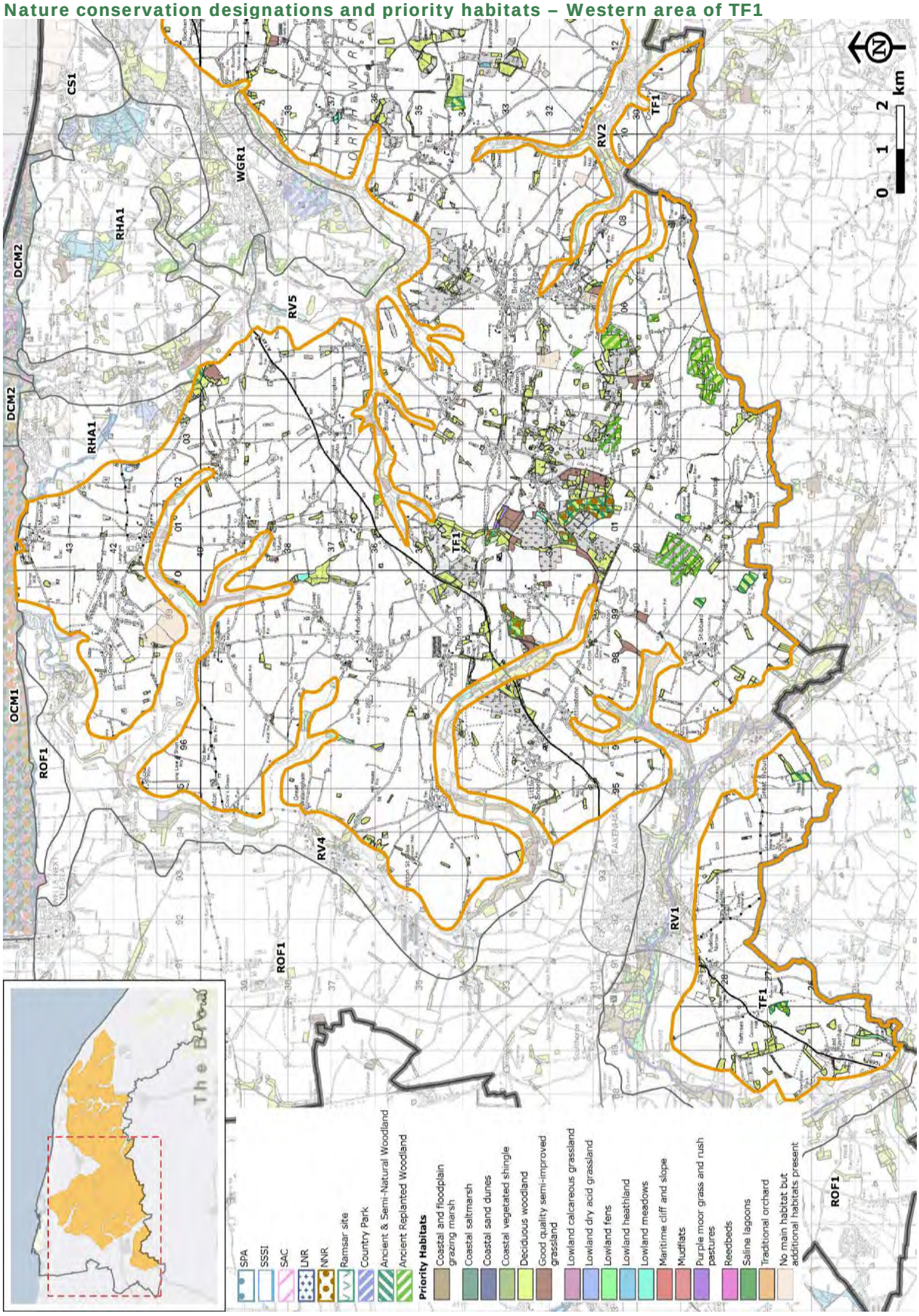
Superficial geology – TF1 (top = west, bottom = east)





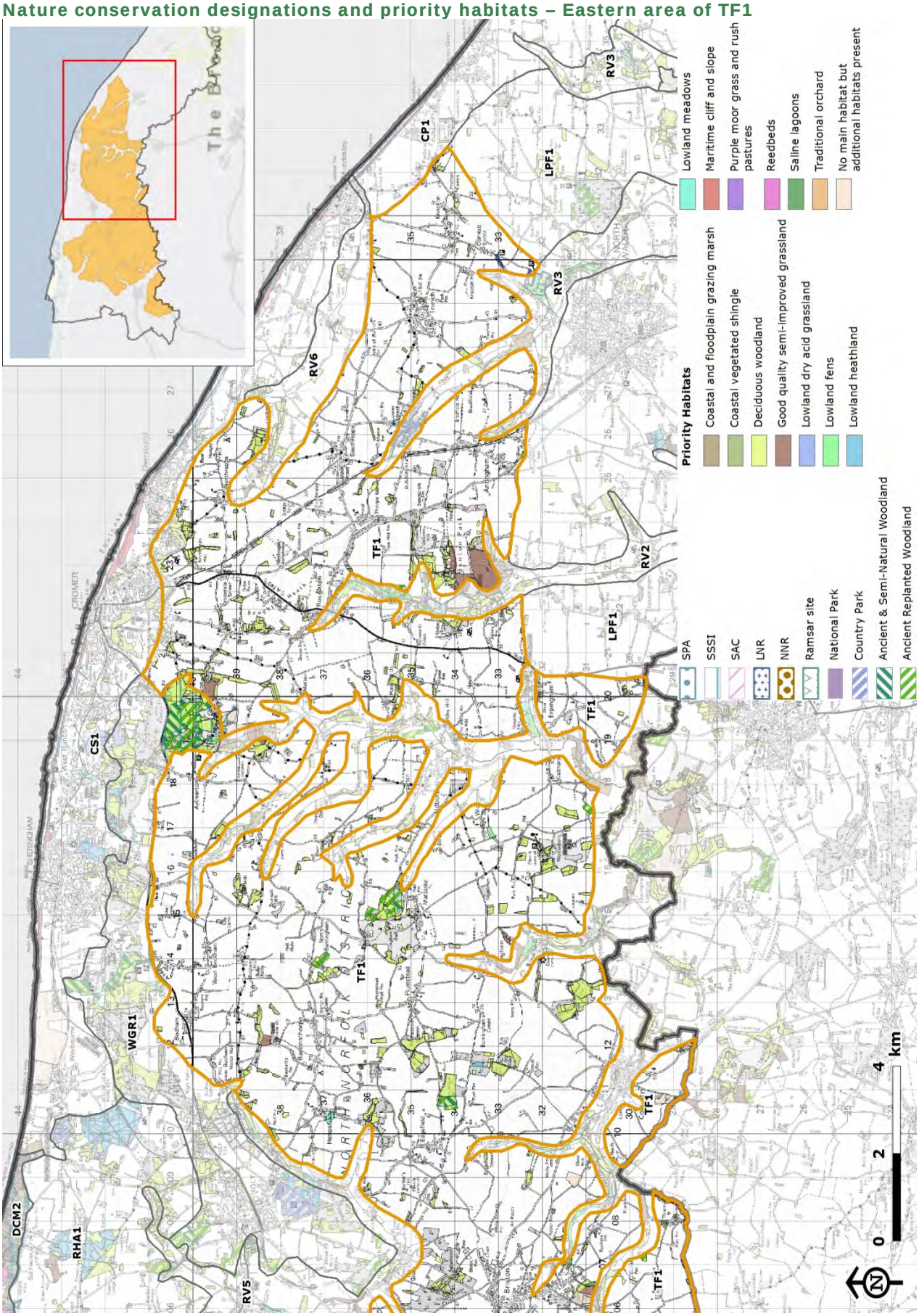
Tributary Farmland (TF)

Nature conservation designations and priority habitats – Western area of TF1



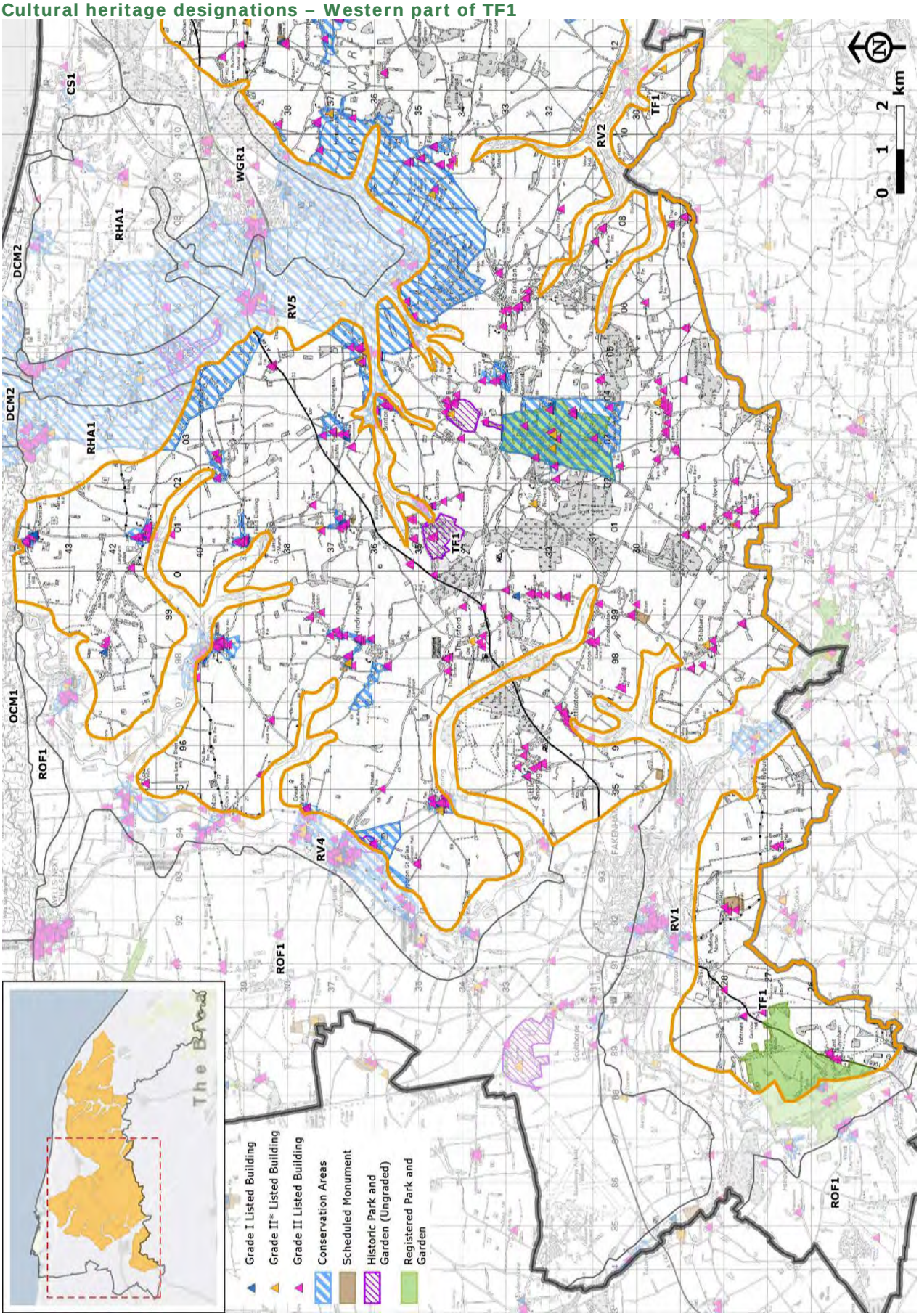
Tributary Farmland (TF)

Nature conservation designations and priority habitats – Eastern area of TF1



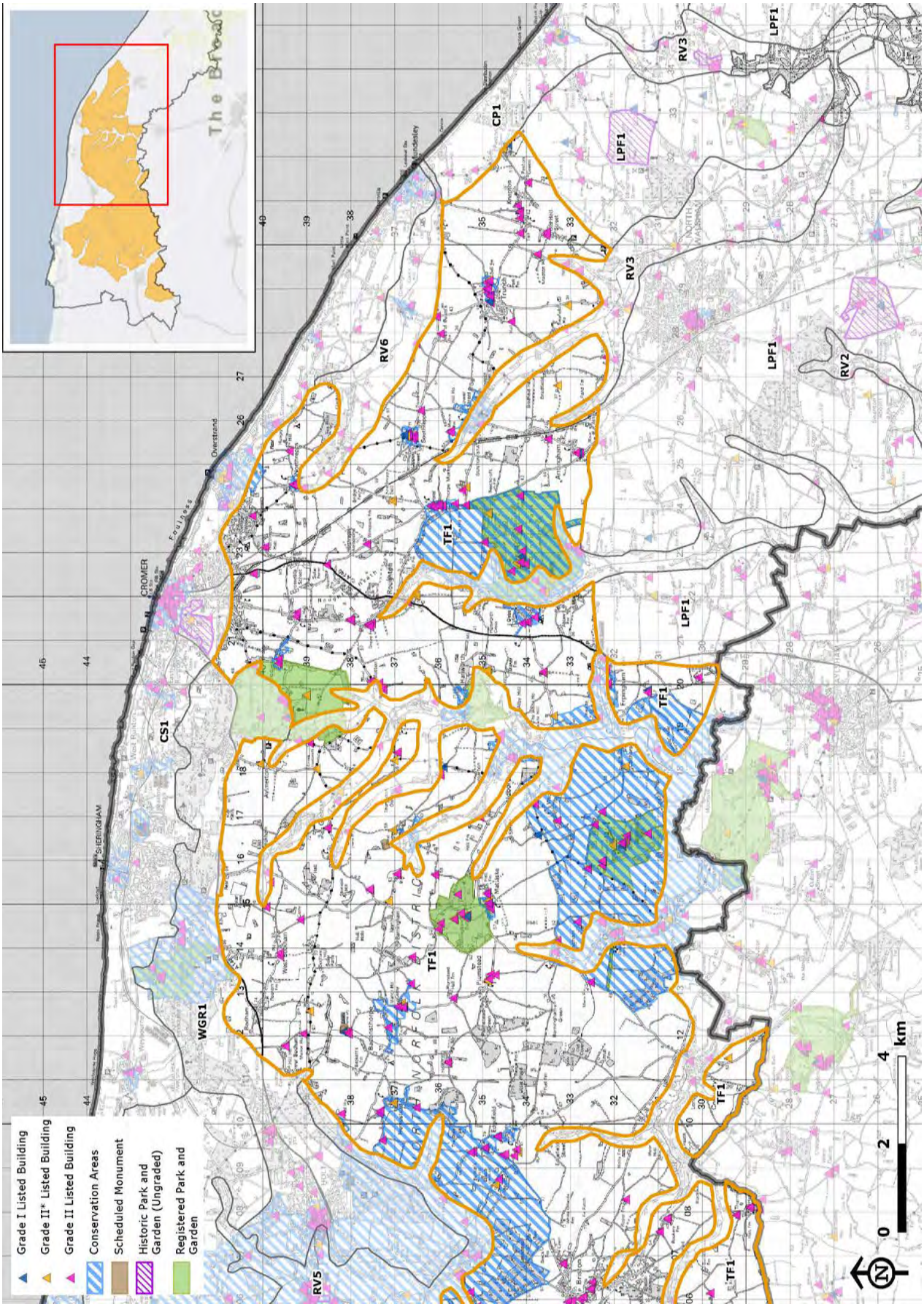
Tributary Farmland (TF)

Cultural heritage designations – Western part of TF1



Tributary Farmland (TF)

Cultural heritage designations – Eastern part of TF1



Tributary Farmland (TF)

KEY CHARACTERISTICS

1) **Undulating terrain dissected by small river valleys with elevated, and occasionally expansive, open plateau areas**

The topography and drainage pattern of the Type were produced by glacial depositional landforms and meltwaters. Thick glacial deposits of sand, gravel and till overlie the solid geology which is chalk in the west and Norfolk crag in the east. Streams are the headwaters for major rivers such as the Stiffkey, Glaven and Bure. Ponds are also a feature of the landscape. Historic airfields are present on some of the plateau areas.

2) **A rural landscape in which arable land use predominates with pasture more common around the edges of villages and in proximity to the river valleys**

The thick glacial deposits give rise to deep, well drained and generally loamy soils of good to very good agricultural quality (including some pockets Graded 1 – Excellent – in the east). Many of the fields result from 20th century enclosure, but there are also areas of 18-19th century enclosure as well as some notable areas of remnant ancient pre-enclosure field boundaries associated with settlements (e.g. Wood Norton, Bale and Briston). Whilst fields are typically medium to large in scale, there is a greater presence of small fields around settlements than in other Types. Pasture tends to be improved and of limited ecological value.

3) **Hedgerows and mature hedgerow trees are frequent features within the landscape**

Hedgerows define the field pattern which has been influenced by the history of smaller tenanted and owner-occupier landholdings based loosely around villages, resulting in a less regulated landscape than the Rolling Open Farmland Type. Hedges tend to be single species although there are areas with multi-species and high hedges, and some hedgerows are banked.

4) **Woodland cover is locally prominent across the area in a variety of forms**

This comprises some notable areas in the heavier loamy and clayey soils around Swanton Novers and the woodlands in this area are associated with historic parks (see below). The variety includes older (some ancient) woodlands, plantation woodland often associated with estates, as well as younger geometric shelter belts and modest game copses. Ancient woodland sites are of nature conservation interest, reflected by SSSIs at Swanton Novers Woods, Felbrigg Woods and Edgefield Little Wood and the Swanton Novers National Nature Reserve. Veteran trees and traditional orchards are also present.

5) **Historic parks and estates are a distinctive feature of the Landscape Type**

Historic estates are common throughout the Type, and often have associated parkland and woodland which encloses the park boundary. Examples include Melton Constable Hall, Barningham Hall, Wolterton Hall, Hanworth Hall, Gunton Park and part of Raynham Park (all of which are on Historic England's Register of Parks and Gardens), as well as Gunthorpe Park and Briningham Park which are un-registered. The extensive woodlands around estate boundaries are prominent features within the Tributary Farmland, and result in a much greater sense of enclosure in their vicinity than in the remainder of the Type. Many of the estates include designed landscapes which are the work of Lancelot 'Capability' Brown (Melton Constable Hall) and Humphry Repton (Barningham, Wolterton, Mannington, Gunton, Northrepps and Hanworth Halls).

6) **Settlement is typically rural villages with dispersed large houses and farmsteads in the wider landscape**

Villages tend to be semi-nucleated or nucleated around a church, with linear extensions along roadways (e.g. Field Dalling, Sharrington and Hindringham). A number of villages have significant historic merit, being designated as conservation areas. Morston is a traditional coastal fishing village. Church towers are prominent skyline features and landmarks throughout this Landscape Type. In addition to this traditional settlement pattern there are occasional rows of post war local authority housing in isolated places, or just beyond settlement boundaries. Some of the farmsteads are extensive with large barns. The local vernacular is typically coursed flint stone, often in combination with red brick, and clay pantile pitched roofs. The dispersed nature of

Tributary Farmland (TF)

farmsteads and large houses within the wider landscape reflects the historical land ownership within this area of smaller tenanted and owner-occupier landholdings.

7) **A network of quiet rural lanes linking settlements**

The network of lanes is a feature of this area, linking the historic villages and often bounded by mature hedgerows. There are also main roads running through the Type which are key tourist routes.

8) **Strong visual relationship between the valleys that dissect the landscape, the coast around Morston and the Wooded Glacial Ridge to the north**

The valleys contribute to the experience of moving across this landscape type. Where the Tributary Farmland meets the coast around Morston, there is also a visual relationship between this farmland, the coastal marshes and the sea beyond. The elevated wooded horizon of the Wooded Glacial Ridge defines the majority of the northern boundary of the Tributary Farmland, and is an influential landscape feature, providing a degree of containment to the northern side of this large Type.

VALUED FEATURES AND QUALITIES

1) **Strong rural character with a sense of remoteness and tranquillity**

The rural settlement pattern means there are areas of quiet rural farmland and dark skies at night in between the villages.

2) **Historic parklands**

Historic parks and their designed landscapes with associated woodlands are of historical, recreational and biodiversity value.

3) **Historic field patterns**

Remnant historic field patterns, such as the pre-enclosure field boundaries associated with settlements (e.g. Wood Norton, Bale and Briston), are rare and important historic components of the landscape structure which contribute to the strong local identity in these areas.

4) **Woodland cover, hedgerows and hedgerow trees**

Woodland cover (especially ancient woodland and veteran trees), hedgerows and hedgerow trees contribute to the habitat network as well as contributing to visual amenity and adding time depth to the landscape**.**

5) **Remnant semi-natural habitats**

In addition to deciduous woodland, remnants of wood pasture, grassland, heathland, traditional orchards, species-rich hedgerows and wildflower roadside verges are relatively rare and provide variety as well as biodiversity.

6) **Rural historic villages and vernacular buildings**

Historic villages and the use of local building styles and materials contribute positively to the historical continuity and sense of place within this landscape.

7) **Rural lanes**

Rural lanes contribute to the perception of a rural landscape and provide historical continuity.

8) **Long range views and prominent landscape features**

Long range, expansive views over undeveloped skylines are possible from many elevated locations within the Type, e.g. looking north from Corpusty Church, which allow an appreciation of the scenic qualities and varied character of the landscape. The elevated wooded horizon of the Wooded Glacial Ridge defines the northern boundary and is an influential visual feature.

Tributary Farmland (TF)

Many of the Valued Features and Qualities of the Tributary Farmland are considered to contribute positively to Key Qualities of Natural Beauty of the Norfolk Coast AONB, as set out within the current AONB Management Plan. These Key Qualities include:

- Strong and distinctive links between land and sea
- Diversity and integrity of landscape, seascape and settlement character
- Sense of remoteness, tranquillity and wildness
- Richness of archaeological heritage and historic environment, particularly that relating to the coast and its character.

Corpusty Church, a local landmark and high point which allows expansive views north over the Tributary Farmland landscape.

FORCES FOR CHANGE / DETRACTORS

1) Modern agricultural practices and change

Post World War II intensification of agriculture, including spread of arable land, an enlargement of fields and modernisation of farm buildings has resulted in changes to ancient field patterns, hedgerows, narrow lanes and verges. Changing agricultural practices include a rise in pig farming which has brought about considerable landscape and visual change. There has also been increasing demand for equine-related development, particularly on the edge of settlements (e.g. shelters, vehicles and trailers/horse boxes, menages, field sub-division by pony tape and fencing and the installation of larger gateways). There has been some farm diversification such as glamping, camping and caravan sites, rural wedding venues, woodland adventure courses, leisure retail outlets, small scale industrial uses and storage facilities continue to contribute to development pressures.

Tributary Farmland (TF)

2) Uncertainity regarding future agricultural subsidy schemes following the UK's departure from the EU.

Changes to agricultural subsidies will have significant impacts on the landscape and biodiversity. These could be positive or negative.

3) Conversion of agricultural buildings and scale of new storage structures

Decline in the usefulness of traditional farm buildings has led to neglect and/ or conversion of barns from rural working buildings to residential and leisure uses. Such conversions can introduce 'suburban' features such as surfaced drives / domestic style gates and fences / garden style planting and parking areas / overly large windows and external lighting. There is continued pressure for construction of large agricultural storage buildings (potato stores, grain stores) to replace older barns. New agricultural buildings, often large in scale and of non-traditional materials such as steel, concrete and aluminium cladding, sited in locations away from or prominently within existing farm complexes can detract from the prevailing landscape character.

4) Settlement expansion and infill to meet housing demand

Edge of settlement new housing or industry of a generic nature has undermined the traditional road and settlement patterns and vernacular building style and materials. There has also been increasing infill development in historically spacious villages e.g. at Hindringham and Roughton.

Other consequences of such development include existing properties being enlarged / improved and sub-divided, fencing replacing hedged boundaries, and extensions to properties which overly enlarge or gentrify rural settlements / locations.

Continued increases in light pollution associated with new built form and infrastructure development will affect the sense of remoteness, tranquillity and dark skies associated with this landscape.

5) Demand for isolated new homes

Demand for isolated new homes can result in buildings that do not reinforce the local vernacular. Lighting and domestic external curtilage can be prominent in otherwise sparsely populated areas and this can affect the area's sense of remoteness and historic, rural character.

6) Loss of traditional land uses and habitats

There has been a decrease in the number and area of traditional farm orchards over the years, as well as loss of some hedgerows and decline in traditional woodland management skills which is threatening the age and species diversity of semi-natural woodlands.

7) Renewable energy development

The continuing development of large scale off-shore wind farms has resulted in large scale infrastructure projects within this Landscape Type. Elements include temporary disturbance caused by trenching for cable routes and the introduction of permanent structures such as on-shore sub- stations and shore connection compounds.

There is also a continuing pressure for solar PV developments on farmland and within the former airfield areas, and for anaerobic digestion plants associated with farms e.g. at Hempton.

8) Climate change

Climate change could result in the need for new crops, changes in farming practices, increased demand for reservoirs, the introduction of new pests and diseases affecting native species, and increased demand for / efficiency of renewable energy types. A changing climate will result in a change in the distribution and abundance of species that can result in landscape scale changes.

A change in climate will result in different recreational patterns and use that could place increased pressure on the landscape for more tourism related development

9) Telecoms masts and wind turbines in prominent locations

Elevated locations are preferred sites for telecom masts and wind turbines and in this expansive landscape these can result in wide ranging visual intrusion on the skyline and erosion of rural

Tributary Farmland (TF)

character. The benefits/harm balance requires careful analysis within this Type.

10) Mineral extraction

Demand for extraction of sands and gravel can affect tranquillity, fragile habitats and road traffic levels.

11) Tree diseases and invasive species

Ash dieback and other tree diseases may have a significant impact on the composition of woodland and hedgerow trees within the District and this Type. Invasive species have the potential to have a significant impact on native biodiversity that can result in landscape scale changes.

LANDSCAPE VISION

The vision for this landscape type is a well-managed and actively farmed rural landscape that invests in natural capital, creating and enhancing ecological networks and semi-natural habitats. New development is successfully integrated within the existing settlements where it reinforces traditional character and vernacular. The landscape retains a rural character with dark night skies.

LANDSCAPE GUIDELINES

1) Conserve sense of rurality

This open, tranquil and strongly rural landscape area is particularly sensitive to increases in built development, such as wind turbines, telecom masts, housing and industrial activity. Capacity to visually contain development in this context is limited.

Ensure the redevelopment of redundant barn complexes both within, on the edge and especially outside settlement boundaries, is sensitively undertaken avoiding use of suburban features such as surfaced drives, domestic style gates and fences, ornamental planting, overly large windows or excessive external lighting. The same should be considered for new standalone houses in the countryside. Impact both by day and night should be a consideration to maintain the rural character and dark skies. Consider opportunities to address adverse light pollution by means of replacement downlighting or complete removal of lighting, taking into account the appropriateness of the latest lighting technologies, e.g. different types of LEDs.

Maintain the rural features that contribute to character, biodiversity and historical continuity, including rural lanes, hedgerows, verges, gateposts and walls – avoid road widening and urbanising features such as close board fencing, kerbs, lighting and excessive signage.

New planting associated with development should blend with existing features rather than simply trying to screen new development - layers of vegetation may be more appropriate than one thick screen using species local to the area.

2) Conserve the nucleated character of villages

Retain the compact character of development in villages to avoid impinging on the remote, rural character of the surrounding landscape. Avoid linear sprawl. Ensure any new development is well integrated into the landscape and does not form a harsh edge.

3) Protect and appropriately manage the rich cultural heritage of the area

Protect and manage the numerous and extensive parkland estates, historic villages and churches to retain these as features of the landscape. Ensure new development does not compete with the church towers for prominence so they remain key landmark features on the skyline.

4) Conserve and expand areas of woodland and other non-arable habitats

Improve ecological connectivity in the landscape through conserving and expanding areas of

Tributary Farmland (TF)

woodland, ponds and other non-arable and semi-natural habitats.

Retain and manage areas of woodland and trees, including those that contribute to the setting of the villages and buildings in the landscape. Reinstate and create hedges, grassland, orchards, ponds and watercourses where these have been lost or removed from the landscape. Enlarge areas of pasture, woodland, scrub, heathland and arable margins, with a focus on re-connecting fragmented habitats and improving ecological connectivity for a variety of species including great crested newts, reptiles, bats, birds and insects.

Support landowners and agricultural subsidy schemes that invest in natural capital and ecosystem services. These can include, but are not limited to, creating and restoring ponds and 'ghost' ponds and managing and enhancing the range of habitats associated with bats, barn owls and farmland birds, providing roosting, nesting/resting and feeding opportunities throughout the year (woodland margins, fallow plots, overwintered stubble and insect-rich foraging habitats).

5) **Manage the impacts of climate change**

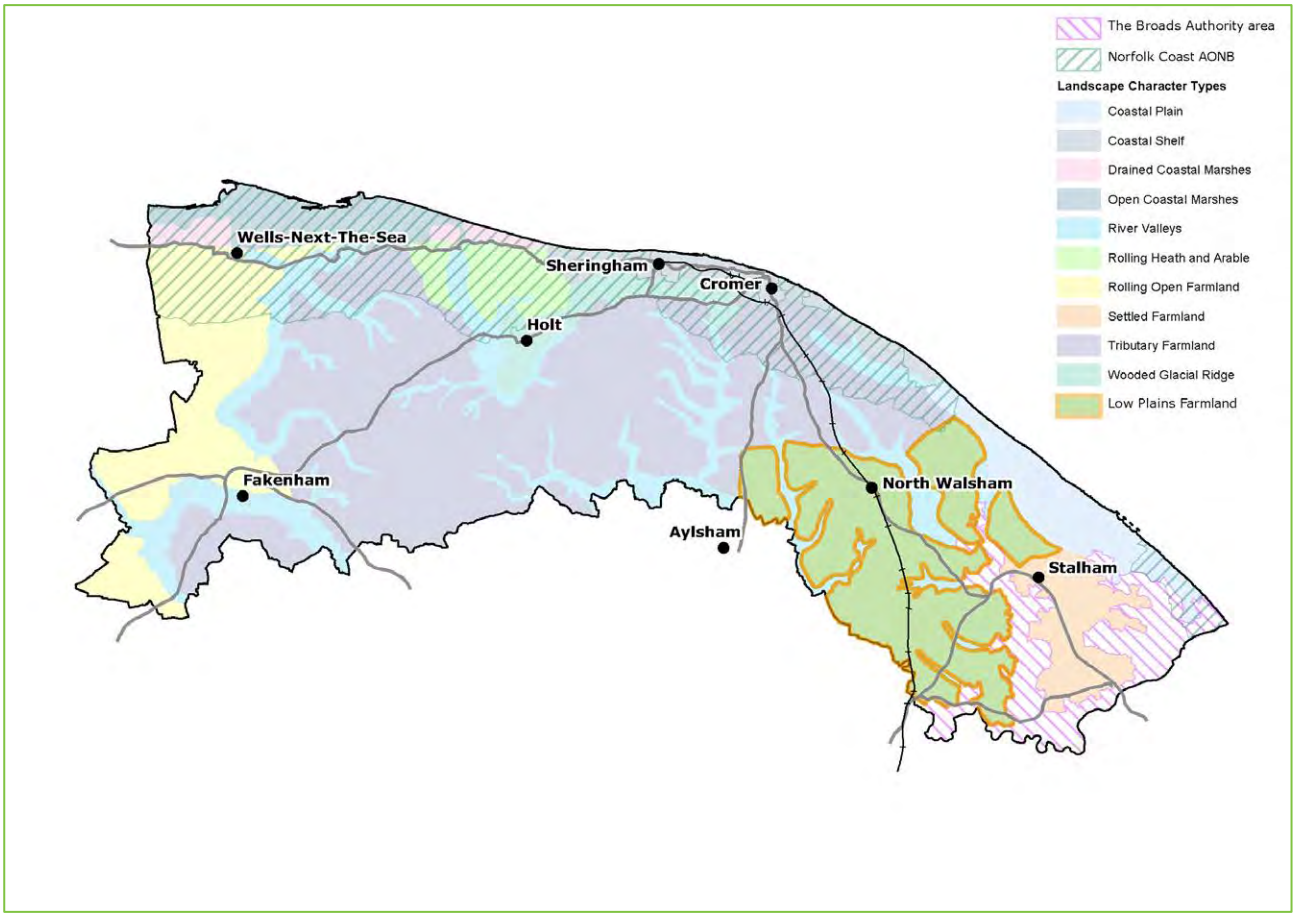
Manage and enhance the health and structure of woodlands to improve resilience in the face of climate change and pests and diseases. Manage development to ensure that changing recreational patterns do not adversely affect the rural agricultural heritage of this landscape Type.

6) **Manage activities such as mineral extraction**

Ensure extraction activities are well integrated into the landscape and managed to minimise impact on the rural character of the landscape. Ensure long terms plans for restoration are in character with the landscape and take opportunities to increase semi-natural habitats.

The rich cultural heritage within Tributary Farmland – the Grade I listed Church of All Saints, Aldborough & Thurgarton, with rare thatched roof

Low Plains Farmland (LPF)



Low Plains Farmland (LPF)

SUMMARY

The Low Plains Farmland Type is characterised by a flat or gently undulating open landscape with long, uninterrupted views, predominantly arable land use and dispersed rural settlements, including the expanding market town of North Walsham. The landscape becomes less enclosed and wooded towards the coast, as a result of 20th Century agriculture and hedgerow removals.

The Type covers an extensive inland part of the lower-lying east part of the District, and is intersected by South-Draining Valleys which drain to the Broads. The Type is located to the east of the Tributary Farmland Type, the difference between the two being elevation and topography (the Tributary Farmland is higher and more undulating than the Low Plains Farmland). To the east the Low Plains transitions to the Coastal Plain which is flatter and influenced by its proximity to the sea. To the south-west, the Type continues across the administrative boundary where it forms part of the 'Tributary Farmland' within Broadland District. Around Stalham, the Type subtly transitions to the Settled Farmland Type, a more low-lying and even flatter area characterised by more settlement.

Component Areas

There is one large continuous area of Lowland Plain in North Norfolk:

LPF1 - North Norfolk Low Plains Farmland

Low Plains Farmland (LPF)

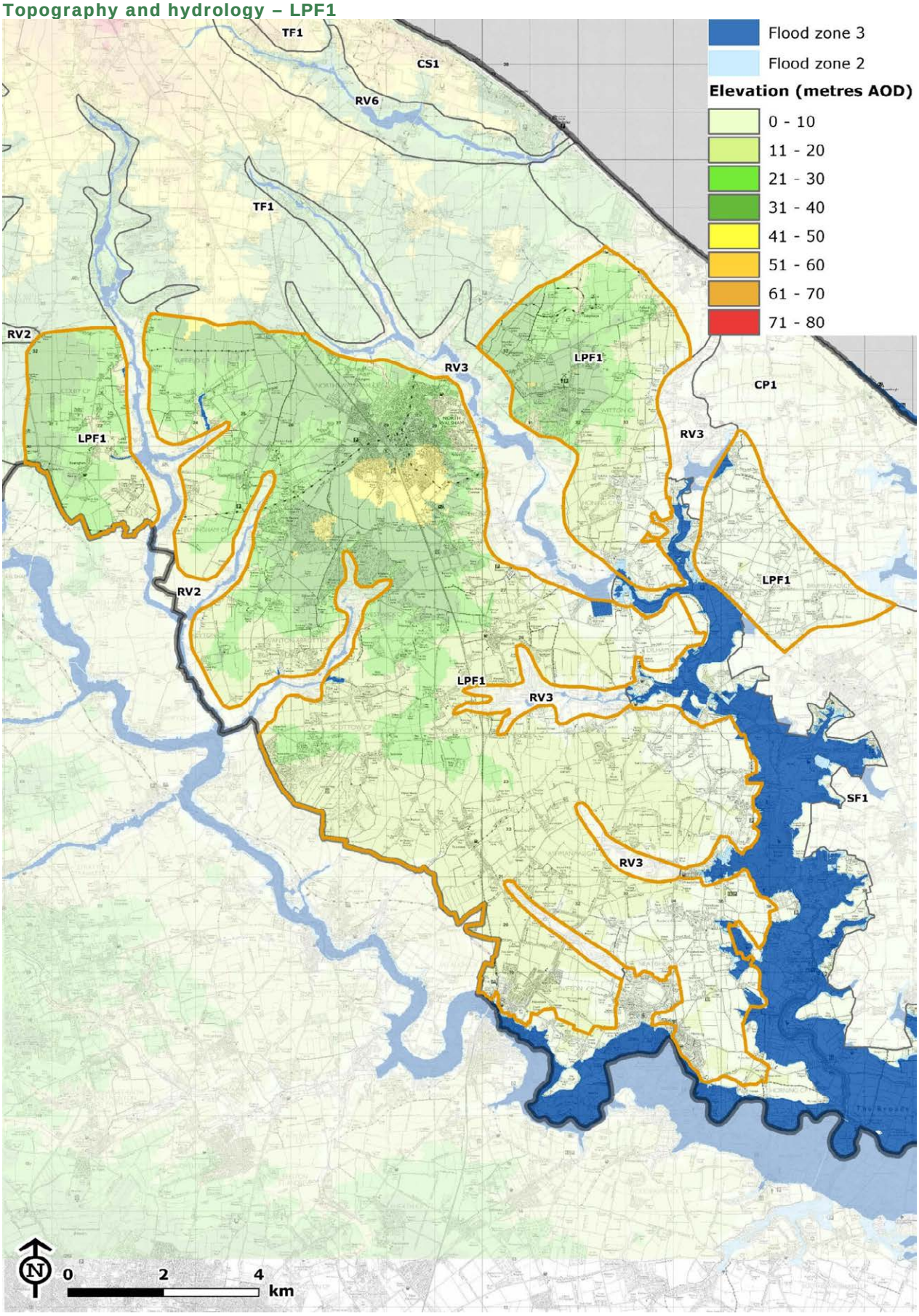
Location of LPF1

Low Plains Farmland (LPF)

Landscape designations and policy area - LPF1

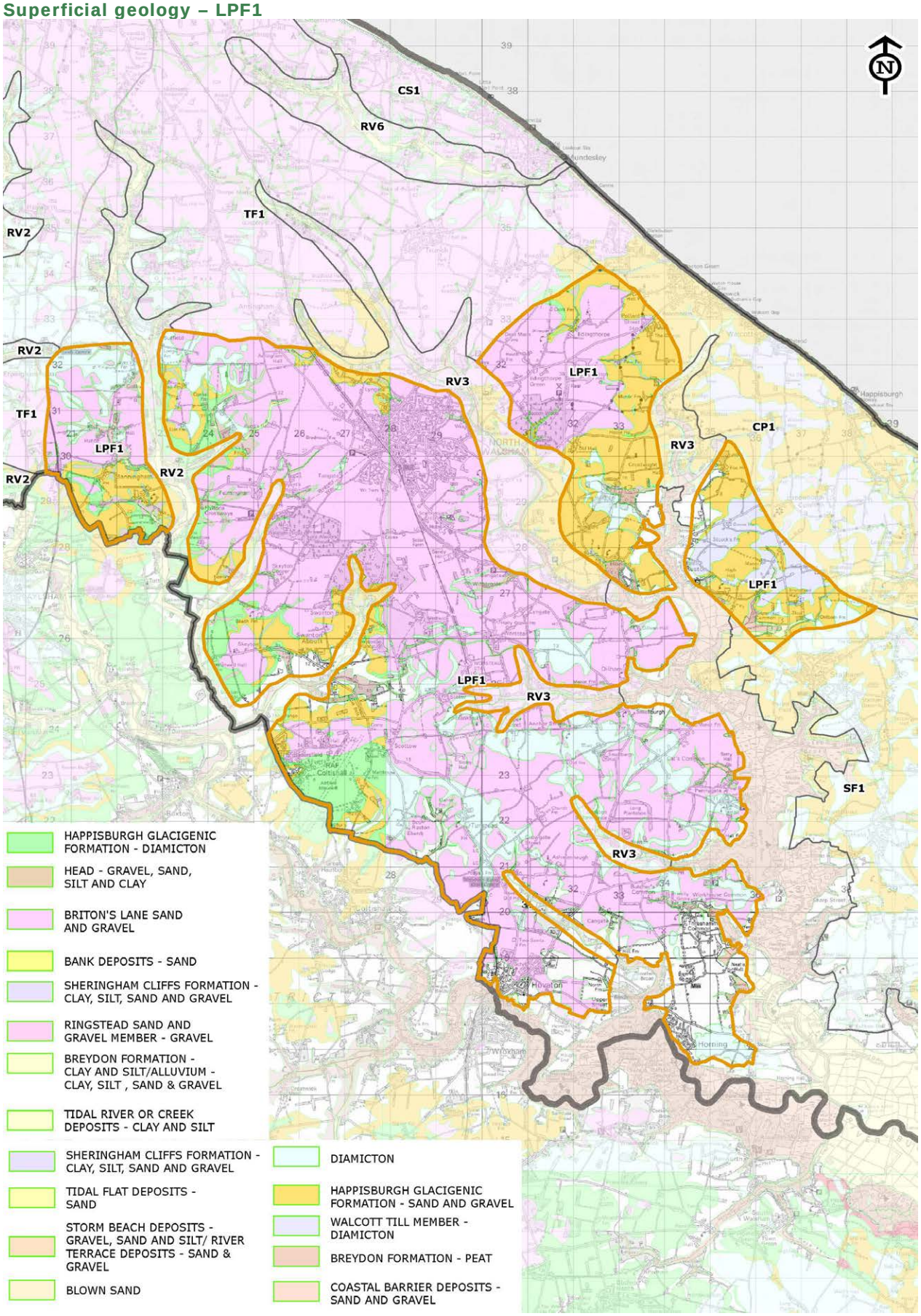
Low Plains Farmland (LPF)

Topography and hydrology – LPF1



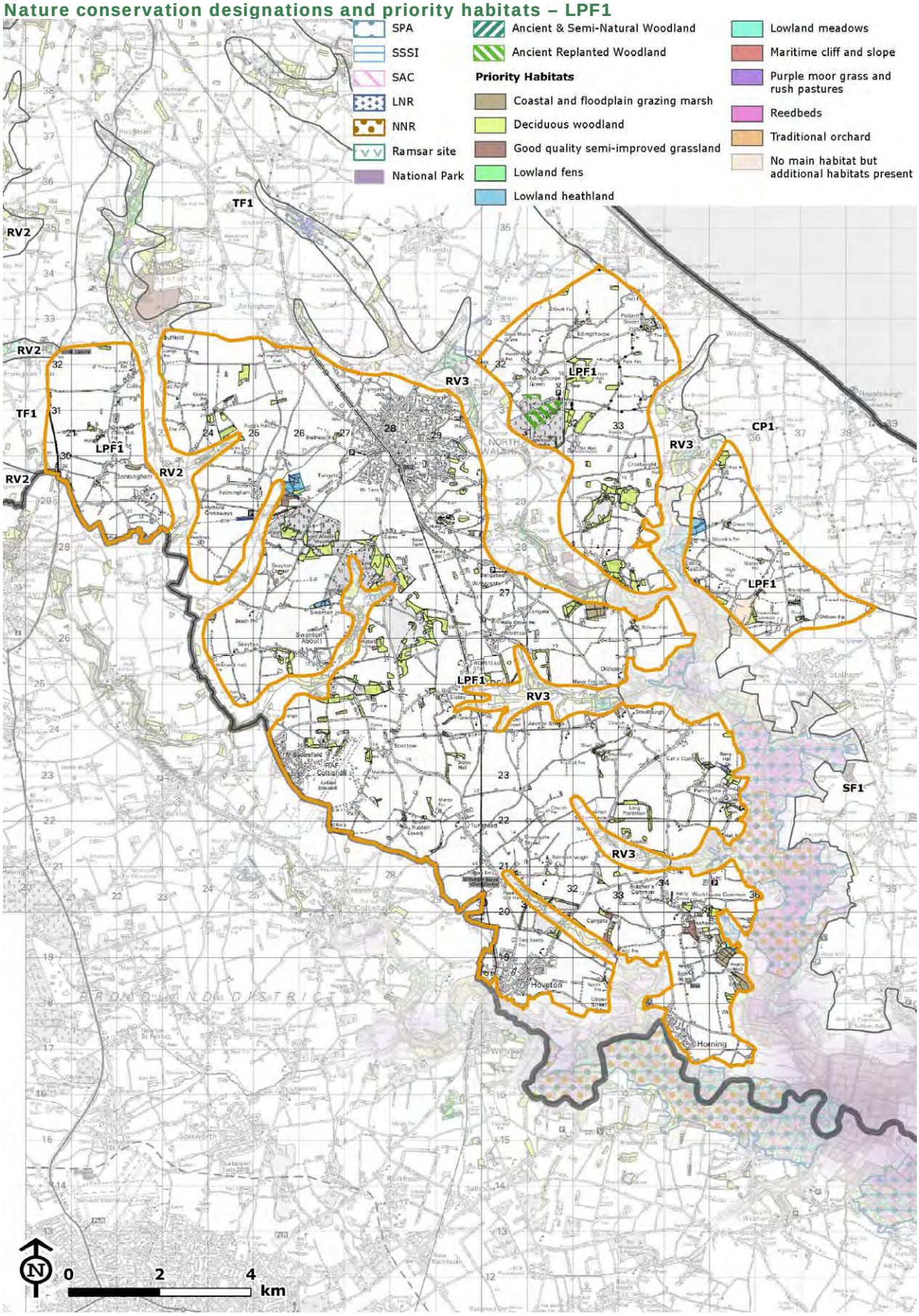
Low Plains Farmland (LPF)

Superficial geology – LPF1



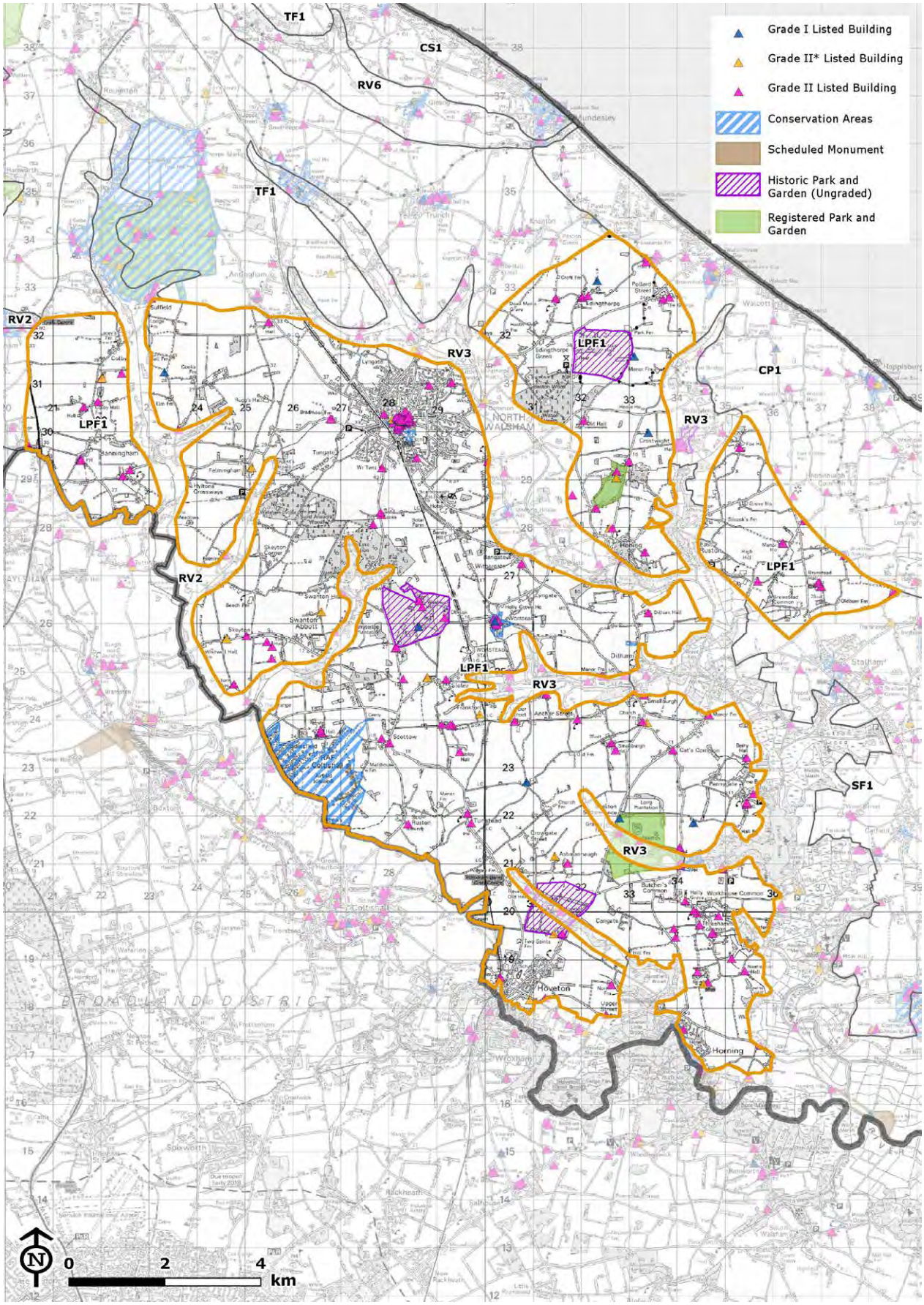
Low Plains Farmland (LPF)

Nature conservation designations and priority habitats – LPF1



Low Plains Farmland (LPF)

Cultural heritage designations – LPF1



Low Plains Farmland (LPF)

KEY CHARACTERISTICS

1) **Flat or very gently undulating terrain, draining by small streams**

Unconsolidated crag sands underlie the glacial tills in this part of Norfolk, producing a low lying and muted topography typically between 10 and 40m AOD. Watercourses within the Type are limited to small streams draining into the adjacent Broads valleys.

2) **A rural landscape in which arable land use predominates with pasture more common closer to the river valleys and the Broads**

The glacial deposits give rise to deep, well drained coarse loamy soils of good to excellent agricultural quality (Grades 1-3). Many of the fields result from 20th century enclosure, but there are also areas of 18-19th century enclosure.

Field sizes are medium to large on the whole and fairly regular in shape. Closer to the valleys this overall trend becomes different, with smaller, more irregular-sized fields. Pasture, if present, tends to be temporary or recent arable reversion, except where it may be related to parkland (see below) or especially wetter, lower lying areas. Set aside and grassed margins are not as prevalent in this Type, probably due to the high agricultural land grade over much of the area.

3) **An open landscape with large fields and low hedges**

Field boundaries on the whole consist of low grass banks due to widespread hedge removal, however there are areas with high hedges, which results in localised enclosed areas, and there is also some planting of new hedgerows in some places. This combination of arable farming and low grassy banks in place of hedges creates an open landscape, frequently punctuated in some areas by prominent mature oak trees lining the roads and field boundaries Hedge height and size tends to be greater the closer to settlements as a result of individual landholders not having access to machinery to maintain them regularly.

4) **Grassed bank and ditch field boundary features**

In some areas hedges may never have formed all field boundaries and here grassed banks / ditches provide the boundary feature. This is a feature which makes this type different from the Tributary Farmland Type.

5) **A 'copse and small wood landscape'**

Woodland cover dispersed unevenly across the type. Some areas have quite large blocks of woodland (e.g. Bacton Woods) with other areas fairly deprived of woodland (Tunstead and north of Stalham). Most areas have more dispersed and fragmented woodland cover which provides a sort of 'copse and small wood landscape'. There are some small areas of former ancient woodland (too small to be registered) often as hazel coppice (south and east) mixed with woodland planted for sporting purposes and forestry. These variations reflect the landownership issues that have variously affected land use.

6) **Remnant heaths**

The sandy tills soils have given rise to some areas of heath, for example the distinctive area of former heathland around North Walsham and remnants on a number of small commons. Lowland heath is a priority habitat.

7) **Areas of parkland and estates**

Areas of parkland are present associated with smaller 'Gentry' houses such as Honing Hall, Beeston Hall, Westwick House and Witton Hall. Some are registered designed landscapes attributed to Humphry Repton.

8) **Settlement comprises market towns, rural villages, hamlets and dispersed farmsteads**

The main settlement is the Anglo-Saxon settlement and market town of North Walsham. The town contains one of the 14th century "wool churches" that are a testament to the prosperity of the

Low Plains Farmland (LPF)

local mill owners and is located on the former North Walsham and Dilham Canal (only part of which now survives). The centre contains rendered, colour washed brick or plain brick, houses with an understated classical character. Some of the larger houses face the market and exhibit classical fronts from the 18th and early 19th centuries. Apart from this town, the majority of the settlements are villages of varying sizes, or dispersed farmsteads.

The local vernacular is typically coursed flint stone, often in combination with red brick, and clay pantile pitched roofs. Brick and cobbles are also typical withal brick buildings dating from the 18th century onwards. Stucco is a feature in the market towns, and thatch is present in some buildings particularly closer to the Broads.

9) RAF Coltishall

RAF Coltishall was one of the longest commissioned airfields in the UK before it closed in 2006. The former RAF Coltishall base also makes a significant contribution to the built area, although most of the site is well integrated into the existing landscape by trees. The runway area is now in use as a substantial solar farm.

10) A network of rural lanes linking settlements

The network of lanes is a feature of this area, and these are rural in character. There are some main roads including the A149 and the A1151, and the Bittern railway line from Sheringham to Norwich runs through the type.

11) An expansive landscape with long views and church towers as landmark features

Long views to skylines punctuated by belts of trees (including conifers), areas of older deciduous woodland, and isolated trees. Some of these isolated trees are all that remain of the removed hedgerows. Prominent features in the landscape, which can often be seen on the horizon, include church towers. However, there are also views of other structures including the Trimingham dome (in the neighbouring Coastal Plains Type) and modern agricultural buildings.

The Church of St. Andrew, Felmingham

Low Plains Farmland (LPF)

VALUED FEATURES AND QUALITIES

1) **Strong rural character with a sense of remoteness and tranquillity**

   The rural settlement pattern means there are areas of quiet rural farmland and dark skies at night in between the towns and villages.

2) **Historic parklands**

   Historic parks and designed landscapes associated with grand houses are of historical, recreational and biodiversity value.

3) **Woodlands, hedgerows and hedgerow trees**

   Woodland cover (especially ancient woodland), hedgerows and hedgerows trees contribute to the habitat network as well as contributing to visual amenity and providing a wooded horizon in views. Deciduous woodland is a priority habitat.

4) **Remnant semi-natural habitats**

   Remnants of deciduous woodland, semi-improved grassland/pasture (often within and on the edge of small settlements), remnant heathland and mature hedgerow oak trees, provide a sense of variety as well as biodiversity.

5) **Historic market towns and villages with vernacular buildings**

   Historic market towns and villages contribute positively to the sense of history in the landscape. The presence use of local styles and materials and presence of vernacular buildings contributes to sense of place.

6) **Rural lanes**

   Rural lanes contribute to the perception of a rural landscape and provide a sense of history.

7) **RAF Coltishall**

   RAF Coltishall is one of the longest commissioned airfields in the UK and provides a legacy of the RAF, contributing to historic and social significance (it is recognised as a Conservation Area).

8) **Long views punctuated by distinctive skyline features including numerous church towers**

   Views of church towers as landmark features provide visual interest and a sense of history.

Beech trees within Bacton woods, a significant area of woodland within Low Plains Farmland.

Low Plains Farmland (LPF)

FORCES FOR CHANGE / DETRACTORS

1) **Modern agricultural practices and change**

Post World War II intensification of agriculture, including spread of arable, an enlargement of fields and modernisation of farm buildings resulted in changes to ancient field patterns, hedgerows, narrow lanes and verges. More recently there has been increased pressure for farm diversification, such as field-scale solar systems, farm shops, new woodland and tourism/ recreation-related activities including camping and adventure courses, and this is likely to continue.

2) **Uncertainty regarding future agricultural subsidy schemes following the UK's departure from the EU**

Changes to agricultural subsidies will have significant impacts on the landscape and biodiversity. These could be positive or negative.

3) **Conversion of agricultural buildings and scale of new storage structures**

Decline in the usefulness of traditional farm buildings has led to neglect and/or conversion of barns from rural working buildings to residential and leisure uses. Such conversions can introduce 'suburban' features such as surfaced drives/domestic style gates and fences, garden style planting and parking areas/overly large windows and external lighting.

Modern agricultural buildings (e.g. stock sheds, barn or other complexes) often large in scale and of non-traditional materials such as steel, concrete and aluminium cladding, sited in locations away from or prominently within existing farm complexes can be very prominent features in this flat landscape, detracting from the prevailing landscape character.

4) **Edge of town development and settlement expansion**

There is considerable industrial and urban development on the edge of the town areas, which contrasts with the majority of the rural character area. Post war housing development on settlement edges has also undermined the traditional local vernacular.

The increasing wealth in the area is demonstrated by numbers of properties being enlarged / improved and sub-divided all of which have affected the appearance and character of settlements, often in individually modest but cumulatively significant ways (fencing replacing hedged boundaries/the loss of large gardens with mature trees and the resultant massing of buildings).

Continued increases in light pollution associated with new built form and infrastructure development will affect the sense of remoteness, tranquillity and dark skies associated with this landscape.

5) **Demand for isolated new homes**

Demand for isolated new homes can result in buildings that do not reinforce the local vernacular. Lighting and domestic external curtilage can be prominent in otherwise sparsely populated areas and this can affect the area's sense of remoteness and historic, rural character**.**

6) **Changes to the road network**

Development of the road network and road upgrades including associated street lighting, kerbing, drainage and signage is resulting in a reduction in the rural character of the road network and adversely affecting dark skies.

7) **Loss of traditional land uses and habitats**

There has been a decrease in hedgerows and decline in traditional woodland management skills over the years, which is threatening the age and species diversity of semi-natural woodlands and the hedgerow network. Heathland has also been lost resulting in a loss of diversity.

8) **Tree diseases and invasive species**

Ash dieback and other tree diseases may have a significant impact on the composition of

Low Plains Farmland (LPF)

woodland and hedgerow trees within the District and this Type. Invasive species have the potential to have a significant impact on native biodiversity that can result in landscape scale changes.

9) Renewable energy development

The need for renewable energy has and will result in pressure for renewable forms of energy generation including wind turbines, solar panels (including field-scale systems), biofuels, and anaerobic digestion plants associated with farms. Some examples are already present in the landscape e.g. the large-scale solar array on the former runway at RAF Coltishall and to the south west of North Walsham.

10) Climate change

Climate change could result in the need for new crops, changes in farming practices, increased requirement for reservoirs , the introduction of new pests and diseases affecting native species and biodiversity, increased demand for/efficiency of renewable energy types.

New housing at the edge of settlements (Hoveton – top; and North Walsham – bottom)

Low Plains Farmland (LPF)

LANDSCAPE VISION

The vision for this landscape type is a well-managed and actively farmed rural landscape that makes the most of field margins for biodiversity and contains a mosaic of farmland, heathland and woodland to provide a network of semi-natural features. New development is integrated within the existing settlements where it reinforces traditional character and vernacular. The landscape retains a rural character and dark skies at night.

LANDSCAPE GUIDELINES

1) Conserve and expand areas of woodland and other non-arable habitats

Retain and manage areas of woodland and trees, including those that contribute to the setting of the villages and buildings in the landscape. Reinstate and create hedges, grassland, orchards, ponds and watercourses where these have been lost or removed from the landscape. Enlarge areas of pasture, woodland, scrub, heathland and arable margins, with a focus on re-connecting fragmented habitats and improving ecological connectivity for a variety of species including great crested newts, reptiles, bats, birds and insects.

Support landowners and agricultural subsidy schemes that invest in natural capital and ecosystem services. These can include, but are not limited to, creating and restoring ponds and 'ghost' ponds and managing and enhancing the range of habitats associated with bats, barn owls and farmland birds, providing roosting, nesting/resting and feeding opportunities throughout the year (woodland margins, fallow plots, overwintered stubble and insect-rich foraging habitats).

2) Conserve sense of rurality

This open and rural Landscape Type could be sensitive to increases in built development, such as wind turbines, telecom masts, housing and industrial activity.

Ensure the redevelopment of redundant barn complexes both within, on the edge and especially outside settlement boundaries, is sensitively undertaken avoiding use of suburban features such as surfaced drives, domestic style gates and fences, ornamental planting, overly large windows or excessive external lighting. The same should be considered for new standalone houses in the countryside. Impact both by day and night should be a consideration to maintain the rural character and dark skies. Consider opportunities to address adverse light pollution by means of replacement downlighting or complete removal of lighting, taking into account the appropriateness of the latest lighting technologies, e.g. different types of LEDs.

Maintain the rural features that contribute to character, biodiversity and historical continuity, including rural lanes, hedgerows, verges, gateposts and walls – avoid road widening and urbanising features such as kerbs, lighting and excessive signage.

New planting associated with development should not only screen new development but blend with existing features - layers of vegetation may be more appropriate than one thick screen using species local to the area.

3) Conserve the nucleated character of villages

Retain the compact character of development in villages to avoid impinging on the remote, rural character of the surrounding landscape. Avoid linear sprawl. Ensure any new development is well integrated into the landscape and does not form a harsh edge.

Seek to enhance and reinforce those areas of villages which have degraded or unfocused styles / character, such as those with post-war council housing on the outskirts, which is often at odds with the character of the centre of the settlements.

4) Protect and appropriately manage the historic parks

Protect and manage the numerous and extensive parks that are significant features of the landscape.

Low Plains Farmland (LPF)

5) Prepare for climate change and potential loss of features through disease

Manage and enhance the health and structure of woodlands to improve resilience in the face of climate change and new pests and diseases, supporting and re-introducing traditional management practices where appropriate, such as coppicing. Replant ageing or diseased specimens (with climate and disease hardy species if possible) to ensure the future survival of these features.

Integrate any biofuel crops into the landscape by avoiding excessively large 'blocks' of biofuels and using rotations/species which do not appear excessively higher than existing hedgerows (which could be allowed to grow in height).

6) Retain the character of the skyline

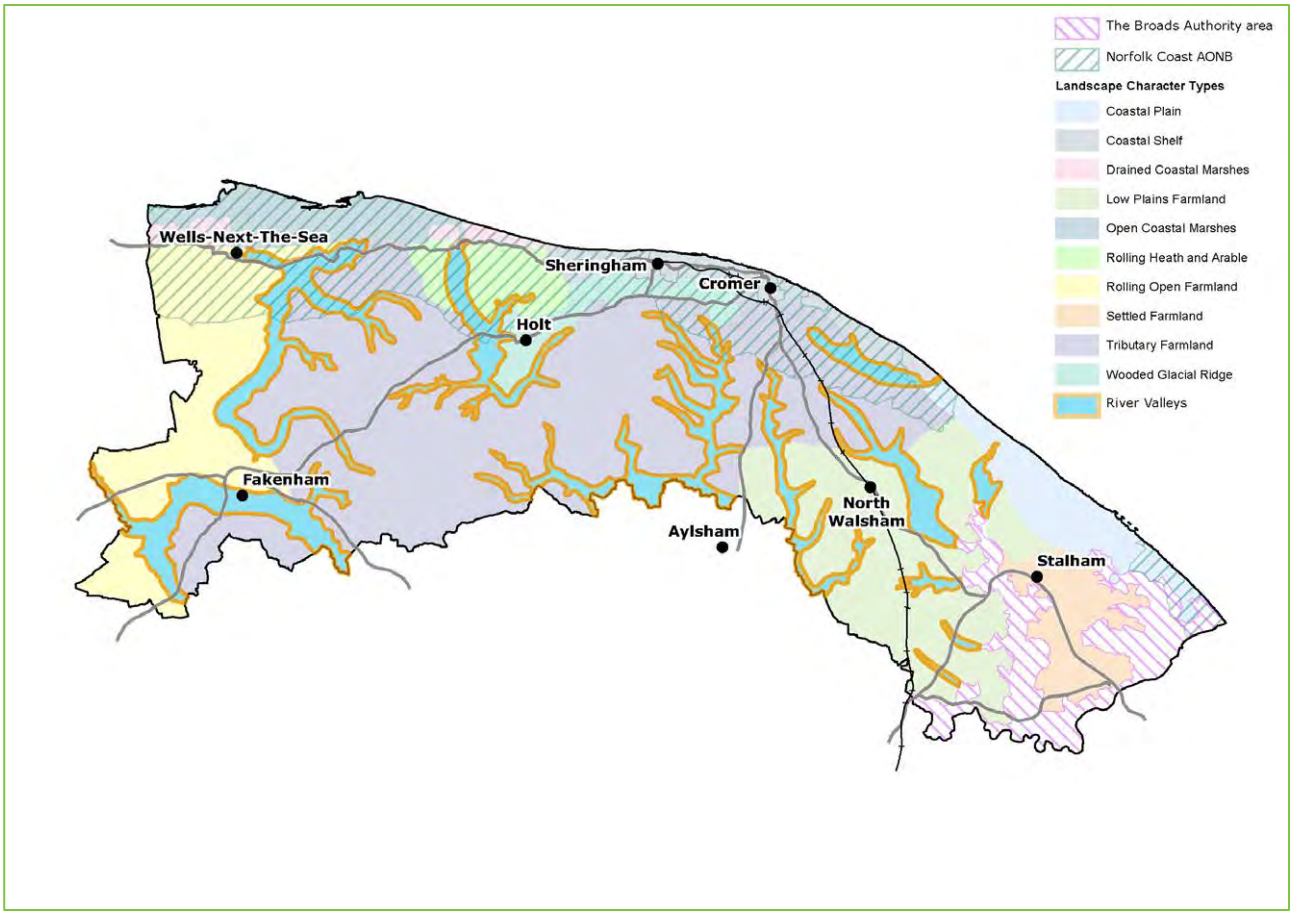
Maintain a treed skyline on which church towers are features. Ensure new development does not compete with the church towers for prominence so they remain key landmark features.

7) Enhance public rights of way

Aim to improve access by linking existing public rights of way, e.g. Weaver's Way and Paston Way Recreational Routes through North Walsham, with neighbouring villages, to provide improved non-car routes and enhance opportunities for enjoying and understanding the landscape.

A field margin / cover crop of *Phacelia*, which is excellent for pollinators, on the edge of Worstead.

River Valleys (RV)



River Valleys (RV)

SUMMARY

Parts of three river systems, the Wensum, the Bure and the Ant, feed south and eastward through the District into the Broads. The river Wensum is one of the finest examples of a lowland chalk river in the country. Two principal rivers, the Stiffkey and the Glaven, are also rare chalk rivers, flowing northwards over the chalk bedrock to the sea, encompassing parts of the Norfolk Coast AONB, and to a lesser extent, the North Norfolk Heritage Coast. The valley floors provide a strong contrast to the typically open, large-scale arable landscapes through which they pass, being characterised by a pastoral land use, a high level of tree cover and a linear settlement pattern, with significant local variations in land cover and, consequently, in views. On valley sides there is typically a continuation of arable farming from the adjacent areas, but landform nonetheless gives a more contained character on which the valley floors have a strong visual influence. The tributary valleys are more intimate and enclosed with extensive woodland cover and hedgerows bordering narrow lanes and settlement confined to valley floors.

River valleys cut through most of the District's landscapes but they most notably interact with the Tributary Farmland (TF) and Low Plains Farmland (LPF) landscape types. The boundaries of the valleys are difficult to accurately demarcate on a map as there is a gradual transition between the valley sides and surrounding wider landscapes, therefore the boundaries of the valleys should be treated as representing a transition.

Component Areas

There are six geographically distinct River Valleys in North Norfolk:

RV1 – River Wensum and tributaries

RV2 – River Bure and tributaries

RV3 – River Ant and tributaries

RV4 – River Stiffkey and tributaries

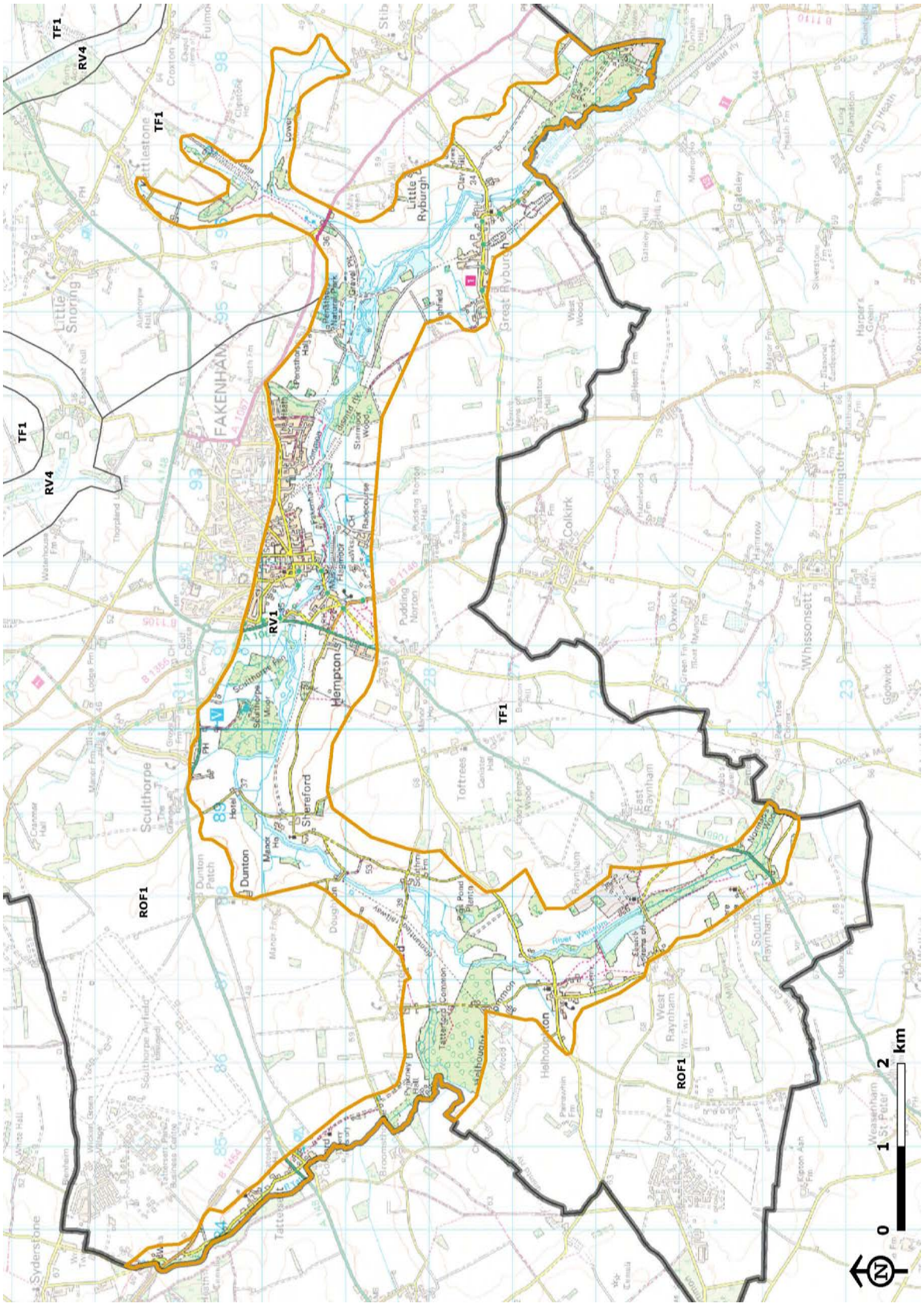
RV5 – River Glaven and tributaries

RV6 – Mundesley Beck

Bayfield Park straddles the Glaven Valley and includes parkland trees within scenic expanses of pasture.

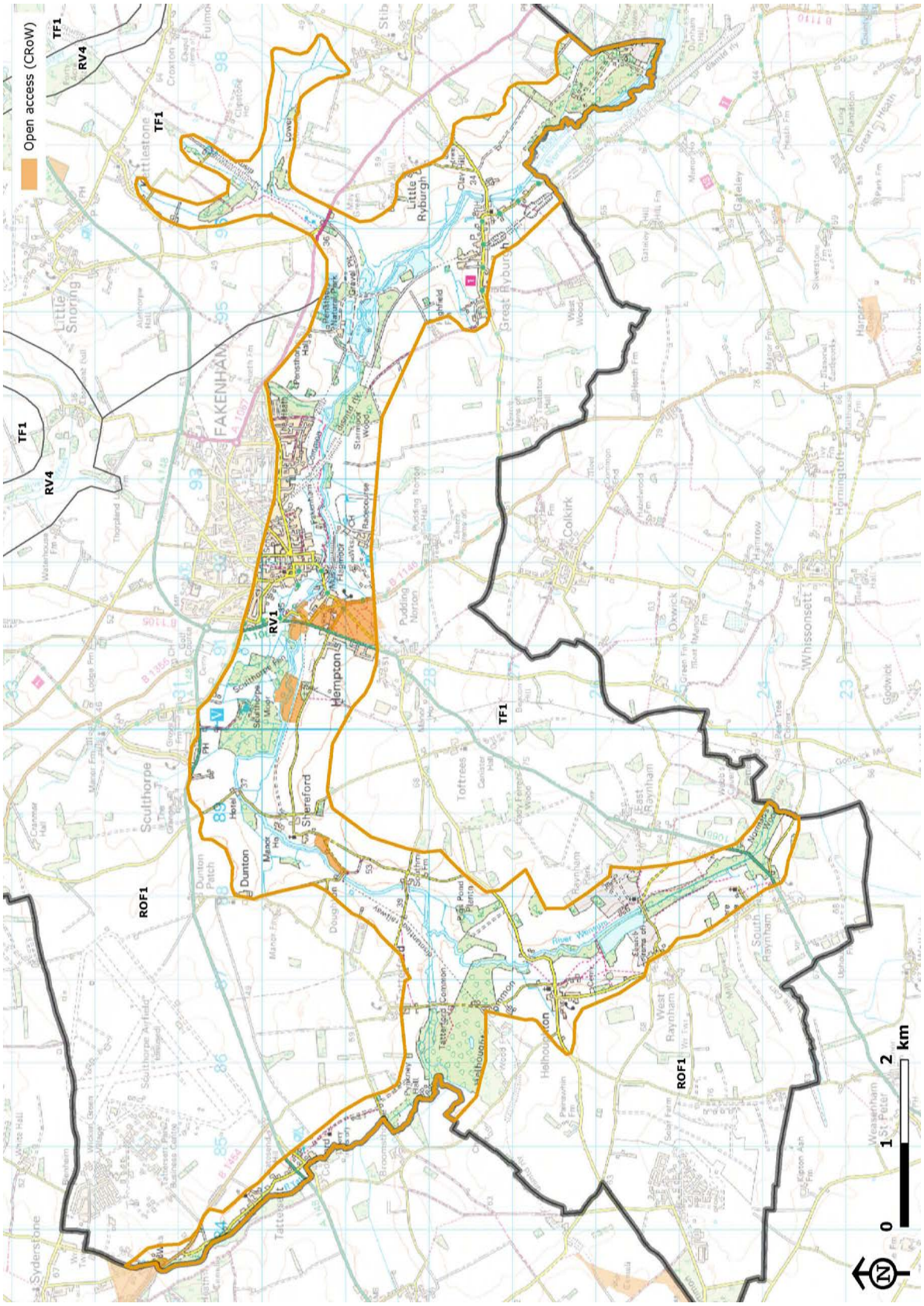
River Valleys (RV)

Location of RV1 – River Wensum and Tributaries



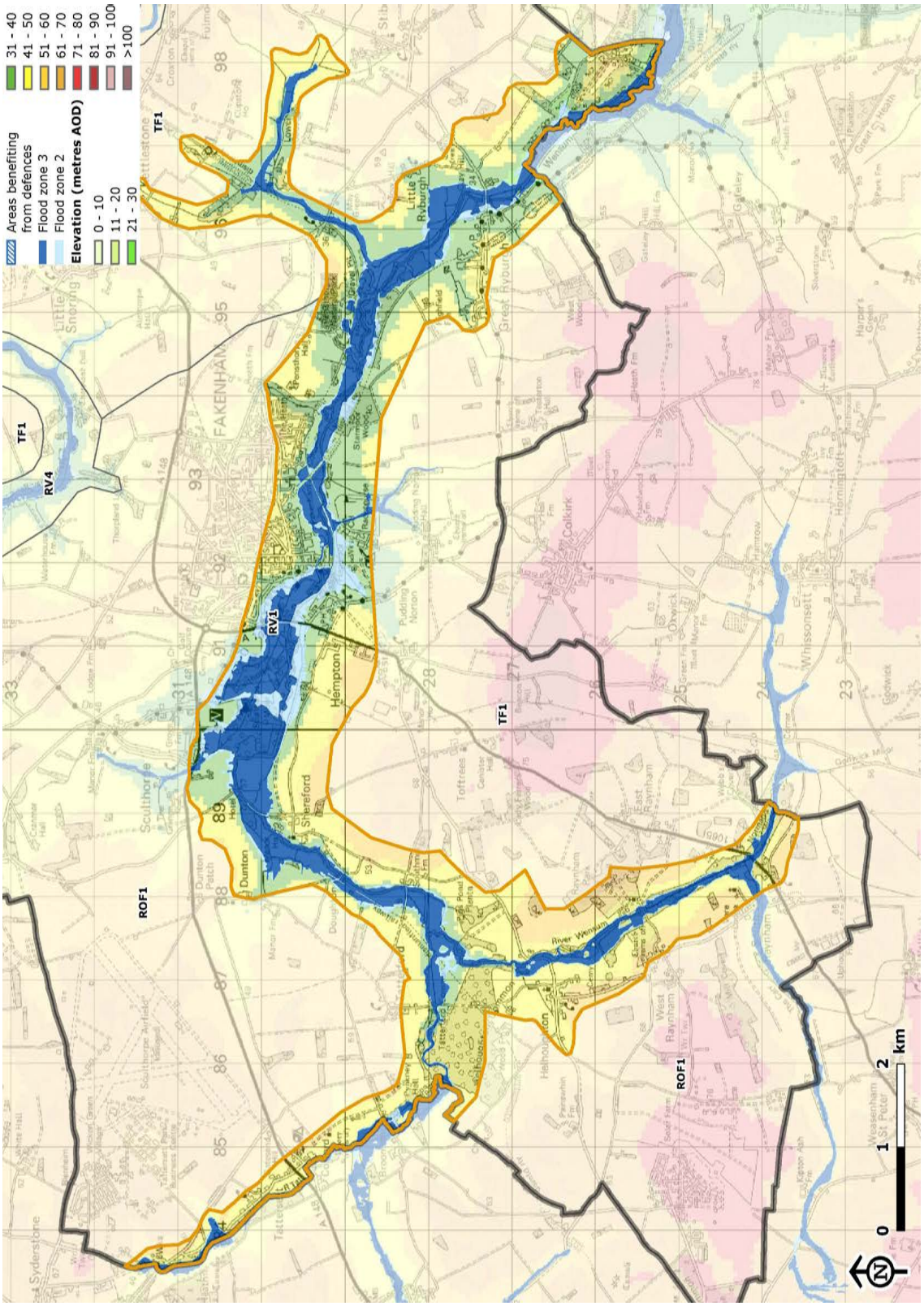
River Valleys (RV)

Landscape designations and policy area RV1 – River Wensum and Tributaries



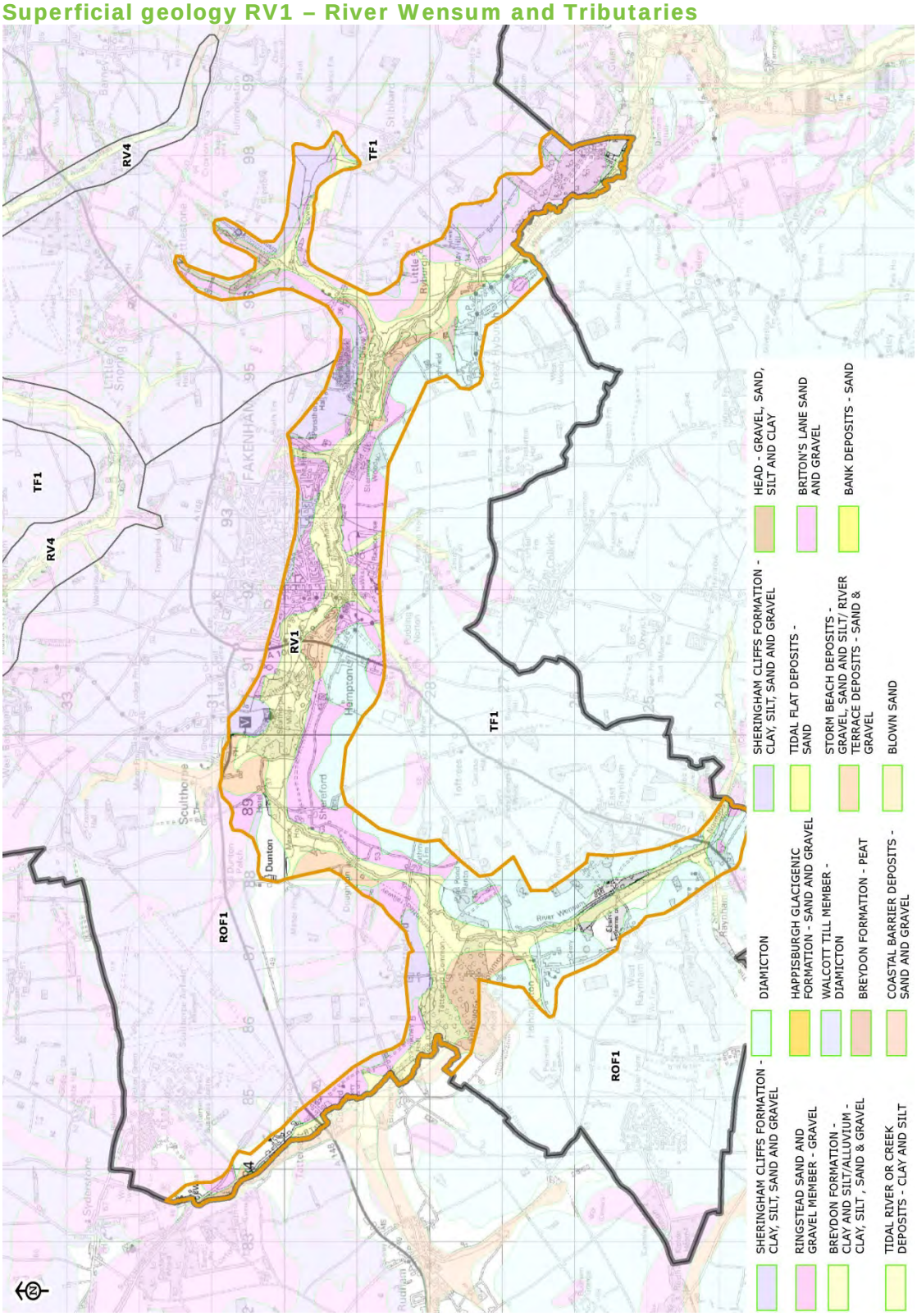
River Valleys (RV)

Topography and hydrology RV1 – River Wensum and Tributaries



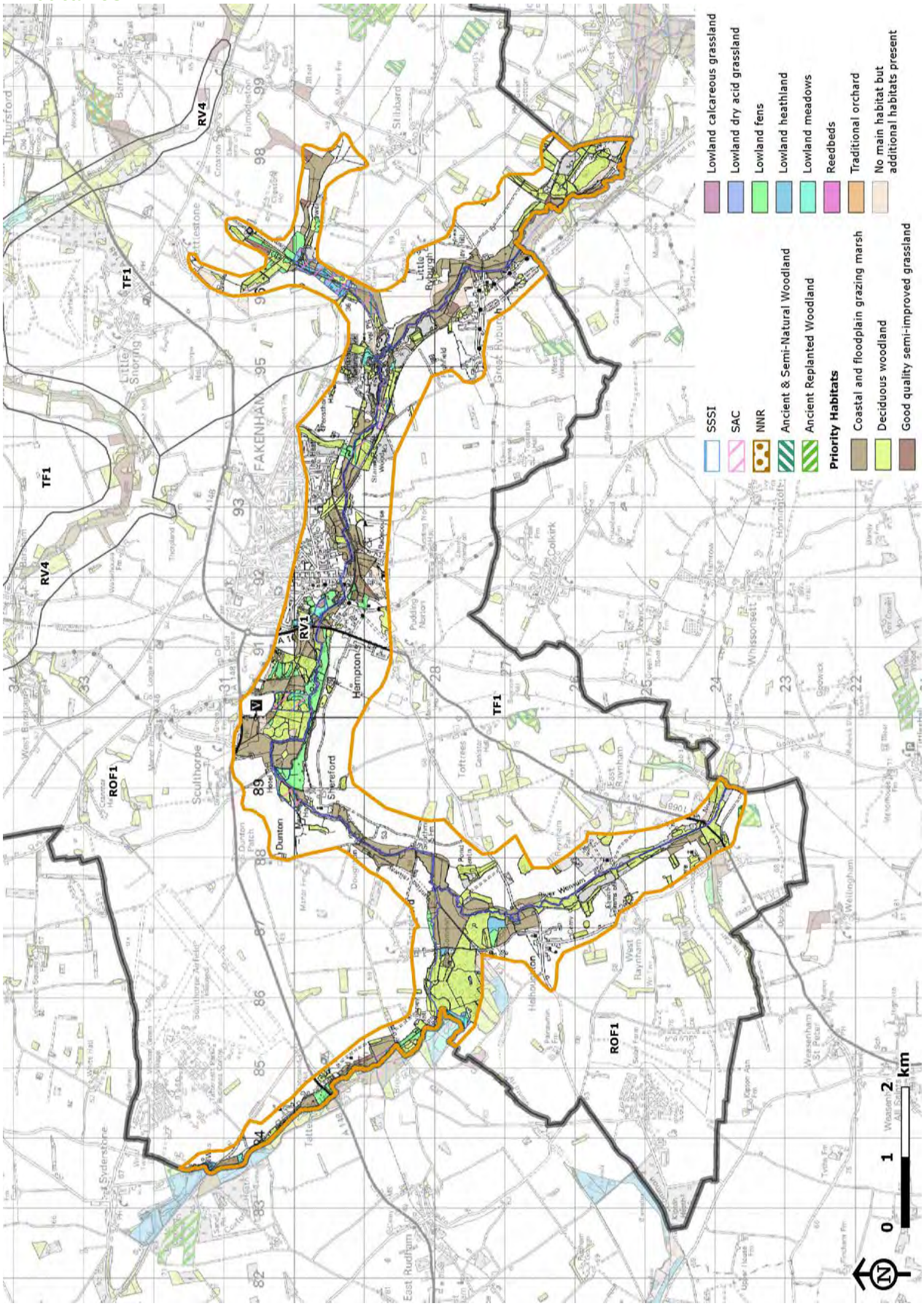
River Valleys (RV)

Superficial geology RV1 – River Wensum and Tributaries



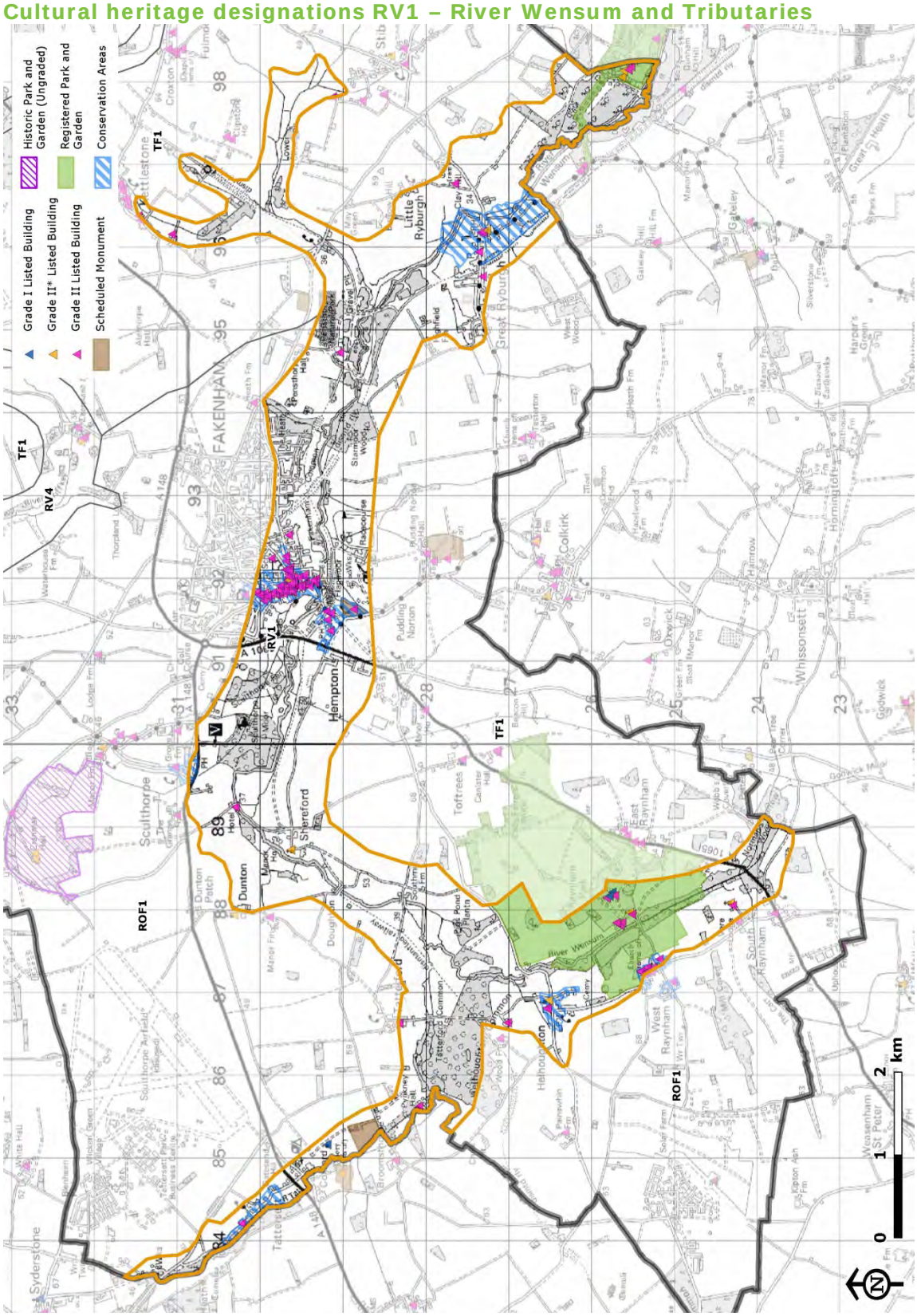
River Valleys (RV)

Nature conservation designations and priority habitats RV1– River Wensum and Tributaries



River Valleys (RV)

Cultural heritage designations RV1 – River Wensum and Tributaries

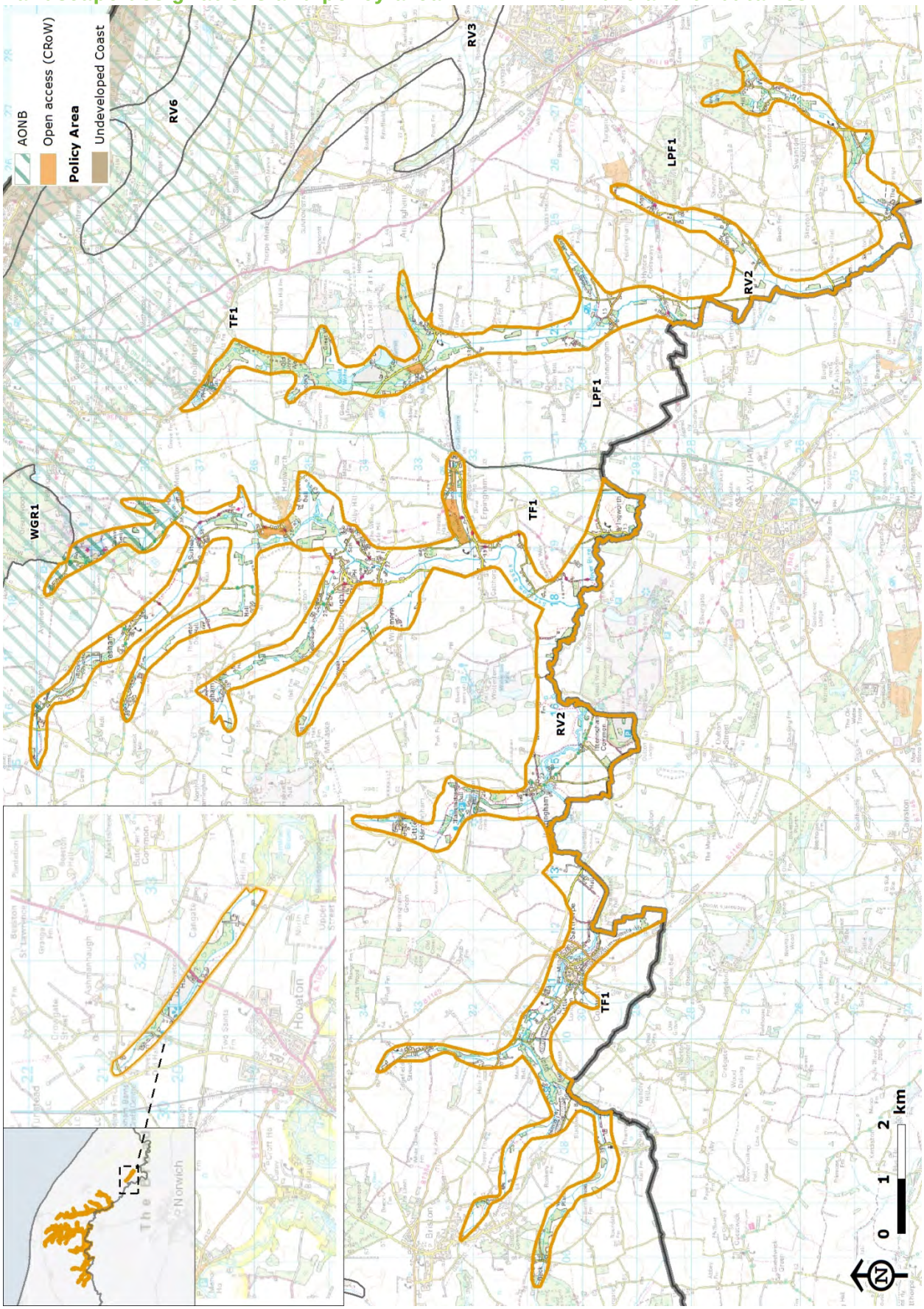


River Valleys (RV)

Location of RV2 – River Bure and tributaries

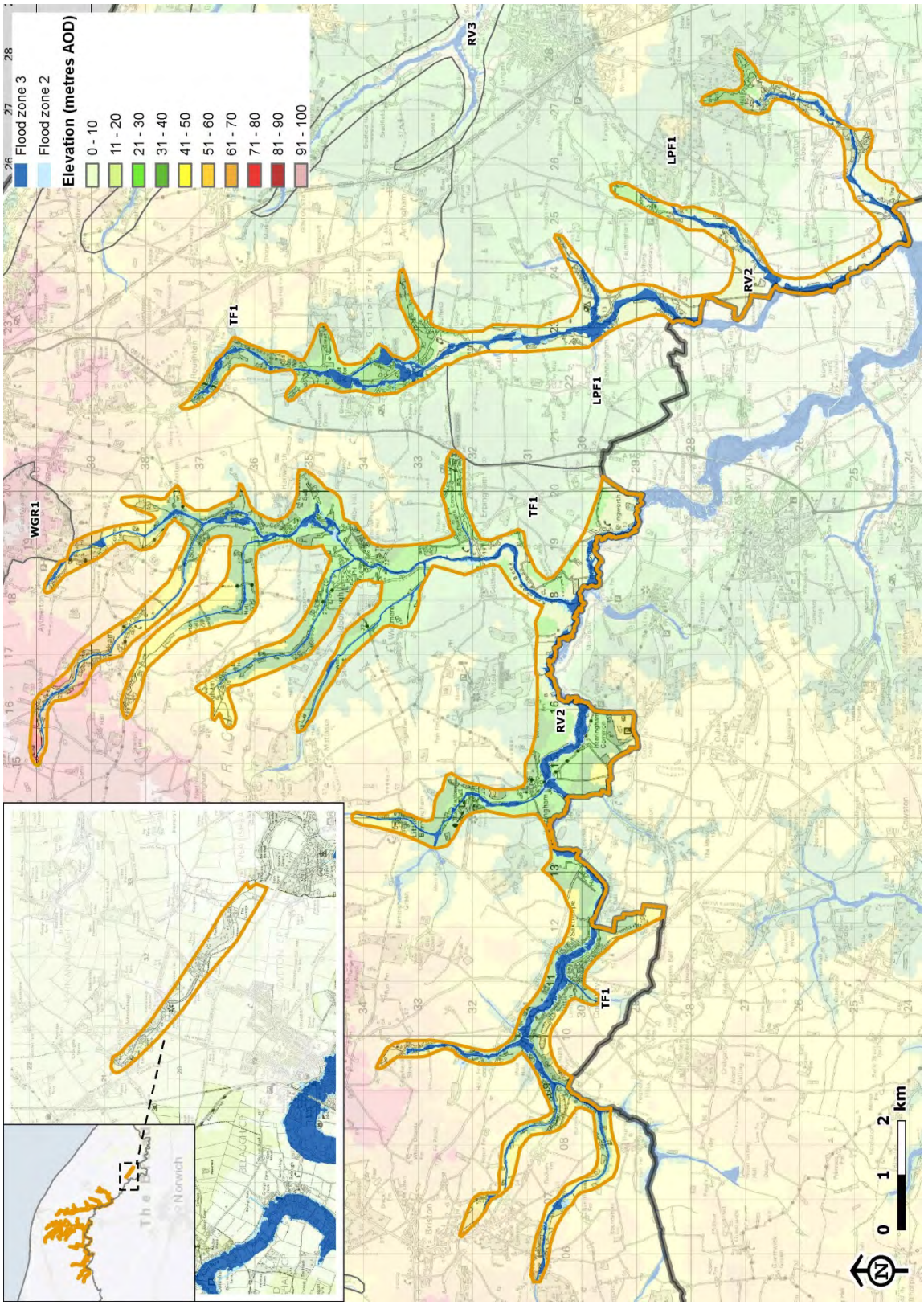
River Valleys (RV)

Landscape designations and policy area RV2 – River Bure and tributaries



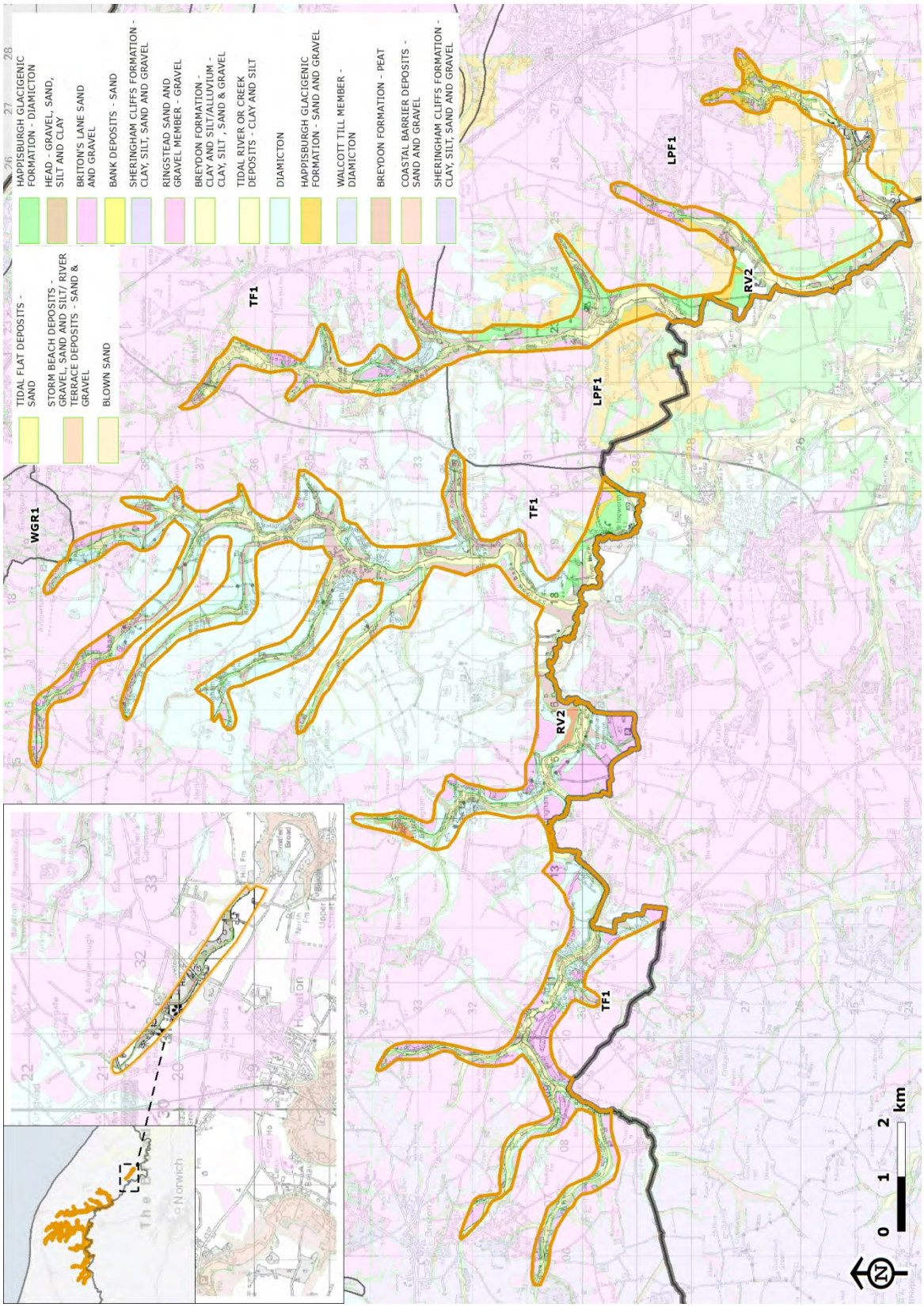
River Valleys (RV)

Topography and hydrology RV2 – River Bure and tributaries



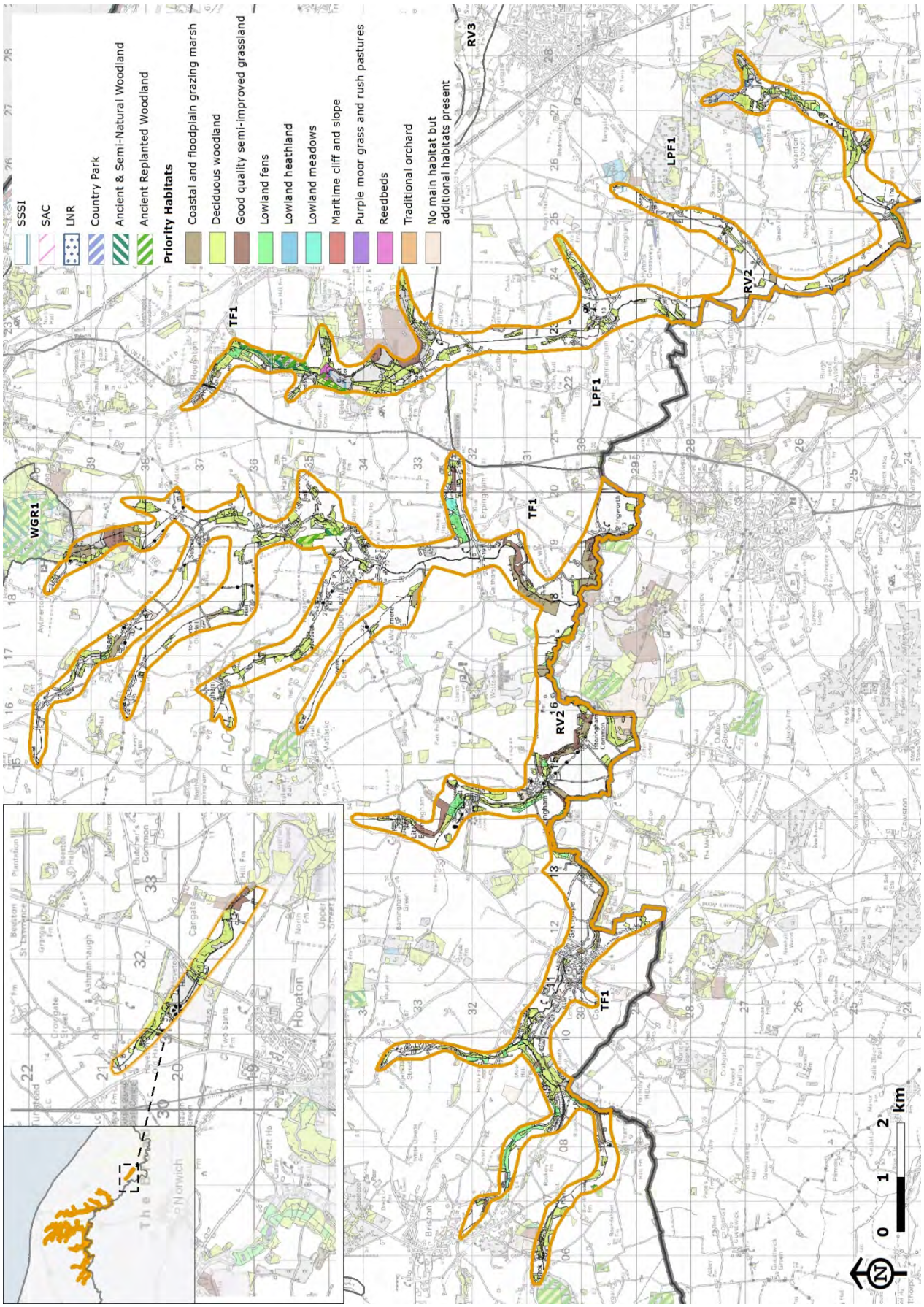
River Valleys (RV)

Superficial geology RV2 – River Bure and tributaries



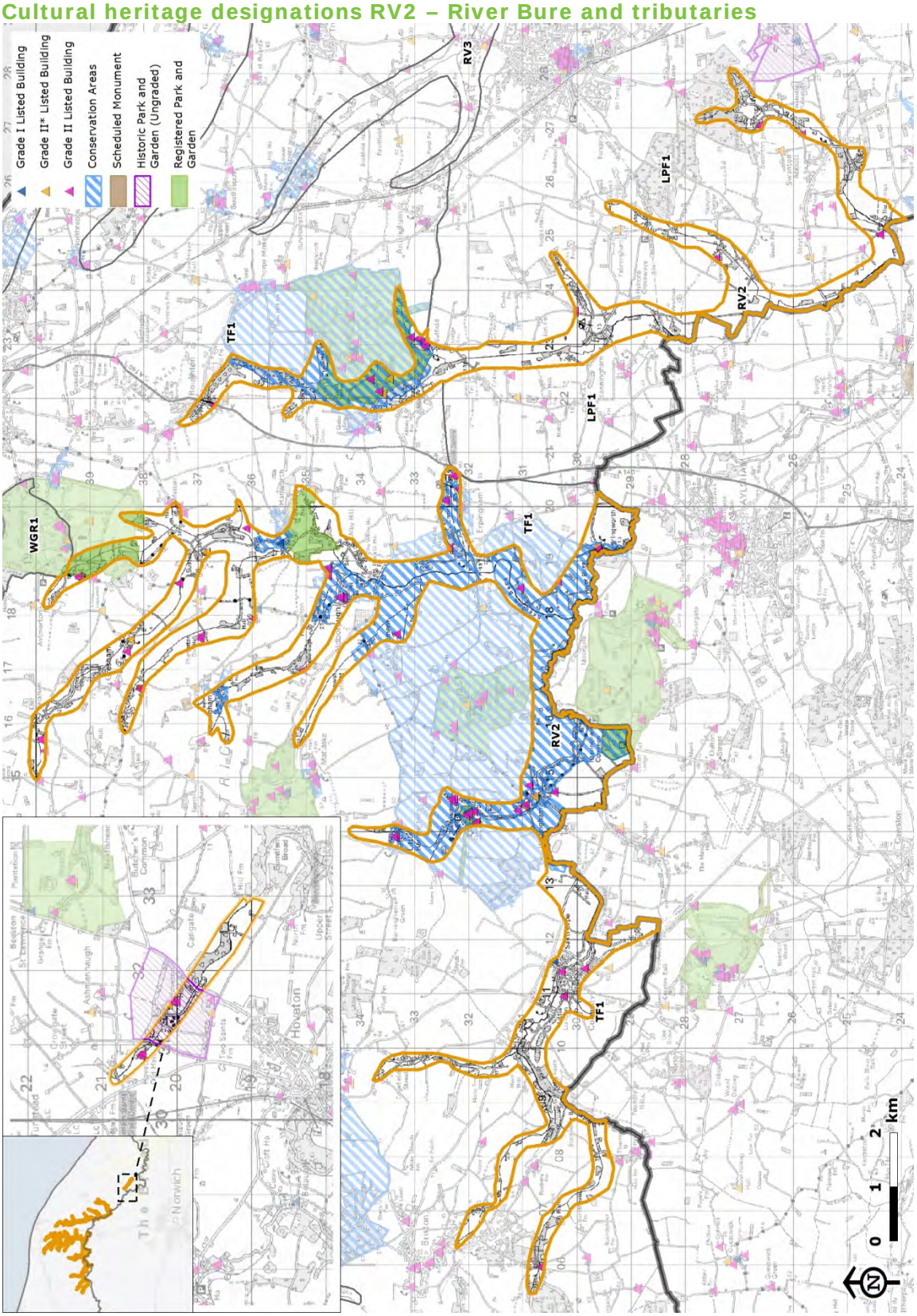
River Valleys (RV)

Nature conservation designations and priority habitats RV2 – River Bure and tributaries



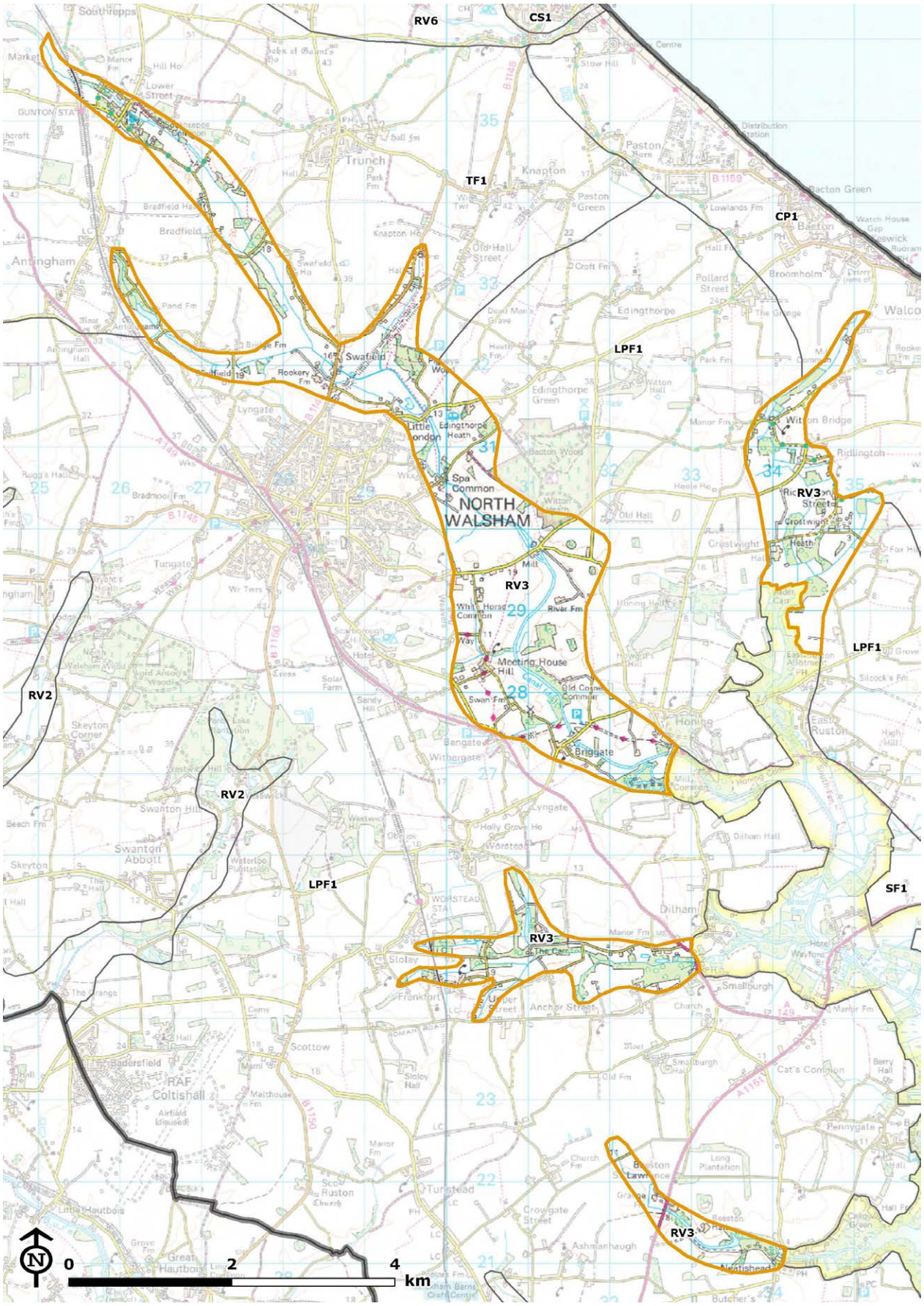
River Valleys (RV)

Cultural heritage designations RV2 – River Bure and tributaries



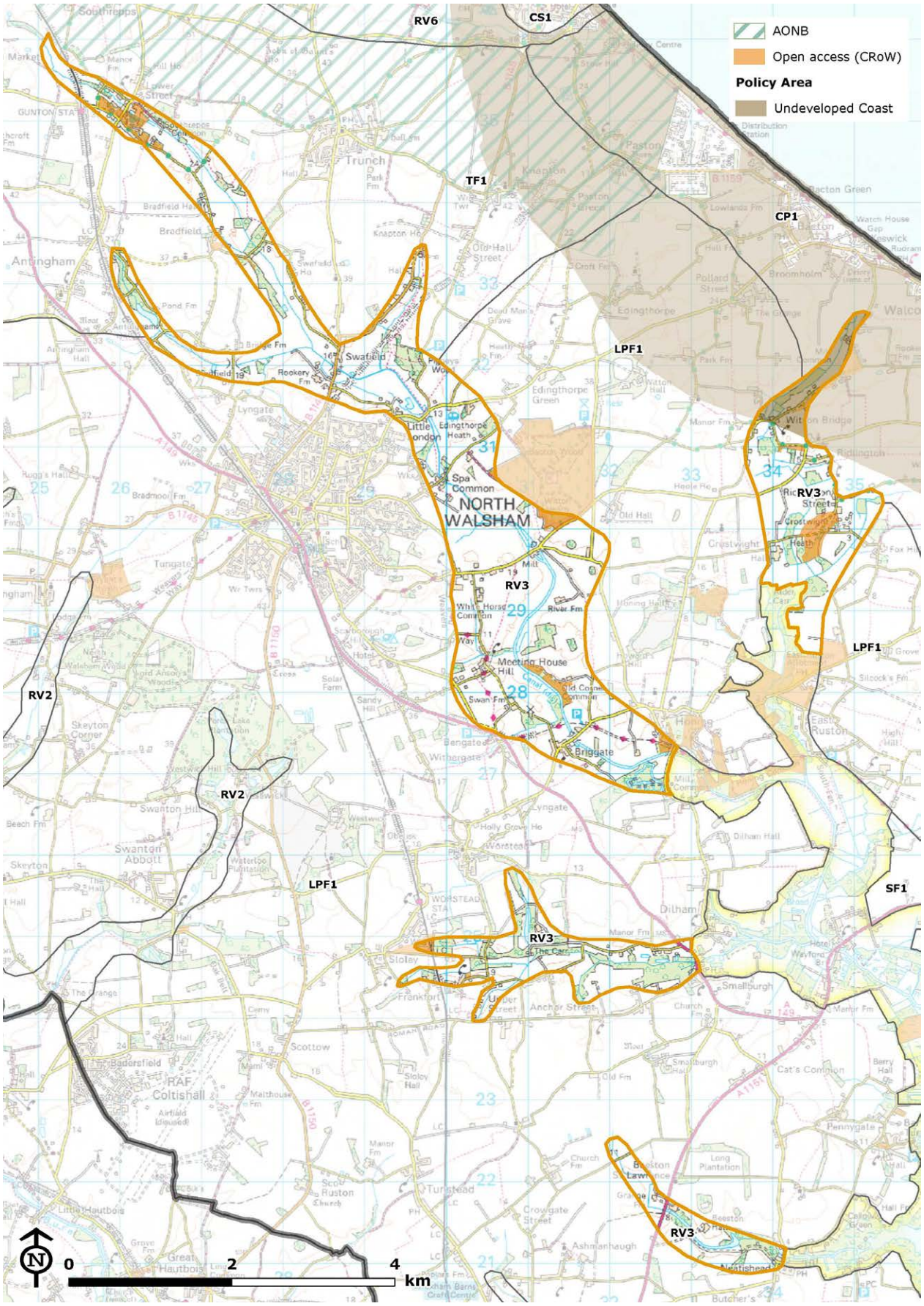
River Valleys (RV)

Location of RV3 – River Ant and tributaries



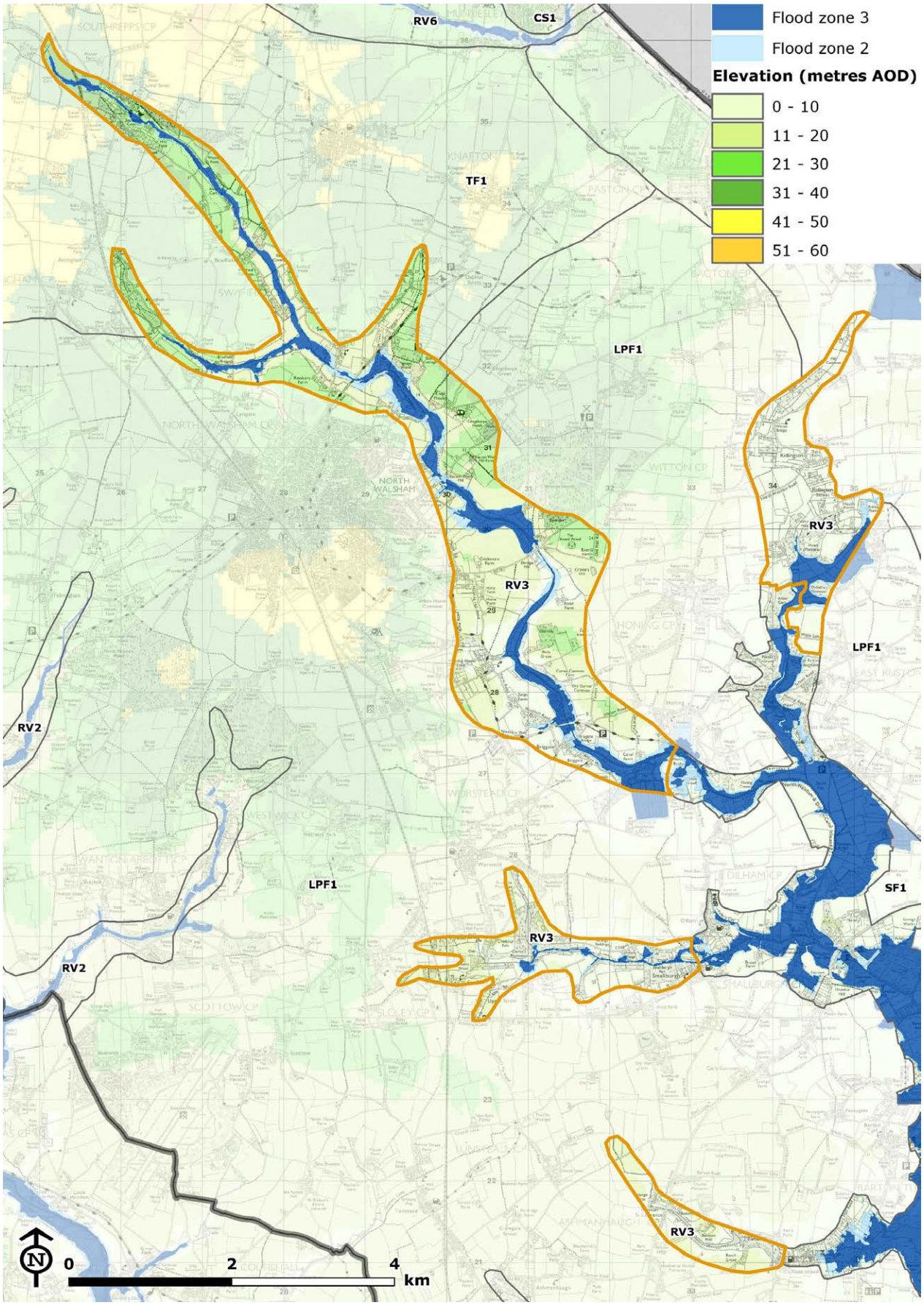
River Valleys (RV)

Landscape designations and policy area RV3 – River Ant and tributaries



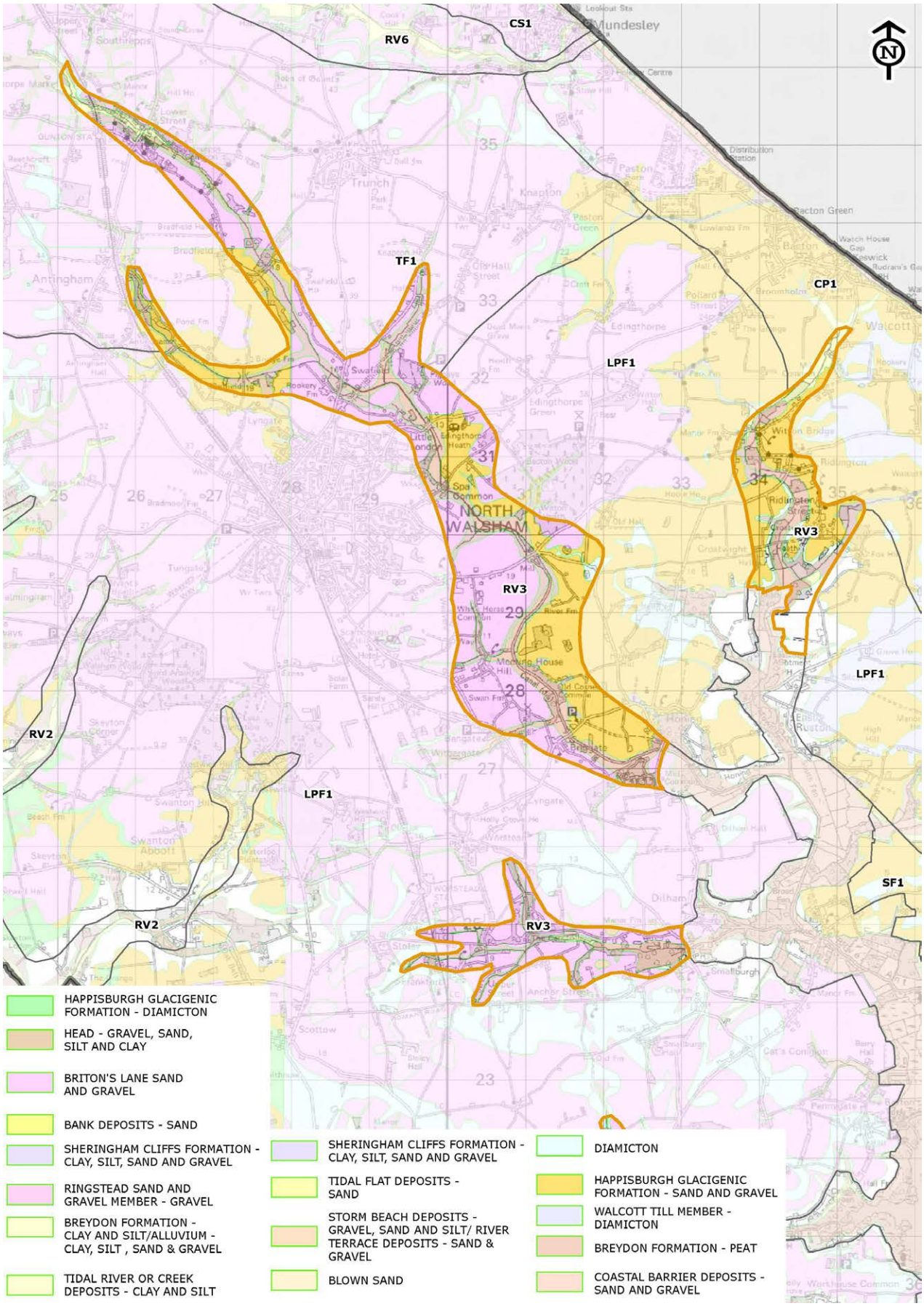
River Valleys (RV)

Topography and hydrology RV3 – River Ant and tributaries



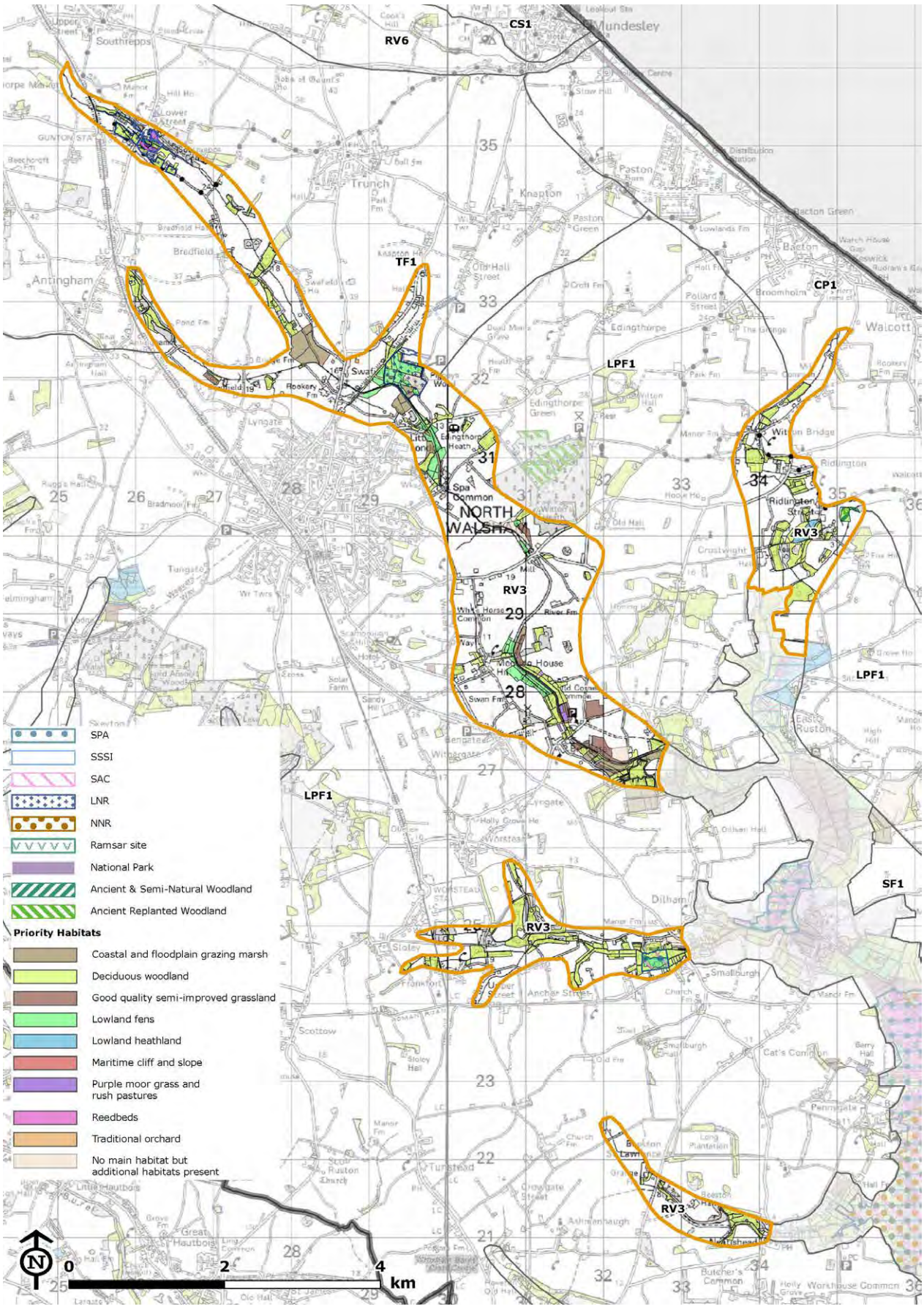
River Valleys (RV)

Superficial geology RV3 – River Ant and tributaries



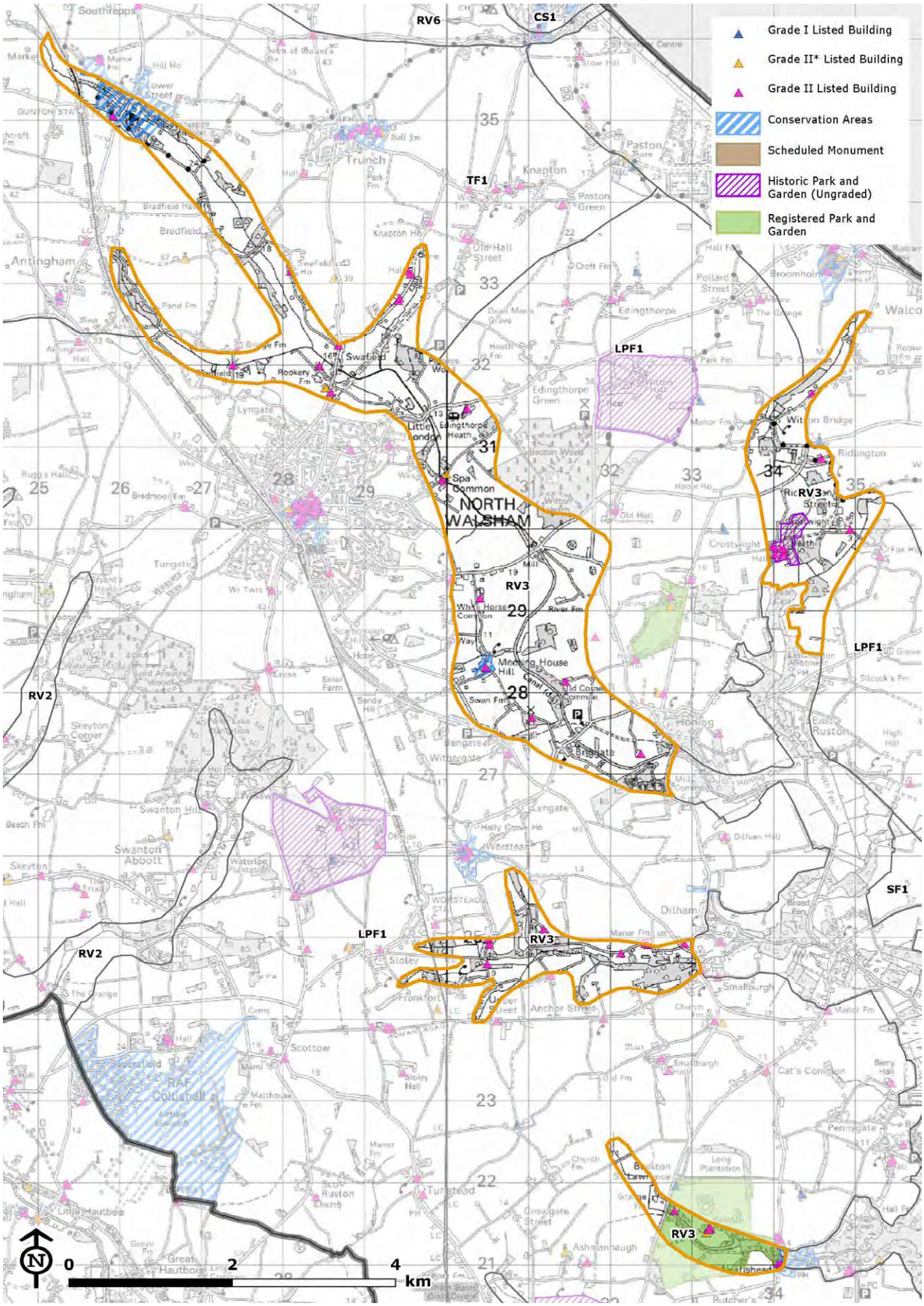
River Valleys (RV)

Nature conservation designations and priority habitats RV3 – River Ant and tributaries



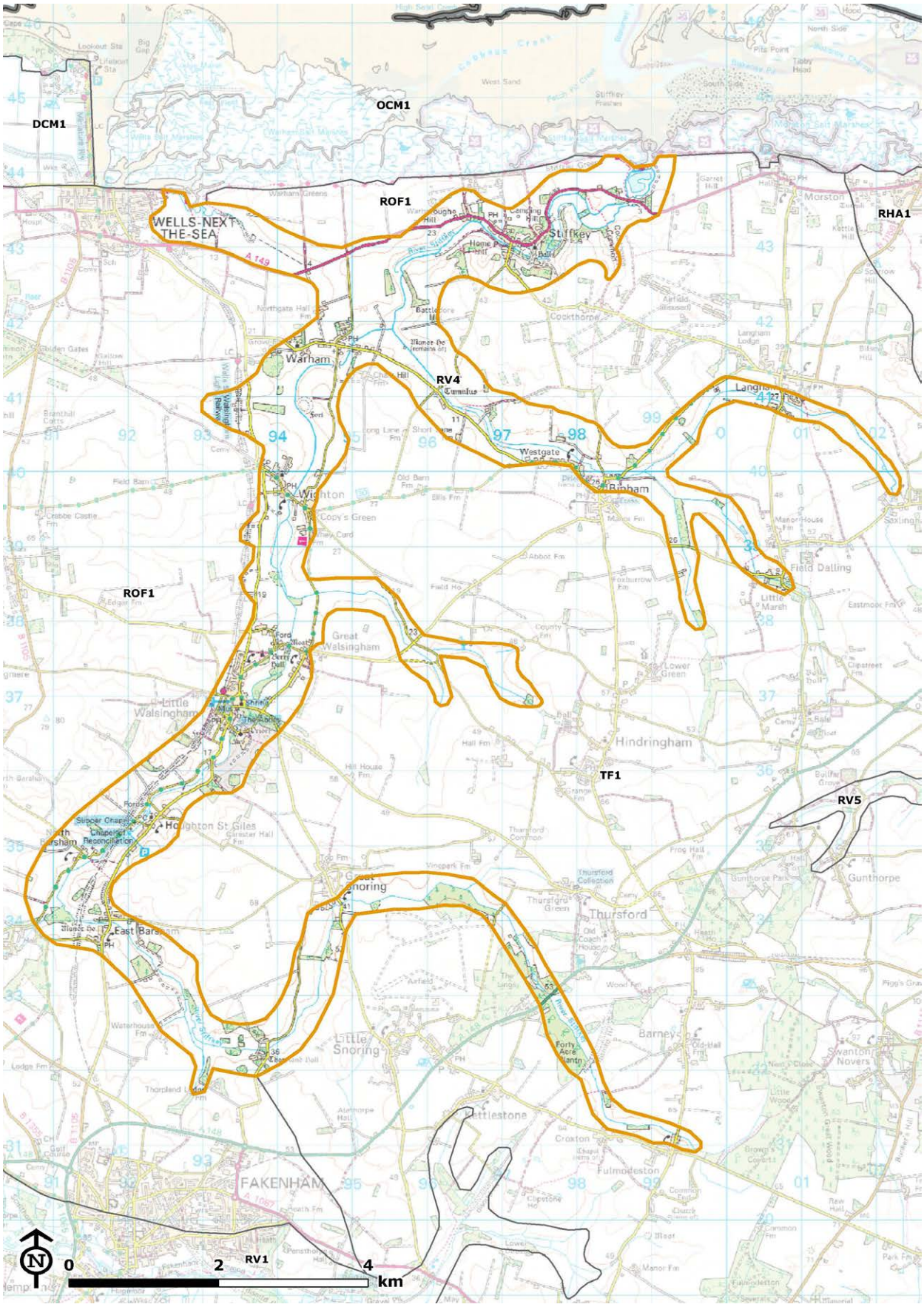
River Valleys (RV)

Cultural heritage designations RV3 – River Ant and tributaries



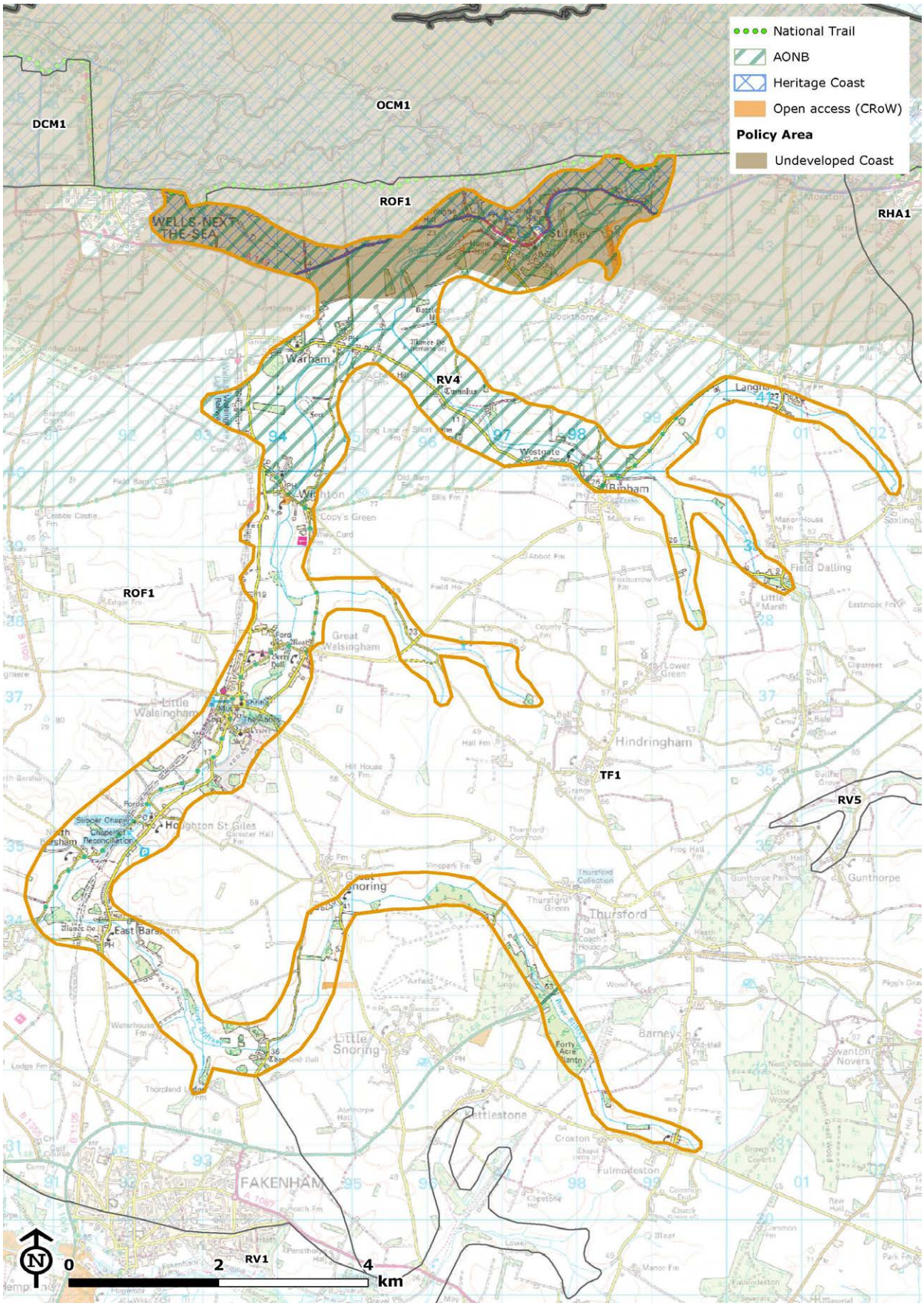
River Valleys (RV)

Location of RV4 – River Stiffkey and tributaries



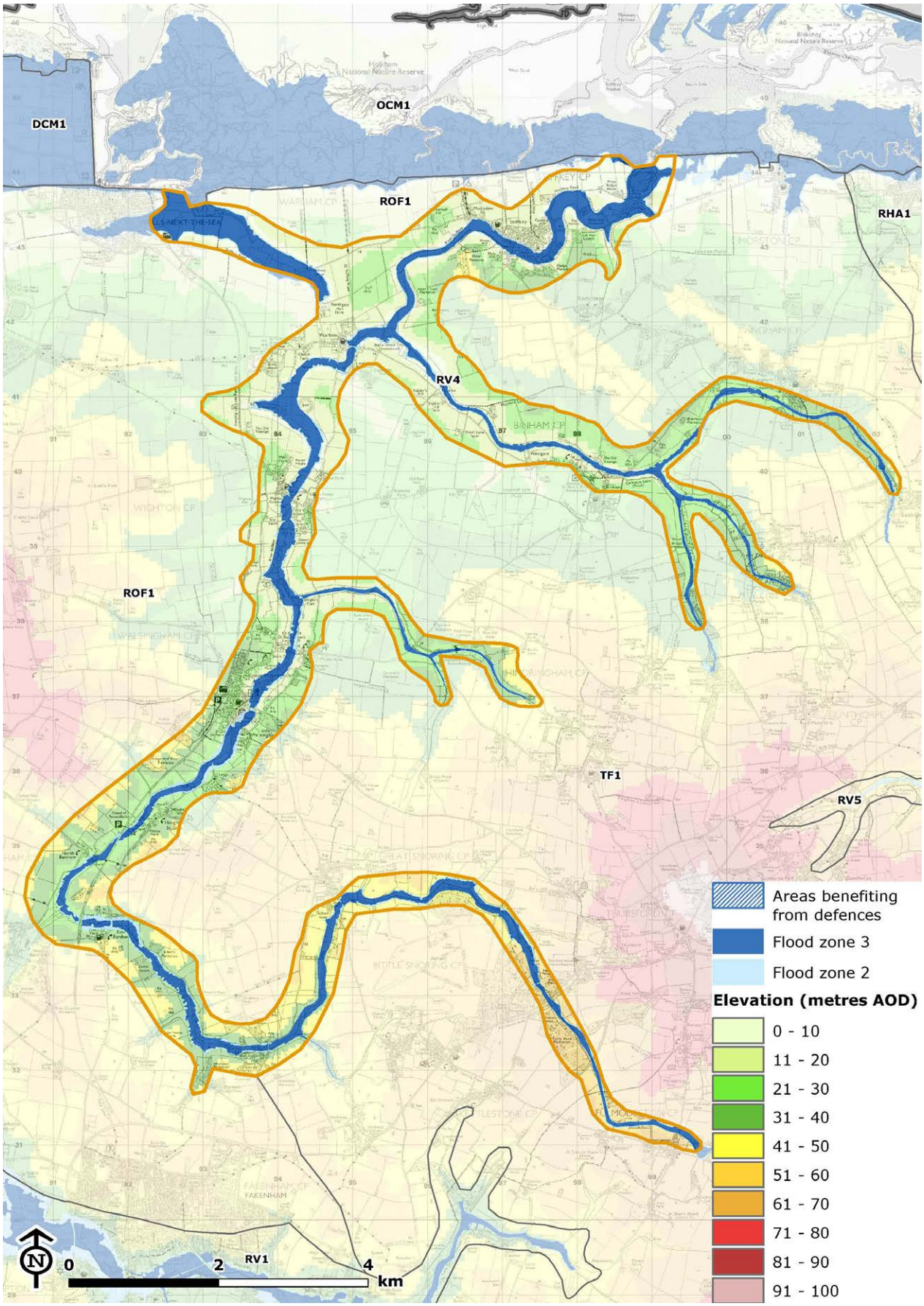
River Valleys (RV)

Landscape designations and policy area RV4 – River Stiffkey and tributaries



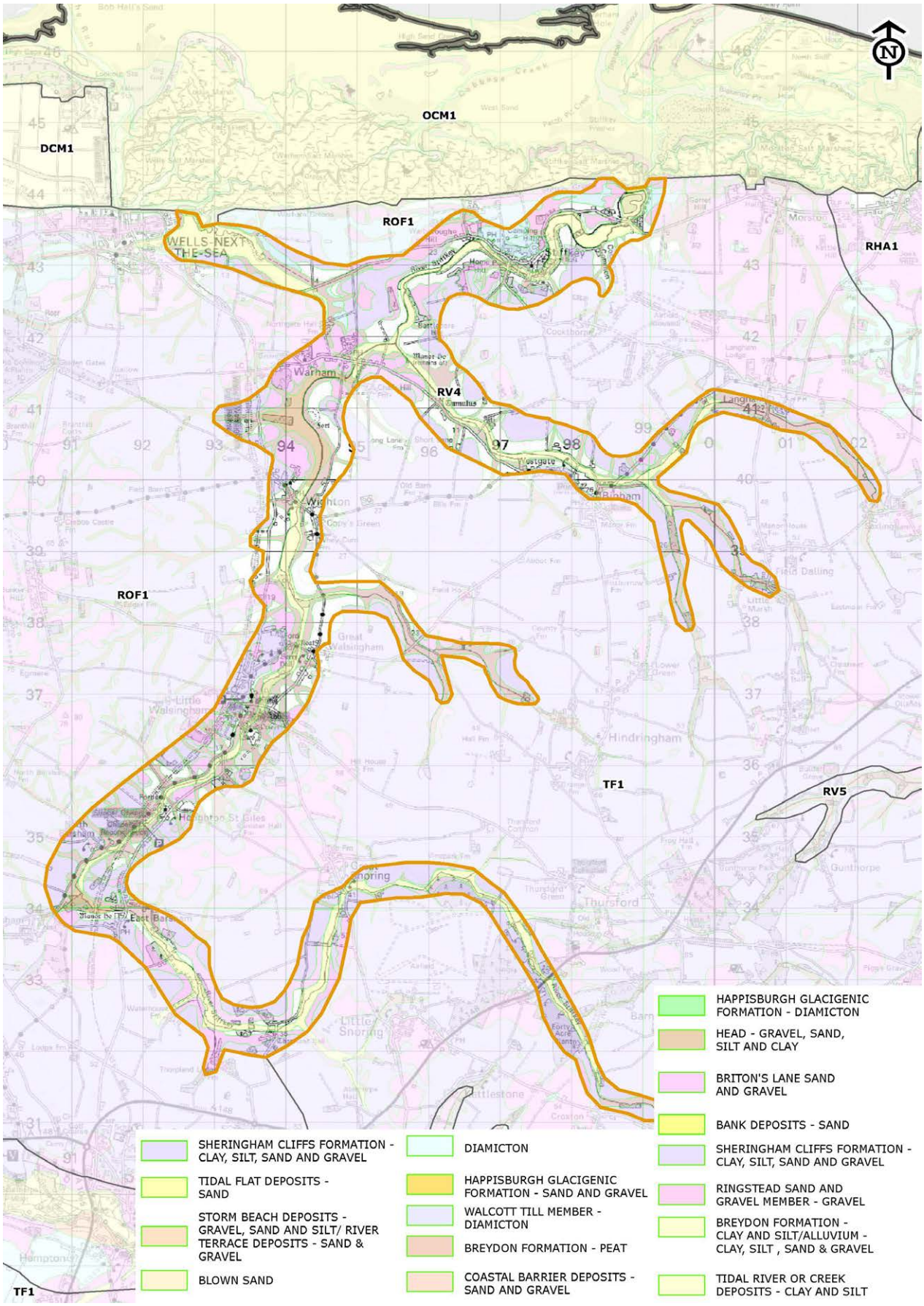
River Valleys (RV)

Topography and hydrology RV4 – River Stiffkey and tributaries



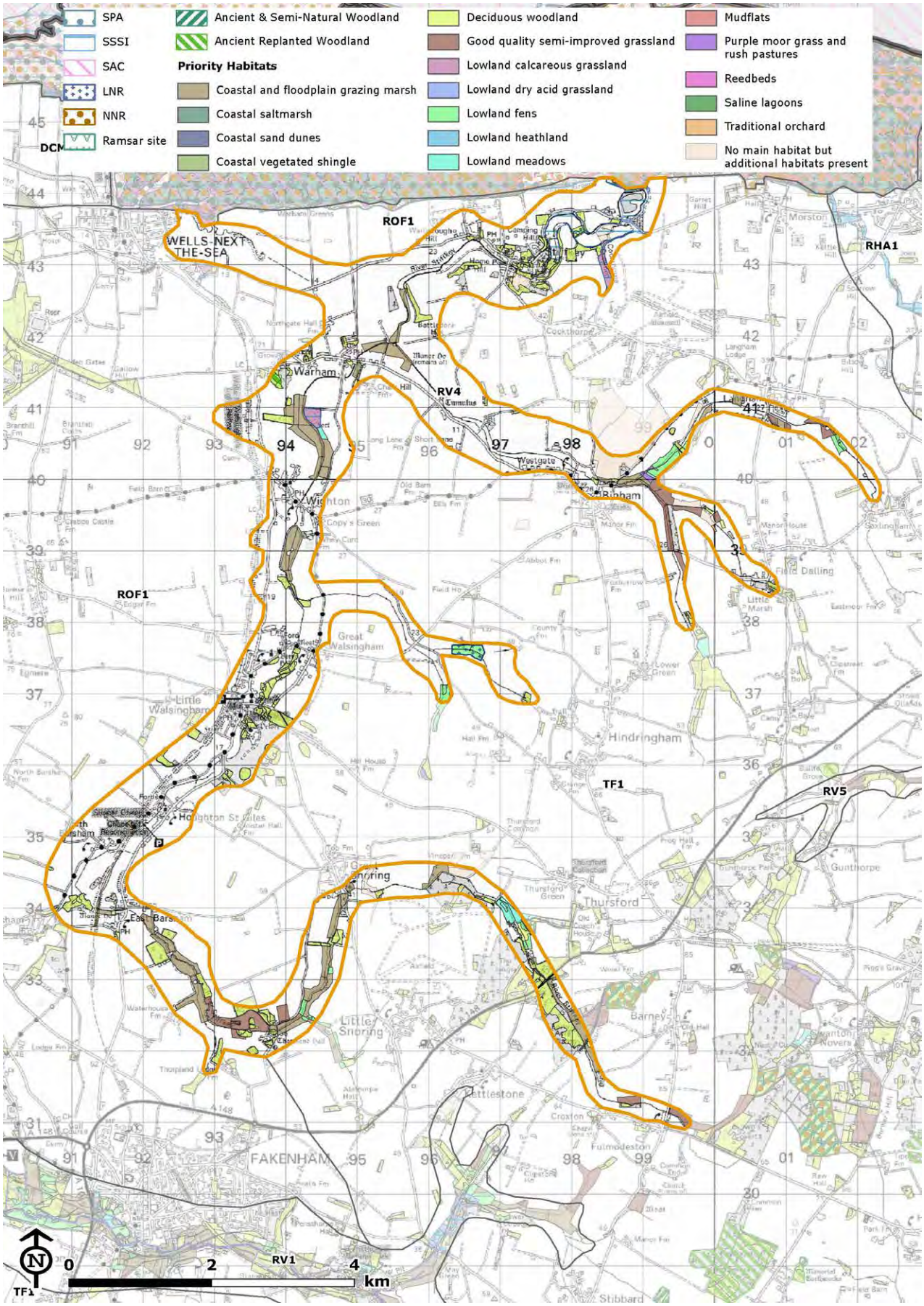
River Valleys (RV)

Superficial geology RV4 – River Stiffkey and tributaries



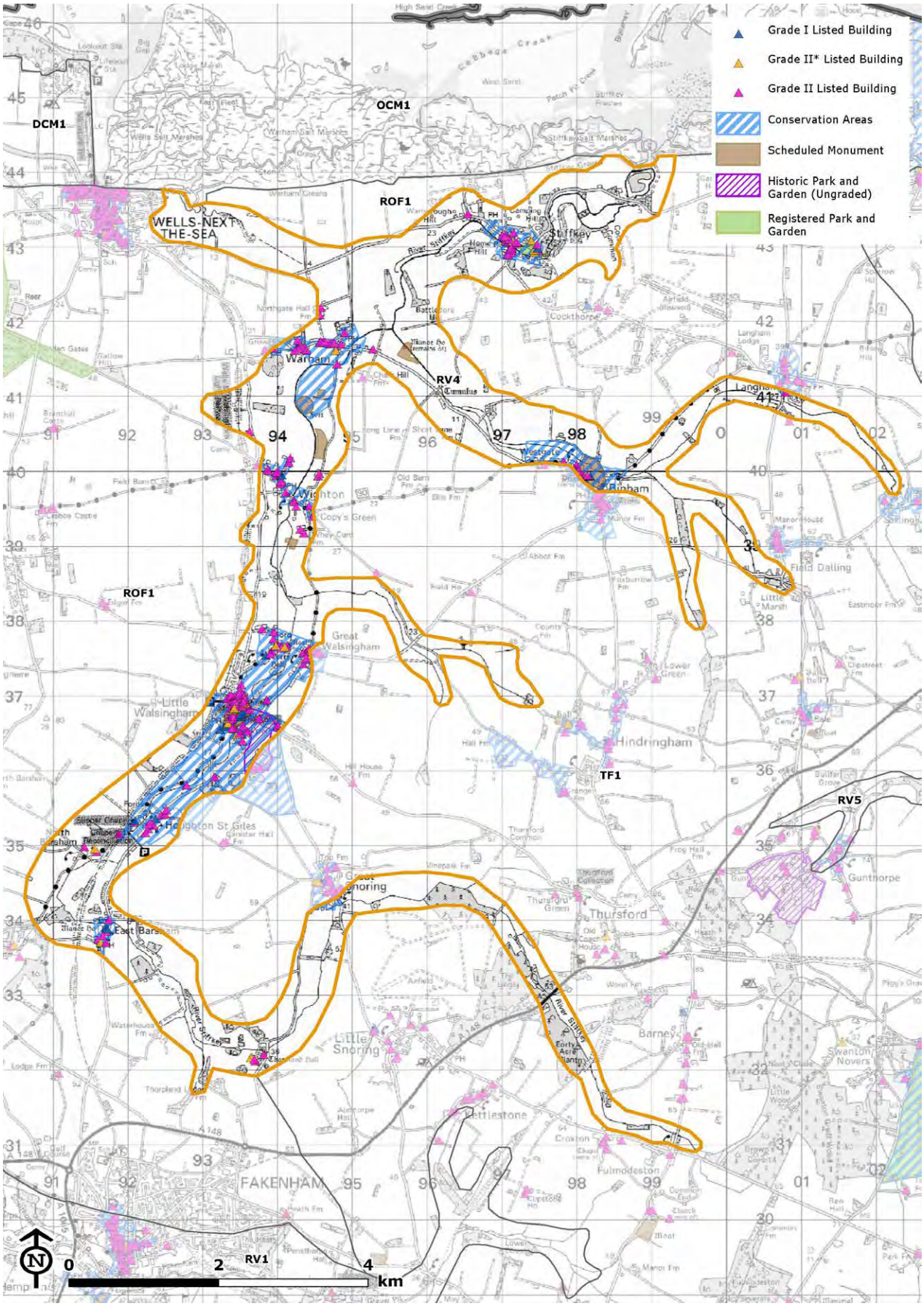
River Valleys (RV)

Nature conservation designations and priority habitats RV4 – River Stiffkey and tributaries



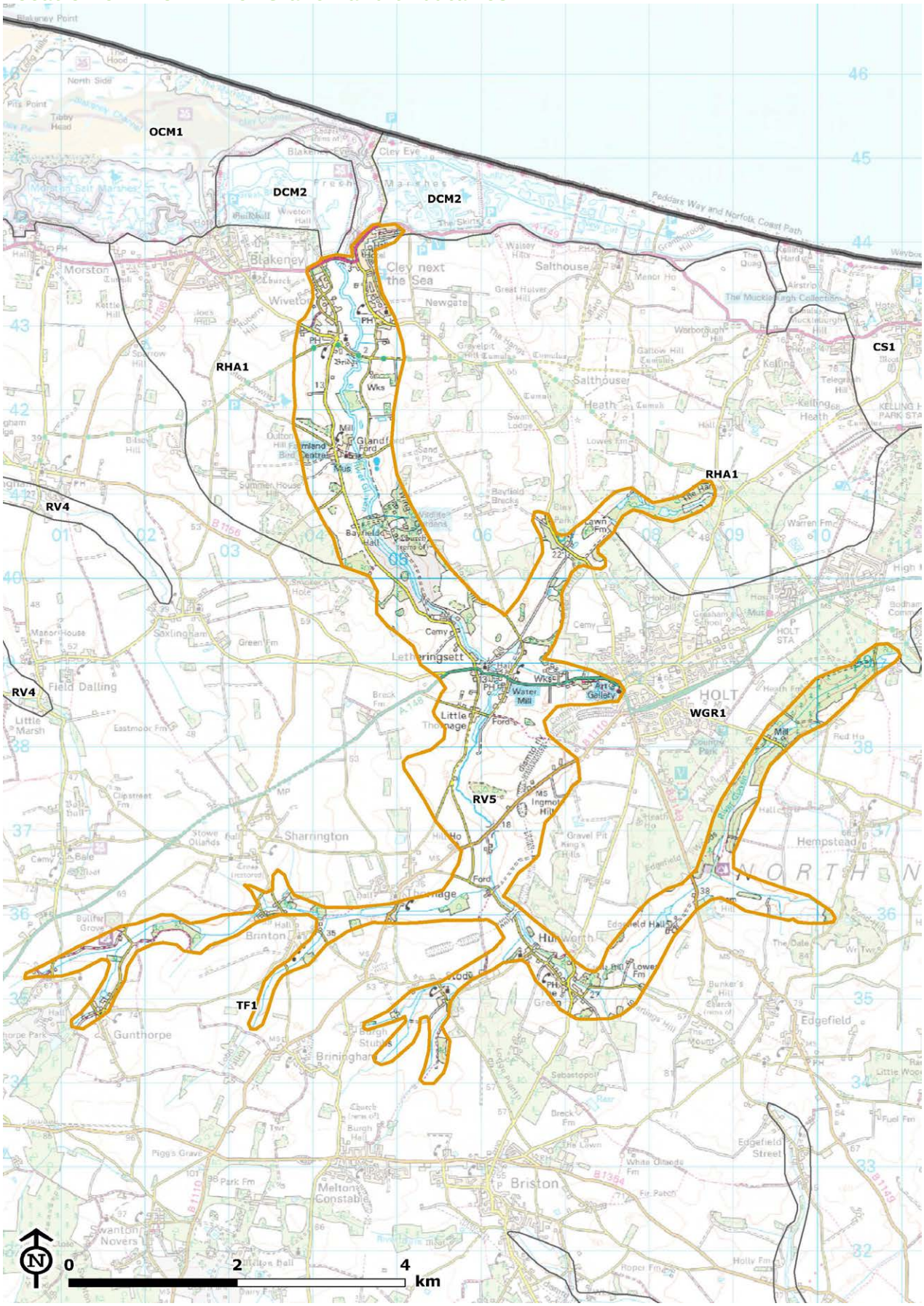
River Valleys (RV)

Cultural heritage designations RV4 – River Stiffkey and tributaries



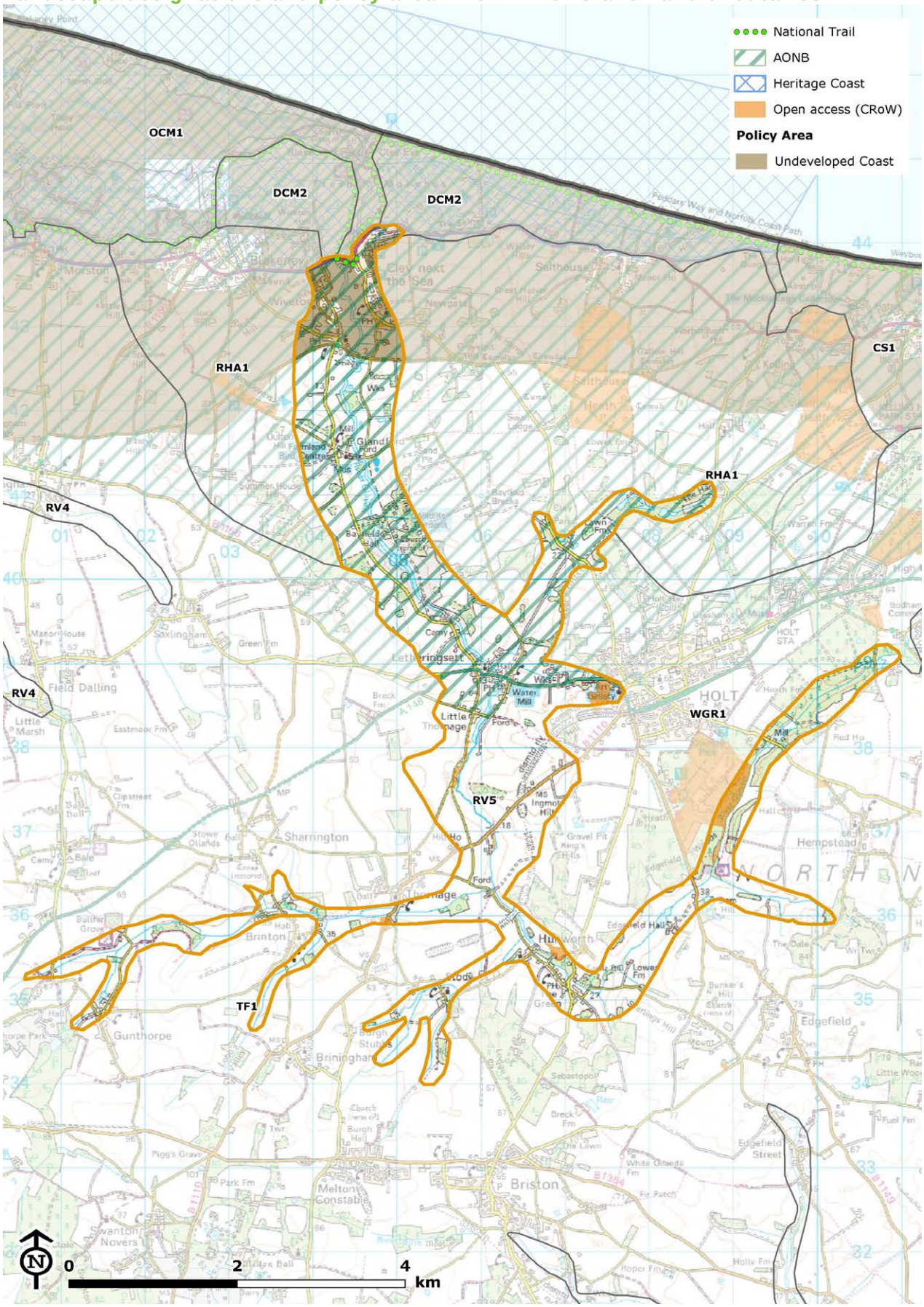
River Valleys (RV)

Location of RV5 – River Glaven and tributaries



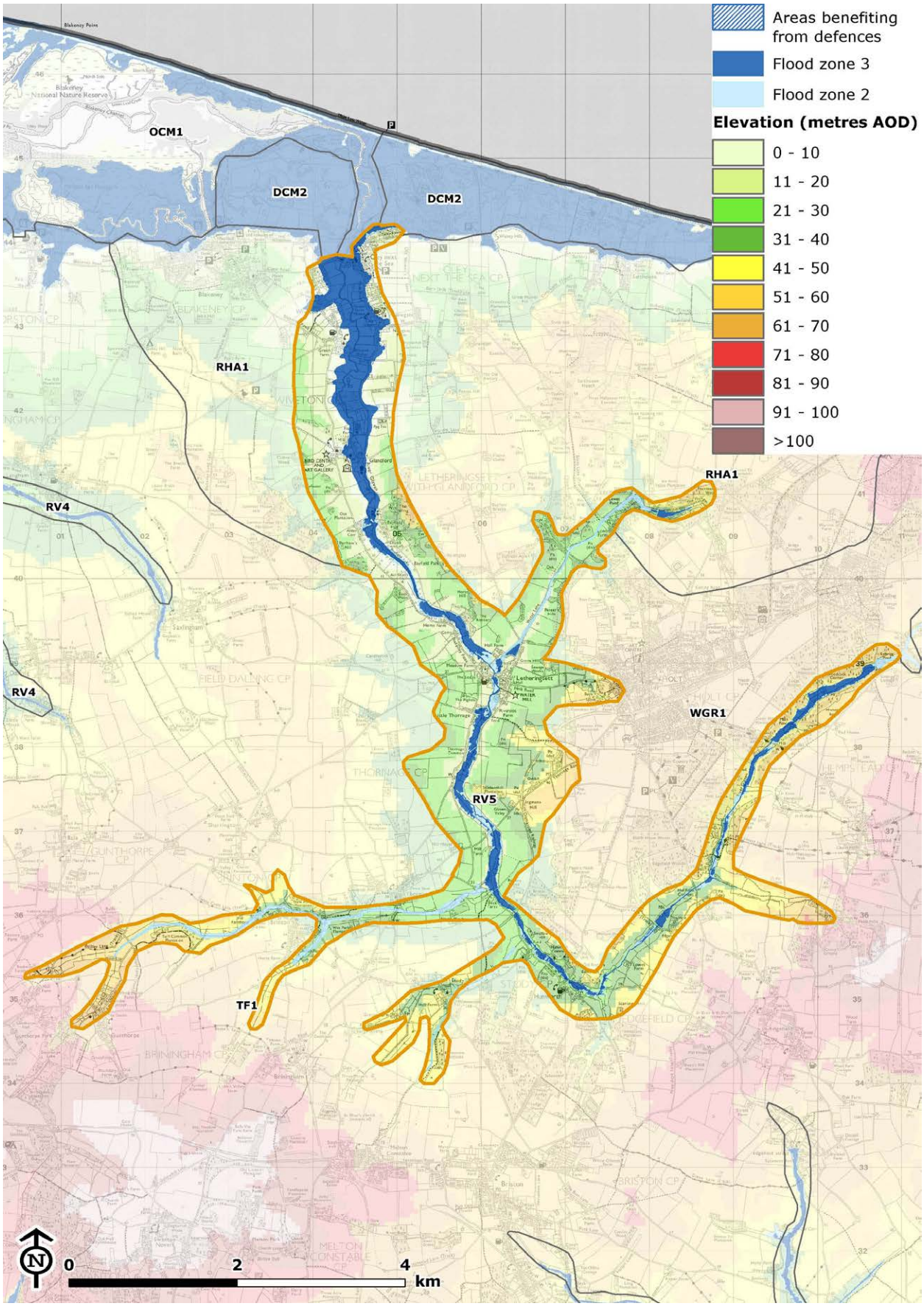
River Valleys (RV)

Landscape designations and policy area RV5 – River Glaven and tributaries



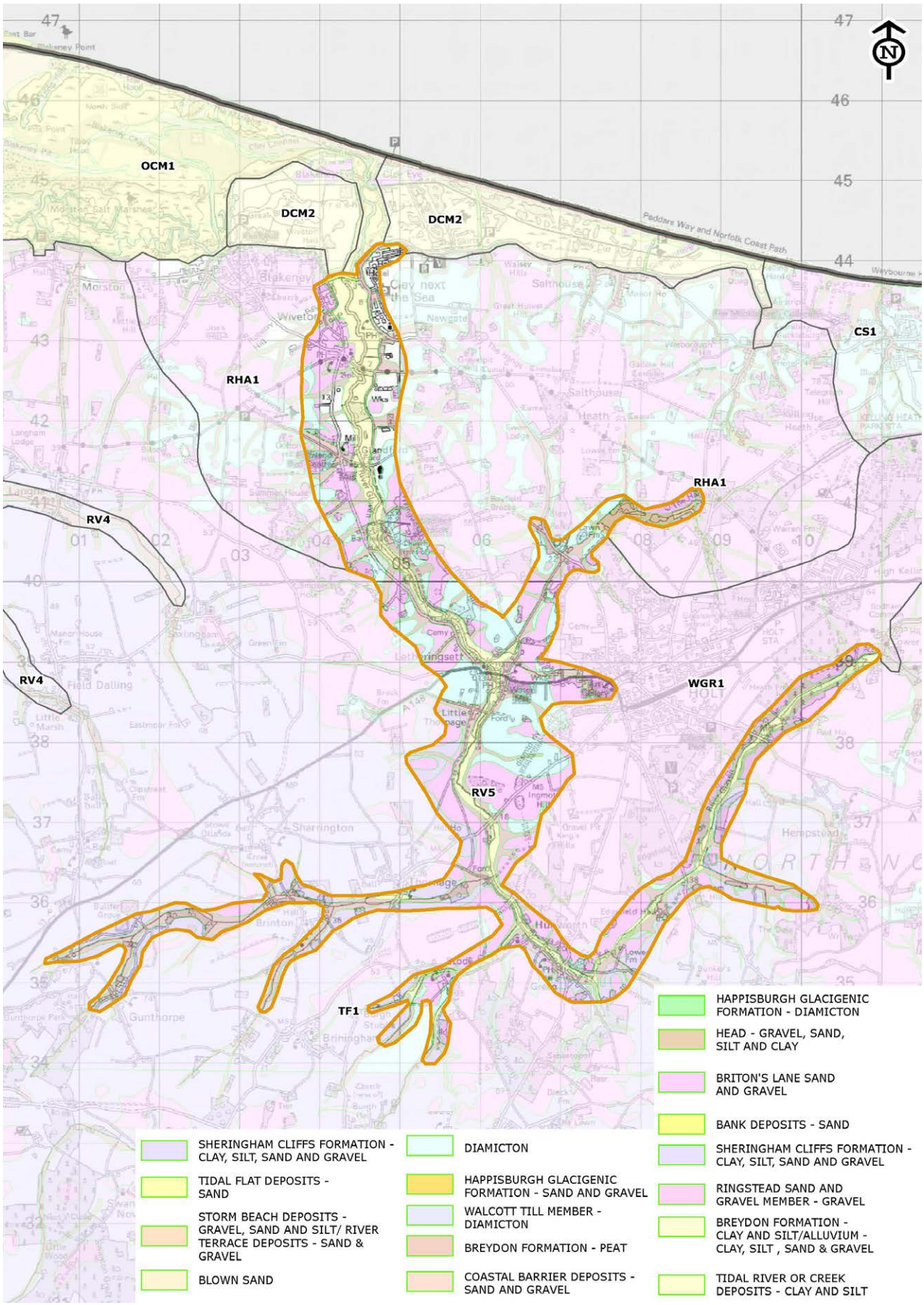
River Valleys (RV)

Topography and hydrology RV5 – River Glaven and tributaries



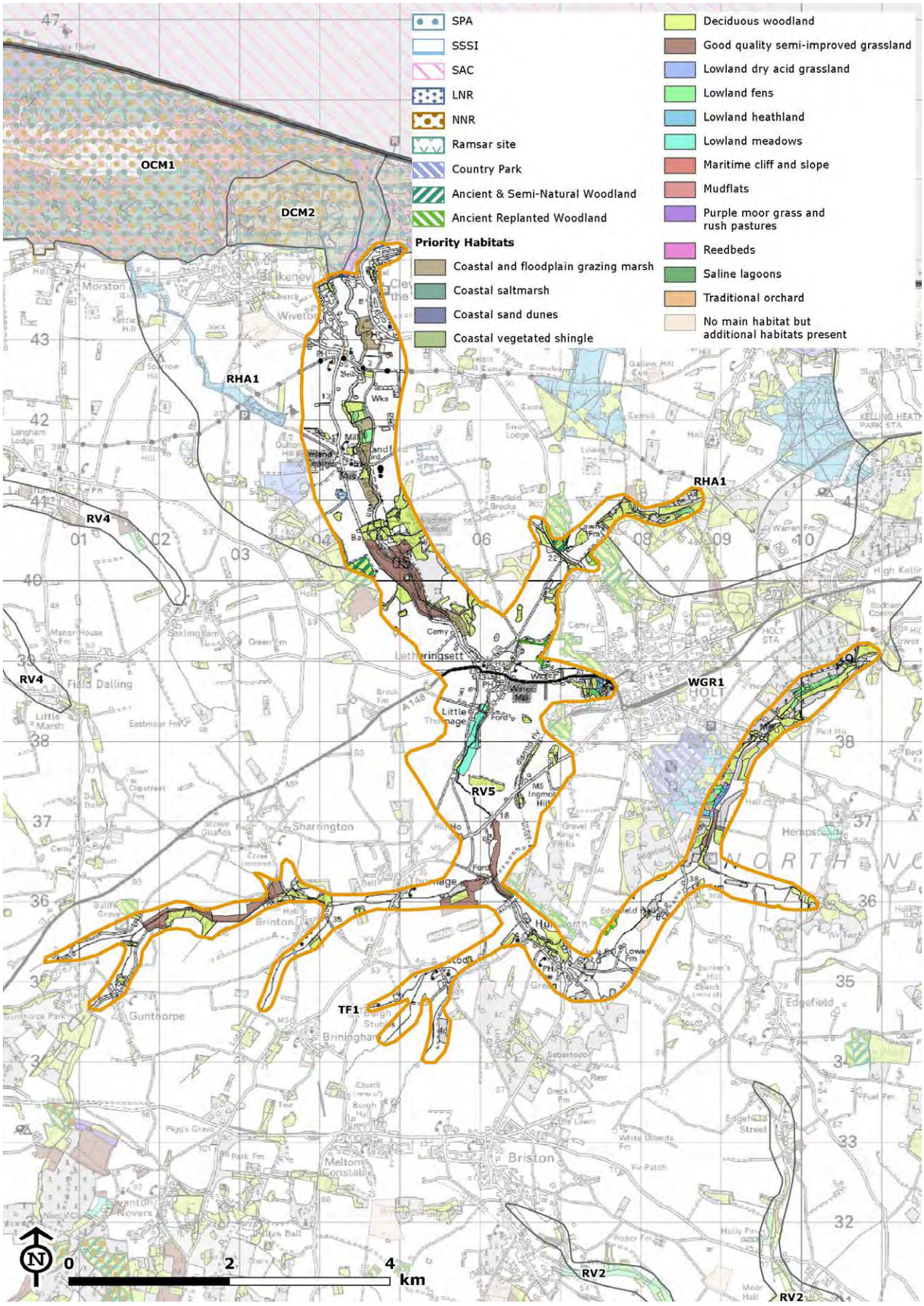
River Valleys (RV)

Superficial geology RV5 – River Glaven and tributaries



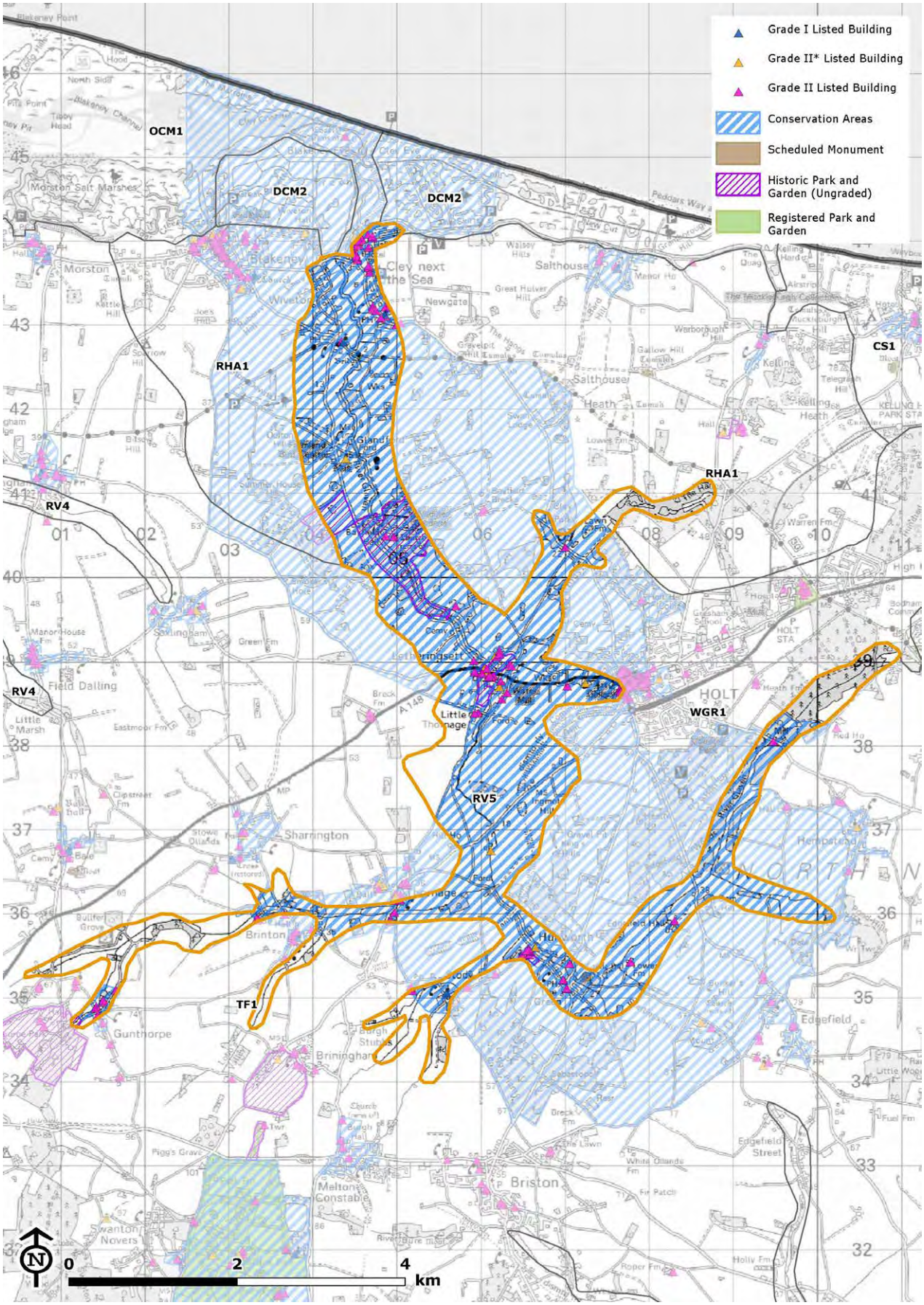
River Valleys (RV)

Nature conservation designations and priority habitats RV5 – River Glaven and tributaries



River Valleys (RV)

Cultural heritage designations RV5 – River Glaven and tributaries

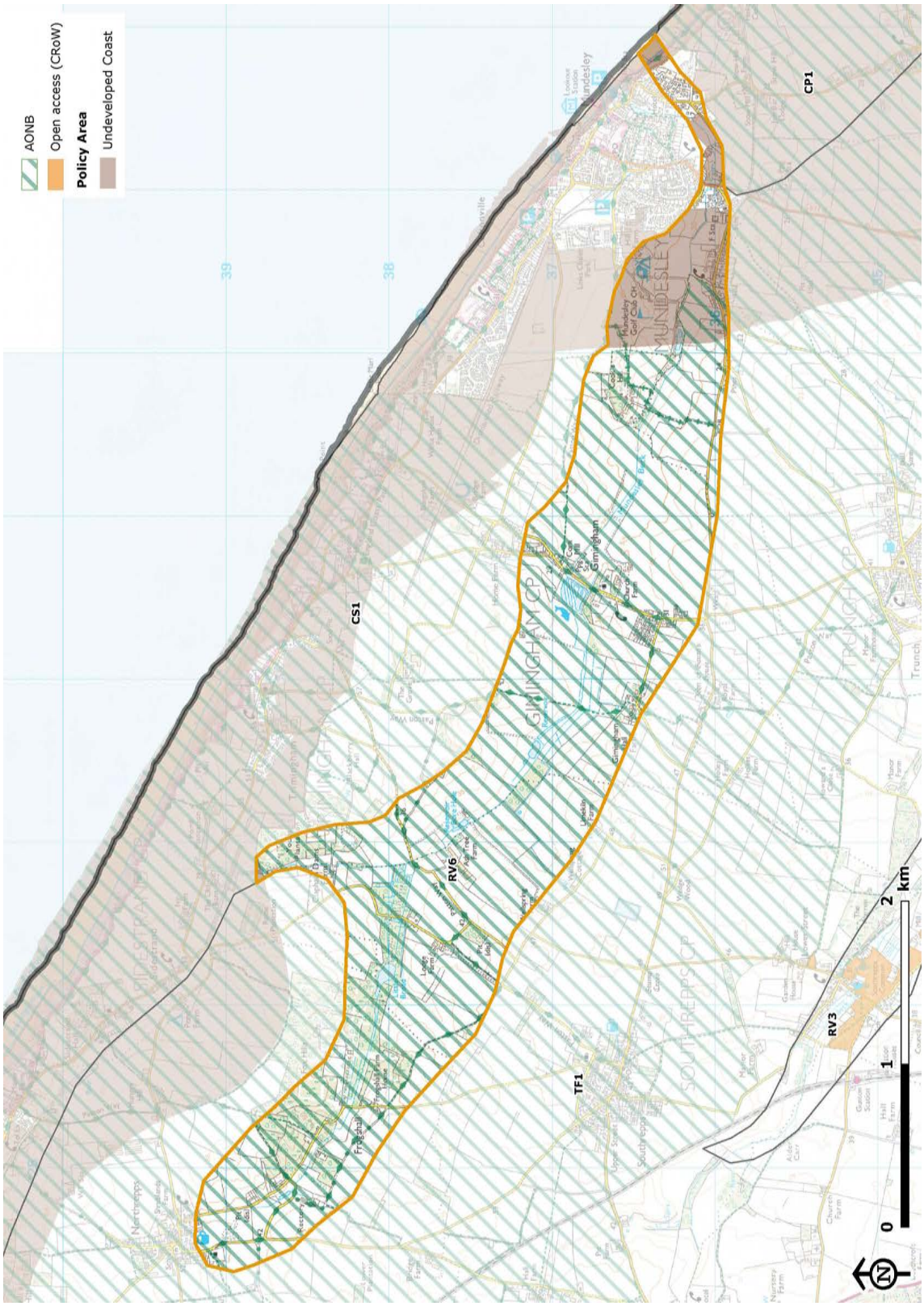


River Valleys (RV)

Location of RV6 – Mundesley Beck

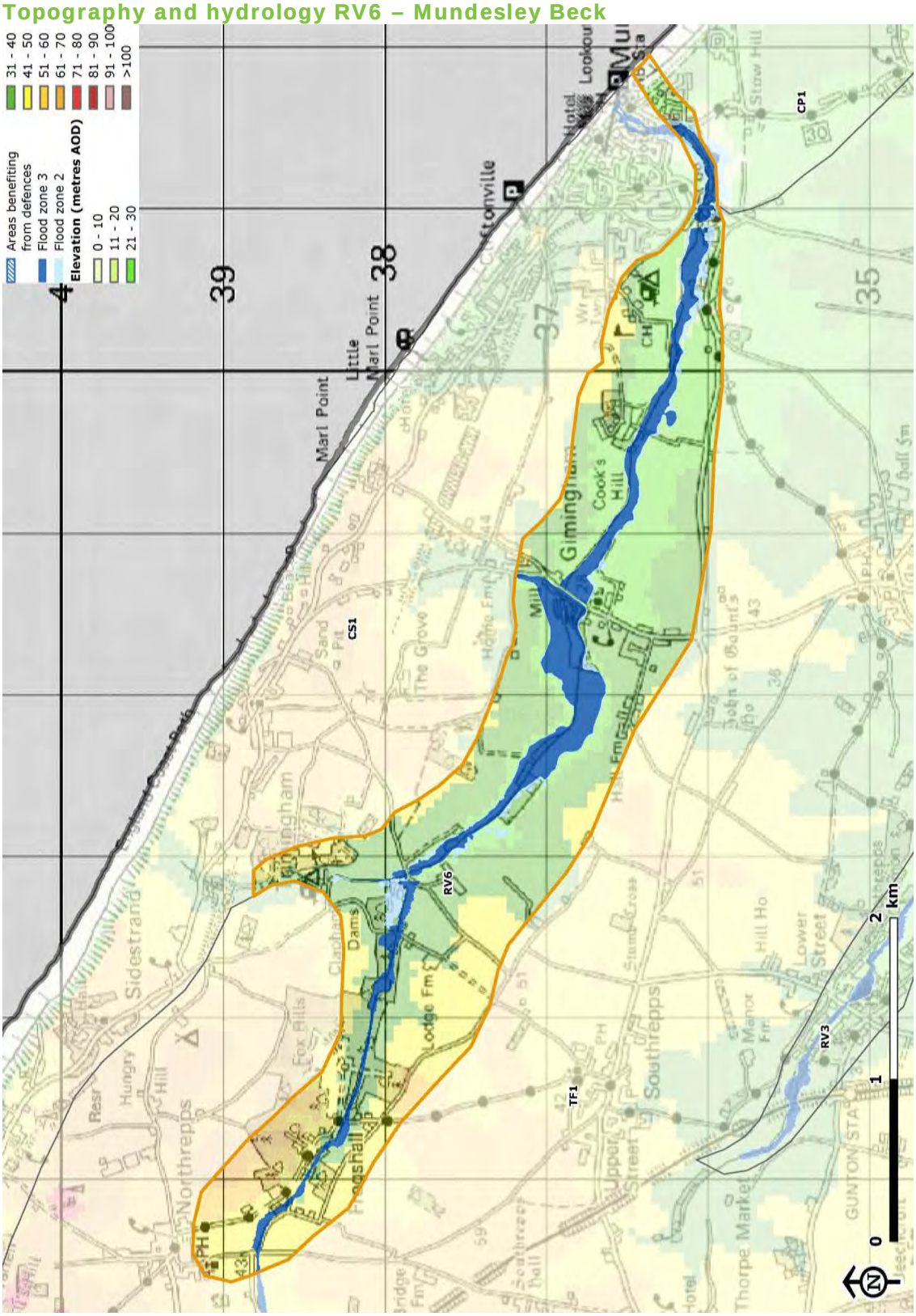
River Valleys (RV)

Landscape designations and policy area RV6 – Mundesley Beck



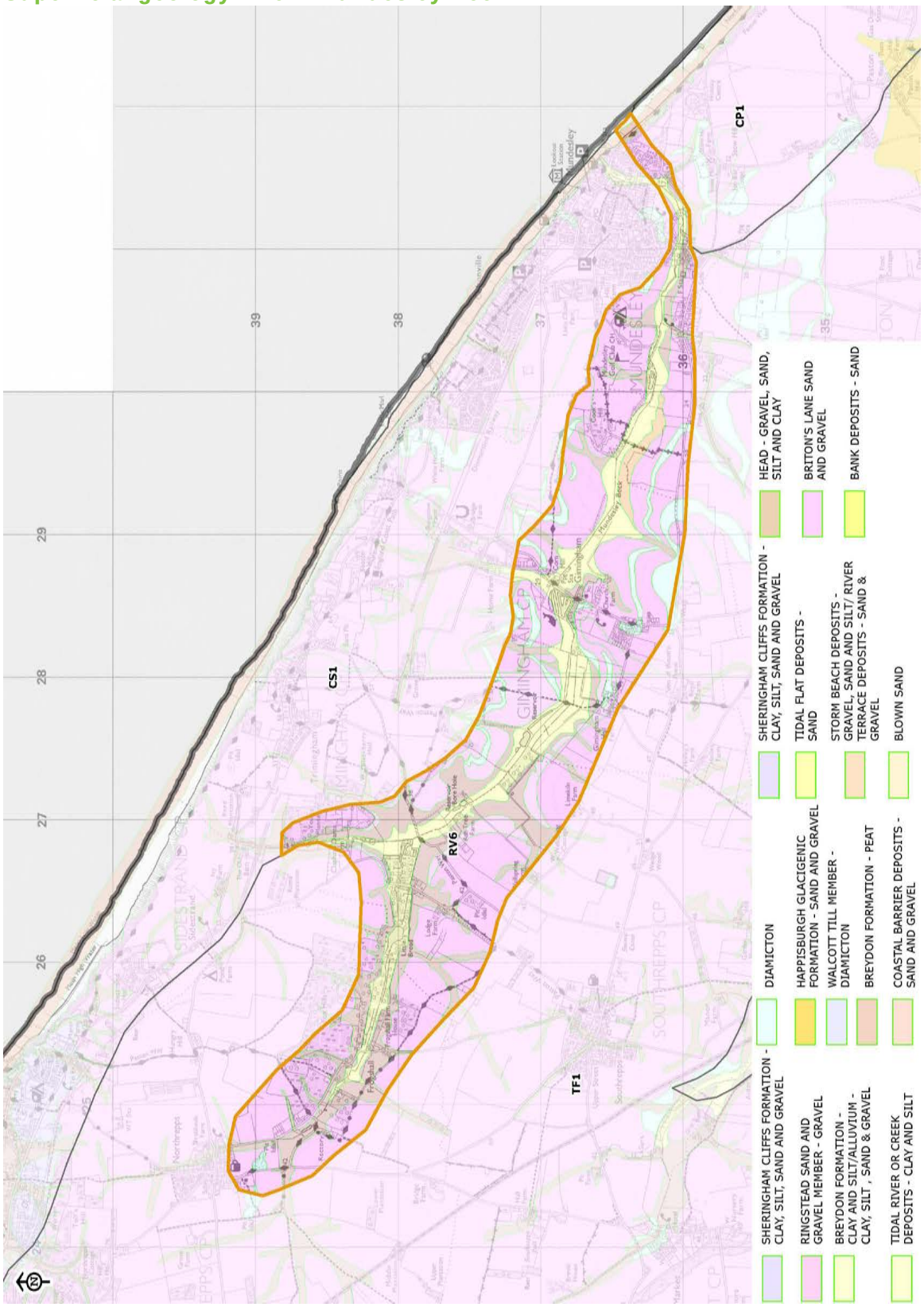
River Valleys (RV)

Topography and hydrology RV6 – Mundesley Beck



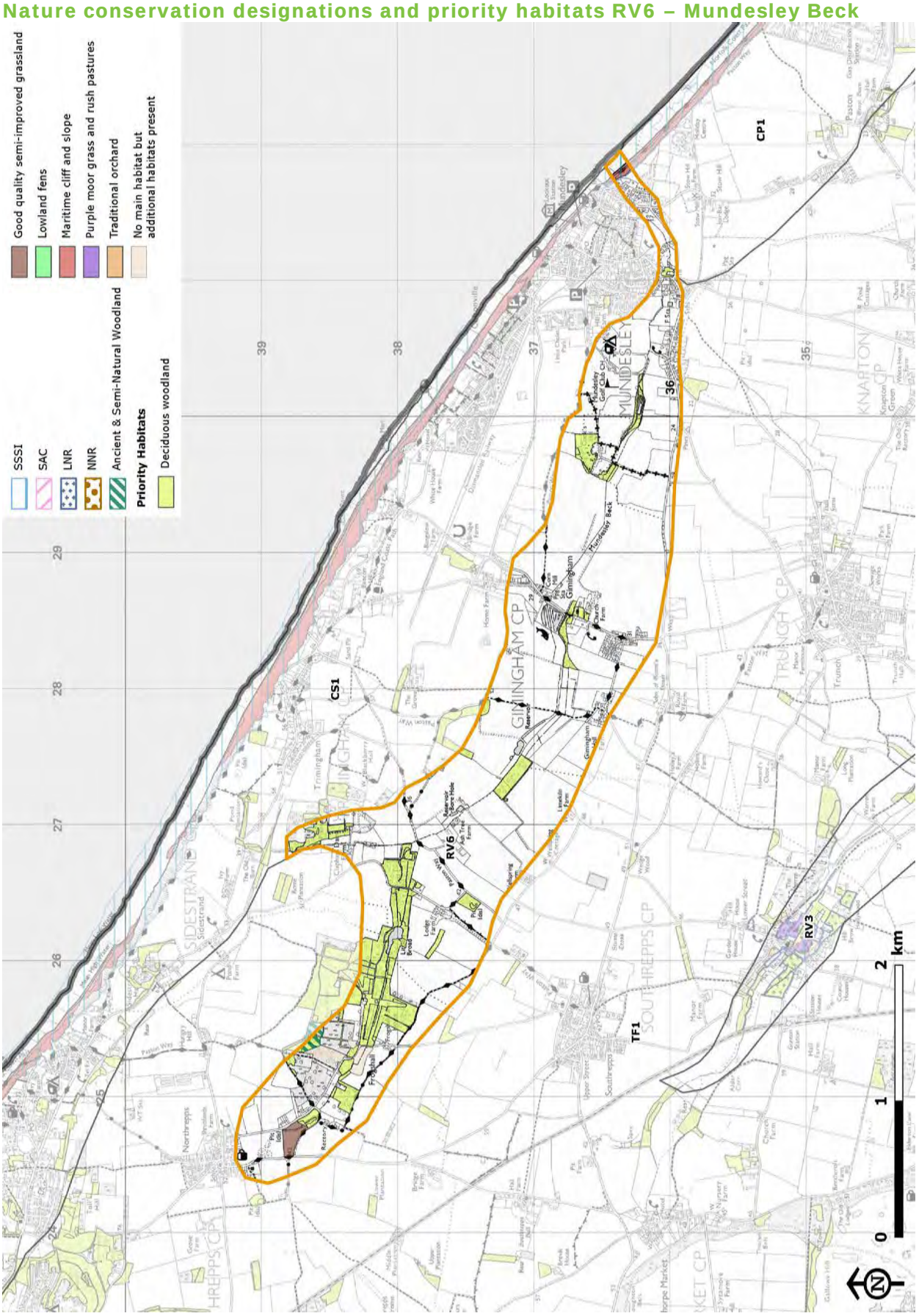
River Valleys (RV)

Superficial geology RV6 – Mundesley Beck



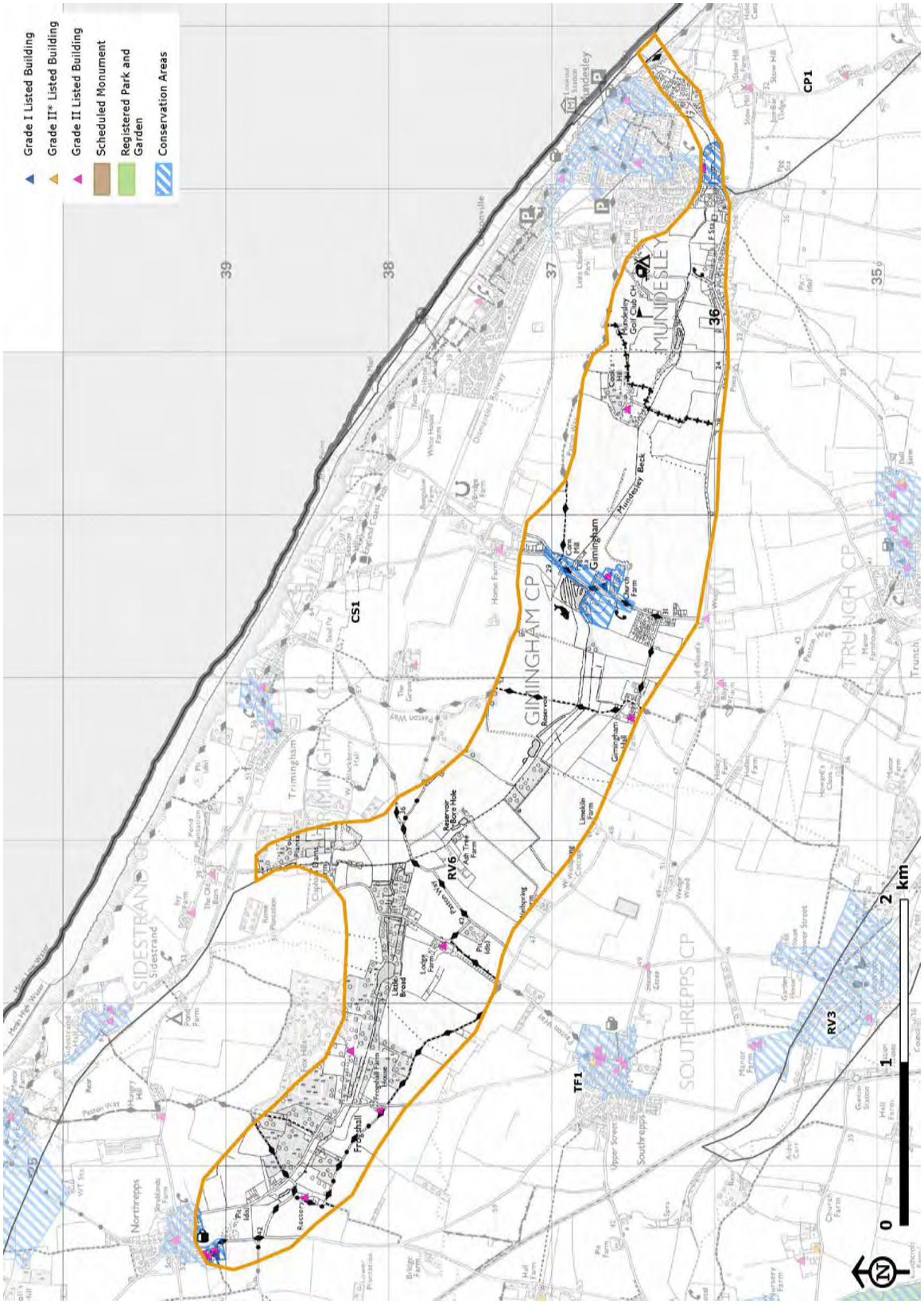
River Valleys (RV)

Nature conservation designations and priority habitats RV6 – Mundesley Beck



River Valleys (RV)

Cultural heritage designations RV6 – Mundesley Beck



River Valleys (RV)

KEY CHARACTERISTICS

1) Typically shallow-sided valleys

The valleys in North Norfolk are typically shallow-sided, although there are some differences between the valleys as set out in the character area notes below. For example, the Wensum is the largest river in the District, with a typical wide valley floor and low, often indistinct, valley sides while the Stiffkey and Glaven valleys close to the coast are deeper than other river valleys in the District. Numerous smaller watercourse and drains are managed by Internal Drainage Boards; catchments managed by The North Norfolk Rivers IDB include River Wensum, Bure, Scarrow beck, Blackwater Beck, North Walsham and Dilham canal and the River Stiffkey.

2) A relatively small-scale pattern of varied land uses on valley floors

The accumulated soils are mainly alluvial silts, clays sands and some peats. This gives rise to a mosaic of land use with pasture, arable, woodland, some fen and rough carr. Historical evolution with owner-occupied and smaller tenanted farms, including areas of arable, woodland, wet and dry pasture, has led to a varied, small-scale landscape. Gravel extraction is evident in some areas.

3) Larger arable fields on valley sides, distinct from valley floors

Field size is moderate to large on the valley sides, tending to be smaller in the valley floor. The format of boundaries tend to be similar between the valley sides and the neighbouring landscape type but is distinctly different in the valley floor - becoming higher, thicker and more likely to contain informal hedgerow trees. Some fields have 'ring boundaries' dividing the valley floor from the sides. Smaller fields on valley floors tend to be insulated from some modern agricultural pressures by the wetter nature of the land and by agri-environment schemes.

4) Relatively high level of woodland cover

There is a variety of woodland forms, primarily deciduous, and high hedgerows containing lots of trees. Association with watercourses or sloping topography means that shapes are often more sinuous and less geometric than the dominant landscape pattern in adjacent arable farmlands. Valley floor woodlands are typically older than those on valley sides, the latter being planted for shooting or commercial purposes. The valley floor woodland tends to be older, native woodland of a less regular form, and often forms a boundary to the watercourse or field patterns.

5) Settlement and roads follow valley sides

There is typically a linear pattern of settlement, associated with rivers. Many villages have Conservation Area status and have evolved through a gradual coalescence of cottages, small holdings and farmsteads. In some areas, the road follows the course of the river, and buildings are very often close to the carriageway.

Generally there are only minor roads along valleys, occasionally crossed by more major routes such as the A1067 from Fakenham to Norwich and A1065 Fakenham to Swaffham. Most minor roads conform to the topography of the valleys, either crossing at right angles or running more or less parallel to the valley floor. The landscape type tends to be moderately quiet as a result, except where the minor roads form a vital link to other settlements (i.e. the road from Letheringsett to Blakeney.

6) High biodiversity

This is one of the most diverse and ecologically valuable sets of habitats in the District, including some unimproved pastures, water meadows, varied woodland habitats and heathland. This is reflected in the area's ecological designations: the Wensum is categorised as a SAC, and there are numerous SSSIs and County Wildlife Sites on areas of land around the Stiffkey, Glaven, Bure and Ant. The Wensum, Stiffkey and Glaven are three of only 200 chalk rivers in the world and are ecologically rich habitats.

River Valleys (RV)

7) Contrast between valley floor containment and expansive views from valley crests

High hedges, woodland and smaller fields combine to create an intimate landscape, in which much built development is hidden from wider view. Views open out the higher one travels up the valley sides. The top plateaus of some valleys are very open with extensive views. For Stiffkey and the Glaven there is a distinct character where the valleys open out to the coast, with coastal light reflected from sea, expansive skies and birdlife.

Characteristics unique to RV1 – River Wensum and tributaries

1) The largest river in the District

This valley has a wide valley floor and low, often indistinct, valley sides.

2) Relationship between settlement, industry, river and ecology at Fakenham and Great Ryburgh

The town of Fakenham and the extended village of Hempton effectively meet at the valley floor and there is a complex interplay of settlement, riverine, industrial and surprisingly high quality ecological land types within a very small and discrete area. A similar relationship exists downstream at Great Ryburgh, where a large industrial maltings complex is located.

3) Fen and reed habitats

There are areas of fen and reeds near Fakenham (Pensthorpe and Sculthorpe Fen), with nationally important wildlife reserves at Hempton and Sculthorpe, providing a strong visitor attraction. The substantial former gravel workings at Pensthorpe are now a bird reserve.

4) Well-wooded headwater valleys with villages

Shallow valleys draining into the Wensum from springs in the vicinity of Kettlestone and Stibbard to the east of Fakenham, Raynham to the south-west and Tattersett (the River Tat) to the west have a strong woodland component.

5) Estate Parkland

Raynham Hall has a large 18th century designed parkland with a substantial lake formed from a dammed area just off the line of the river. The parkland is much reduced from its original extent but older and more recent shelter belts are apparent. Sennowe Park is an early C20 Italianate garden and pleasure grounds bordering the River Wensum which includes a sinuous lake.

The River Wensum and its floodplain at Great Ryburgh

River Valleys (RV)

Characteristics unique to RV2 – River Bure and tributaries

1) **Nucleated settlement pattern alongside the Bure**

   Settlements here are more nucleated than is usual for valleys. Itteringham is an estate-type village with a controlled pattern of development. Saxthorpe and Corpusty have had more ad hoc growth which, with gradual infill over decades, has resulted in formerly dispersed settlement developing a fairly nucleated form. Settlement is concentrated in the valley floor areas with extensions running up the sides.

2) **Fairly dense development along the Scarrow Beck tributary**

   There is a fairly dense and extensive settlement pattern along the Scarrow Beck, comprising the larger villages of Erpingham and Aldborough, and minor villages at Bessingham and Hanworth. Elsewhere there is a dispersed pattern with fragmented or multi-centred villages, outlying cottages and farmsteads. Gresham on Gur Beck tributary still retains its traditional small fields, closes and large gardens around and within the settlement, resulting in the impression of a much older landscape.

3) **Gunton Park**

   The Hagon Beck tributary falls into the Great Lake at the Gunton Park estate, where extensive woodland belts form part of a distinctive historic sub-area on the western fringe of Grade II* Registered Parkland and within an extensive Conservation Area. The lake in turn feeds Suffield Beck.

4) **Canalisation on King's Beck and Suffield Beck**

   The watercourse between Gunton Park and the Bure is largely canalised.

5) **Road network not strongly valley-oriented**

   The road network only partly conforms to the valley sides or watercourse and more often appears to be independent of it.

6) **Isolated and rural character**

   The majority of the area has an isolated and rural feel, possibly resulting from the distance from any large town, busy village or holiday area. There are more isolated small and medium farms near the valley sides than in other adjacent Areas.

Tranquil pastoral scene at Hanworth Common (RV2)

River Valleys (RV)

Characteristics unique to RV3 – River Ant and tributaries

1) **Valley sides are not well defined**

   The valley has an amalgam of terracing and small hills within the context of a larger valley. Only the valley floor is well defined and wide. Tributary valleys in the vicinity of Worstead and Beeston are shallow.

2) **North Walsham to Dilham Canal**

   Most of the River Ant between Antingham and The Broads was canalised in the early 19th century, for commercial traffic. Several disused locks and wharfs form features.

3) **Limited valley-floor settlement**

   Settlement tends to be dispersed and set well up the valley sides, often running parallel to the watercourse except at Briggate where there is a bridge crossing within the settlement. Former common land areas at Southrepps (Lower Street), Spa Common and Bradfield all demonstrate an ad hoc nature to the layout and development of the settlement, including industrial, holiday chalet and infill residential development. This ad hoc development is probably a result of its historical development from common land which was simply settled and carved out of 'waste land' areas, without any sense of an overall guide or control to its development.

4) **Expansion of North Walsham**

   North Walsham has expanded downslope onto the valley side, with development at Swafield, Little London and Spa Common. The upper reaches beyond Swafield have not experienced the same pressures and have largely retained their distinctive form and individuality. Proximity to North Walsham is not particularly apparent due to the landform and woodland screening, but night time light pollution is evident. Proximity to North Walsham is an important determinant to character, with higher volumes of traffic on nearby minor roads than is typical for river valleys.

5) **River crossings**

   River crossings are notable and often occur by small older bridges. This is largely due to the road network radiating from North Walsham.

6) **Parklands with modified watercourses**

   Small tributaries which feed into the River Ant within The Broads are associated with historic parklands: Beeston Park and the former Worstead Park. These both have a current or remnant large house and parkland, with the watercourse modified to create lakes.

Ebridge water mill and disused lock on the North Walsham and Dilham Canal (RV3)

River Valleys (RV)

Characteristics unique to RV4 – River Stiffkey and tributaries

1) **Steep sided and canalised lower reaches, with a scenic coastal character**

In its lower reaches the valley is relatively steep-sided, with prominent undulations. The river here is deep and canalised, with low raised banks due to dredging. Beyond Stiffkey village the valley flattens out, with a strong and expansive coastal character where the river meets the open coastal marshes to the west of Morston. The natural beauty of the river valley landscape downstream of Wighton is recognised by its inclusion within the Norfolk Coast AONB, and, where the river meets the coastal marshes, the North Norfolk Heritage Coast.

2) **Strong historic character**

Settlements and the surrounding landscapes in the lower and middle reaches of the valley have numerous historic buildings and features, such as the abbey, priory and friary at Walsingham, Binham Priory, the Tudor great house at Barsham, the Slipper Chapel at Houghton St Giles, the registered Park and Garden at Stiffkey Old Hall and many churches. There is a significant Iron Age Fort at Warham. Walsingham in particular was a very important location in the Middle Ages as a centre of pilgrimage, and attracts a significant number of tourists. All of the valley's principal settlements have Conservation Area designations, with a strong presence of vernacular brick, flint and pantiled roofs, and some timber framing.

3) **Important wetland and chalk river habitats**

The river valley contains extensive and diverse areas of priority habitats along most of its length, including lowland meadows, lowland fens, lowland calcareous grassland, deciduous woodland, traditional orchards, good quality semi-improved grassland and grazing marsh. Designated sites include the Stiffkey Valley SSSI near the coast, which supports nationally important populations of breeding birds, including avocets. Warham Camp SSSI supports a diverse chalk grassland flora and associated butterfly populations. Hindringham Meadows is a Local Nature Reserve.

The clear waters of the chalk-fed river at Stiffkey village (RV4)

River Valleys (RV)

Characteristics unique to RV5 – River Glaven and tributaries

1) **Relatively steep valley sides**

Both in the lower and upper reaches the Glaven valley has a strong form, with fairly steep sides.

2) **A managed landscape with high diversity**

Management of this area has retained strong landscape and ecological diversity and character, with woodland, wooded carr, wet ditches, grassland and hedges with hedgerow trees, with different sections characterised by coastal influences, parkland and pastoral farmland. The Glaven Valley is unusual in that it has remnants of heathland on its slopes, both in the lower valley and further upstream (close to Hunworth and Holt). The rare chalk river hosts native species such as the white-clawed crayfish.

3) **Historic villages**

The settlements of Cley and Wiveton give a strong character to the lower regions of the valley, with views of the churches and small older cottages, but this is never dominant. The prominent characteristic is of an old rural coastal landscape. Further inland, villages such as Thornage, Brinton and Stody retain a strong vernacular character, with little modern development. Strength of character along the whole of the Glaven Valley is recognised by the number of villages which are designated Conservation Areas.

4) **Bayfield Estate**

The prominent parkland of Bayfield Hall encompasses and divides the valley mid-way. Its long estate boundary walls are a distinctive feature. The estate includes the 19th Century model village of Glandford.

5) **Woodland influence**

The adjacent Wooded Glacial Ridge character type has a strong woodland component which continues down into the valley to the south and east of Holt.

The scenic village of Wiveton (RV5)

River Valleys (RV)

Characteristics unique to RV6 – Mundesley Beck

1) A short valley, almost wholly within the AONB, with a heavily canalised watercourse

The shortest of North Norfolk's river valleys, running parallel to the coast a little over 1km inland for most of its 7km length. This small river draws its waters from a superficial aquifer comprised predominantly of sands and gravels, and has largely been canalised with no sections of naturally meandering river channel. With the exception of the area around Mundesley, the valley is almost wholly within the Norfolk Coast AONB.

2) Settlement crosses rather than follows the valley

There is little settlement along most of the valley. The nucleated village of Northrepps lies near the head of the river, at a crossroads, and the smaller village of Gimingham is spread out in a linear form across rather than along the landform, reflecting the fact that roads cross the valley rather than follow it. The Paston Way recreational route crosses the valley in a number of locations.

3) Prominence of Mundesley

Mundesley covers both the northern valley side and the valley floor at the river mouth, constraining the watercourse to a narrow gulley flowing out through the village. There has been significant infill development on the valley side and floor over the course of the 20th Century. A golf course with floodlit driving range, and a former TB hospital backed by a wooded crest, are prominent on a steeper section of the valley close to the edge of Mundesley.

4) Limited woodland, pasture and hedgerows

The upper reaches are well wooded but the rest of the valley has little woodland or tree cover. There is some valley floor pasture but much of this, and some hedgerows, have been lost in the post-WW2 period, reducing the extent to which the valley displays the containment and smaller landscape scale characteristic of its Type.

View south-west across the Mundesley Beck from the outskirts of Mundesley (RV6)

River Valleys (RV)

VALUED FEATURES AND QUALITIES

1) **Intimate, contained rural character**

Landform, extent of valley floor tree and hedgerow cover, small field sizes combine to provide an intimacy and strong sense of place on the valley floor. In contrast, the surrounding arable farmlands on the valley sides are much more open. The overall character is that of a rural, wooded, enclosed, pastoral landscape.

2) **Variety of landscape elements and scenic views**

This is a landscape of considerable contrasts, containing woodland, pasture, carr, heathland and historic villages. Visual perception changes rapidly from containment or partial containment on the valley floors (depending on the individual valley landform and degree of screening from woodland and/or hedgerows), to extensive views from valley crests.

3) **Wealth of biodiversity**

The rich diversity, quality and comparative intactness of habitats, notably rare chalk-fed rivers, wetlands and carr woodland, act as biodiversity 'reservoirs' with the capacity to supply and link to the surrounding landscapes beyond. These include important habitat for otter and water vole, and for migratory birds. Linkage to The Broads is significant in ecological terms for the Bure and Ant.

4) **Strong sense of time depth and historical continuity**

The distinctive character and cultural heritage value of individual settlements provide a sense of place, historic and visual interest, with varied vernacular styles across the valleys reflecting the nuances of local character and building materials. Small fields provide an attractive setting to many villages and hamlets. Features such as historic parklands, water mills and ancient 'ring garth' field boundaries add to this. Many of North Norfolk's Conservation Areas are within, or encompass, valley settlements.

5) **Parklands enhance historic landscape character**

Parklands often span valleys as well as adjacent higher ground, utilising watercourses to create designed landscapes (often through a small dammed lake), usually with a strong woodland element e.g. Raynham, Sennowe, Beeston and Worstead**.**

6) **Other valued features include:**

Views of numerous church towers within and across valleys, such as at Fakenham and Wiveton.

The River Wensum and its floodplain provide important habitats for migratory birds (RV1)

River Valleys (RV)

FORCES FOR CHANGE / DETRACTORS

1) Modern agricultural practices

Hedgerow loss has had an impact on valley sides but typically less so on valley floors, although in several areas, such as around Fakenham and near Binham and Langham, there has been greater impact on character where clearance has created larger fields, and large scale poultry units are very visible in the landscape. Canalisation of some stretches of river in the last century, notably on tributaries of the Bure and in the lower course of the Stiffkey, has detracted from natural landscape character.

2) Uncertainity regarding future agricultural subsidy schemes following the UK's departure from the EU.

In recent years there have been positive impacts on ecology and landscape character, e.g. hedgerow reinstatement and wildflower field margins, resulting from agri-environment grants. However, there is uncertainty regarding how such schemes will be affected following the UK's departure from the EU. Changes to agricultural subsidies will have significant impacts on both landscape and biodiversity. These could be positive or negative.

3) Conversion of agricultural buildings, or construction of isolated new dwellings

Construction of new agricultural buildings and conversion of old barns from rural working buildings to residential uses has had an effect on rural and historic landscape character. New agricultural buildings, often large in scale and of non-traditional materials such as steel, concrete and aluminium cladding, sited in locations away from or prominently within existing farm complexes, can detract from the prevailing landscape character.

4) Increase in domestic tourism

This is leading to demand for new facilities and infrastructure, including camping and glamping sites and holiday chalets as wellas an increase in traffic levels, recreational pressure and farm conversions/diversification

5) Development pressure in and around villages

Increased density within villages e.g. through subdivision of large gardens, can detract from historic settlement form and character. This is particularly the case with development that doesn't fit with the prevalent linear form e.g. which encroaches up valley sides.

The screening potential of high hedgerows and woodlands increases pressure for development on small-scale fields around settlement fringes, but these can make a strong contribution to settlement character.

6) Expansion of Fakenham and North Walsham

Urban expansion has been particularly prevalent around Fakenham, with development into the valleys since c.1980s, including estate type developments of a generic nature. Large stores and industrial estates on the edge of Fakenham have also eroded the distinctive rural character of the river valley landscape. There has also been estate development on the former Heath area to the south of Fakenham.

At North Walsham, areas around Spa Common, Swafield and Little London have seen considerable ad hoc industrial, holiday chalet and infill residential development which have eroded landscape character.

7) Suburbanisation

New developments whether in villages or in isolated locations, but particular the latter, can introduce suburban features such as surfaced drives, domestic style gates and close board fencing, garden style planting and parking areas and overly large windows and external lighting.

River Valleys (RV)

8) Telecom masts

Telecom masts in prominent locations, either within valleys or in adjacent landscapes, can result in significant visual intrusion on contained valley landscapes, and consequent erosion of rural character.

9) Climate change

Climate change could result in the need for new crops, changes in farming practices, the introduction of new pests and diseases affecting native species, Issues such as Sudden Oak Death could be exacerbated by a changing climate, and non-native, drought tolerant species such as Holm Oak outcompeting native trees resulting in a change in woodland composition and associated impacts on biodiversity. Invasive species such as Himalayan Balsam are currently a threat along some of the river banks, such as the Glaven.

Many of the fluvial watercourses have quite narrow and confined floodplains as such the impacts of climate change are not shown to increase flood extents significantly along these watercourses. Climate change has however the potential to increase flood levels, depths and velocities.

10) Impact of gravel extraction

Gravel extraction has had some localised impact on landscape character e.g. in the upper reaches of the Tat valley in the Wensum catchment, and near Edgefield in the Glaven Valley.

11) Woodland changes

A decline in traditional woodland management skills threatens the age and species diversity of semi-natural woodlands. Coniferous woodlands can have a dominating effect that detracts from valley form. Tree diseases may have a significant impact on the composition of woodland and hedgerow trees within the District and the Type, although not on the general extent of tree cover.

The maltings buildings at Great Ryburgh are dominant features within the Wensum valley landscape (RV1)

River Valleys (RV)

LANDSCAPE VISION

The vision for this landscape type is of intimate, small-scale landscapes with a wide variety of land uses / habitats, offering a contrast to the more expansive, open, large-scale arable farming and coastal landscapes that surround the valleys. New development should be appropriate in scale, unobtrusive and readily accommodated into its landscape setting. Woodland and hedgerows should be a major landscape element, helping to contain development. The linear valley form should be apparent, and should dictate land use and development form. Valley sides should offer some degree of transition between the contrasting scales of the valley floors and surrounding arable farmlands.

LANDSCAPE GUIDELINES

1) Maintain the small scale of valley landscapes

Conserve large mature gardens and smaller fields on the edges of villages; ensure any new development is well integrated into the landscape and does not form a harsh edge. Retain mature trees which contribute to the setting of the village and buildings.

Recognise the influence that large-scale developments in adjacent areas can have on the perceived scale and containment of valleys.

2) Maintain rural character

Ensure new built development respects existing densities and character styles. Improve existing hard edges of settlements by using new development that responds to local vernacular, with planting appropriate to character to aid integration into the surrounding landscape.

Ensure the redevelopment of redundant barn complexes both within, on the edge of, and especially outside settlement boundaries, is sensitively undertaken avoiding use of suburban features such as surfaced drives, domestic style gates and fences, ornamental planting, overly large windows or excessive external lighting. Impact both by day and night should be a consideration to maintain rural character and dark skies.

Maintain the rural features that contribute to character, biodiversity and historical continuity, including ancient winding lanes, hedgerows, wide verges, gateposts and walls – avoid road widening and urbanising features such as kerbs, lighting and excessive signage.

3) Integrate valley-side development

Use landscaping, in particular tree and hedgerow planting, to limit the visual influence of development that does not conform to historic linear patterns. Seek to re-connect fragmented habitats. There is scope in particular for enhancement in the vicinity of Fakenham and North Walsham.

4) Protect high ecological status

Protect the high ecological status and water quality of the river valleys, extensive stretches of which are nationally designated, recognising that varied habitats which enhance biodiversity likewise enhance landscape interest and character.

Manage and enhance the health and structure of woodlands and wetlands to improve resilience in the face of climate change and new pests, diseases and invasive species, supporting and re-introducing traditional management practices where appropriate, such as coppicing. Seek opportunities to restore and expand native carr woodland by replacing existing poplar plantations.

5) Protect and manage cultural heritage assets

Protect and appropriately manage the rich cultural heritage of the area, reflecting the historic focus of settlement on watercourses. This includes parkland estates, historic villages and churches, many of which fall within designated Conservation Areas.

River Valleys (RV)

6) Strengthen public access

Strengthen public access through the valleys, including the fragmented rights of way network, by introducing new linkages, including seeking opportunities to utilise the disused railway lines within some areas as longer distance cycle and footpath routes. This could be as part of new strategic green infrastructure within the Fakenham and North Walsham areas, in response to the continued growth of the towns. Seek opportunities to improve people's interpretation of the landscape, including natural, historic and archaeological features, to reinforce the distinct identity of valleys.

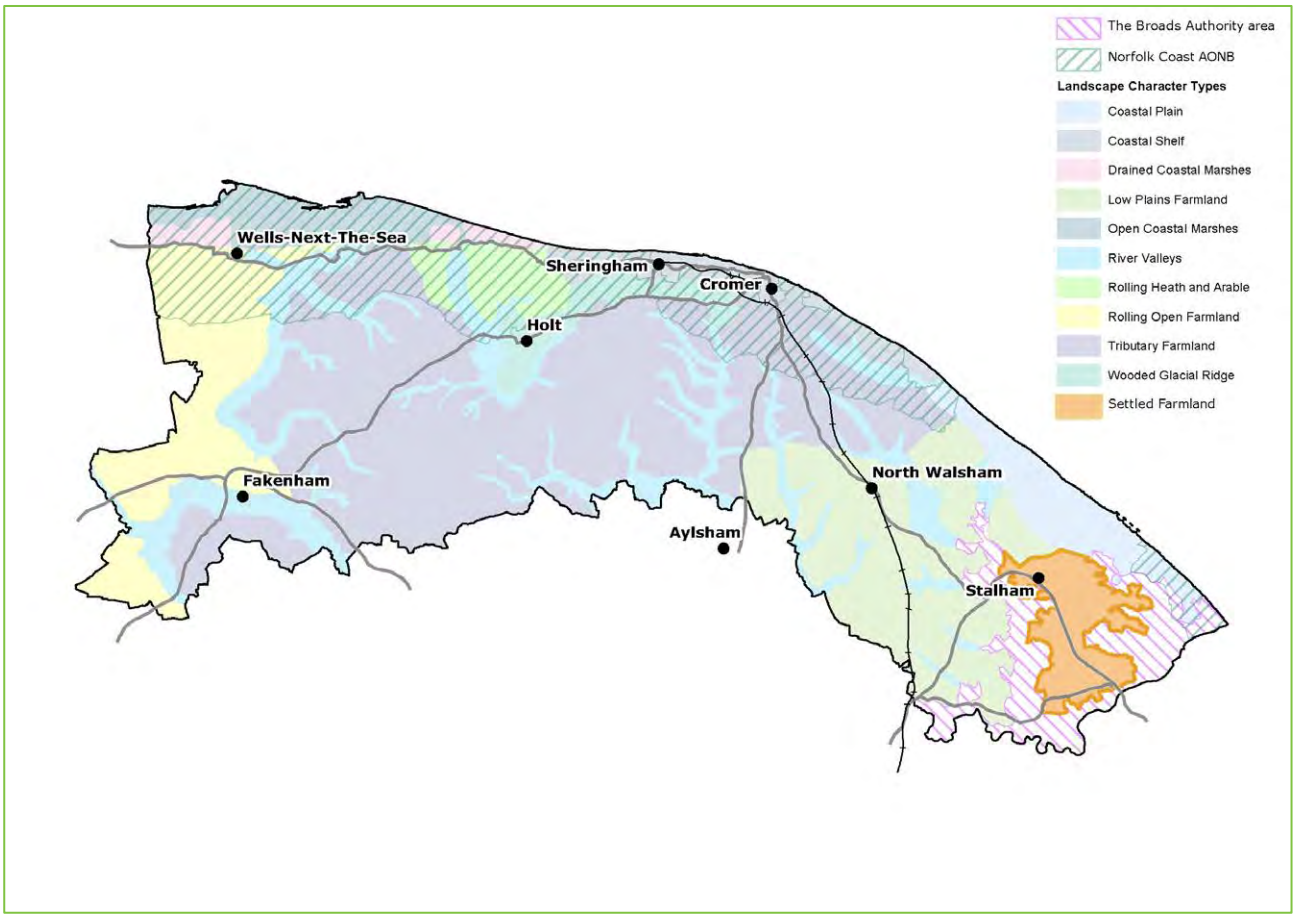
View north over the Wensum valley to Fakenham parish church tower (RV1)

Glandford Ford (RV5)

River Valleys (RV)

Wiveton Church (RV5)

Settled Farmland (SF)



Settled Farmland (SF)

SUMMARY

The Settled Farmland Type is characterised by flat or very flat arable landscapes, which are bordered by woodland fringing the adjacent Broads Valleys. Settlement is a strong feature of the landscape, as dispersed farmsteads or in villages such as Sea Palling, Hickling, Ludham and parts of Potter Heigham and the market town of Stalham.

The Type gradually transitions to the Low Plains Farmland Type to the north of Stalham, beyond which the land rises slightly and becomes more gently undulating, with fewer settlements. The remainder of the Type is effectively bounded on three sides by the more wooded Broads Valleys (Broads Authority Executive Area), which have a wilder and less agricultural character.

Component Areas

There is one continuous area of Settled Farmland in North Norfolk:

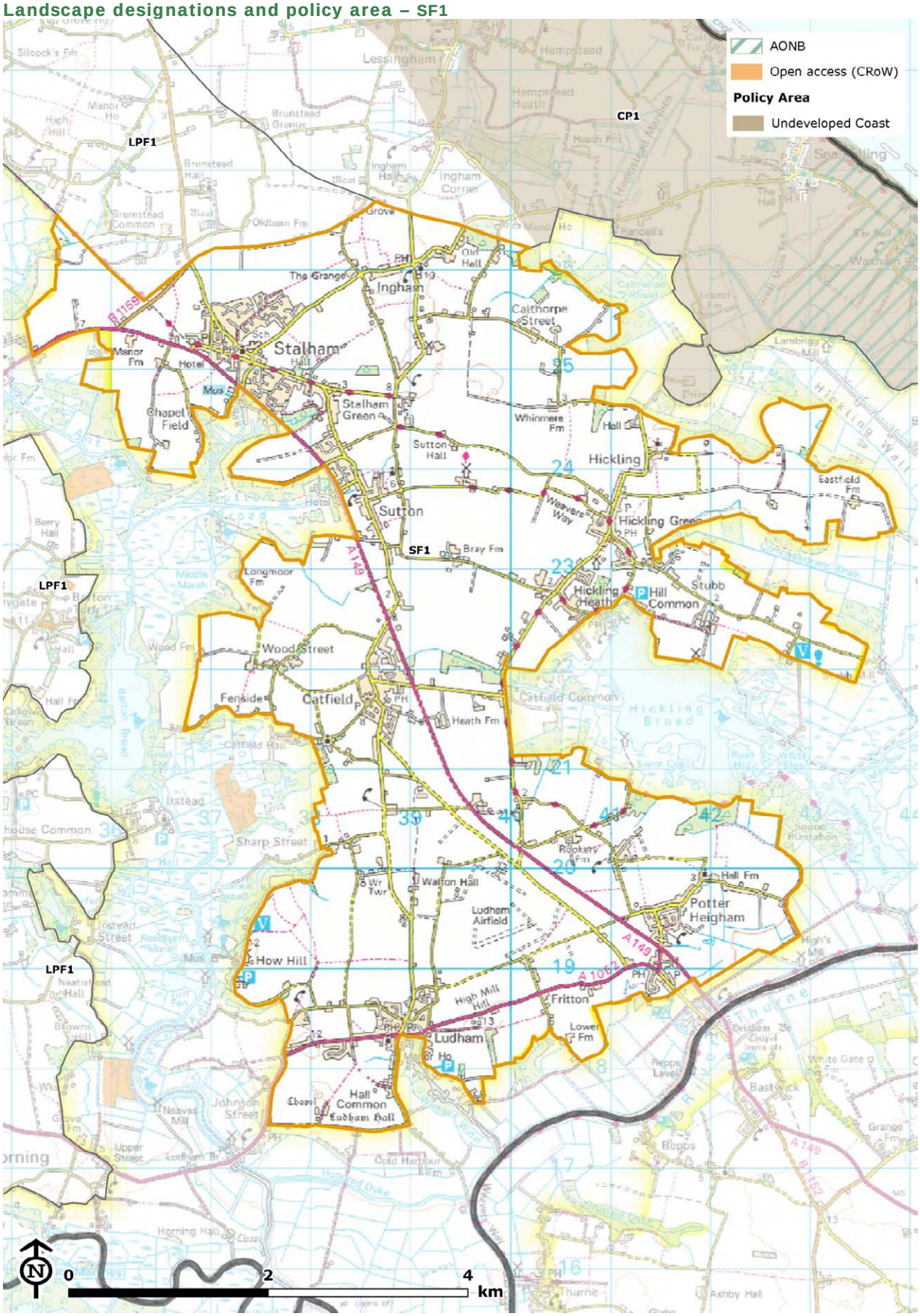
SF1 – Stalham, Ludham and Potter Heigham

Settled Farmland (SF)

Location of SF1

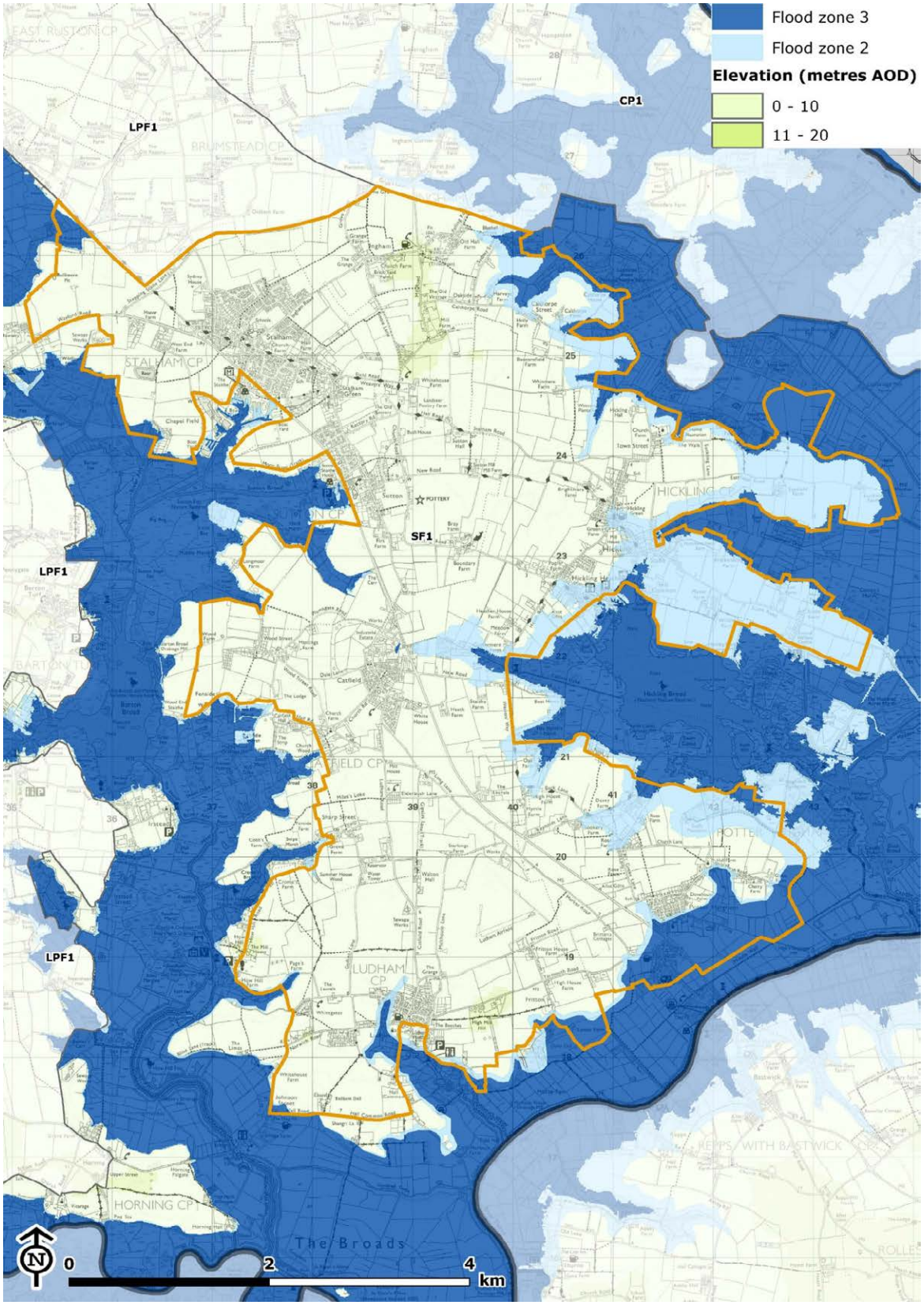
Settled Farmland (SF)

Landscape designations and policy area – SF1



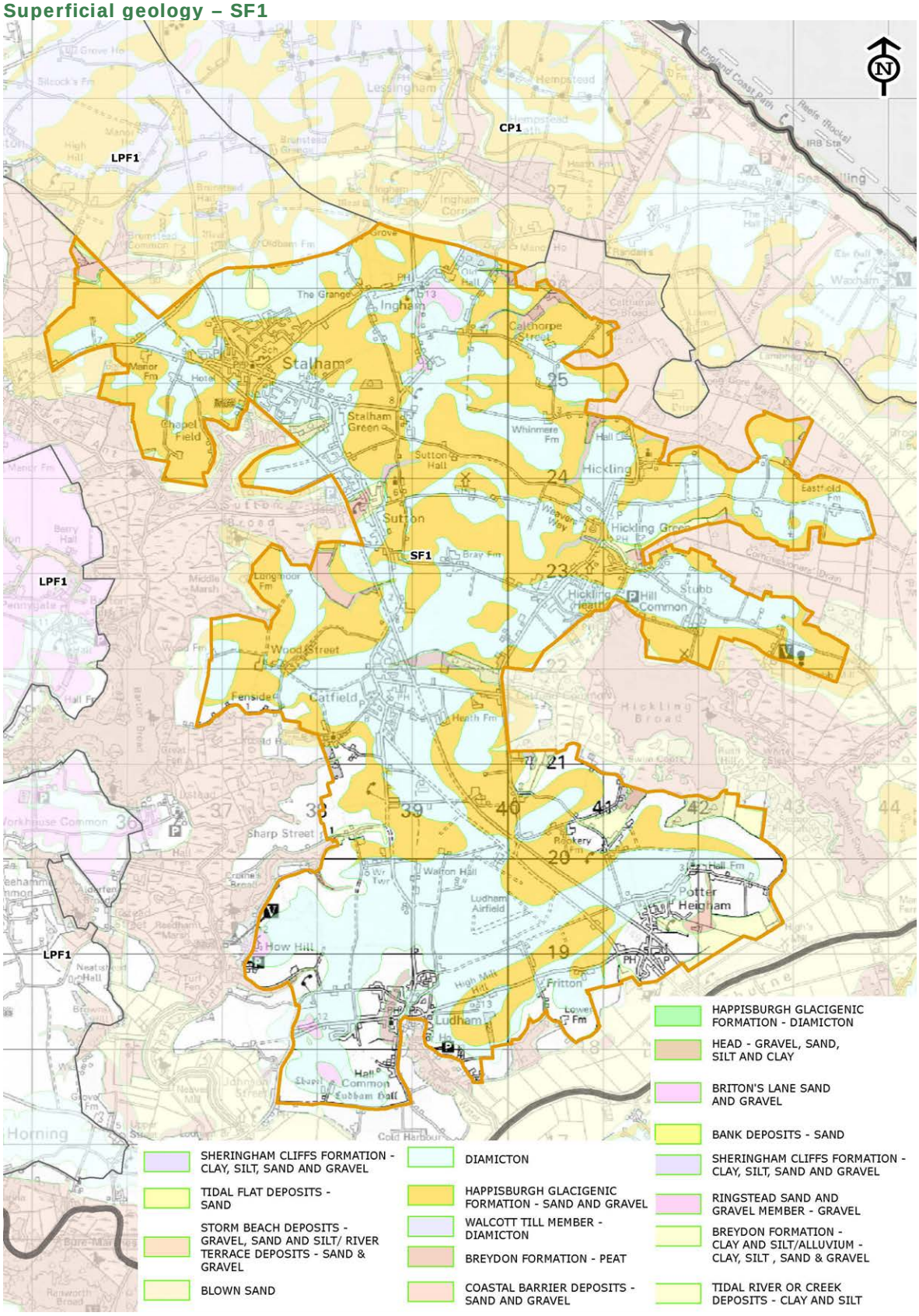
Settled Farmland (SF)

Topography and hydrology – SF1



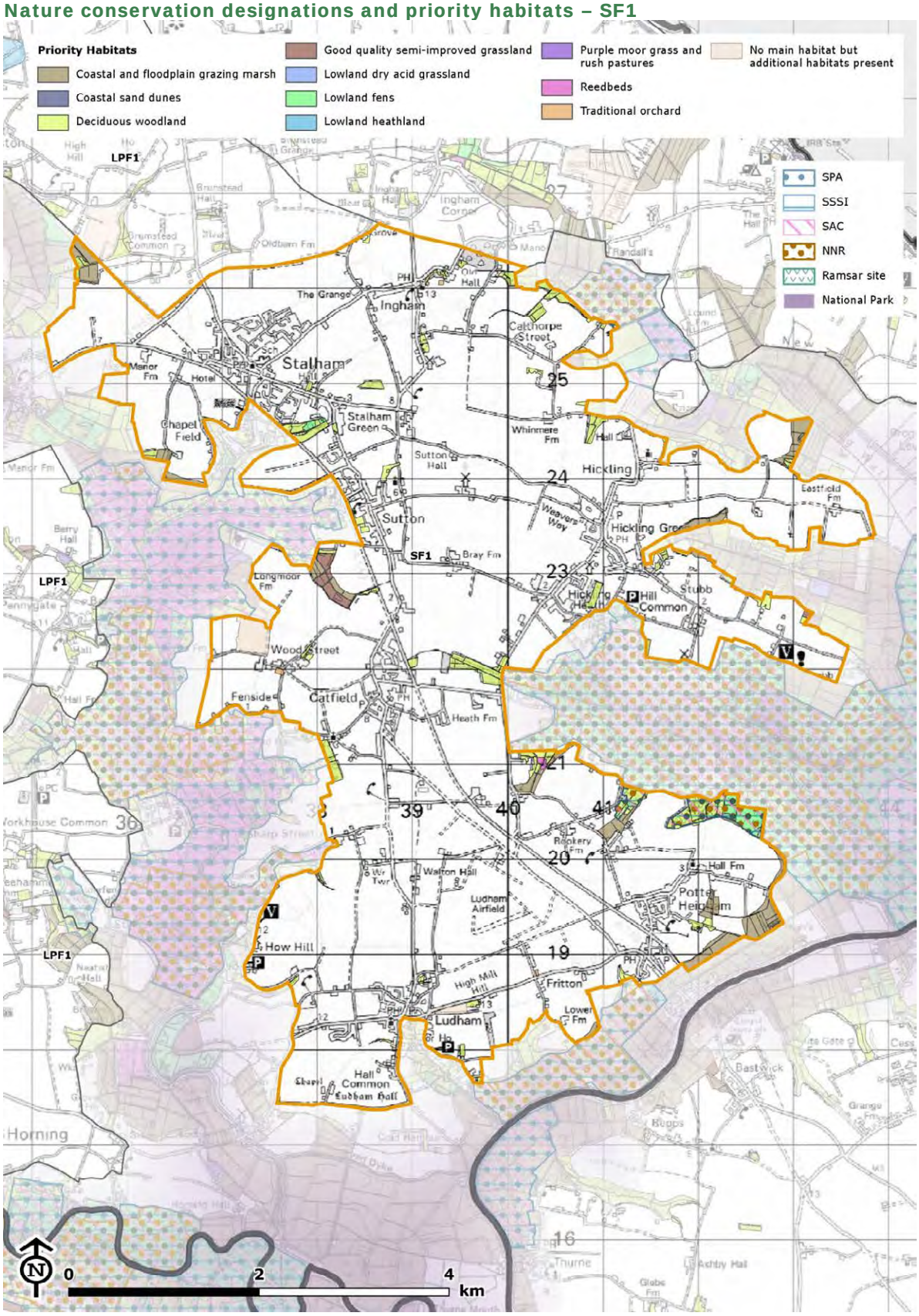
Settled Farmland (SF)

Superficial geology – SF1



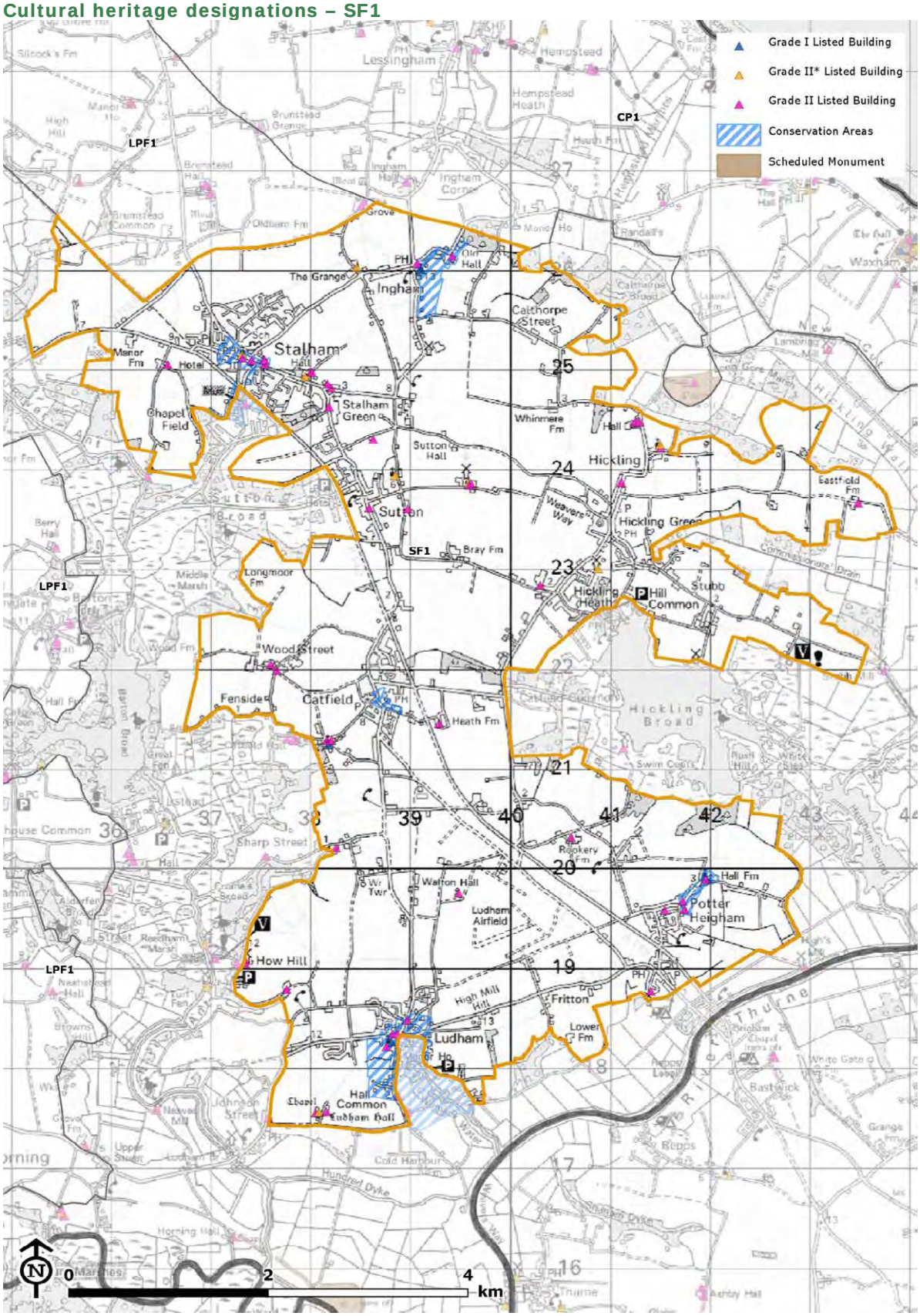
Settled Farmland (SF)

Nature conservation designations and priority habitats – SF1



Settled Farmland (SF)

Cultural heritage designations – SF1



Settled Farmland (SF)

KEY CHARACTERISTICS

1) Flat or very flat terrain, with watercourses limited to running ditches

Unconsolidated crag sands underlie the glacial sandy clay till and silts in this part of Norfolk, which borders the peat and alluvium lands of the Broads. The topography is flat with little change in levels. Most of the area is between 1m and 7m above sea level. Watercourses within the Type are limited to running ditches alongside the arable fields, some of which feed into the adjacent Broads.

2) A rural landscape in which arable land use predominates with small pockets of pasture around settlement and some farmsteads

The glacial deposits give rise to deep, well drained coarse loamy soils of predominantly very good to excellent agricultural quality (Grades 1-2). Many of the fields result from 20th century enclosure, but there are also small areas of 18-19th century enclosure.

Field sizes are large or very large on the whole and fairly regular in shape. Set aside and grassed margins are not as prevalent in this Type, probably due to the high agricultural land grade over much of the area.

3) An open landscape with large fields bounded by ditches, grassed banks and low hedges

Field boundaries on the whole consist of ditches or low grass banks, in part due to widespread hedge removal; however, there are areas of smaller fields with high hedges around settlement, which results in localised enclosed areas, and there is also new hedgerow planting in some places. The combination of arable farming and low banks or ditches tends to increase the apparent size of the landscape.

4) Low woodland cover throughout the Type

Woodland cover is very low within this landscape, and it is noticeable that copses for shooting have not been planted in such numbers as on neighbouring Types - probably as a response to the higher potential agricultural production of the land compared to lighter soils. The limited woodland present is generally restricted to small pockets associated with settlements, e.g. Sutton.

5) Mature oak trees within roadside banks are prominent features

Despite the general absence of woodland blocks and copses, in many areas the landscape exhibits a strong impression of being well-vegetated, due to the prevalence of large mature oaks lining the minor roads, and some remnant field oaks, which break up the open expanses of arable fields.

6) Settlement comprises a market town, rural villages and dispersed farmsteads

Settlement is semi-dispersed and includes Stalham, Catfield, Sutton, part of Potter Heigham, Hickling, Ludham and Ingham. The settlement structure is semi-nucleated but with considerable additional sprawl and little consistent vernacular character within or between settlements, although thatch is relatively common compared to other Types, due to proximity to the Broads. Isolated farmsteads are also present beyond the villages.

The main settlement in this area is the market town of Stalham. The southern edge of the town (within the Broads Authority area) borders the River Ant and contains a marina and the Museum of the Broads. A Conservation Area covers the town's historic core, including St. Mary's church (a Grade II* listed building).

7) A diverse road network, including the dominant A149

The road network falls into two categories: the older inter-settlement structured road network of minor roads together with the A1062 and old A149; and the newer, busy A149, an arterial route to the Broads which bisects the Type, running north to south on the trackbed of the former railway and bypassing the minor villages it once ran through. The minor roads follow no topographical features and run indirectly between settlements.

Settled Farmland (SF)

8) **A strong visual relationship with the adjacent Broads.**

The long views within this open landscape are confined in much of the area by the extensive wooded fringes of the adjacent Broads, which border the Type on three sides.

9) **Moderately long views and church towers as landmark features**

Prominent features on the skyline, which rise above the wooded Broads fringes and roadside trees, include several 14th – 15th century church towers, the water tower north of Ludham and Hickling Heath windmill. Modern agricultural and industrial buildings are also prominent in certain areas, such as around Catfield and the former Ludham airfield.

Mature oak trees line a number of roadsides within the landscape

VALUED FEATURES AND QUALITIES

1) **Strong rural character with a sense of remoteness and tranquillity**

The rural settlement pattern means there are areas of quiet rural farmland away from the main roads, and dark skies at night in between the towns and villages. These qualities are most apparent in the more isolated parts (east of Hickling and some areas bordering the Broads).

2) **Highly productive farmland**

The fertile soils support a diversity of arable and horticultural produce.

3) **Remnant semi-natural habitats**

Remnants of deciduous woodland, semi-improved grassland/pasture (often on the edge of small settlements), grazing marsh, traditional orchards and mature hedgerow and roadside oak trees, provide a sense of variety to the landscape and a connection with nature, as well as biodiversity.

4) **Historic market towns and villages with vernacular buildings**

Historic market towns and villages, many of which are designated Conservation Areas, contribute positively to the sense of history in the landscape. The use of local styles and materials, notably thatch, and presence of vernacular buildings contributes to a sense of place.

Settled Farmland (SF)

5) **Rural lanes**

Rural lanes contribute to the perception of a rural landscape and provide a sense of history.

6) **Long views punctuated by distinctive skyline features including numerous church towers**

Views of church towers as landmark features provide visual interest and a sense of history.

7) **Treed horizons**

The woodland in the neighbouring Broads valleys fringe this landscape type and provide an impression of enclosure, a feature on the skyline and reinforce the sense of place.

Ludham Conservation Area

Settled Farmland (SF)

FORCES FOR CHANGE / DETRACTORS

1) Modern agricultural practices and change

Post World War II intensification of agriculture, including spread of arable land, an enlargement of fields and modernisation of farm buildings has resulted in changes to ancient field patterns, hedgerows, narrow lanes and verges. Changing agricultural practices include a rise in pig farming which has brought about considerable landscape and visual change. There has also been increasing demand for equine related development particularly on the edge of settlements (e.g. shelters, vehicles and trailers/horse boxes, menages, field sub-division by pony tape and fencing and the installation of larger gateways). There has been some farm diversification such as glamping, camping and caravan sites, rural wedding venues, woodland adventure courses, leisure retail outlets, small scale industrial uses and storage facilities, and this is likely to continue.

2) Uncertainty regarding future agri-environment schemes following the UK's departure from the EU.

Changes to agricultural subsidies may have significant positive or negative impacts on the landscape and biodiversity.

3) Conversion of agricultural buildings and scale of new storage structures

Decline in the usefulness of traditional farm buildings has led to neglect and/or conversion of barns from rural working buildings to residential and leisure uses. Such conversions can introduce 'suburban' features such as surfaced drives / domestic style gates and fences / garden style planting and parking areas / overly large windows and external lighting.

Modern agricultural and industrial buildings (e.g. stock sheds, warehousing, barn or other complexes), are often large in scale, constructed from non-traditional materials such as steel, concrete and aluminium cladding, and sited in locations away from or prominently within existing farm complexes. These tend to be prominent within this landscape due to the flat landform, and can detract from the prevailing landscape character. They are particularly noticeable around Catfield and Sutton and parts of Potter Heigham.

4) Edge of town development and settlement expansion

There is continuing urban development pressure on the edge of the Stalham, which contrasts with the majority of the rural character area. Post war housing development on settlement edges, e.g. Catfield and Sutton, has undermined the traditional local vernacular.

The increasing wealth in the area is demonstrated by numbers of properties being enlarged / improved and sub-divided all of which have affected the appearance and character of settlements, often in individually modest but cumulatively significant ways (fencing replacing hedged boundaries / the loss of large gardens with mature trees and the resultant massing of buildings).

Continued increases in light pollution associated with new built form and infrastructure development will affect the sense of remoteness, tranquillity and dark skies associated with this landscape.

5) Demand for isolated new homes

Demand for isolated new homes can affect the area's sense of remoteness and historic, rural character. Features such as lighting, fencing, gates and other items of domestic curtilage can adversely impact the character of sparsely populated areas.

6) Changes to the road network

Development of the road network, notably the A149 which transects the area, and road upgrades including kerbing, engineered drainage, signage and associated street lighting results in a reduction in the rural character of roads and adversely affecting dark skies and tranquillity.

7) Loss of traditional land uses and habitats

There has been a decrease in hedgerows and decline in traditional woodland management skills

Settled Farmland (SF)

over the years, which is threatening the age and species diversity of semi-natural woodlands and the hedgerow network. Traditional orchards have also been lost resulting in a loss of cultural heritage and biodiversity.

8) Tree diseases and invasive species

Ash dieback and other tree diseases may have a significant impact on the composition of woodland and hedgerow trees within the District and this Type. Invasive species have the potential to have a significant impact on native biodiversity that can result in landscape scale changes

9) Climate change

Climate change could result in the need for new crops, changes in farming practices, the introduction of new pests and diseases affecting native species, increased demand for irrigation, increased demand for / efficiency of renewable energy types.

A changing climate will result in a change in the distribution and abundance of species that can result in landscape scale changes.

Climate change may result in different recreational patterns and use that could place increased pressure on the landscape for more tourism related development.

10) Renewable energy development

Continued development pressure for renewable energy has resulted in pressure for renewable forms of energy generation including wind turbines, solar panels (including field scale systems), biofuels, and anaerobic digestion plants associated with farms.

New housing development on the edge of Stalham

Settled Farmland (SF)

LANDSCAPE VISION

The vision for this landscape type is a well-managed and actively farmed rural landscape that makes the most of field margins, restored grassland and hedgerows for biodiversity to provide a network of semi-natural features, whilst protecting the highly productive agricultural soils and farmland. The intrinsic rural character of the landscape and traditional character of settlements, farmsteads and historic skyline features will be conserved and enhanced, with new development well integrated into the landscape and strengthened recreational links within the Type and to the neighbouring Broads via biodiverse rural lanes, footpaths and cycle routes; maximising opportunities to enjoy and understand the landscape, and dark skies at night.

LANDSCAPE GUIDELINES

1) Improve ecological connectivity in the landscape through conserving and expanding areas of woodland, ponds and other non-arable and semi-natural habitats

Retain and manage areas of woodland and trees, including those that contribute to the setting of the villages and buildings in the landscape. Reinstate and create hedges, grassland, orchards, ponds and watercourses where these have been lost or removed from the landscape. Enlarge areas of pasture, woodland, scrub, heathland and arable margins, with a focus on re-connecting fragmented habitats and improving ecological connectivity for a variety of species including great crested newts, reptiles, bats, birds and insects.

Support landowners and agricultural subsidy schemes that invest in natural capital and ecosystem services. These can include, but are not limited to, creating and restoring ponds and 'ghost' ponds and managing and enhancing the range of habitats associated with bats, barn owls and farmland birds, providing roosting, nesting/resting and feeding opportunities throughout the year (woodland margins, fallow plots, overwintered stubble and insect-rich foraging habitats).

2) Conserve sense of rurality

This open and rural landscape area could be sensitive to increases in built development, such as wind turbines, telecom masts, housing and industrial activity.

Ensure the redevelopment of redundant barn complexes both within, on the edge and especially outside settlement boundaries, is sensitively undertaken avoiding use of suburban features such as surfaced drives, domestic style gates and fences, ornamental planting, overly large windows or excessive external lighting. The same should be considered for new standalone houses in the countryside. Impact both by day and night should be a consideration to maintain the rural character and dark skies. Consider opportunities to address adverse light pollution by means of replacement downlighting or complete removal of lighting, taking into account the appropriateness of the latest lighting technologies, e.g. different types of LEDs which reduce light spill and glare.

Maintain the rural features that contribute to character, biodiversity and historical continuity, including rural lanes, hedgerows, banks and verges, gateposts and walls – avoid road widening and urbanising features such as kerbs, lighting and excessive signage.

New planting associated with development should blend with existing features rather than simply trying to screen new development - layers of vegetation may be more appropriate than one thick screen using species local to the area.

3) Conserve the character of villages

Retain the compact character of development in villages to avoid impinging on the rural character of the surrounding landscape. Avoid linear sprawl. Ensure any new development is well integrated into the landscape and does not form a harsh edge.

Seek to enhance and reinforce those areas of villages which do not reinforce the typical character and vernacular of the settlement, such as those with post-war council housing on the outskirts.

Settled Farmland (SF)

4) Prepare for climate change and potential loss of features through disease

Manage and enhance the health and structure of woodlands to improve resilience in the face of climate change and new pests and diseases, supporting and re-introducing traditional management practices where appropriate, such as coppicing. Replant ageing or diseased specimens (with climate and disease hardy species if possible) to ensure the future survival of these features.

Integrate any biofuel crops into the landscape by avoiding excessively large 'blocks' of biofuels and using rotations/species which do not appear excessively higher than existing hedgerows (which could be allowed to grow in height).

5) Retain the character of the skyline

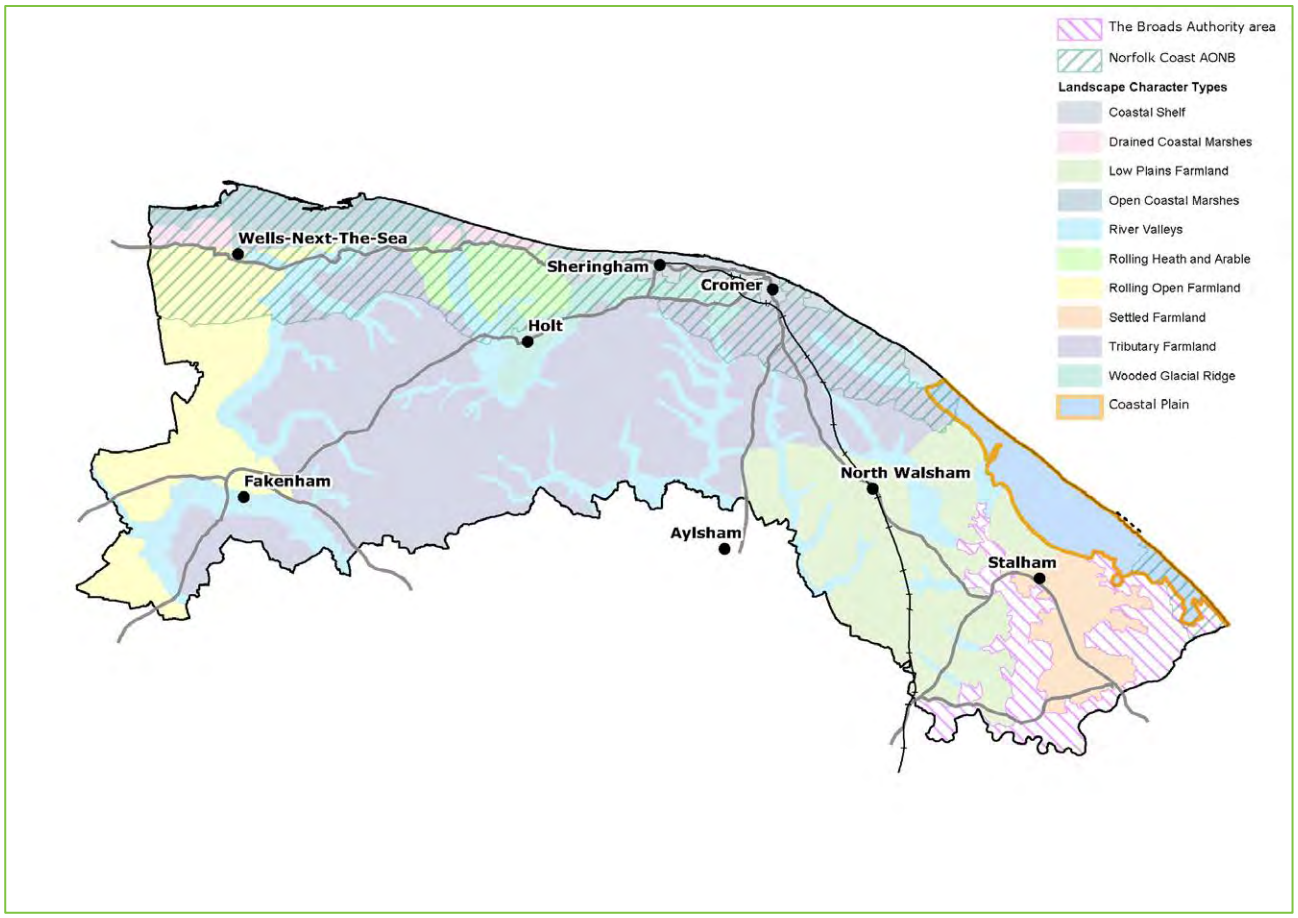
Maintain a treed skyline on which church towers are features. Ensure new development does not compete with the church towers for prominence so they remain key landmark features on the skyline.

6) Enhance public rights of way

Aim to improve access by linking existing public rights of way, e.g. Weaver's Way long distance footpath, with neighbouring villages and the Broads, to provide improved non-car routes and enhance opportunities for enjoying and understanding the landscape.

The church tower of Holy Trinity, Ingham, a distinctive landmark feature on the skyline

Coastal Plain (CP)



Coastal Plain (CP)

SUMMARY

The Coastal Plain Type is characterised by a flat or nearly flat open coastal landscape of predominantly Grade 1 arable farmland with some more naturalistic habitats, especially in the south towards the Broads and along the dynamic coastal margin.

The Type meets the open sea along the full extent of its eastern boundary. The north and west parts of the Type gradually transition to the inland Tributary Farmland and Low Plains Types as the landscape becomes more undulating and the influence of the coast diminishes. Small areas also border the River Valley Type at the Mun and the Ant Valleys. The southern part of the Type borders the more wooded Broads Valleys (Broads Authority Executive Area). The Norfolk Coast AONB overlaps with the Type at its northern and southern ends.

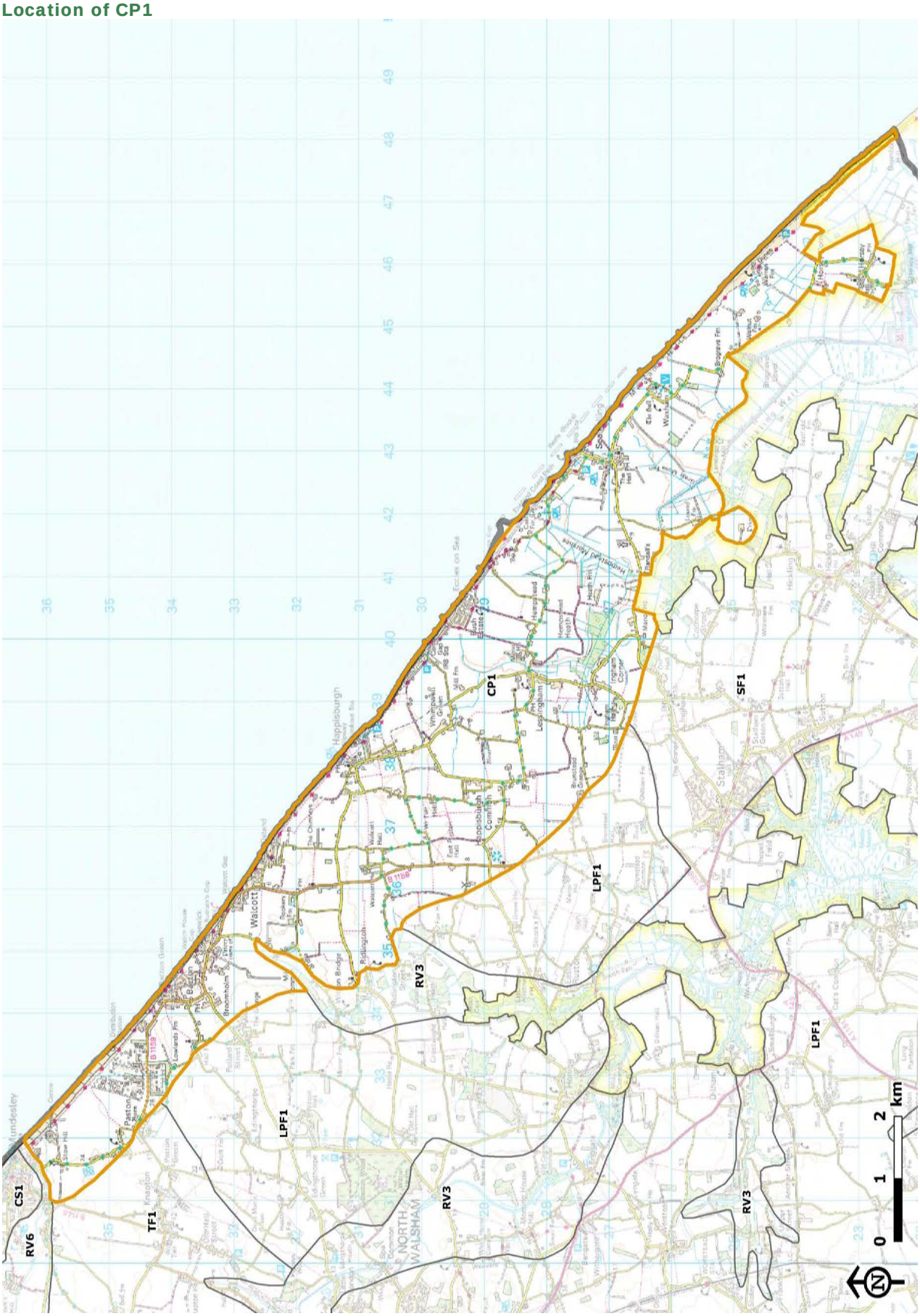
Component Areas

There is one continuous area of Coastal Plain in North Norfolk:

CP1 – Bacton to Waxham Coastal Plain

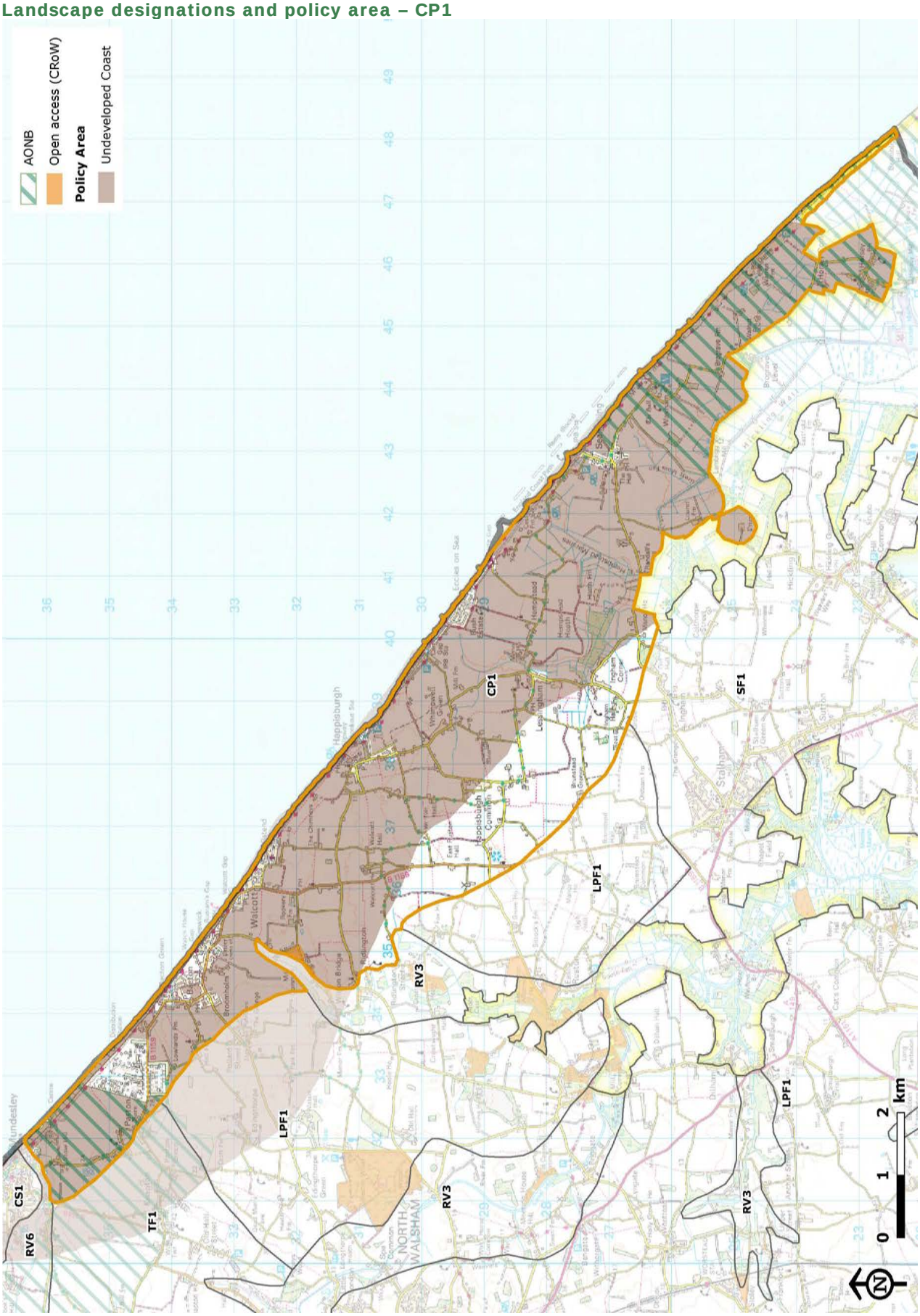
Coastal Plain (CP)

Location of CP1



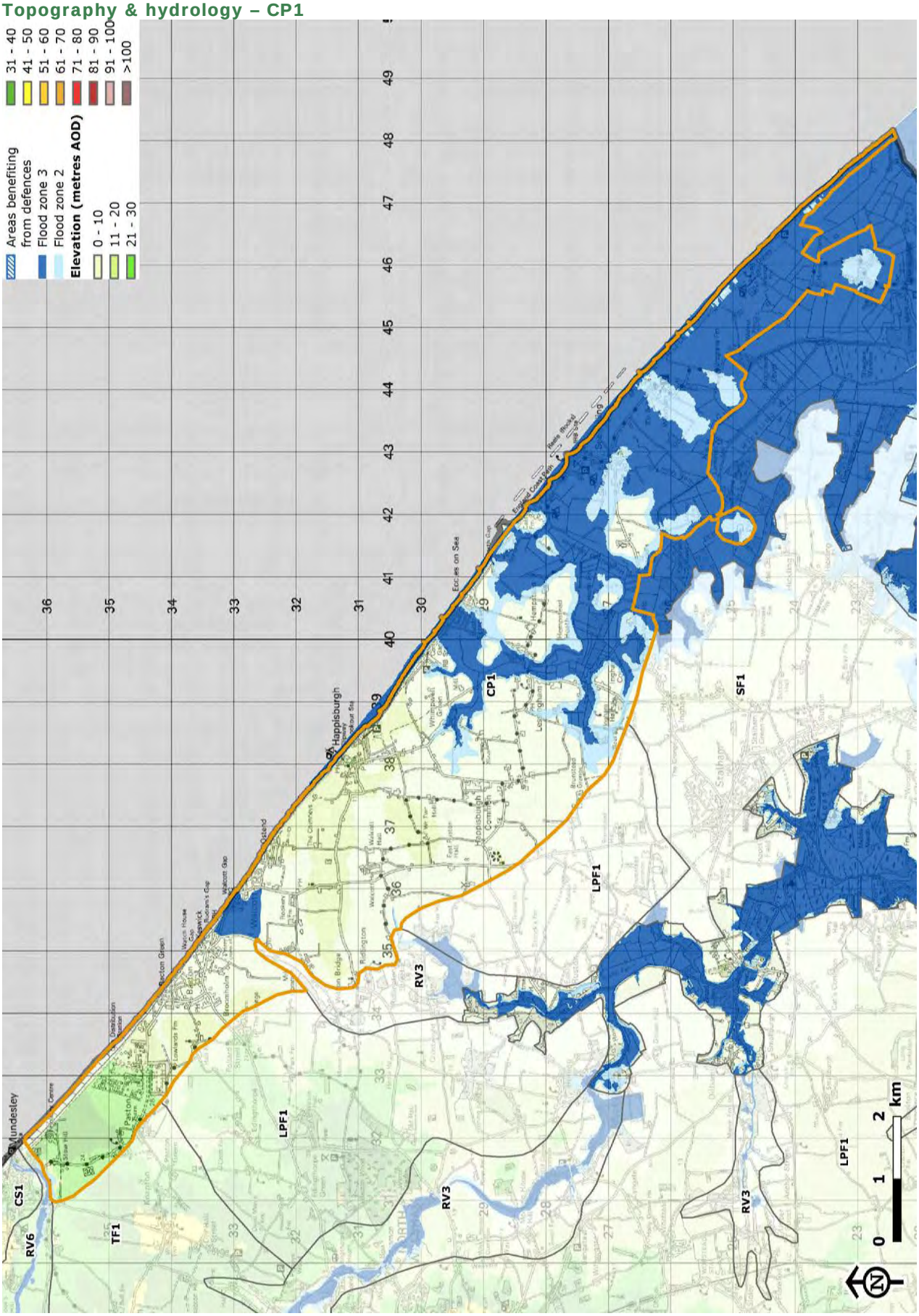
Coastal Plain (CP)

Landscape designations and policy area – CP1



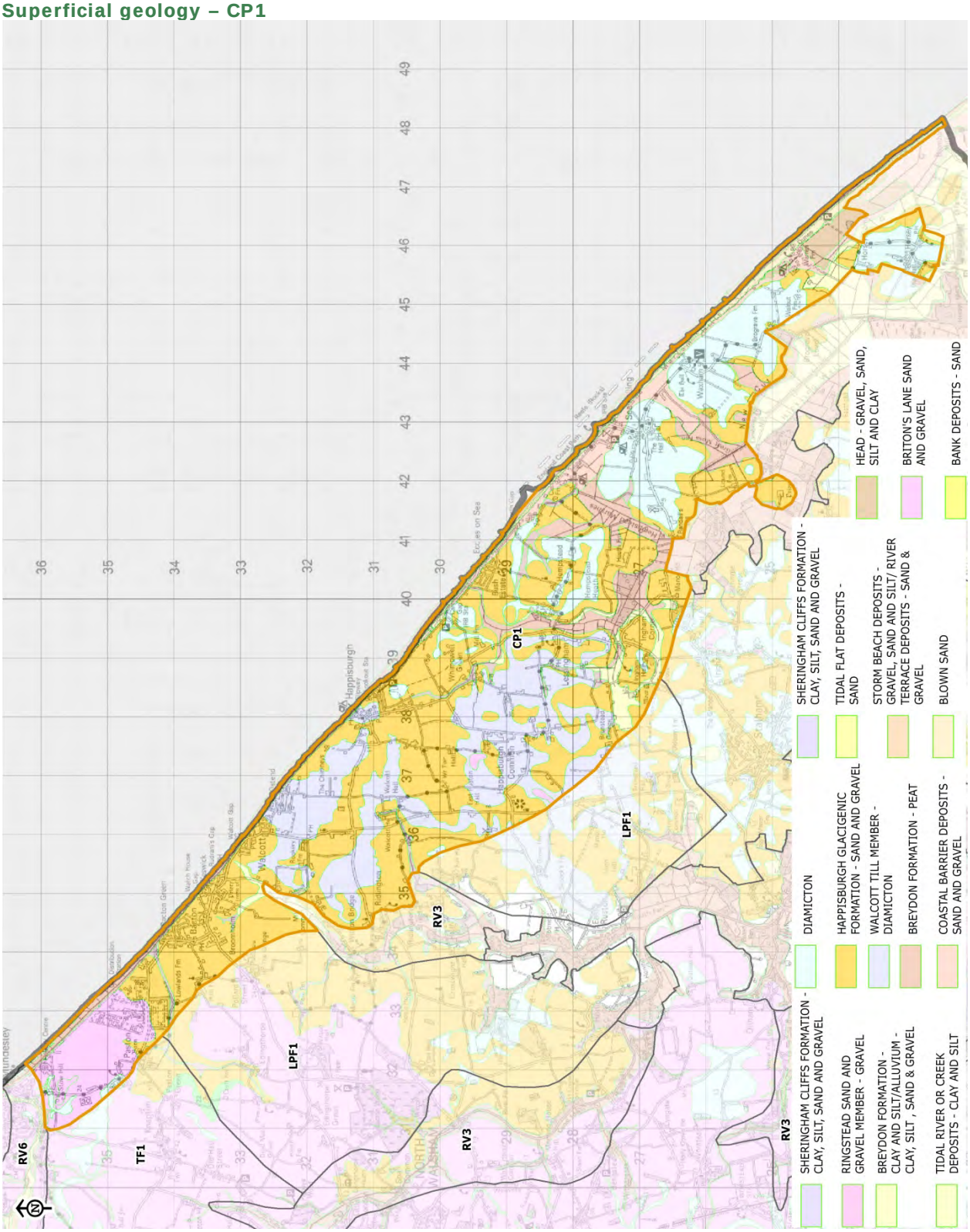
Coastal Plain (CP)

Topography & hydrology – CP1



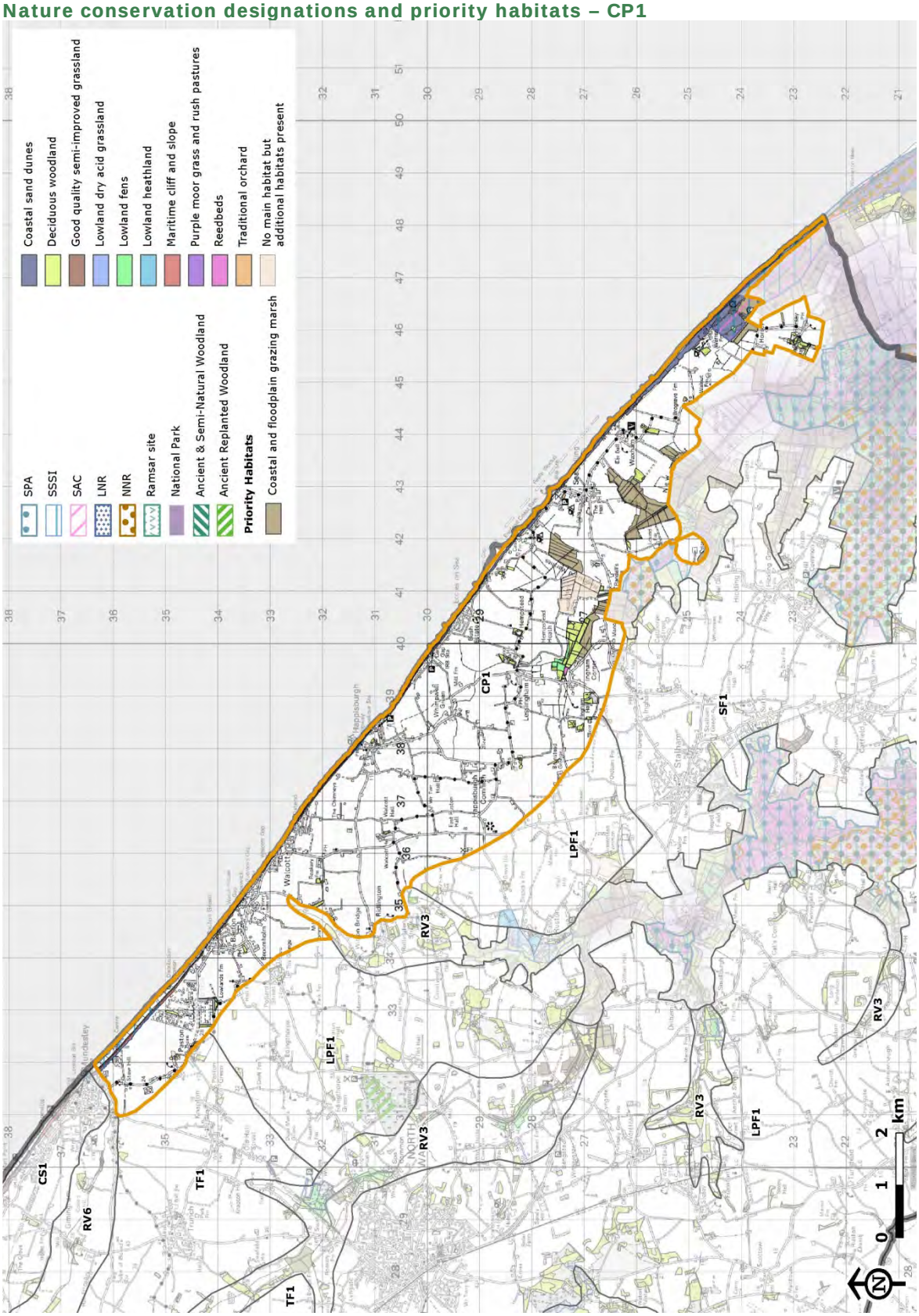
Coastal Plain (CP)

Superficial geology – CP1



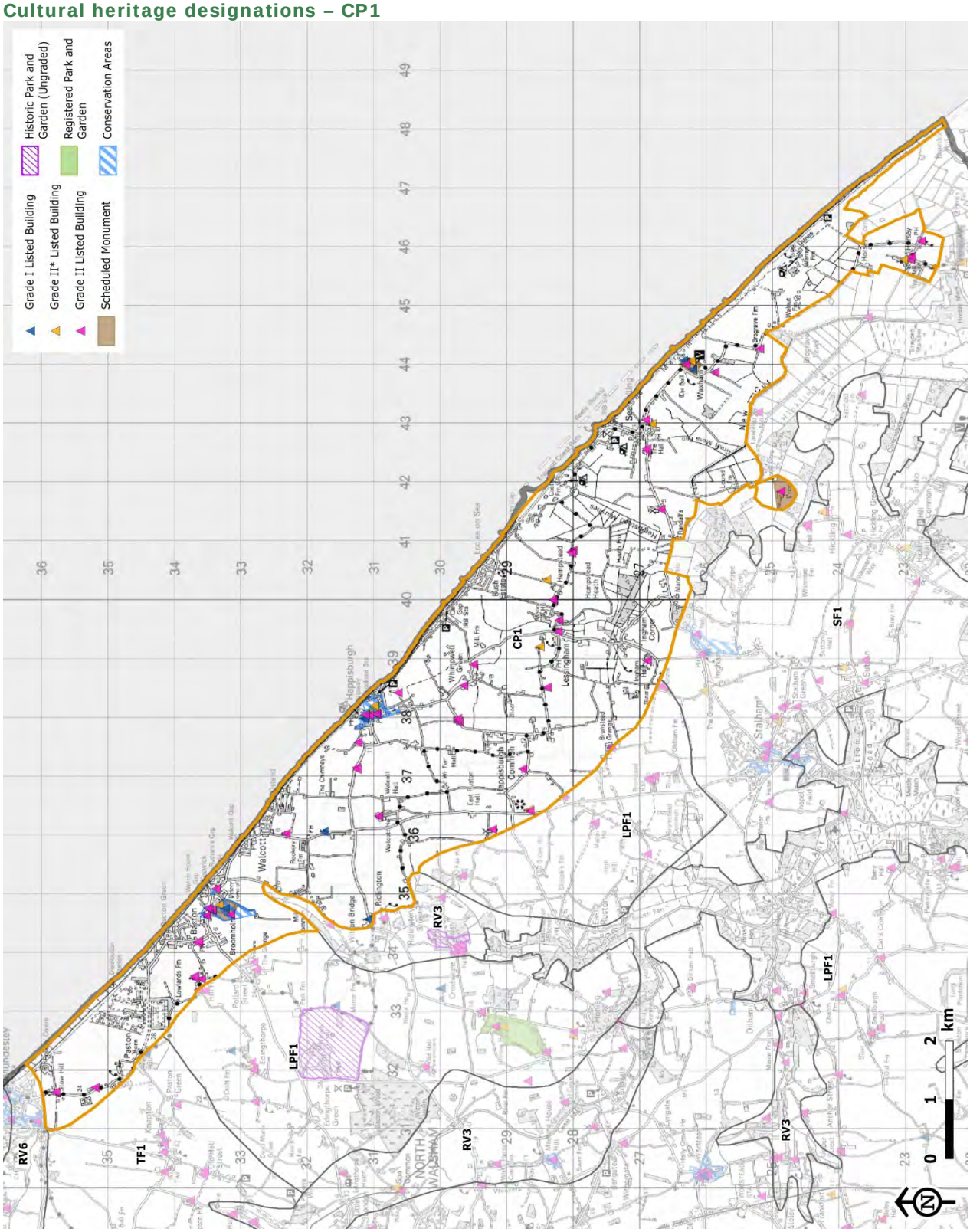
Coastal Plain (CP)

Nature conservation designations and priority habitats – CP1



Coastal Plain (CP)

Cultural heritage designations – CP1



Coastal Plain (CP)

KEY CHARACTERISTICS

1) **Flat or very flat terrain, with some minor but noticeable undulations**

The undulations are of considerable importance in defining human use of the landscape. Rising 10m at most, these have been the sites of choice for farmsteads and particularly for churches (Walcott and East Ruston). The gently rising coastal settlement of Happisburgh with its church tower and iconic lighthouse is a prominent landscape feature.

2) **An eroding coastal edge comprising low cliffs along the northern stretch, including the nationally significant Mundesley Cliffs SSSI and coastal dunes to the south, both of which are Priority Habitats**

These formations have arisen from glacial deposits (tills, sands and gravels) and the coastal edge is undergoing continued marine erosion from the east.

3) **A rural landscape in which arable land use predominates with small pockets of pasture around settlement and some farmsteads**

The glacial deposits give rise to deep, well drained coarse loamy soils and some of the largest areas of Grade 1 (Excellent) agricultural land in the county, and therefore agricultural land use is maximised with few areas of set aside or grassed margins. Pasture, if present, tends to be associated with settlement or along the coastal edge, or as a consequence of recent arable reversion, often for horses.

Field pattern is predominantly geometric and field size varies from large to medium, with some small pasture fields near cottages and the older settlements.

4) **A very open, large-scale and windswept landscape with large fields bounded by ditches and/or banks, often without a hedge**

Many hedgerow removals took place in the 20th century due to agricultural intensification, and where a hedge is present it is often very low and scrubby but may be multi-species. The combination of arable farming and low banks or ditches tends to increase the apparent size and expanse of the landscape.

5) **Low level of woodland cover throughout the Type**

Where present, woodland tends to comprise small copses of deciduous and coniferous trees, often associated with isolated farmsteads, mature wooded belts around larger 'rectory' properties or small scrubby woodland in lower lying areas. Trees within coastal settlements are virtually absent or small / windblown.

6) **Settlement comprises dispersed rural villages, farmsteads and coastal holiday development**

The traditional settlement pattern is that of historic villages and scattered farmsteads/ halls. Older settlements such as Happisburgh, Lessingham and Ingham Corner have particularly distinctive vernacular architecture, with coursed high quality flintwork and small cottages with large gardens. Thatched roofs become more prevalent in the south approaching the Broads. A number of historic barn complexes are also present within this landscape, including Waxham Great Barn (Grade I) and Paston Great Barn (Grade II*), both Scheduled Monuments which date from the late 1500s and are constructed of flint with thatched roofs.

Settlement along the coastal fringe is influenced by the gradual ad-hoc spread of holiday plots for structures ranging from C19th semi-detached holiday houses, beach-hut type shed 'parks' (e.g. Bacton and Walcott, prefabricated inter-war and post war bungalow type holiday homes (now predominantly permanent homes) to estates of holiday flats and bungalows (mostly 1960s/70s) which have become permanent homes and more recently areas of static caravans.

7) **Substantial industrial development at Bacton Gas Terminals**

The Bacton Gas Terminals site opened in 1968 and is a dominant feature (particularly its tall

Coastal Plain (CP)

telecom masts) in a range of views within and outside this landscape Type.

8) A network of minor rural roads feeding off the B1159

The road network is dominated by the B1159, a single straight (possibly Roman) road, which serves as the main feeder road to service the coastal settlements. It cuts through the landscape irrespective of settlement or other topographical features.

9) A higher than average number of public rights of way

A network of linked footpaths and bridleways traverse this landscape type, making the whole area particularly accessible.

10) A remote southern area situated between coastal dunes and the Broads

The southern part of the Type is isolated and very low lying, with a predominance of drainage ditches alongside the arable fields, which give way to substantial areas of grazing marsh, wet woodland and coastal sand dunes.

11) Long views along the coast, and church towers as landmark features

Church towers provide the most distinctive features on the skyline within this open landscape; notably the particularly prominent and iconic tower of St. Mary's, Happisburgh (Grade II*). Other skyline features include the Happisburgh lighthouse, a single wind turbine, a water tower, the Bacton Gas Terminals masts and longer distance views of the Trimingham dome to the north. Due to the flat topography, even small features can appear prominent, particularly where they coincide with ridges.

View north towards Bacton Gas Terminals from Happisburgh church tower

Coastal Plain (CP)

VALUED FEATURES AND QUALITIES

1) **The strong sense of remoteness, tranquillity and wildness including dark skies in undisturbed areas**

   These qualities are most apparent in the isolated and remote south of the area bordering the Broads, and to a lesser extent within quieter parts of the inland farmland.

2) **Highly productive farmland**

   The fertile soils support a diversity of arable produce.

3) **Remnant semi-natural habitats**

   Including coastal grassland and scrub, traditional orchards, grazing marsh, wildflower roadside verges, coastal sand dunes and wet woodland which are relatively rare and provide a sense of place and a connection with nature, as well as a rich biodiversity.

4) **Historic villages, farmsteads and barns**

   Contribute positively to the sense of history in the landscape. The use of local styles and materials, notably coursed flint and thatched roofs, and presence of vernacular buildings contributes to the unique identity of the area.

5) **20th century wooden bungalows, chalets and wartime defensive structures**

   The wooden and board bungalows and wooden chalets at Bacton which provide evidence of the cultural history of the area, particularly as a destination for tourism from the early 1900s onwards, whilst former wartime defensive structures (pill boxes and spigot mortar posts) along the coastal fringe give significant character and interpretation to the history of the area.

6) **Rural lanes and footpaths**

   Rural lanes contribute to the perception of a rural landscape and provide a sense of history. The prolific network of public rights of way makes this landscape notably permeable.

7) **Long views punctuated by distinctive skyline features including numerous church towers**

   The open coastal landscape imparts a distinctive quality of light and large skies, whilst views of church towers as landmark features provide visual interest and a sense of history.

Many of the Valued Features and Qualities of the Coastal Plain are considered to contribute positively to Key Qualities of Natural Beauty of the Norfolk Coast AONB, as set out within the current AONB Management Plan. These Key Qualities include:

- Dynamic character and geomorphology of the coast
- Strong and distinctive links between land and sea
- Diversity and integrity of landscape, seascape and settlement character
- Exceptionally important, varied and distinctive biodiversity, based on locally distinctive habitats
- Nationally and internationally important geology
- Sense of remoteness, tranquillity and wildness.

Coastal Plain (CP)

The open coastal landscape with church tower and wind turbine as prominent skyline features

FORCES FOR CHANGE / DETRACTORS

1) **Modern agricultural practices and change**

Post World War II intensification of agriculture, including spread of arable, an enlargement of fields and modernisation of farm buildings resulted in changes to ancient field patterns, hedgerows, narrow lanes and verges. More recently there has been increased pressure for farm diversification, such as field-scale solar systems, farm shops, , new tourism/recreation-related activities including glamping, and camping.

2) **Uncertainty regarding future agri-environment agricultural subsidy schemes following the UK's departure from the EU.**

Changes to agricultural subsidies will have significant impacts on the landscape and biodiversity. These could be positive or negative.

3) **Intensive coastal development**

This has resulted in prominent built development along the coast without a cohesive style or sense of place, accompanied by introduction of lighting. Coastal erosion has resulted in a need for coastal defences which have been added to over the years. The introduction of the Bacton Gas Terminal in 1968 resulted in industrialisation of this part of the coast. The terminal is a significant part of the national energy network. Any future changes to this site will need to be appropriately managed within the landscape setting.

4) **Continuing coastal erosion**

The section of coastline between Cromer and Happisburgh is made up of an assemblage of dynamic coastal landforms from nationally important Pleistocene cliffs at Mundesley to the fixed dune system at Winterton. The coast line is eroding in places and significant parts of the landscape are at risk from tidal flood and erosion of defences directly threatening some settlements.

5) **Conversion of agricultural buildings and scale of new storage structures**

Decline in the usefulness of traditional farm buildings has led to neglect and/or conversion of barns from rural working buildings to residential and leisure uses. Such conversions can introduce 'suburban' features such as surfaced drives / domestic style gates and fences / garden style planting and parking areas / overly large windows and external lighting.

Modern agricultural buildings (e.g. stock sheds, warehousing, barn or other complexes) often

Coastal Plain (CP)

large in scale and of non-traditional materials such as steel, concrete and aluminium cladding, sited in locations away from or prominently within existing farm complexes can be very prominent features in this flat landscape, detracting from the prevailing landscape character.

6) Edge of settlement and infill development

The increasing wealth in the area is demonstrated by numbers of properties being enlarged / improved and sub-divided all of which have affected the appearance and character of settlements, often in individually modest but cumulatively significant ways (fencing replacing hedged boundaries / the loss of large gardens with mature trees and the resultant massing of buildings).

Continued increases in light pollution associated with new built form and infrastructure development will affect the sense of remoteness, tranquillity and dark skies associated with this landscape.

7) Demand for isolated new homes

Demand for isolated new homes can result in buildings with a non-traditional character. Lighting can be prominent in otherwise sparsely populated areas and this can affect the area's sense of remoteness and historic, rural character.

8) Changes to the road network

Development of the road network and road upgrades, including kerbing, signage and associated street lighting, can result in a reduction in the rural character of roads and can adversely affect dark skies and tranquillity.

9) Loss of traditional land uses and habitats

There has been a decrease in hedgerows and decline in traditional woodland management skills over the years which are threatening the age and species diversity of semi-natural woodlands and the hedgerow network. Traditional orchards have also been lost resulting in a loss of cultural heritage and biodiversity.

10) Tree diseases

Tree diseases such as ash dieback and sudden oak death are becoming more prevalent and this may have a significant impact on the composition of woodland and hedgerow trees within the District and this Type.

11) Renewable energy development

The need for renewable energy has and will result in pressure for renewable forms of energy generation including wind turbines, solar panels (including field scale systems), biofuels, and anaerobic digestion plants associated with farms.

Offshore wind farms may also affect views from this Type, diluting the perception of remoteness. The continuing development of large scale off-shore wind farms has resulted in large infrastructure projects within this Landscape Type and remains a force for change. Elements include temporary disturbance caused by trenching for cable routes and the introduction of permanent structures such as on-shore sub stations and shore connection compounds.

12) Climate Change

Tidal flooding is a significant hazard along with coastal flood risk due to a combination of increased tidal levels and wave heights. Coastal erosion and increased flood extents is a significant factor directly threatening some settlements

Climate change could result in the need for different crops, changes in farming practices, an increased requirement for reservoirs, and the introduction of new pests and diseases affecting native species.

Tree diseases could be exacerbated by a changing climate, with non-native, drought tolerant species outcompeting native trees resulting in a change in woodland composition and associated impacts on biodiversity.

Coastal Plain (CP)

Coastal erosion of the soft sand cliffs at Happisburgh

LANDSCAPE VISION

The vision for this landscape type is a well-managed and actively farmed rural landscape, with a wild coastal edge incorporating resilient semi-natural habitats and opportunities to enjoy the landscape and the scenic long views along the coast, and dark skies at night. The mosaic of habitats will stretch inland to re-connect with those in neighbouring areas and the Broads, whilst the highly productive agricultural soils and farmland will be protected and sensitively managed, including from the risk of soil erosion. The intrinsic rural character of the landscape and traditional character of settlements, farmsteads and historic skyline features will be conserved and enhanced, with new development well integrated into the landscape and strengthened recreational links via biodiverse rural lanes, footpaths and cycle routes. Large scale on-shore infrastructure projects to support the offshore wind farms will be complete and any above ground structures will be well integrated into the local landscape.

LANDSCAPE GUIDELINES

1) Conserve the coastal character, sense of remoteness and tranquillity

Plan to sustainably manage visitor pressure at 'hotspots' (e.g. Horsey beach car park) along this ecologically fragile section of coastline, in conjunction with the AONB Management Plan, such as by developing improved public transport connections (bus routes) and new recreational footpaths and cycle routes with enhanced interpretation of the landscape and nature, encouraging people to explore inland as an alternative to the coastal strip.

New tourist facilities such as camping and glamping should be located close to existing facilities and well integrated into the landscape setting.

Conserve and enhance the strong sense of remoteness, tranquillity and wildness (and dark skies) within parts of the area, which contributes to the Norfolk Coast AONB.

Coastal Plain (CP)

2) Conserve sense of rurality

This open and rural landscape area could be sensitive to increases in built development, such as wind turbines, telecom masts, housing and industrial activity.

Ensure the redevelopment of redundant barn complexes both within, on the edge and especially outside settlement boundaries, is sensitively undertaken avoiding use of suburban features such as surfaced drives, domestic style gates and fences, ornamental planting, overly large windows or excessive external lighting. The same should be considered for new stand-alone houses in the countryside. Impact both by day and night should be a consideration to maintain the rural character and dark skies. Consider opportunities to address adverse light pollution by means of replacement downlighting or complete removal of lighting, taking into account the appropriateness of the latest lighting technologies, e.g. different types of LEDs which reduce light spill and glare.

Maintain the rural features that contribute to character, biodiversity and historical continuity, including rural lanes, hedgerows, banks and verges, gateposts and walls – avoid road widening and urbanising features such as kerbs, lighting and excessive signage.

New planting associated with development should blend with existing features rather than simply trying to screen new development: layers of vegetation may be more appropriate than one thick screen using species local to the area.

Encourage opportunities to better integrate the coastal caravan and chalet parks within the landscape, by new planting in conjunction with potentially reduced densities of units.

3) Manage the changing coastline

The current Shoreline Management Plan advocates a strategic programme of managed coastal realignment with short, medium and long term aims which include minimising the rate of impact on key assets such as Bacton Gas Terminal and the settlements along this vulnerable stretch of coastline. Specific measures will include rock defences and beach recharge, along with policies incorporating economic and social mitigation. All elements of this programme will need to balance and manage key defences while planning for longer term retreat and relocation taking into account the prevailing landscape characteristics.

4) Conserve and expand the mosaic of semi-natural habitats

Maintain and expand grassland, scrub, hedge and other associated habitats for bats, especially in the 6km radius of Paston Barn Special Area of Conservation (SAC). Protect the remaining traditional orchards which are a priority habitat for rare species (e.g. noble chafer beetle) and an important element of the cultural heritage of the area, and encourage the planting of new traditional orchards to improve habitat connectivity and resilience. Retain and manage mature trees, hedges, paddocks and pasture, including those that contribute to the setting of the villages and buildings in the landscape. Restore hedgerows, wet grassland and reed beds alongside the ditched watercourses where these have been lost, and enlarge existing remnants to re-connect fragmented habitats, particularly to join up with the neighbouring Broads.

Maintain and restore areas of coastal sand dune and cliff habitats and encourage the creation of grassland and other semi-natural habitats on land behind.

Support landowners and agri-environment schemes in managing and enhancing the range of habitats associated with farmland birds and pollinators, providing nesting/resting and feeding opportunities throughout the year (fallow plots, overwintered stubble and insect-rich foraging habitats).

5) Enhance the ecological and landscape character of the Bacton Gas Terminals site

Particularly in conjunction with any future development of these facilities. This could include managing the generous road verges alongside the B1159 Bacton Road for the benefit of wildflowers and pollinators, and increasing strategic native woodland/hedgerow screen planting on the more exposed eastern side of the site.

Coastal Plain (CP)

6) Conserve the character of villages and other historic built features

Retain the compact character of development in villages to avoid impinging on the rural character of the surrounding landscape. Avoid linear sprawl. Ensure any new development is well integrated into the landscape and does not form a harsh edge.

Seek to enhance and reinforce those areas of villages which have degraded or unfocused styles / character, which is often at odds with the character of the centre of the settlements.

Preserve the timber framed bungalows / holiday huts and wartime defensive structures which have historical value and contribute to the unique character of this coastal landscape.

7) Prepare for climate change, continuing coastal erosion and potential loss of features through disease

Manage and enhance the health and structure of woodlands to improve resilience in the face of climate change and new pests and diseases, supporting and re-introducing traditional management practices where appropriate, such as coppicing. Replant ageing or diseased specimens (with climate and disease hardy species if possible) to ensure the future survival of these features.

Integrate any biofuel crops into the landscape by avoiding excessively large 'blocks' of biofuels and using rotations/species which do not appear excessively higher than existing hedgerows (which could be allowed to grow in height).

Plan for continuing coastal erosion, sea level rise and associated increases in flooding behind the coastal dunes and sea defences.

Ensure that large infrastructure projects related to the off-shore wind farm developments are assimilated into their landscape setting through appropriate design, scale, and landscape mitigation.

8) Retain the character of the skyline

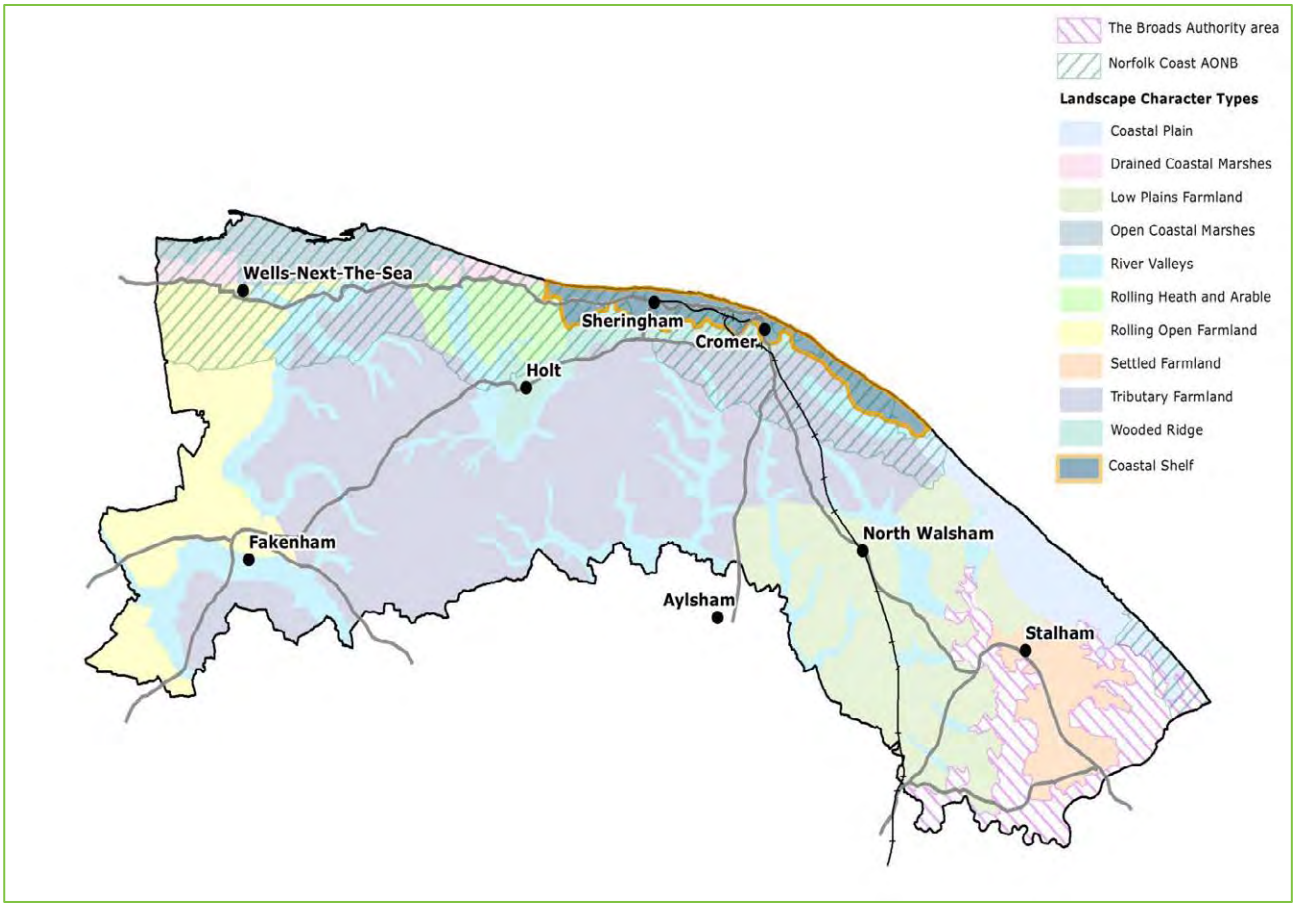
Ensure new development does not compete with the church towers for prominence so they remain key landmark features on the skyline.

9) Enhance public rights of way

Aim to improve access, both along the coast and inland, by sensitively managing and linking existing public rights of way, e.g. Norfolk Coast Path National Trail, with neighbouring villages and the Broads, to provide improved non-car routes and enhance opportunities for enjoying and understanding the landscape.

Mundesley beach and cliffs

Coastal Shelf (CS)



Coastal Shelf (CS)

SUMMARY

The Coastal Shelf type is characterised by a coastal strip of land, around 12 miles in length yet only 1 mile deep, which incorporates some of the District's principal settlements, sandwiched between the Cromer Ridge and the sea. Settlement is nestled within pockets of arable farmland and woodland, some of which are markedly rural and unspoilt. The presence of the historic holiday towns of Sheringham and Cromer, combined with the sandy beaches and frequent cliffs along the coast, creates a strong focus for tourism.

The more undeveloped parts of the Coastal Shelf type lie within the Norfolk Coast AONB, whilst the main settlements (Sheringham, Cromer, Overstrand and Mundesley) and their immediate surroundings are excluded from this designation. Similarly, North Norfolk's Undeveloped Coast policy area applies to all parts of the type excluding the built-up areas. The western edge of the type is adjacent to, but outside, the North Norfolk Heritage Coast.

The Type adjoins open sea along the full extent of its northern boundary. At its western end, the Type abruptly changes to the Rolling Coastal Heath and Arable type where it meets the steep scarp slope of Kelling Heath, beyond Weybourne. At its eastern end, the Type incorporates the end of the Cromer Ridge, which terminates in high cliffs just to the west of Mundesley, and transitions to the Tributary Farmland and River Valley types around the Mun Valley. The southern boundary of the central part of the Type is sharply defined by the wooded and frequently steep scarp slope of the Cromer Ridge (Wooded Glacial Ridge type).

Component Areas

There is a single continuous area of Coastal Shelf in North Norfolk:

CS1 – Weybourne to Mundesley Coastal Shelf

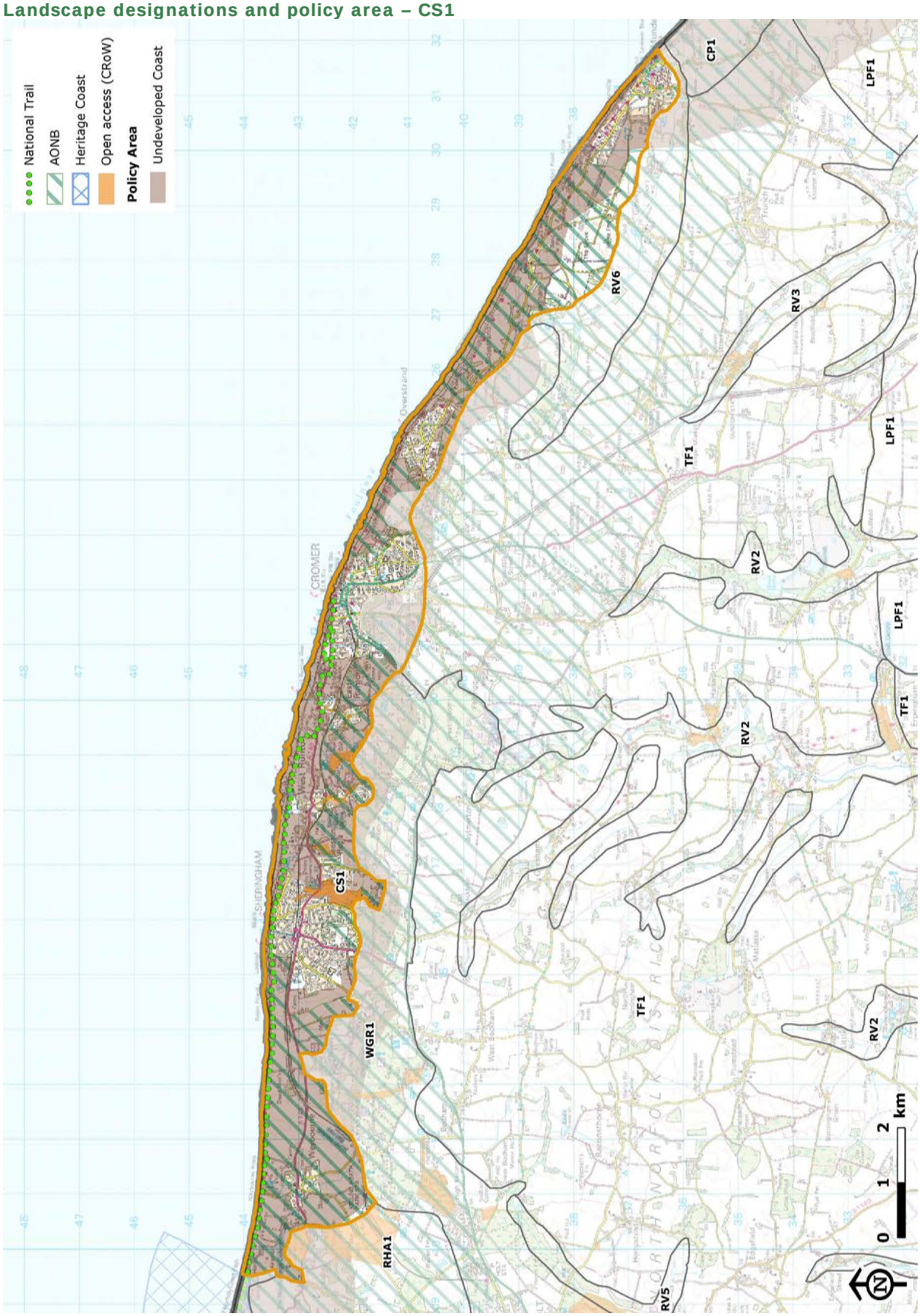
The windmill at Weybourne, one of the numerous distinctive landmarks within the landscape.

Coastal Shelf (CS)

Location of CS1

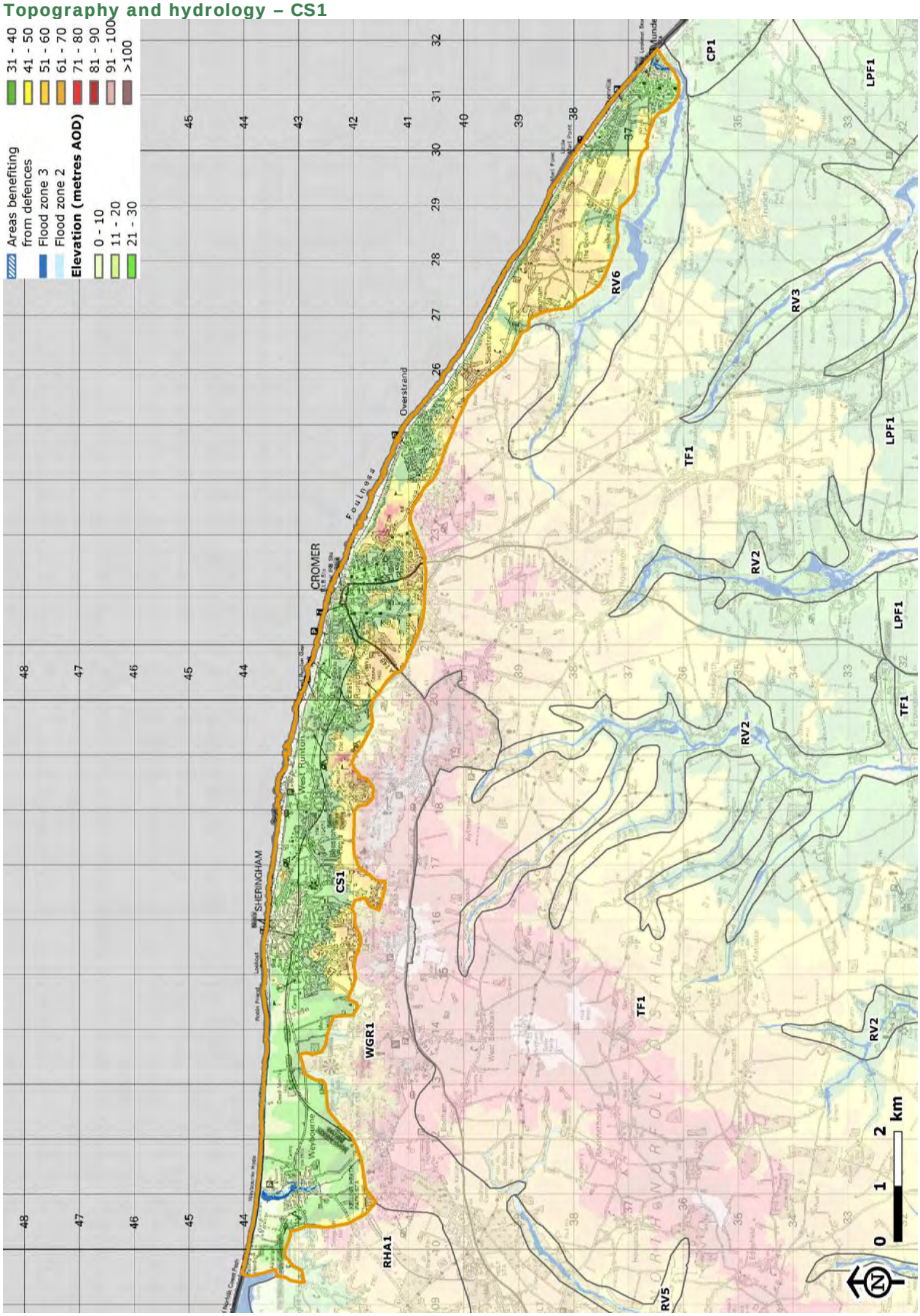
Coastal Shelf (CS)

Landscape designations and policy area – CS1



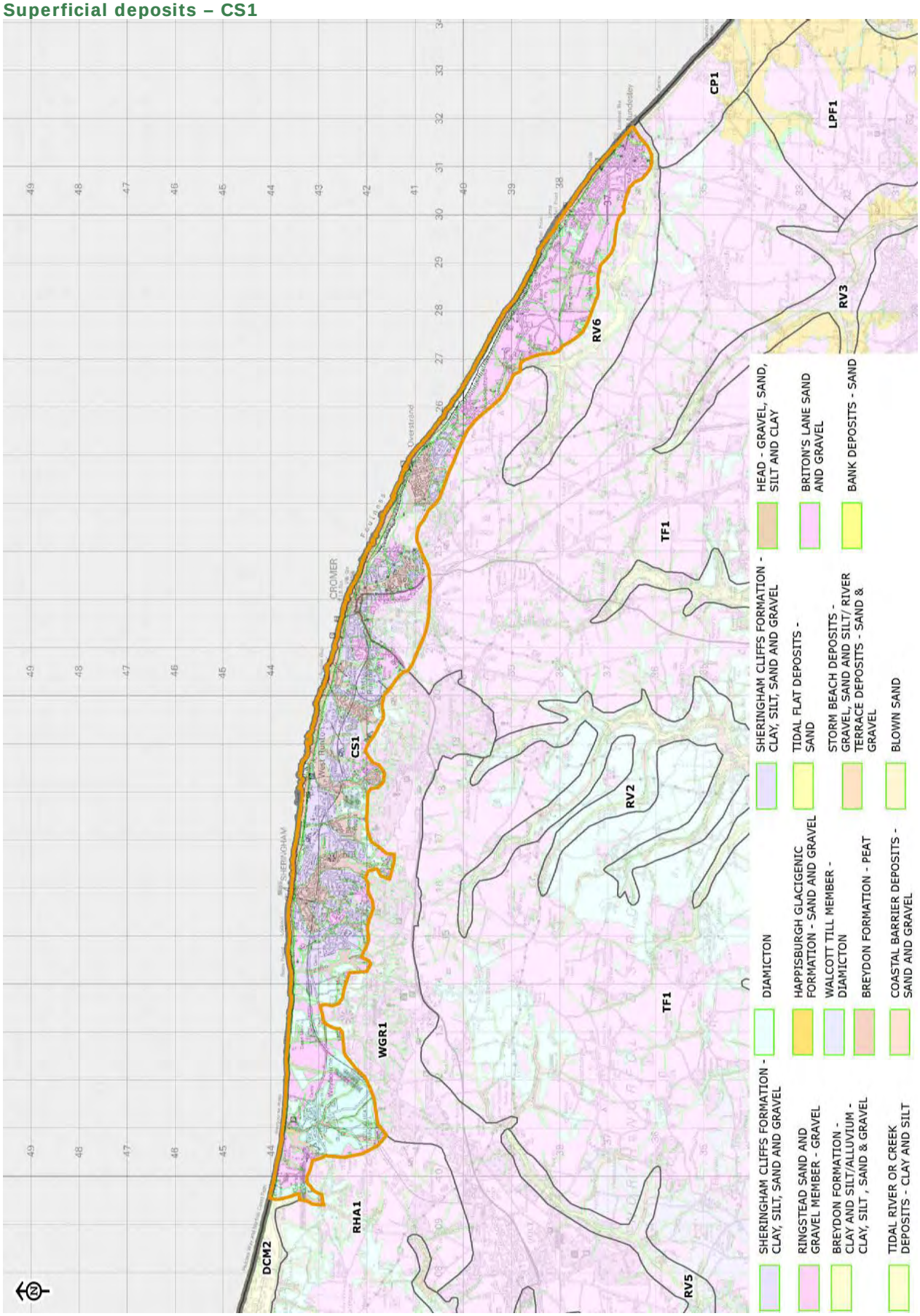
Coastal Shelf (CS)

Topography and hydrology – CS1



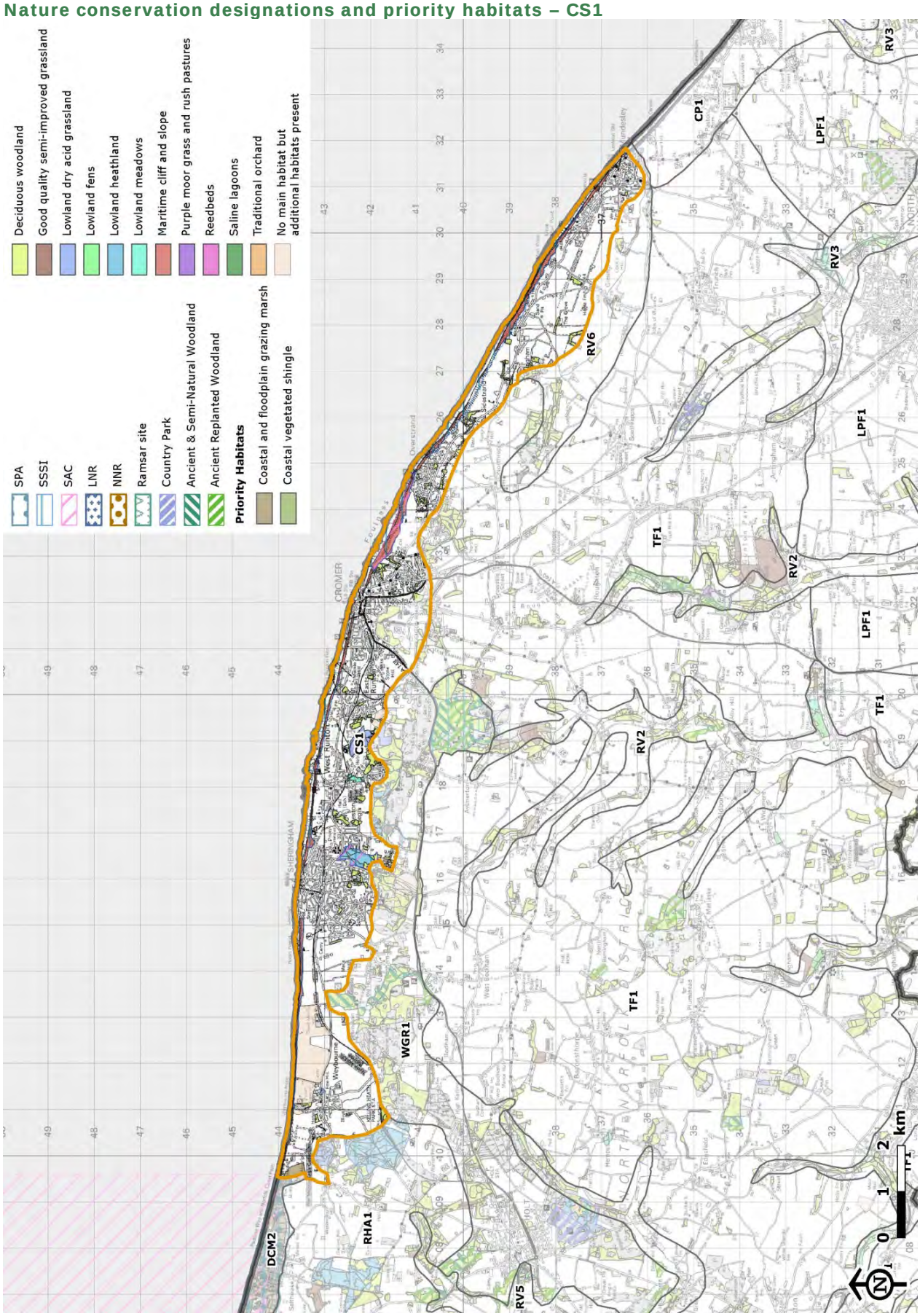
Coastal Shelf (CS)

Superficial deposits – CS1



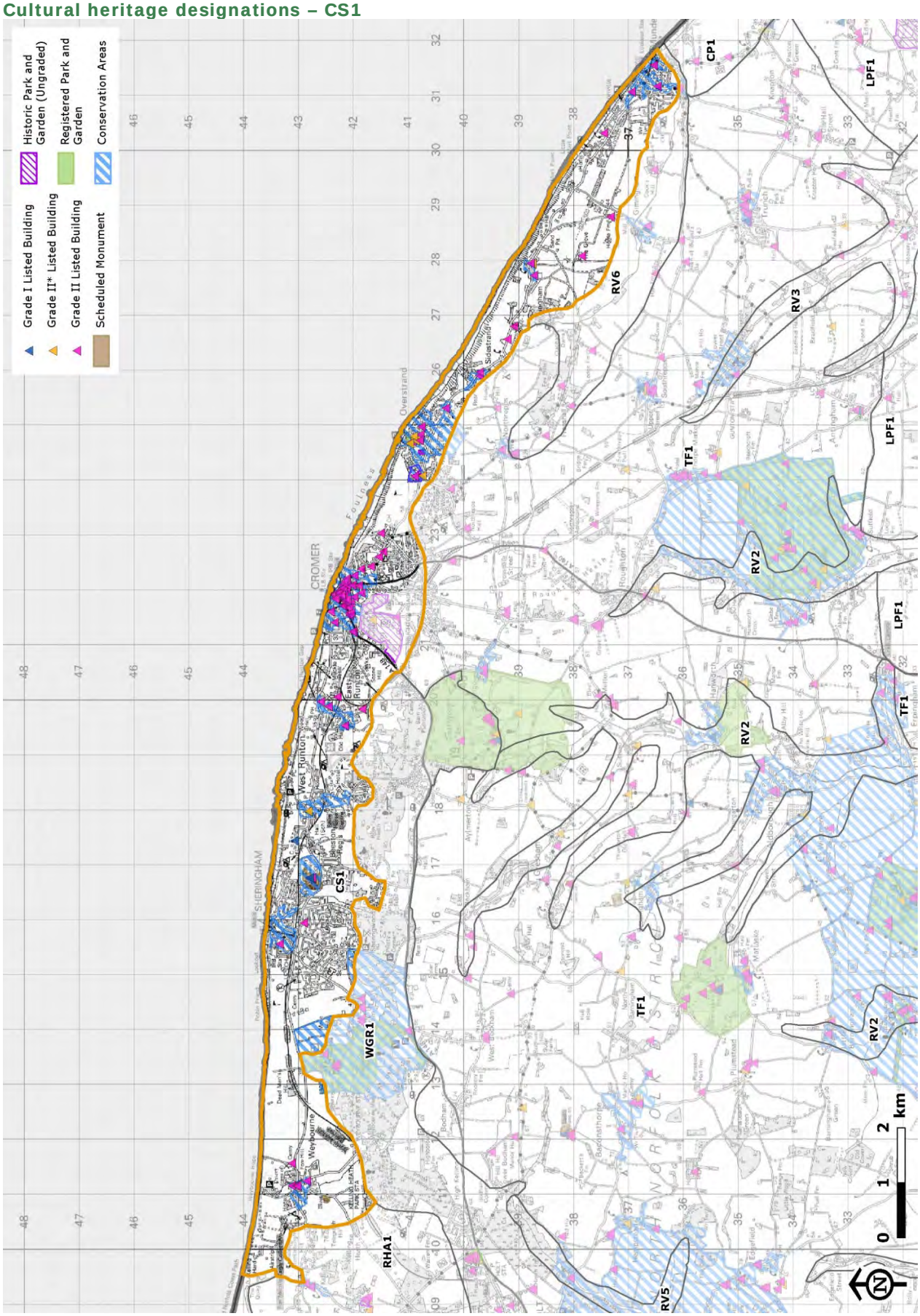
Coastal Shelf (CS)

Nature conservation designations and priority habitats – CS1



Coastal Shelf (CS)

Cultural heritage designations – CS1



Coastal Shelf (CS)

KEY CHARACTERISTICS

1) Dramatic and distinctive topography

The Coastal Shelf occupies a ledge of elevated, undulating land which meets the sea in a series of dramatic cliffs between Weybourne and Mundesley, and is enclosed on the inland side by the generally steep scarp slope of the Wooded Ridge type, which rises to 103m AOD at Roman Camp. The topography is highly irregular and undulating, resulting in intimate areas often screened from one another by fingers of higher land, formed of superficial glacial deposits, reaching towards the coast. The sense of enclosure created by the landform emphasises views seawards.

2) An eroding coastline

This section of coast is actively eroding as a result of sea encroachment. Much of the resulting cliff edge is composed of the unconsolidated and contorted glacial clays, sands and gravels exposed at the seaward end of the Cromer Ridge. The underlying chalk is visible in the cliffs at Weybourne and on the foreshore at West Runton. Further east, the bedrock changes from chalk to crag.

3) Tourism and leisure-related settlement and land use along the coast

Tourism has had a significant impact on this coastal area over a long period of time. Settlements which developed with nucleated cores (usually associated with the fishing industry) have subsequently expanded so that distances between them are small – i.e. the Sheringham – Beeston Regis – West Runton – East Runton – Cromer stretch.

Large areas of caravan parks dominate many cliff top sites between and adjoining settlements, and there are a number of golf courses and fields used for camping. There is a fairly extensive network of public rights of way, with the Norfolk Coast Path National Trail and a number of other footpaths linking the coast with the Wooded Ridge and further inland, together with areas of Open Access Land, e.g. Beeston Regis Common.

4) Differing settlement character of Cromer and Sheringham

Cromer is the major settlement, which developed during the C19th as a resort, whereas Sheringham, which is not much smaller, developed from its fishing village origin to become a different type of resort with a distinctly different architecture. Cromer appears to have been more distinctly 'planned' (especially the western grid streets) and has a rich historic environment with 85 Listed Buildings, including landmark assets such as the Hotel de Paris, the Parish church and the pier, and many other buildings of local interest or historic significance. Sheringham's growth was slightly later, and whilst it is has retained a more vernacular appearance, reflecting its fishing village origins, it has very few Listed Buildings.

5) Open farmland and semi-natural habitats provide important biodiversity and visual separation between settlements

Despite the concentration of settlement in this area, the presence of sizeable areas of predominantly arable farmland, together with isolated areas of deciduous and mixed woodland, heathland, dry acid grassland, meadows and traditional orchards help to soften settlement edges and maintain a degree of separation between settlements. Where farmed land remains this plays a vital role in maintaining rural gaps. A number of settlements also retain areas of common land within the settlement form which contribute to retaining rural character (e.g. Beeston Common, which is also a SSSI, and East and West Runton Commons).

The extensive cliffs along the coast also provide important maritime cliff and slope habitats, with the majority of the coast designated as SSSIs for its ecological and/or geological interest.

6) More open character at the eastern end of the Coastal Shelf

Development in the vicinity of Mundesley, Trimingham and Sidestrand is less nucleated than is the case further west. Intervening land has numbers of ad-hoc post 19th century individual houses mostly associated with the area's tourist appeal. The field pattern in this area has been more heavily eroded by hedgerow removals than elsewhere on the Coastal Shelf.

Coastal Shelf (CS)

7) Less developed character at the western end of the Coastal Shelf

Beyond Sheringham, Weybourne is the only settlement within the Coastal Shelf, with the surrounding land in almost wholly agricultural use. At this western end of the Coastal Shelf, large areas of woodland on the rising land of the Cromer Ridge limit views inland and enclose the settlements. The heritage steam railway running between Sheringham and Holt via Weybourne adds a traditional character to this area.

8) Busy road network

The A149 coast road is the main route running throughout much of this landscape, which connects with the A148 at Cromer and the Mundesley/Cromer Road running further east along the coast. These routes are busy and it is unusual to be far from road noise, but minor roads in some areas retain a stronger rural character and are associated with thick tall hedges / trees and biodiverse verges. Others have suffered loss of hedges / verges and have little character.

9) Trimingham Radome

The area to the south east of Trimingham has been a site of radar transmitters since WW2 and quite extensive areas of hilltop contain abandoned block houses and high security fencing. The Trimingham Radome is visible for many miles to the south and west.

10) Panoramic views of the coast and Wooded Glacial Ridge

Views within the Type vary significantly, depending on the degree of elevation and enclosure provided by landform and land cover, but there are many locations offering extensive panoramas either out to the sea, along the coastal cliffs or inland to the wooded ridge which provides a green backdrop to the busy coastal strip – e.g. Incleborough Hill between East and West Runton, and Beeston Bump near Sheringham.

View east from Muckleburgh Hill to Weybourne and beyond, highlighting the close relationship of the Coastal Shelf landscape with the sea, the enclosing inland Wooded Ridge on the horizon and the undulating arable farmland providing visual separation between settlements.

Coastal Shelf (CS)

VALUED FEATURES AND QUALITIES

1) Coastal character

The dynamic and visually striking cliffs stretching along the coastline of the Type, which vary between strongly eroding and non or low eroding, provide a strong sense of place and elevated long views, as well as internationally important biodiversity and geodiversity (a number of geological SSSIs are designated along this coastline). The presence of the sea defines views throughout much of the Type, providing a sense of openness and particular quality of coastal light to contrast with the enclosure provided by the backdrop of the mostly wooded Cromer Ridge.

2) The separate identity of coastal settlements

The distinctive character and historical value of individual settlements provides a sense of place, historic and visual interest, and is recognised in numerous Conservation Area designations throughout the Type. Small areas of arable farmland, woodland and other semi-natural habitats are important in providing visual separation, reinforcing each settlement's individual sense of place and setting.

3) Distinctive skyline features

Distinctive skyline features such as the Weybourne windmill, Cromer lighthouse and numerous church towers provide visual landmarks and visual interest.

4) Unspoilt, traditional character between Kelling Heath and Sheringham

The visual interplay between the wooded, undulating hills around Sheringham Park, the attractive village of Weybourne, with its landmark windmill and railway, the undeveloped surrounding countryside and the sea give this area an appealing character.

5) Recreational opportunities

The extensive recreational opportunities provided by the network of footpaths, tracks and Open Access Land throughout the Type, including the Norfolk Coast Path National Trail, which provide good access along the coast and inland to the Cromer Ridge. The North Norfolk Railway, which runs from Sheringham to Holt via Weybourne, is a popular attraction.

Many of the Valued Features and Qualities of the Coastal Shelf are considered to contribute positively to Key Qualities of Natural Beauty of the Norfolk Coast AONB, as set out within the current AONB Management Plan. These Key Qualities include:

- Dynamic character and geomorphology of the coast
- Strong and distinctive links between land and sea
- Diversity and integrity of landscape, seascape and settlement character
- Nationally and internationally important geology
- Sense of remoteness, tranquillity and wildness.

Coastal Shelf (CS)

View west from Cromer lighthouse over Cromer and its Grade I listed parish church tower, which is the highest in Norfolk.

The Trimingham radome, a prominent skyline feature and visual landmark within the Coastal Shelf landscape (as seen from the south - Tributary Farmland Type).

Coastal Shelf (CS)

FORCES FOR CHANGE / DETRACTORS

1) Intensive coastal development

Incremental erosion of the areas of open space (farmland, woodland, heathland, golf courses, etc) between settlements has occurred, particularly between Sheringham and Cromer and along the A149 coast road in the east, through new built form including the expansion of settlements and varied in-fill development. Many cliff-top sites have also been developed as caravan parks. These changes have resulted in the loss of visual separation between individual settlements, harming their distinctive settings, and prominent built development along the coast without a cohesive style or sense of place, accompanied by the introduction of lighting. Coastal erosion has also resulted in a need for coastal defences which have been added over the years.

2) Continuing coastal erosion

This section of coastline, particularly to the east of Cromer, is among the most physically active within the District. The current adopted Shoreline Management Plan (SMP6) outlines a variety of policy approaches over the short, medium and long term ranging from hold the line at the main settlements, to managed realignment and no active intervention, allowing natural erosion processes to proceed, which helps beaches to build, avoiding accelerated erosion of the shorelines here and elsewhere and contributing to nature conservation and biodiversity objectives.

3) Intensification of visitor-related pressure

Climate change and increased popularity of domestic tourism may result in greater visitor numbers and associated increases in road traffic and pressures for additional accommodation, use of the public rights of way network and impact on sensitive habitats and geological sites.

4) Modern agricultural practices and change

Post World War II intensification of agriculture, including spread of arable, an enlargement of fields and modernisation of farm buildings resulted in changes to ancient field patterns, hedgerows, narrow lanes and verges. More recently there has been increased pressure for farm diversification, such as field-scale solar systems, farm shops, holiday lets, new woodland and tourism/recreation-related activities including camping and adventure courses, and this is likely to continue.

5) Uncertainty regarding future agricultural subsidy schemes following the UK's departure from the EU

Changes to agricultural subsidies could have significant impacts on the landscape and biodiversity. These could be positive or negative.

6) Conversion of agricultural buildings and scale of new storage structures

Decline in the usefulness of traditional farm buildings has led to neglect and/or conversion of barns from rural working buildings to residential and leisure uses. Such conversions can introduce 'suburban' features such as surfaced drives / domestic style gates and fences / garden style planting and parking areas / overly large windows and external lighting. New agricultural buildings, often large in scale and of non-traditional materials such as steel, concrete and aluminium cladding, sited in locations away from or prominently within existing farm complexes can detract from the prevailing landscape character.

7) Edge of settlement and infill development

The increasing wealth in the area is demonstrated by numbers of properties being enlarged / improved and sub-divided all of which have affected the appearance and character of settlements, often in individually modest but cumulatively significant ways (fencing replacing hedged boundaries / the loss of large gardens with mature trees and the resultant massing of buildings). Continued increases in light pollution associated with new built form and infrastructure development will affect the sense of remoteness, tranquillity and dark skies associated with this landscape.

Coastal Shelf (CS)

8) Demand for isolated new homes

Demand for isolated new homes can result in buildings with a non-traditional character. Lighting can be prominent in otherwise sparsely populated areas and this can affect the area's sense of remoteness and historic, rural character.

9) Changes to the road network

Development of the road network and road upgrades, including associated street lighting, is resulting in the increasing dominance of roads as features within the landscape, and adversely affecting dark skies and tranquillity.

10) Renewable energy development

The continuing development of large scale off-shore wind farms has resulted in temporary disturbance caused by trenching for cable routes through this Landscape Type, with links from both the Dudgeon and Sheringham Shoal wind farms coming ashore at Weybourne Hope. The introduction of permanent structures associated with any such future development would potentially have greater impact.

There is also a continuing pressure for solar PV developments on farmland.

11) Telecoms masts and wind turbines in prominent locations

Elevated locations are preferred sites for telecom masts and wind turbines and in this expansive landscape these can result in wide ranging visual intrusion on the skyline and erosion of rural, character, to the detriment of special qualities of the AONB. The benefits/harm balance requires careful analysis within this sensitive Landscape Type.

12) Tree diseases and invasive species

Ash dieback and other tree diseases may have a significant impact on the composition of woodland and hedgerow trees within the District and this Type. Invasive species have the potential to have a significant impact on native biodiversity that can result in landscape scale changes.

13) Climate change

Climate change could result in the need for new crops, changes in farming practices, increased demand for reservoirs, the introduction of new pests and diseases affecting native species, and increased demand for / efficiency of renewable energy types. A changing climate will result in a change in the distribution and abundance of species that can in turn result in landscape scale changes, including potential impacts on the important lowland heathlands.

A change in climate will result in different recreational patterns and use that could place increased pressure on the landscape for more tourism related development.

Coastal Shelf (CS)

New housing on the southern edge of Cromer, contained to the south by woodland.

New in-fill housing at Weybourne.

Coastal Shelf (CS)

LANDSCAPE VISION

The vision for this landscape type is a richly diverse coastal landscape of biodiverse and productive farmland and resilient semi-natural habitats which provide the distinctive and scenic setting for well-maintained and cohesive historic settlements, creating a strong focus for sustainably managed tourism and recreation. Settlements will be clearly separated by a network of semi-natural habitats and farmland, with connectivity between these areas wherever possible. New development will be well integrated into the landscape and local vernacular, with a sensitive approach to lighting to maintain dark skies, and opportunities will be sought to better integrate existing coastal development. Restoration and enhancement of valued landscape features will occur alongside the managed and/or natural change of the coastline in response to climate change and erosion.

LANDSCAPE STRATEGY AND GUIDELINES

1) **Enhance landscape integration of prominent coastal development**

   Seek opportunities to better integrate existing development, such as cliff-top caravan parks, through appropriate landscape enhancement and management and/or changes in the developed form. Any new caravan development should be well-integrated into the landscape. Maintain and restore areas of coastal sand dune and cliff habitats and encourage the creation of grassland and other semi-natural habitats on land behind.

2) **Conserve the valuable undeveloped areas between coastal settlements, to maintain a clear sense of leaving one settlement before arriving at the next**

   Protect and enhance areas that are key to preserving settlement separation, retaining and enhancing so as to maintain rural and semi-natural characteristics. Seek to improve habitat connectivity between isolated areas of undeveloped land. Avoid development that results in 'suburban' features such as surfaced drives / domestic style gates and fences / garden style planting and parking areas / overly large windows and external lighting.

3) **Conserve and enhance the individual character of settlements**

   Retain the distinctive character of settlements by ensuring new development responds to historic built form and the traditional vernacular style and materials, with reference to the Council's adopted Design Guide. Avoid linear sprawl. Ensure any new development is well integrated into the landscape and does not form a harsh edge, and seek to enhance and reinforce those areas of villages which have degraded or unfocused styles / character, which is often at odds with the character of the centre of the settlements.

4) **Retain the character of the skyline**

   Carefully manage the location of any development which would detract from distinctive skyline features or from views across undeveloped landscapes from the Cromer Ridge to the coast or vice-versa – e.g. wind turbines and masts.

5) **Enhance public rights of way**

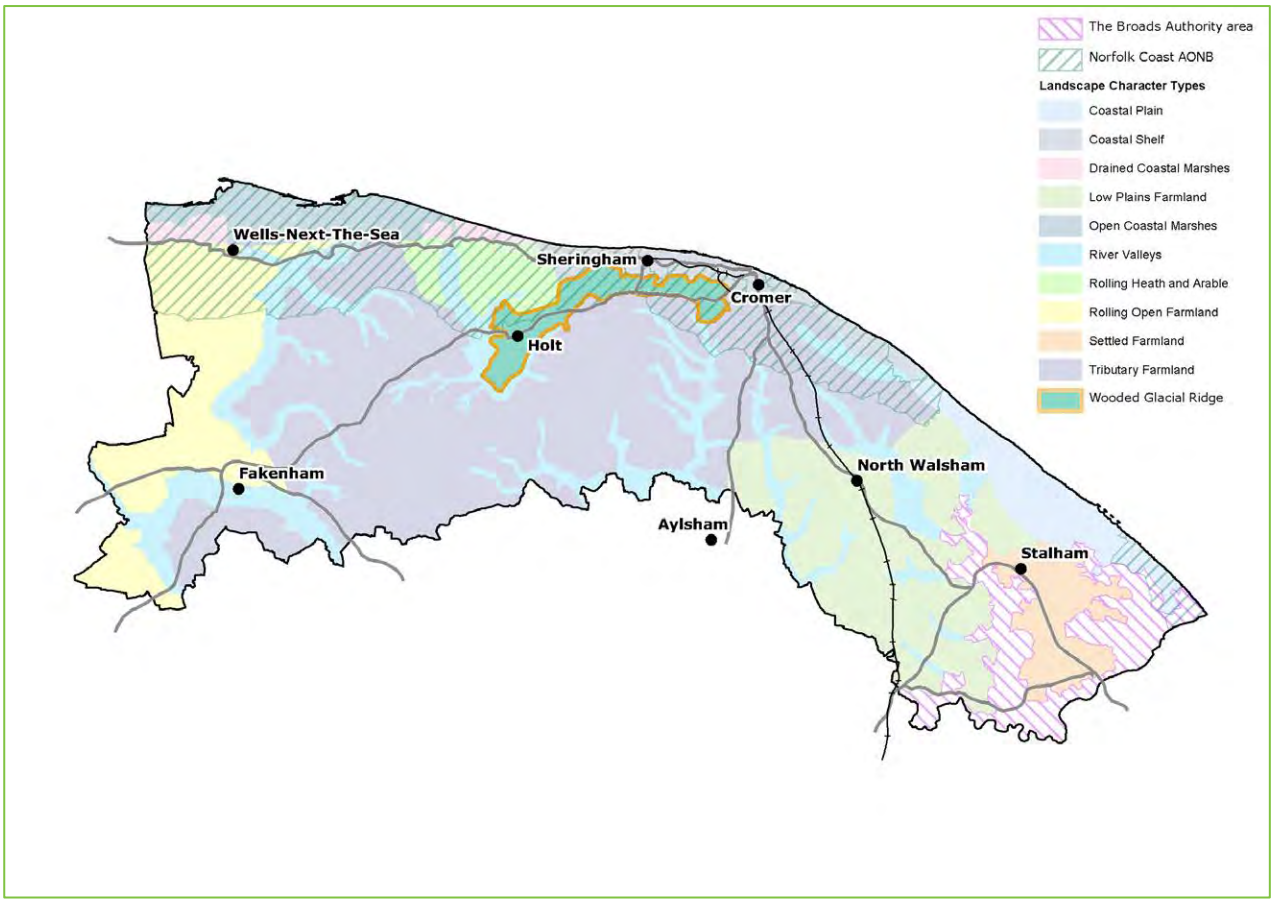
   Aim to improve off-road inland access, and linkage to the Norfolk Coast Path National Trail, enhancing opportunities for enjoying and understanding the landscape.

6) **Manage the impacts of climate change and coastal erosion**

   Manage and enhance the health and structure of woodlands to improve resilience in the face of climate change and new pests and diseases, supporting and re-introducing traditional management practices where appropriate, such as coppicing. Replant ageing or diseased specimens (with climate and disease hardy species if possible) to ensure the future survival of these features.

   Plan for continuing coastal erosion and sea level rise.

Wooded Glacial Ridge (WGR)



Wooded Glacial Ridge (WGR)

SUMMARY

The Wooded Glacial Ridge Landscape Type relates to a terminal glacial moraine, the Cromer Ridge, that forms a dramatic, distinctive and influential landscape feature, characterised by a steep, north-facing wooded scarp slope and more gently sloping, largely arable southern side. Beneath the scarp, sandy gravels form undulating lower slopes that support the District's principal heathlands, and where the scarp runs closer to the sea it encloses some of the districts main settlements, with beaches and cliffs to create a strong focus for tourism. The Wooded Glacial Ridge has a significant influence on the visual character of adjacent landscapes both to the north and south.

All of the Wooded Glacial Ridge type, other than the area around Holt, lies within the Norfolk Coast AONB.

The Wooded Ridge encloses and forms a prominent backdrop to the lower-lying Coastal Shelf type, and transitions into Tributary Farmland on the gentler southern side of the ridge. To the north-west, the Type transitions into Rolling Heath and Arable and to the south-west it descends to the Glaven Valley (River Valleys type).

Component Areas

There is one distinct area of Wooded Glacial Ridge in North Norfolk:

WR1 – Wooded Glacial Cromer Ridge

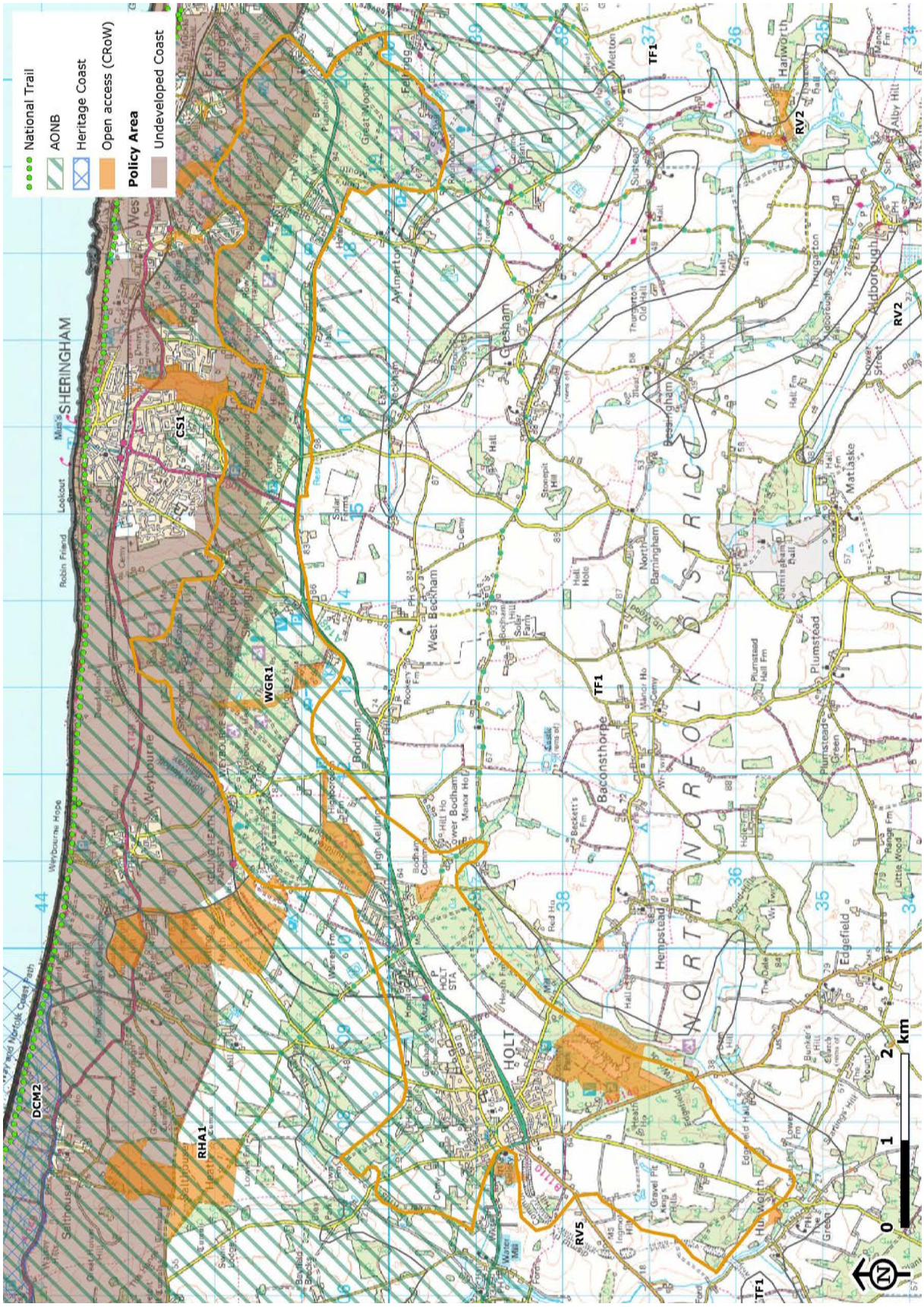
The Wooded Glacial Ridge encloses the neighbouring Coastal Shelf type, as seen here viewed from the coast at Sheringham.

Wooded Glacial Ridge (WGR)

Location of WGR1

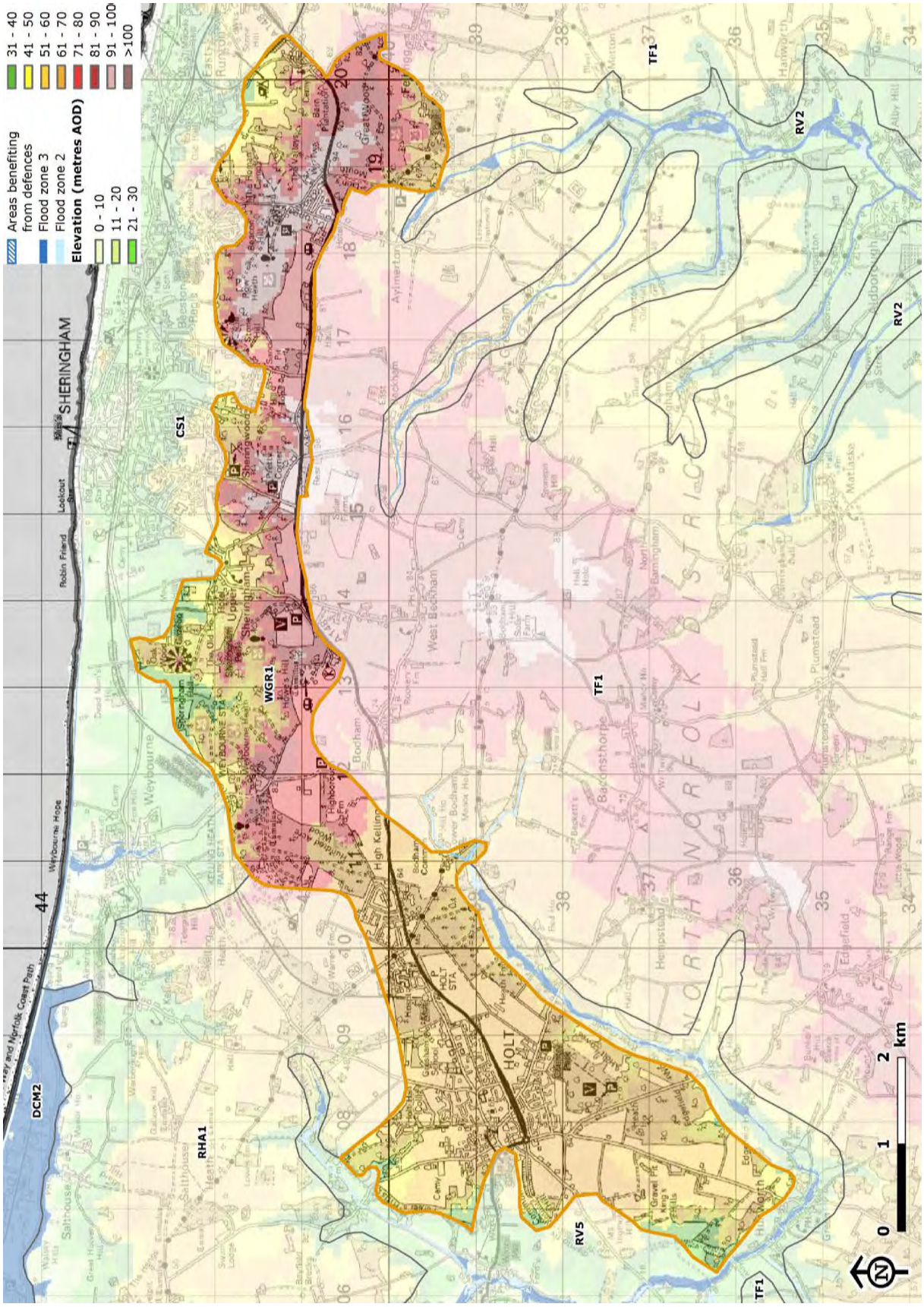
Wooded Glacial Ridge (WGR)

Landscape designations and policy area – WGR1



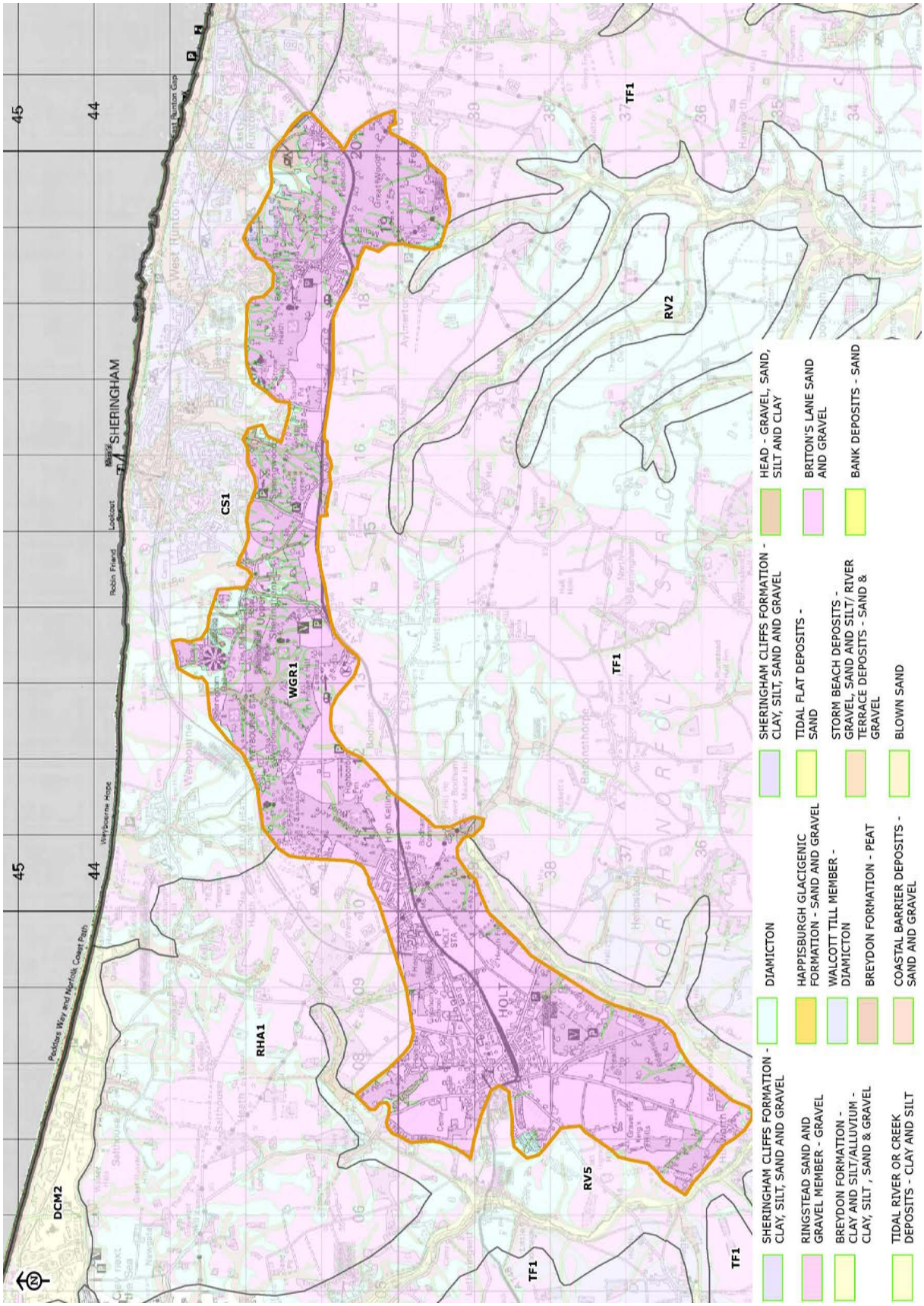
Wooded Glacial Ridge (WGR)

Topography and hydrology – WGR1



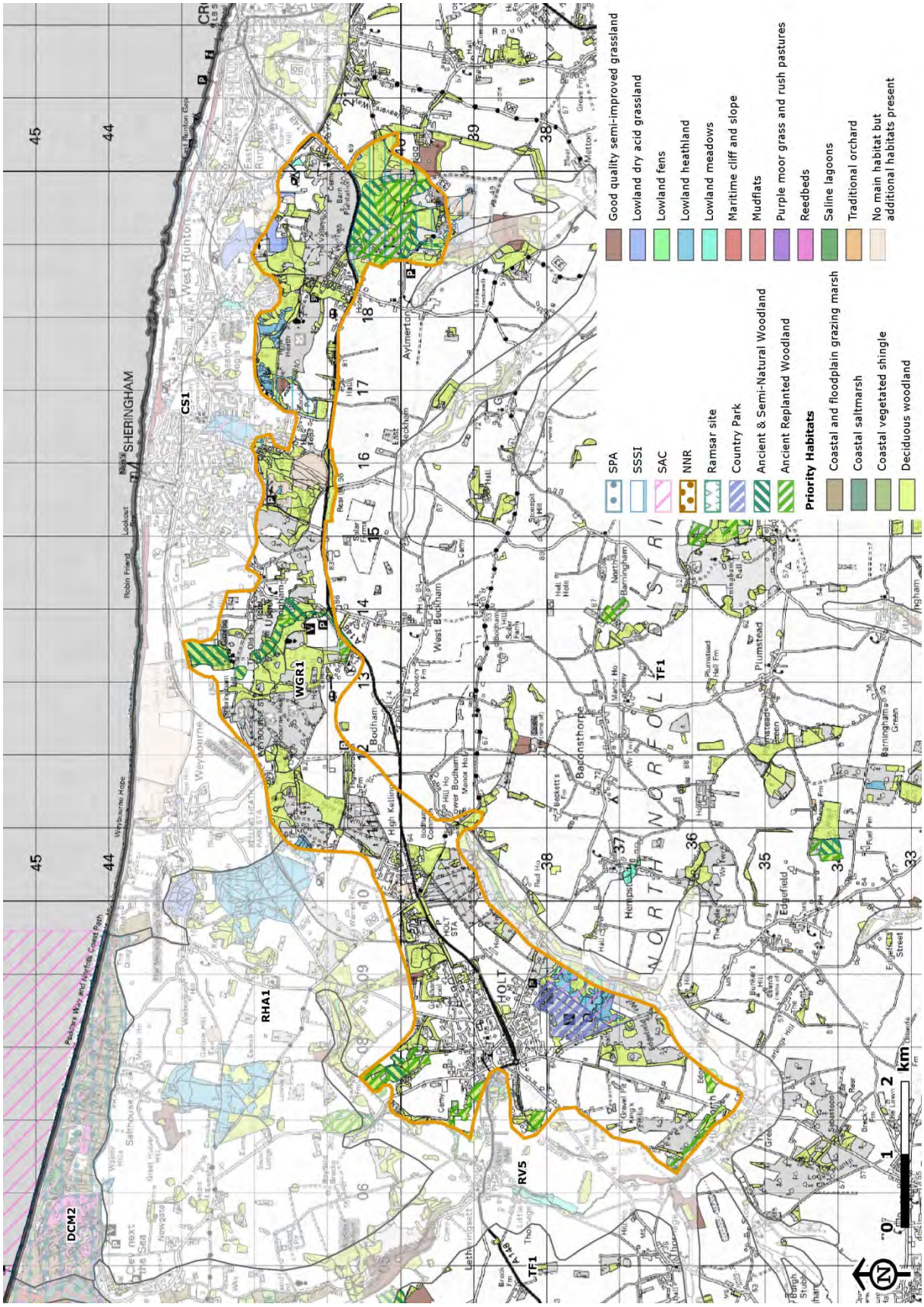
Wooded Glacial Ridge (WGR)

Superficial deposits – WGR1



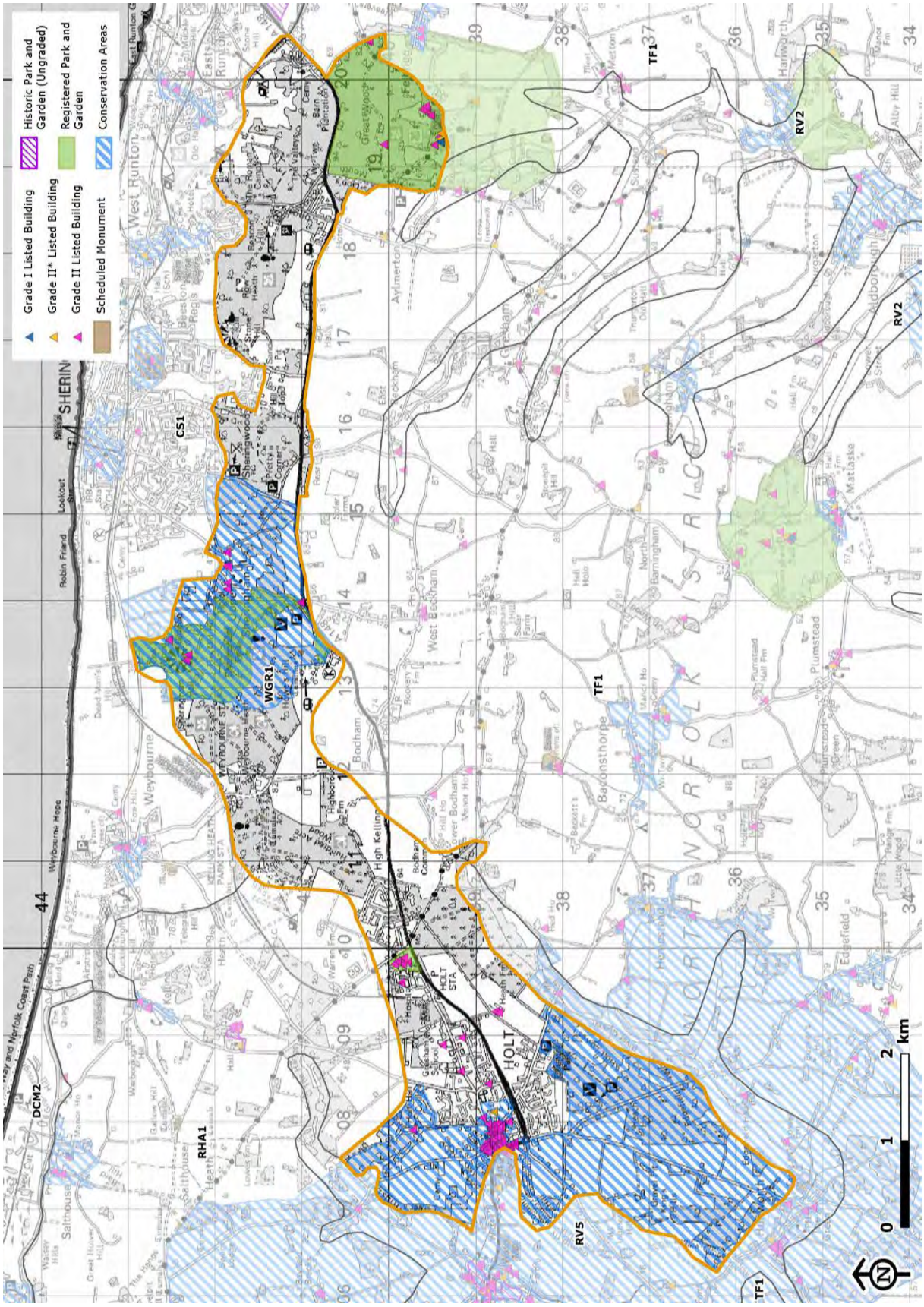
Wooded Glacial Ridge (WGR)

Priority habitats and ancient woodland – WGR1



Wooded Glacial Ridge (WGR)

Cultural heritage designations – WGR1



Wooded Glacial Ridge (WGR)

KEY CHARACTERISTICS

1) Dramatic and distinctive topography and geomorphology

The Wooded Glacial Cromer Ridge is a terminal moraine rising to 103m above sea level at Beacon Hill / Roman Camp and comprising glacial deposits of till, sands and gravels, which meets the sea in a series of dramatic cliffs within the Coastal Shelf type. It forms an important landmark which is visible on the horizon in many parts of the District. The north face of the ridge comprises a relatively steep scarp slope with irregular undulations. The south face of the Ridge slopes inland more gradually into a high level, expansive, plateau-like landscape within the neighbouring Tributary Farmland type, before gradually descending into lower-lying areas, including the River Valleys Type.

2) Woodland is the dominant land cover

Woodland is the dominant land cover along the top of the ridge and its scarp slope, comprising a combination of 20th Century Forestry Commission conifer and mixed woodland plantations (more suited to the poor sandy and acidic soils than agriculture), and many areas of deciduous woodland likely to be the result of natural succession from heathland and scrub. The wooded ridge forms a strong landscape backdrop to coastal settlements, frames the inland town of Holt and is an influential landscape feature within large areas of the Tributary Farmland Type to the south. Arable farmland occupies most of the flatter margins and lower slopes of the Ridge.

3) Panoramic views of the coast and inland

Views within the Type vary significantly, depending on the degree of elevation and enclosure provided by landform and land cover, but there are locations offering extensive panoramas either out to the sea over the Coastal Shelf type such as at Sheringham Park, or inland across the Tributary Farmland, e.g. views south from the A148 main tourist route between Cromer and Holt.

4) Historic estates are important features

A range of 18th – early 20th Century historic estates and associated parkland and woodland are present within the Wooded Glacial Cromer Ridge, including Grade II* registered landscapes at Sheringham Park, Felbrigg Hall and Voewood.

5) A range of semi-natural habitats including ancient woodland and remnant heathland

The extensive and diverse woodland areas, including some substantial blocks of ancient woodland around Sheringham Park, Felbrigg and Holt, provide strong habitat connectivity for a range of woodland species. Lowland heath also occurs amongst some of this woodland, e.g. the National Trust land at Beeston Regis Heath and Roman Camp, at Holt Lowes and within Sheringham Wood. Other habitats present include dry acid grassland, and smaller isolated areas of good quality semi-improved grassland, lowland meadow and lowland fen. Some of these habitats are subject to statutory designations including SSSIs at Felbrigg Woods, Sheringham and Beeston Regis Commons and Holt Lowes; the latter two of which are also part of the Norfolk Valley Fens SAC.

6) Holt and Holt Country Park

The main settlement within the Type is Holt (meaning 'woodland'), an 18th Century Georgian market town that is framed by remnant woodland, including Holt Country Park. This is the only country park within the District. Awarded Green Flag status, it comprises an area of extensive mixed woodland and nationally rare lowland heath to the south of the town.

7) Relatively busy road network

The A148 Holt to Cromer road travels along the general line of the ridge and is a busy tourist route with minor roads extending north and south into the Type from this arterial route. Intermittent long range panoramic views of the coast and inland are a feature of moving through this elevated landscape.

Wooded Glacial Ridge (WGR)

8) Plotland developments within the woodland around High Kelling

Settlements such as High Kelling and Sheringwood 'evolved' within the woodland and former common land during the early C20th and have subsequently expanded.

View north-east from the northern outskirts of Holt towards the ancient woodland around Holt Hall.

The North Norfolk Railway travels between Holt and Sheringham and is a popular attraction.

Wooded Glacial Ridge (WGR)

VALUED FEATURES AND QUALITIES

1) The distinctive and prominent landform and land cover

The Wooded Glacial Cromer Ridge forms a dominant landform feature, providing a strong sense of place, particularly to the settlements it encloses (e.g. Holt) and those within the Coastal Shelf type to which it forms a backdrop (e.g. Sheringham). It also provides a wooded horizon and frames distant views from the South across neighbouring Landscape Types such as Tributary Farmland. Tree cover plays an important role in screening intrusive landscape elements such as leisure-related development.

2) Parkland Estates

Parklands are an important element of the Wooded Glacial Ridge landscape, most notably Sheringham Park and Felbrigg Hall which are important historic estates and Grade II* Registered landscapes managed by the National Trust. Occupying the northern slopes of the Wooded Glacial Cromer Ridge, Sheringham Park has strong associations with Humphry Repton, who designed and laid out the park and garden in the early 1800s. The estate affords fine views of the surrounding landscape and the coastline to the north, and contains an extensive collection of rhododendrons which was begun in the 1850s. Felbrigg Hall is an C18th landscape developed from an earlier deer park surrounding a C17th Jacobean mansion. Repton made sketches of the estate and may have influenced design changes.

3) Important semi-natural habitats

The extensive and diverse woodland areas, including some substantial blocks of ancient woodland around Sheringham Park, Felbrigg and Holt, provide strong habitat connectivity for a range of woodland species. Rare lowland heath also occurs amongst some of this woodland, e.g. the National Trust land at Beeston Regis Heath and Roman Camp, at Holt Lowes and within Sheringham Wood. Other habitats present include dry acid grassland, and smaller isolated areas of good quality semi-improved grassland, lowland meadow and lowland fen. Some of these habitats are subject to statutory designations including SSSIs at Felbrigg Woods, Sheringham and Beeston Regis Commons and Holt Lowes; the latter two of which are also part of the Norfolk Valley Fens SAC.

4) A strong sense of remoteness and tranquillity, and dark skies

The comparative lack of settlement relative to neighbouring areas combined with the extensive woodland creates areas with a strong sense of remoteness and tranquillity. Away from Holt this landscape also benefits from minimal light pollution, to the extent that Kelling Heath Holiday Park has been awarded Dark Sky Discovery Site status.

5) The historic and cultural interest of Holt

Holt benefits from a distinctive and cohesive late-Georgian and early-Victorian character, centred around the historic core of the Market Place and High Street. It is designated as a Conservation Area and contains numerous listed buildings, and provides a strong sense of place. The surrounding woodland and the Glaven Valley to the south west provide a scenic setting to the town.

6) Recreational and leisure opportunities

The extensive recreational opportunities provided by Holt Country Park and the network of footpaths, tracks, National Trust and Open Access Land throughout the Type, providing good access along the Cromer Ridge and to neighbouring coastal and inland landscapes. Sheringham Park and the North Norfolk Railway at Holt are popular visitor attractions.

Wooded Glacial Ridge (WGR)

Many of the Valued Features and Qualities of the Wooded Ridge are considered to contribute positively to Key Qualities of Natural Beauty of the Norfolk Coast AONB, as set out within the current AONB Management Plan. These Key Qualities include:

- Strong and distinctive links between land and sea
- Diversity and integrity of landscape, seascape and settlement character
- Exceptionally important, varied and distinctive biodiversity, based on locally distinctive habitats
- Nationally and internationally important geology
- Sense of remoteness, tranquillity and wildness
- Richness of archaeological heritage and historic environment, particularly that relating to the coast and its character.

Late-Georgian and early-Victorian properties close to Holt town centre.

FORCES FOR CHANGE / DETRACTORS

1) Intensification of tourism-related pressure

Increased popularity of domestic tourism may result in greater visitor numbers and associated increases in road traffic and pressures for additional accommodation, visitor-related development, use of the public rights of way network and impact on sensitive habitats and geological sites.

2) Settlement expansion and infill to meet housing demand

Recent built development, both infill development in all settlements (notably High Kelling, Aylmerton and Sheringwood) and estate-type housing on the edge of Holt, has encroached into the wooded ridge, eroding the traditional settlement form and character, and its landscape setting.

Other consequences of such development include existing properties being enlarged / improved and sub-divided, fencing replacing hedged boundaries, and extensions to properties which overly

Wooded Glacial Ridge (WGR)

enlarge or gentrify rural settlements / locations**.** Continued increases in light pollution associated with new built form and infrastructure development will affect the sense of remoteness, tranquillity and dark skies associated with this landscape.

3) Demand for isolated new homes

Demand for isolated new homes can result in buildings with a non-traditional character. Lighting can be prominent in otherwise sparsely populated areas and this can affect the area's sense of remoteness and historic, rural character.

4) Modern agricultural practices and change

Post World War II intensification of agriculture, including the spread of arable land, enlargement of fields and modernisation of farm buildings resulted in changes to ancient field patterns, hedgerows, narrow lanes and verges. More recently there has been increased pressure for farm diversification, such as field-scale solar systems, farm shops, new woodland and tourism/recreation-related activities including camping and adventure courses, and this is likely to continue.

5) Conversion of agricultural buildings and the scale of new storage structures

New agricultural buildings, often large in scale and of non-traditional materials such as steel, concrete and aluminium cladding, sited in locations away from or prominently within existing farm complexes can detract from the prevailing landscape character.

6) Uncertainty regarding future agricultural subsidy schemes following the UK's departure from the EU

Changes to agricultural subsidies could have significant impacts on the landscape and biodiversity. These could be positive or negative.

7) Changes to the road network

Development of the road network and road upgrades, including associated street lighting, is resulting in the increasing dominance of roads as features within the landscape, and adversely affecting dark skies and tranquillity.

8) Loss of traditional land uses and overgrazing

There has been a decrease in hedgerows and decline in traditional woodland management skills over the years which are threatening the age and species diversity of semi-natural woodlands and the hedgerow network, together with factors such as overgrazing by the expansion of deer populations.

9) Renewable energy development

The continuing development of large scale off-shore wind farms has resulted in temporary disturbance caused by trenching for cable routes through this Landscape Type, to link the Sheringham Shoal Wind Farm from its landfall at Weybourne to a substation further inland at Salle. The introduction of permanent structures associated with any such future development would potentially have greater impact. Offshore wind farms may also affect coastal views form this Type, affecting the perception of remoteness, e.g. the operational Sheringham Shoal wind farm.

There is also a continuing pressure for solar PV developments on farmland.

10) Telecoms masts and wind turbines in prominent locations

Elevated locations are preferred sites for telecom masts and wind turbines and in this expansive landscape these can result in wide ranging visual intrusion on the skyline and erosion of rural, character, to the detriment of defined special qualities of the AONB and adjacent Landscape Types. The benefits/harm balance requires careful analysis within this sensitive Landscape Type.

11) Mineral extraction

Demand for extraction of sands and gravel can affect tranquillity, fragile habitats and road traffic

Wooded Glacial Ridge (WGR)

levels. There are quarries within the area to the south of Holt and at Beeston Regis.

12) Climate change

Climate change could result in the need for new crops, changes in farming practices, increased demand for reservoirs, the introduction of new pests and diseases affecting native species, and increased demand for / efficiency of renewable energy types. A changing climate will result in a change in the distribution and abundance of species that can in turn result in landscape scale changes, including potential impacts on the important lowland heathlands.

A change in climate will result in different recreational patterns and use that could place increased pressure on the landscape for more tourism related development.

13) Tree diseases and invasive species

Ash dieback and other tree diseases may have a significant impact on the composition of woodland and hedgerow trees within the District and this Type. Invasive species have the potential to have a significant impact on native biodiversity that can result in landscape scale changes. Whilst rhododendrons have historically been associated with the parklands within this landscape, these are invasive, thriving on the acidic sandy soils, and have a detrimental impact on biodiversity within the ancient woodlands.

View across Holt Lowes SSSI & SAC

Wooded Glacial Ridge (WGR)

Rhododendrons in flower on the edge of Holt Hall.

LANDSCAPE VISION

The vision for this landscape type is of an area dominated by wooded high ground which forms a distinct setting to settlements and which effectively contains and isolates any development but nonetheless provides a strong network of recreational and leisure opportunities. Wooded areas and other important semi-natural habitats, in particular areas of heathland, form a strong, well connected biodiversity network. Any new residential development is successfully integrated within the existing settlements where it reinforces traditional character and vernacular, and the landscape retains, in many locations, a strong sense of tranquillity and remoteness. The special qualities of natural beauty of the Norfolk Coast AONB, which encompasses most of the area, are preserved.

LANDSCAPE STRATEGY AND GUIDELINES

1) Conserve the wooded character, skyline, sense of remoteness, tranquillity and dark skies by avoiding prominent development

Conserve and enhance the strong sense of remoteness and tranquillity, and dark skies, within large parts of this landscape, which contribute positively to the Norfolk Coast AONB. The prominent wooded glacial ridge is a distinctive landmark feature on the skyline within many parts of the District and, given this wide ranging influence, is therefore is sensitive to increases in built development and infrastructure, such as wind turbines, telecom masts, housing and industrial activity.

Promote the creation of new native woodland in general, and particularly in conjunction with new development as a means of screening built form, maintaining the enclosed nature of many views within the area, reinforcing the important sense of 'woodedness' and linking priority habitats. New planting associated with development should blend with existing features rather than simply trying to screen new development - layers of vegetation may be more appropriate than one thick screen using species local to the area.

Maintain the rural features that contribute to character, biodiversity and historical continuity, including rural lanes, hedgerows, verges, gateposts and walls – avoid road widening and urbanising features such as kerbs, lighting and excessive signage. Consider opportunities to

Wooded Glacial Ridge (WGR)

address adverse light pollution by means of replacement downlighting or complete removal of lighting, taking into account the appropriateness of the latest lighting technologies, e.g. different types of LEDs.

2) **Enhance the diversity, integrity and resilience of native woodlands and conserve, restore and expand other semi-natural habitats including lowland heathland**

Support the sensitive replacement of conifers with native tree species, avoiding overly intensive new plantings, together with the management and restoration of heathland. Where heathland restoration takes place on woodland, consider the scope for compensatory woodland planting on surrounding land to maintain wooded character. Robustly manage invasive species.

3) **Protect and appropriately manage the rich cultural heritage of the area**

Protect and manage the historic parkland estates and the historic character and cultural interest of Holt, Upper Sheringham such that the integrity of these heritage assets is maintained and enhanced.

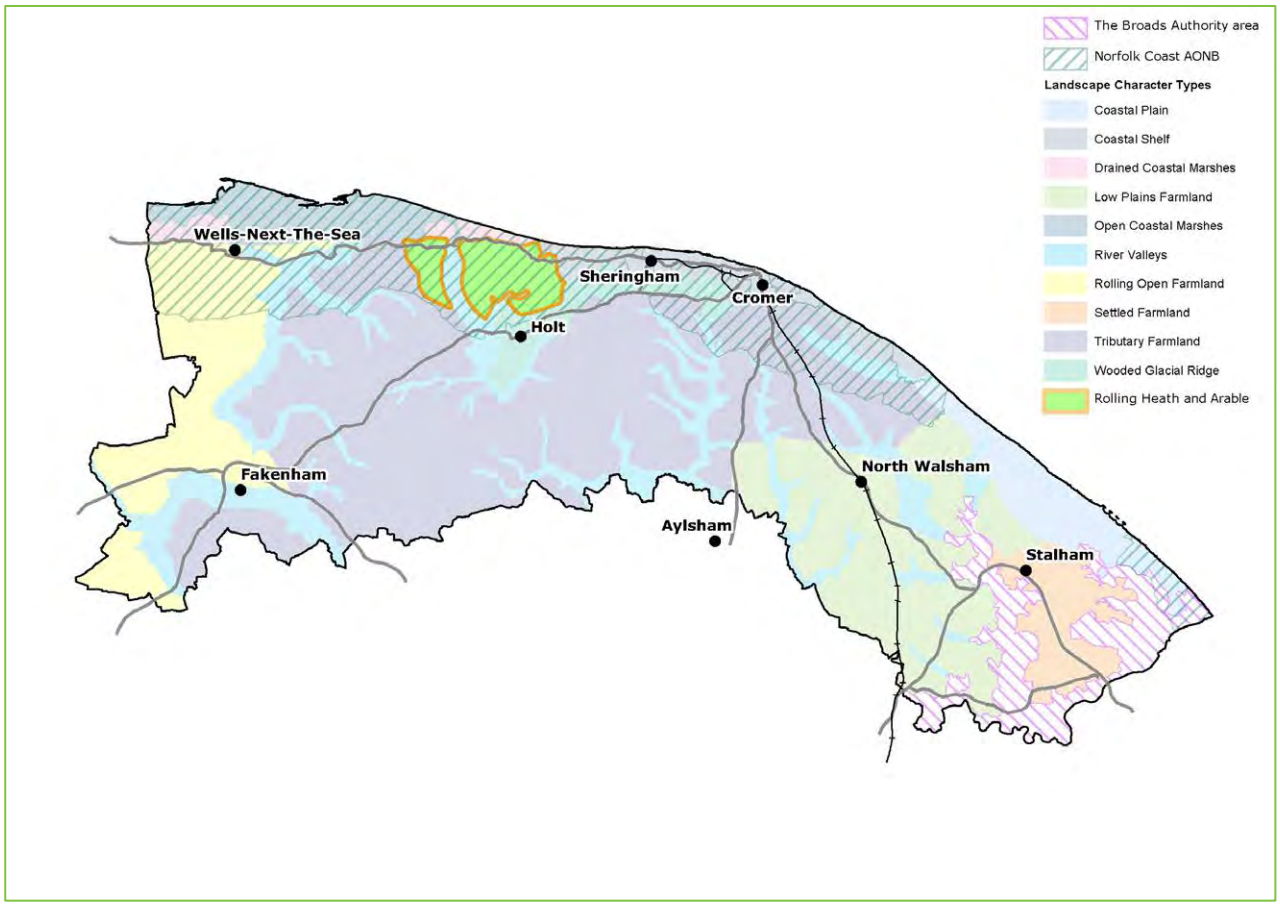
4) **Manage the impacts of climate change**

Manage and enhance the health and structure of heathlands and woodlands to improve resilience in the face of climate change and pests and diseases, supporting and, where appropriate, re-introducing traditional management practices such as coppicing. Replant ageing or diseased specimens (with climate and disease-hardy species if possible) to ensure the future survival of these features.

5) **Manage activities such as mineral extraction**

Ensure extraction activities are well integrated into the landscape and managed to minimise impact on the landscape character. Ensure long terms plans for restoration are in character with the landscape and take opportunities to increase semi-natural habitats, e.g. heathland at Beeston Regis.

Rolling Heath & Arable (RHA)



Rolling Heath & Arable (RHA)

SUMMARY

The Rolling Heath and Arable Type is characterised by a predominantly elevated, open rolling landscape with a strong coastal influence, and very light sandy soils which are marginal in agricultural terms. Land cover is notable for lowland heath, arable farmland, pockets of scrub and woodland, with little settlement inland from the coastal villages of Blakeney and Salthouse.

All of the Rolling Heath & Arable type lies within the Norfolk Coast AONB, and small pockets of land either side of Blakeney also fall within the North Norfolk Heritage Coast.

The Rolling Heath & Arable type is dissected north-south by the valley of the River Glaven (River Valleys type), which meets the coast around Cley-next-the-Sea. The type subtly transitions into Tributary Farmland to the west of Blakeney, and into the Coastal Shelf to the east of Kelling Heath, where the heathland influence diminishes. On its southern inland side the type transitions to the Wooded Glacial Ridge on higher ground to the north of Holt, where woodland becomes dominant. On its northern coastal side the type meets the Open and Drained Coastal Marsh types.

Component Areas

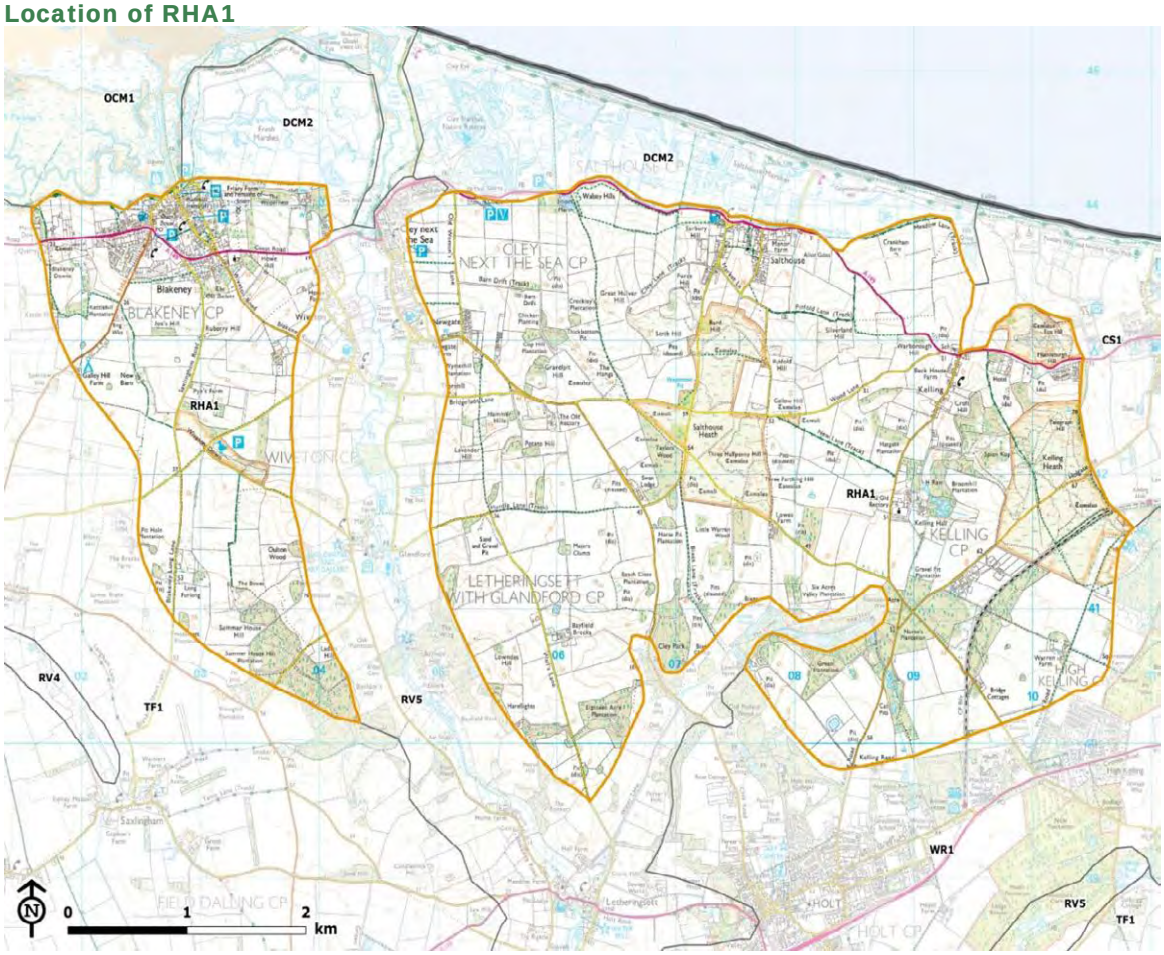
There is one area of Rolling Heath & Arable in North Norfolk, comprising land on either side of the Glaven Valley:

RHA1 – North Norfolk Rolling Heath & Arable

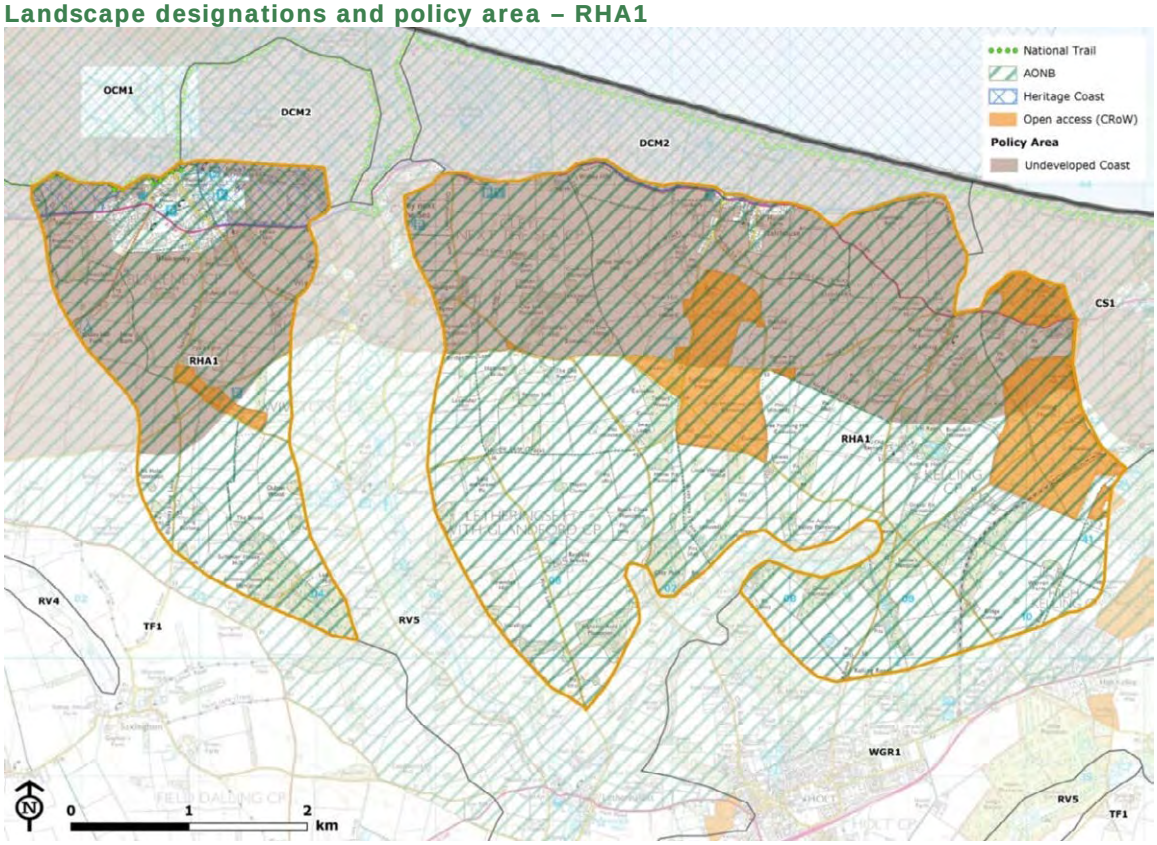
Characteristic rolling arable field with a sandy hillock of planted conifers.

Rolling Heath & Arable (RHA)

Location of RHA1

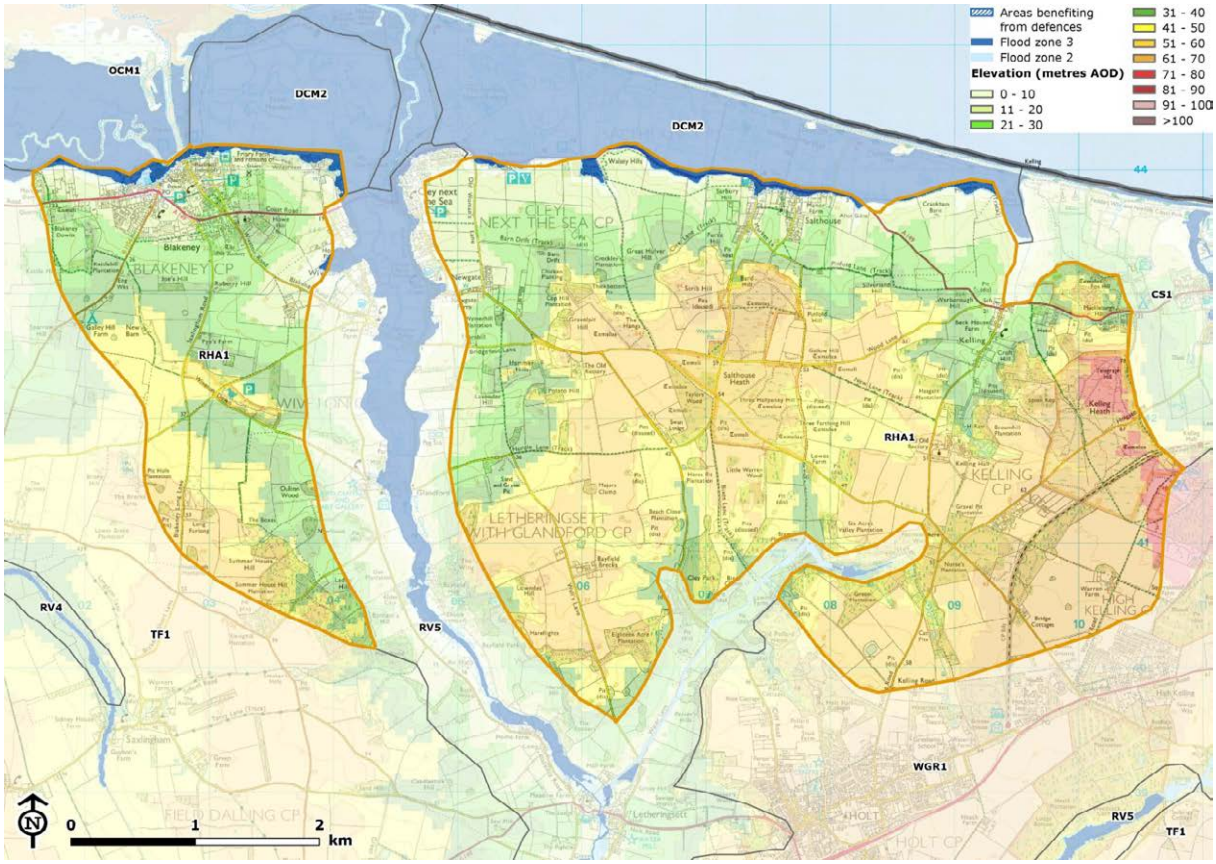


Landscape designations and policy area – RHA1

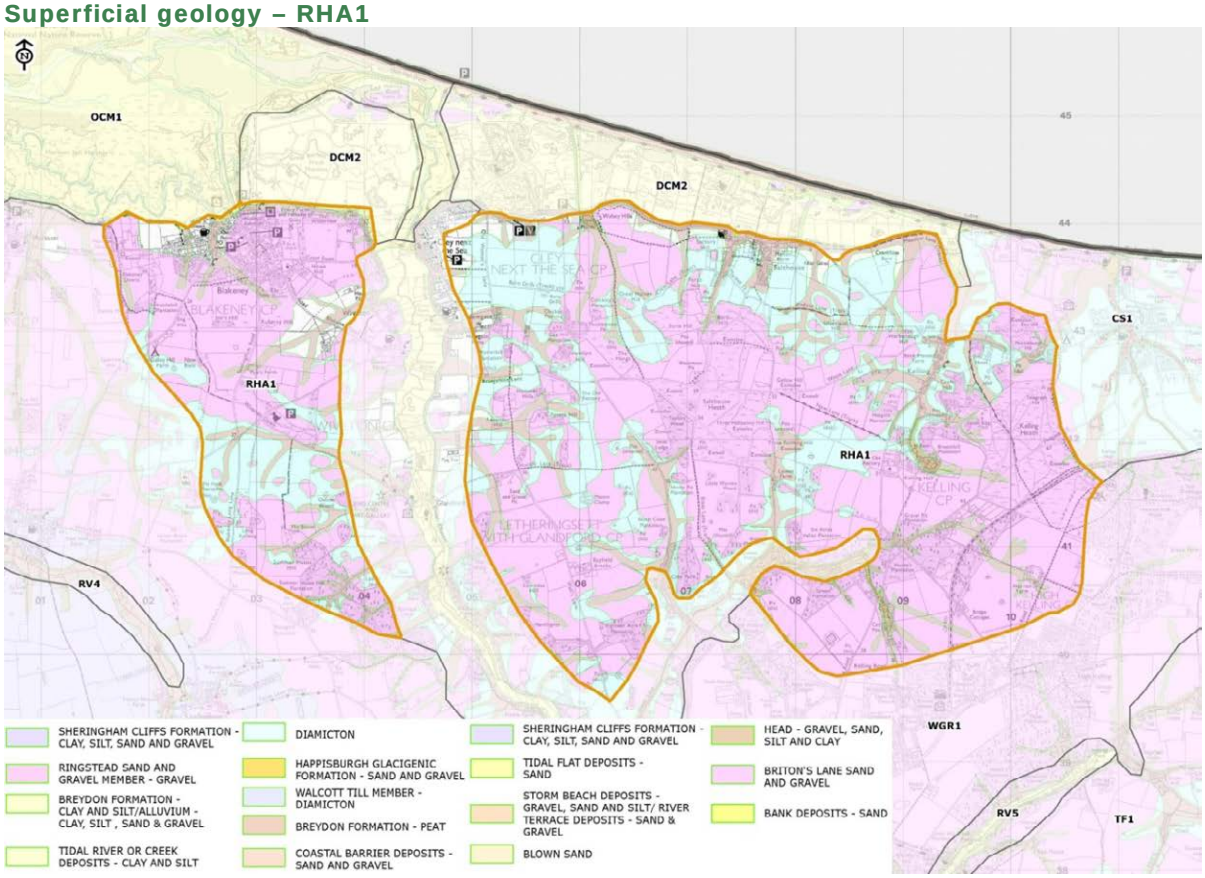


Rolling Heath & Arable (RHA)

Topography and hydrology – RHA1

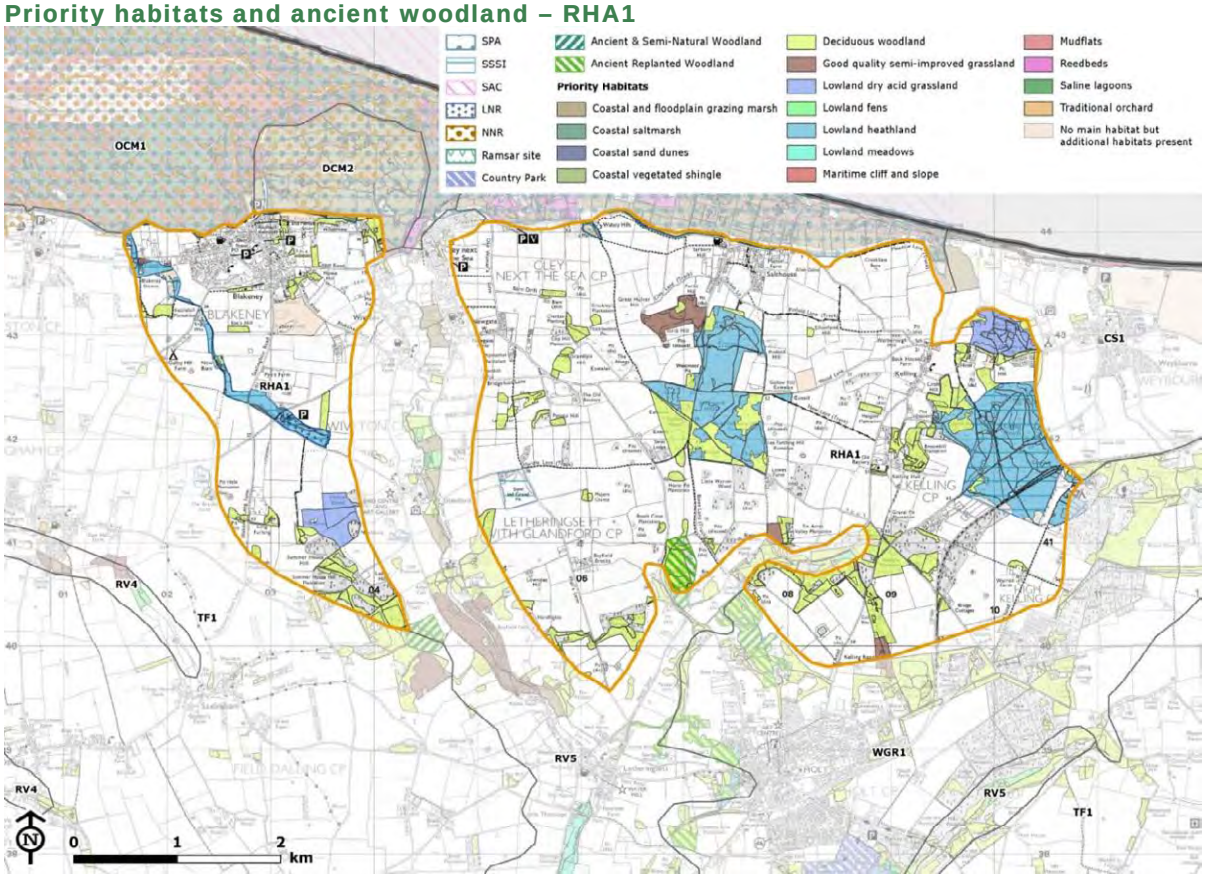


Superficial geology – RHA1

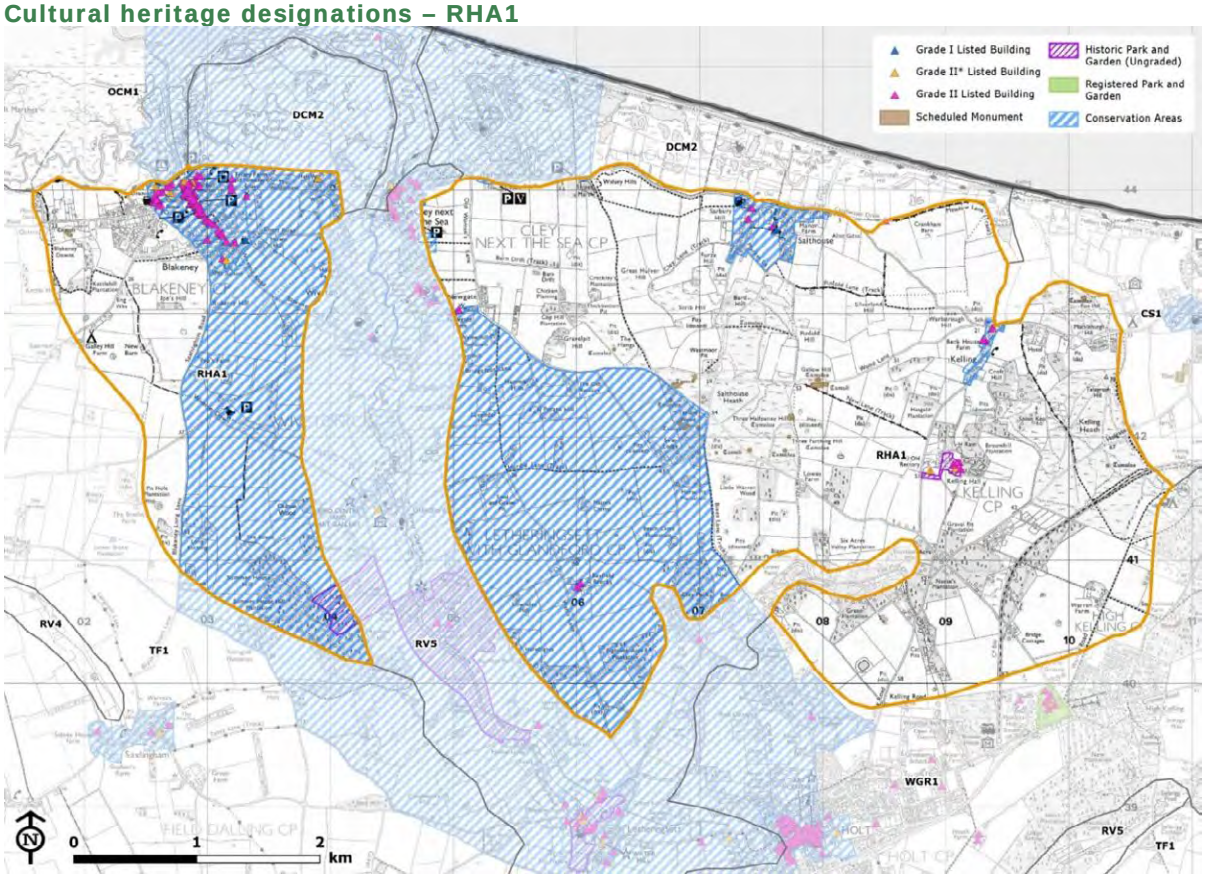


Rolling Heath & Arable (RHA)

Priority habitats and ancient woodland – RHA1



Cultural heritage designations – RHA1



Rolling Heath & Arable (RHA)

KEY CHARACTERISTICS

1) Distinctive glacial topography

The landscape is heavily influenced by the underlying deep deposits of glacial sands and gravels, and features large areas of elevated land including the western extremity of the Cromer Ridge. The glacial deposits give rise to a gently rolling and undulating landform, characterised by gentle slopes from the raised hinterland down towards the coastal marshes, with localised areas of steeper slopes such as the eastern scarp slope of Kelling Heath. Subtle small, gentle hillocks of sands and gravels and neighbouring hollows provide localised intimate areas which contribute to the variation in landscape character, shaping and enclosing views. Prominent landform features include the Blakeney Esker, a 3.5km long sinuous ridge of sediment deposited by glacial meltwater which has SSSI status for its special geological interest.

2) An open, elevated character affording long views to the coast and inland

The extensive raised hinterland is characterised by medium to large scale arable fields, enclosed by low managed hedgerows and occasional coniferous shelterbelts, heathy margins and larger tracts of heathland, giving rise to an open character with long views towards the coastal marshes and sea beyond, and inland across the Glaven Valley. There is a frequent feeling of proximity to the coast, due to the sense of space and large skies, even where direct views are not present.

3) Extensive heathlands and woodland blocks are prominent features

This is predominantly an agricultural landscape, but the light sandy soils also support the District's principal heathlands, including the extensive Salthouse and Kelling Heaths, both of which have sizeable woodland areas. Kelling Heath is designated as a SSSI. Frequent isolated pockets of heath also occur throughout this landscape, often on raised humps of almost pure sand, and amongst small coniferous plantations and deciduous woodland. The area to the west of the Glaven Valley has less heath and woodland than the larger part of the Landscape Type, to the east.

4) A strong rural character, with nature conservation interest and tourism land uses

The area has a strongly rural character, dominated by arable farmland and smaller areas of pig farming, in addition to coastal settlement and semi-natural habitats such as the heathlands. There is a fairly extensive network of public rights of way, including a small stretch of the Norfolk Coast Path National Trail, around Blakeney, and a number of other footpaths linking the coast with areas further inland. There are also extensive areas of Open Access Land associated with the heathlands, and a Local Nature Reserve at Wiveton Down (part of the Blakeney Esker). As a result of the lack of settlement, this Landscape Type is known for its dark night skies; Wiveton Downs and Kelling Heath Holiday Park both have national Dark Sky Discovery Site status. The North Norfolk (heritage) Railway is a popular tourist attraction and runs through the southern part of this area, and there are a number of sites providing holiday accommodation, including Kelling Heath Holiday Park (which straddles the boundary with the Wooded Glacial Ridge Type) and Friary Farm Caravan Park, Blakeney.

5) Concentration of settlement along the coast

Settlement is sparse within this landscape, being concentrated within the two fishing villages of Blakeney and Salthouse, both set near the foot of a slope above the coastal levels, as well as the smaller inland village of Kelling and a few isolated farmsteads. Blakeney is the larger settlement, and exhibits a strongly nucleated historic core, characterised by a typical and consistent vernacular of coursed flintwork with red brick edging and clay pantile roofing. Modern housing development has significantly expanded the settlement boundary to the west, along the A149 and B1156 roads.

6) The Kelling Estate

The Kelling Estate is a significant land owner within the area. The estate extends to approximately 1,600 acres in the vicinity of Kelling village and encompasses Kelling Hall, a Grade II* listed Arts-and-Crafts property, a number of holiday let properties, private residences, farmland, parkland, woodland, a garden centre and public house.

Rolling Heath & Arable (RHA)

7) Frequent disused sand and gravel pits

Numerous disused pits are dotted throughout this landscape, attesting to the value of the rich sand and gravel deposits as building materials over past centuries. The Glandford (Hurdle Lane) Pit is designated as a SSSI for its geological interest.

8) Characterful minor roads linking the busier A149 coast road and A148 Cromer to Fakenham road

The main road within this landscape is the relatively busy A149 coast road, which runs through Salthouse and Blakeney. A network of minor roads links the A149 with the A148 (Fakenham to Cromer) and inland settlements such as Holt (within the neighbouring Wooded Glacial Ridge Type). These main routes are busy; however, many minor roads retain a stronger rural and scenic character and are associated with thick tall hedges / trees and biodiverse verges. Others have suffered loss of hedges / verges and have little character.

Kelling Heath SSSI

Rolling Heath & Arable (RHA)

VALUED FEATURES AND QUALITIES

1) The Blakeney Esker and other distinctive glacial landform features

The Blakeney Esker is nationally recognised for its geological importance through SSSI designation, and is also a prominent and locally distinctive landform feature contributing positively to local identity. The wider landscape is also subtly but distinctly shaped by the underlying glacial deposits, including the many small hillocks of almost pure sand and gravel, which can be prominent within the arable farmland.

2) Strong sense of traditional rurality, tranquillity and remoteness, and dark skies

The area lies wholly within the AONB and contributes strongly to its defined special qualities, including the undeveloped coastal character, sense of remoteness and tranquillity, which complements the adjacent marshlands. The low level of development also leads to dark skies, with these recognised as some of the darkest in the UK. The area hosts two Dark Sky Discovery Sites, at Wiveton Downs and Kelling Heath Holiday Park.

3) Strong and distinctive links between land and sea

This landscape has a strong visual, functional and historic relationship with the sea, with elevated long coastal views available from many higher points inland, contributing to a sense of spaciousness, big skies and quality of coastal light. Conversely, long views inland to the south frequently include the wooded backdrop of the Cromer Ridge on the skyline. Blakeney was a commercial seaport into the 20th Century, with a rich maritime heritage, and still offers access to the sea and Blakeney Point for smaller vessels via the New Cut and Blakeney Channel.

4) Extensive heathlands are valued for their nature conservation and recreational interest

The area is important for its relatively extensive tracts of lowland heath, a priority habitat. Heathlands at Kelling Heath and Wiveton Downs are designated as SSSIs, whilst Wiveton Downs is also a Local Nature Reserve. Salthouse Heath is a County Wildlife Site. This locally distinctive and rare habitat contributes to the special qualities of the AONB, and is also valued as a recreational resource, with extensive areas of Open Access Land. Additionally, the Walsey Hills Reserve east of Cley, owned and managed by the Norfolk Ornithologists Association, provides a small area of hillside heathy scrub, where notable migratory bird species have been recorded. Other priority habitats present include areas of lowland dry acid grassland at Muckleburgh Hill and to the south of Wiveton Downs.

5) Rich archaeological heritage and historic environment

Settlements within this landscape all have a strong historic character and individual identity, recognised through Conservation Area designation, and the presence of clusters of listed buildings. The cohesive vernacular building materials and styles, as well as landmark buildings, contribute to a strong sense of place and historical continuity. Notable buildings include the Guildhall (also a Scheduled Monument), Friary and Mill, and the Church of St Nicholas at Blakeney; Wiveton Hall outside Blakeney; the Church of St Nicholas at Salthouse; Kelling Hall and the Church of St Mary, Kelling. In addition, there a numerous Scheduled Monuments dotted across the landscape, in the form of ancient burial mounds (tumuli), with the majority clustered around Salthouse Heath.

6) Distinctive skyline features

Distinctive skyline features, such as the church towers focused around the settlements, and the enclosing backdrop of the wooded Cromer Ridge, provide visual landmarks and visual interest.

7) Recreational opportunities

Many recreational opportunities exist outside the areas of arable farmland, focused around the extensive areas of Open Access Land on the heathlands, and the coastal areas adjacent to the marshlands. Blakeney is also a hub for boat trips and seal watching trips, and the two Dark Sky Discovery Sites provide a notable and rare recreational resource for star gazing and astronomers.

Rolling Heath & Arable (RHA)

Many of the Valued Features and Qualities of the Rolling Heath and Arable area are considered to contribute positively to Key Qualities of Natural Beauty of the Norfolk Coast AONB, as set out within the current AONB Management Plan. These Key Qualities include:

- Strong and distinctive links between land and sea
- Diversity and integrity of landscape, seascape and settlement character
- Exceptionally important, varied and distinctive biodiversity, based on locally distinctive habitats
- Nationally and internationally important geology
- Sense of remoteness, tranquillity and wildness
- Richness of archaeological heritage and historic environment, particularly that relating to the coast and its character.

View looking east towards Kelling and Muckleburgh Hill (on skyline), showing elevated sea views, clump of conifers on heathy outcrop of sand (left of image) and recently planted hedgerow (right of image)

Rolling Heath & Arable (RHA)

The Blakeney Esker (also known as Wiveton Downs)

FORCES FOR CHANGE / DETRACTORS

1) **Modern agricultural practices and change**

Post World War II intensification of agriculture, including the spread of arable land, enlargement of fields and modernisation of farm buildings has resulted in changes to ancient field patterns, hedgerows, narrow lanes and verges. Although this landscape type has not experienced as extensive field enlargements as other types, hedgerow losses have still occurred, as well as a rise in pig farming which has brought about considerable landscape and visual change. There has been some farm/estate diversification such as 'glamping', camping and caravan sites and holiday accommodation which continue to contribute to development pressures.

2) **Uncertainty regarding future agricultural subsidy schemes following the UK's departure from the EU**

Changes to agricultural subsidies could have significant impacts on the landscape and biodiversity. These could be positive or negative.

3) **Conversion of agricultural buildings and scale of new storage structures**

Decline in the usefulness of traditional farm buildings has led to neglect and/ or conversion of barns from rural working buildings to residential and leisure uses. Such conversions can introduce 'suburban' features such as surfaced drives / domestic style gates and fences / garden style planting and parking areas / overly large windows and external lighting. There is continued pressure for construction of large agricultural storage buildings to replace older barns, and in new locations these can be very prominent features in this open landscape. New agricultural buildings, often large in scale and of non-traditional materials such as steel, concrete and aluminium cladding, sited in locations away from or prominently within existing farm complexes, can detract from the prevailing landscape character. The Kelling Estate, as a major landowner, has a significant influence on the landscape – e.g. in terms of conversion of agricultural buildings to

Rolling Heath & Arable (RHA)

leisure/residential use, and parkland management.

4) Settlement expansion and infill to meet housing demand

Enlargement / improvement of dwellings, and replacement of hedged boundaries with fences, can gentrify rural settlements / locations. Continued increases in light pollution associated with new built form and infrastructure development will affect the sense of remoteness, tranquillity and dark skies associated with this landscape.

At Blakeney, edge of settlement new housing development has undermined the traditional nucleated settlement pattern, and in some cases, the cohesive vernacular building style and materials. Infill development has also resulted in some loss of open space and subdivision of larger plots, reducing the green and treed character of the area around the village core.

5) Demand for isolated new homes

Demand for isolated new homes can result in buildings that do not reinforce the local vernacular. Lighting and domestic external curtilage can be prominent in otherwise sparsely populated areas and this can affect the area's sense of remoteness and historic, rural character.

6) Renewable energy development

The continuing development of large scale off-shore wind farms has resulted in temporary disturbance caused by trenching for cable routes through this Landscape Type, to link the Dudgeon Wind Farm from Weybourne Hope to a substation at Necton. The introduction of permanent structures associated with any such future development would potentially have greater impact.

There is also a continuing pressure for solar PV developments on farmland.

7) Telecoms masts and wind turbines in prominent locations

Elevated locations are preferred sites for telecom masts and wind turbines and in this expansive landscape these can result in wide ranging visual intrusion on the skyline and erosion of rural, character, to the detriment of special qualities of the AONB. The benefits/harm balance requires careful analysis within this sensitive Landscape Type.

8) Tree diseases and invasive species

Ash dieback and other tree diseases may have a significant impact on the composition of woodland and hedgerow trees within the District and this Type. Invasive species have the potential to have a significant impact on native biodiversity that can result in landscape scale changes.

9) Climate change

Climate change could result in the need for new crops, changes in farming practices, increased demand for reservoirs, the introduction of new pests and diseases affecting native species, and increased demand for / efficiency of renewable energy types. A changing climate will result in a change in the distribution and abundance of species that can in turn result in landscape scale changes, including potential impacts on the important lowland heathlands.

A change in climate will result in different recreational patterns and use that could place increased pressure on the landscape for more tourism related development.

Rolling Heath & Arable (RHA)

Recent new housing development at Langham Road, on the south-western edge of Blakeney

LANDSCAPE VISION

The vision for this landscape type is of a well-managed and actively farmed rural landscape that invests in natural capital, creating and enhancing ecological networks and semi-natural habitats; notably the extensive heathlands and wooded areas, and conserves the special qualities of natural beauty of the Norfolk Coast AONB, which encompasses the whole of the area. New development is successfully integrated within the existing settlements where it reinforces traditional character and vernacular, and the landscape retains a rural character with dark night skies and, in many locations, a strong sense of tranquillity and remoteness.

LANDSCAPE STRATEGY AND GUIDELINES

1) Conserve the high scenic quality and natural beauty of the area

The whole of this landscape type is within the Norfolk Coast AONB, reflecting its high scenic quality, undeveloped coastal character and skylines, strong sense of remoteness and tranquillity, dark skies, important lowland heaths and strong and distinctive links between land and sea, including long uninterrupted coastal views. The area is therefore particularly sensitive to larger-scale development such as wind turbines, telecom masts, housing and industrial activity. Capacity to visually contain development in this context is limited.

Ensure the redevelopment of redundant barn complexes both within, on the edge and especially outside settlement boundaries, is sensitively undertaken avoiding use of suburban features such as surfaced drives, domestic style gates and fences, ornamental planting, overly large windows or excessive / invasive external lighting.

Impact both by day and night should be a consideration, to maintain the rural character and dark skies. Consider opportunities to address adverse light pollution by means of replacement downlighting or complete removal of lighting, taking into account the appropriateness of the latest lighting technologies, e.g. different types of LEDs.

Rolling Heath & Arable (RHA)

Maintain the rural character of lanes by protecting roadside hedgerows, hedgerow trees and biodiverse verges. Avoid widening that would result in their loss, and urbanising features such as kerbs, lighting and excessive signage.

2) Conserve and expand areas of lowland heath and other non-arable habitats

Improve ecological connectivity in the landscape through conserving and expanding areas of lowland heath, dry acid grassland, woodland, ponds and other non-arable and semi-natural habitats.

Retain and manage areas of woodland and trees, including those that contribute to the setting of the villages and buildings in the landscape. Reinstate and create hedges, grassland, orchards, ponds and watercourses where these have been lost or removed from the landscape. Enlarge areas of pasture, woodland, scrub, heathland and arable margins, with a focus on re-connecting fragmented habitats and improving ecological connectivity for a variety of species including great crested newts, reptiles, bats, birds and insects.

Support landowners and agricultural subsidy schemes that invest in natural capital and ecosystem services. These can include, but are not limited to, creating and restoring ponds and 'ghost' ponds and managing and enhancing the range of habitats associated with bats, barn owls and farmland birds, providing roosting, nesting/resting and feeding opportunities throughout the year (woodland margins, fallow plots, overwintered stubble and insect-rich foraging habitats).

New planting associated with development should blend with existing features rather than simply trying to screen new development - layers of vegetation may be more appropriate than one thick screen using species local to the area.

3) Conserve the character of villages

Retain the compact character of development in villages to avoid impinging on the remote, rural character of the surrounding landscape. Avoid linear sprawl or development that encroaches up onto higher ground. Ensure any new development is well integrated into the landscape and does not form a harsh edge.

4) Protect and appropriately manage the rich cultural heritage of the area

Protect and manage the numerous and extensive parkland estates, historic villages and churches to retain these as features of the landscape. Ensure new development does not compete with the church towers for prominence so they remain key landmark features on the skyline. Improve the interpretation of cultural heritage features in the landscape, for example, by sensitively designed and sited information boards and the use of technology, e.g. mobile phone applications.

5) Improve and expand the public rights of way network

Ensure existing rights of way are well-maintained, signed and promoted, and seek opportunities to create new rights of way, particularly longer-distance routes (including cycle routes) to connect the inland areas (including the open access heathlands) with the coast (complementing existing routes such as that via Wiveton Downs), contributing to reducing journeys by private car.

6) Manage the impacts of climate change

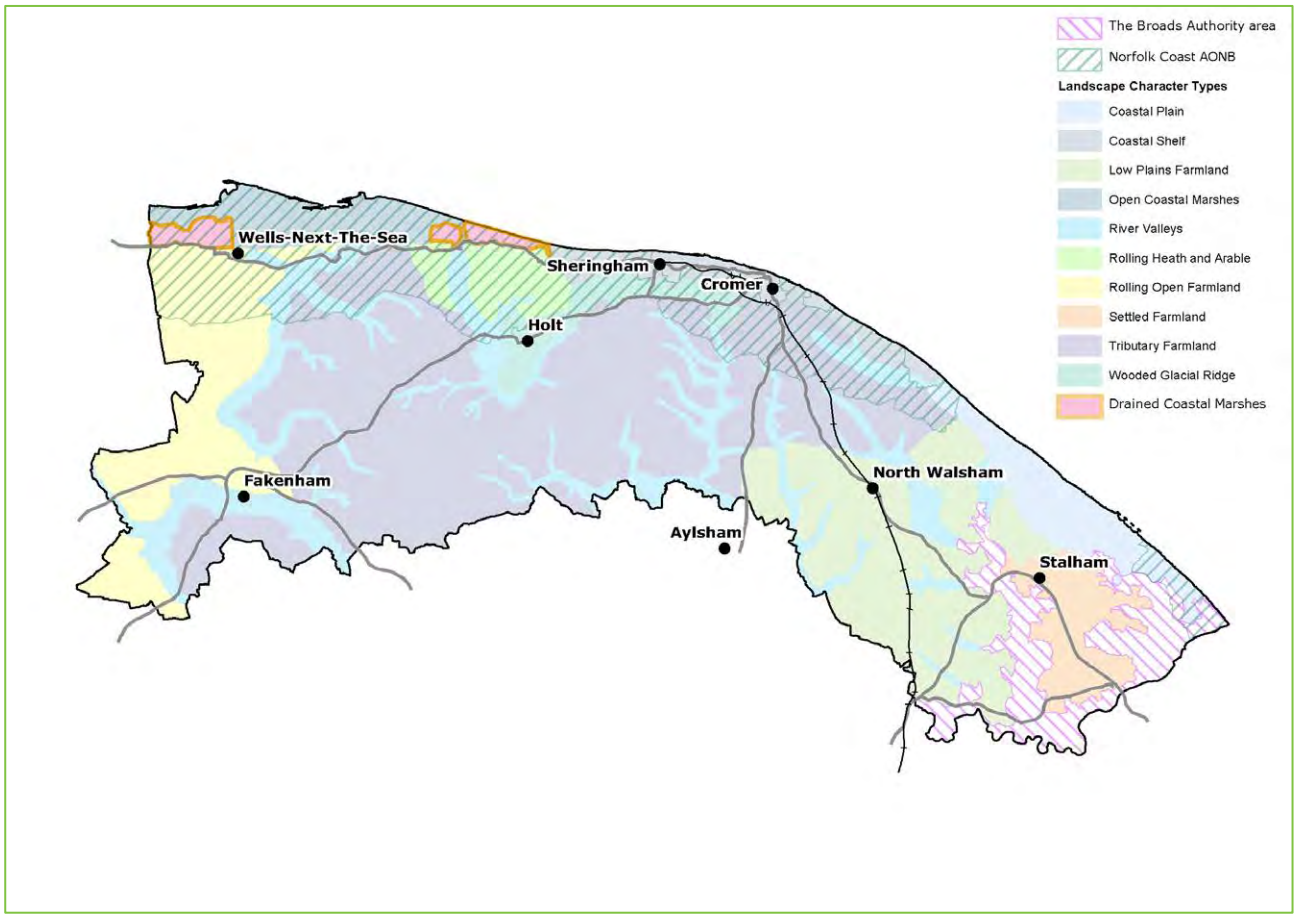
Manage and enhance the health and structure of heathlands and woodlands to improve resilience in the face of climate change and pests and diseases. Manage development to ensure that changing recreational patterns do not adversely affect the rural agricultural heritage of this landscape Type.

Rolling Heath & Arable (RHA)

View west across RV5 to Wiveton, Cley and Blakeney churches.

View north from Walsey Hills Reserve (coastal outcrop of heathy scrub) showing the rolling and undulating landscape gently descending from the elevated hinterland to the coast, with wooded and heathy sand/gravel hillocks and hollows providing intimate areas of more varied landform

Drained Coastal Marshes (DCM)



Drained Coastal Marshes (DCM)

SUMMARY

The Drained Coastal Marshes Type are areas of former Open Coastal Marsh (intertidal marsh) that have been drained and enclosed, forming a flat open landscape comprising some important grazing marsh habitat as well as sand dunes, pine woodland and arable farmland. All parts of the Type fall within the Norfolk Coast AONB.

The Drained Coastal Marshes are protected from the sea by a shingle bank (at Cley), clay banks and a 16m high extensive dune system at Holkham - the 'Holkham Meals'. Beyond these natural and man-made defences, lie the undrained Open Coastal Marshes. The southern boundary of the Type is defined by rising land where the drained marshes meet higher land of the Rolling Open Farmland (at Holkam Park/Wells), Tributary Farmland (at Blakeney) and the Cromer Ridge (at Salthouse).

Component Areas

There are two geographically distinct areas of Drained Coastal Marsh in North Norfolk:

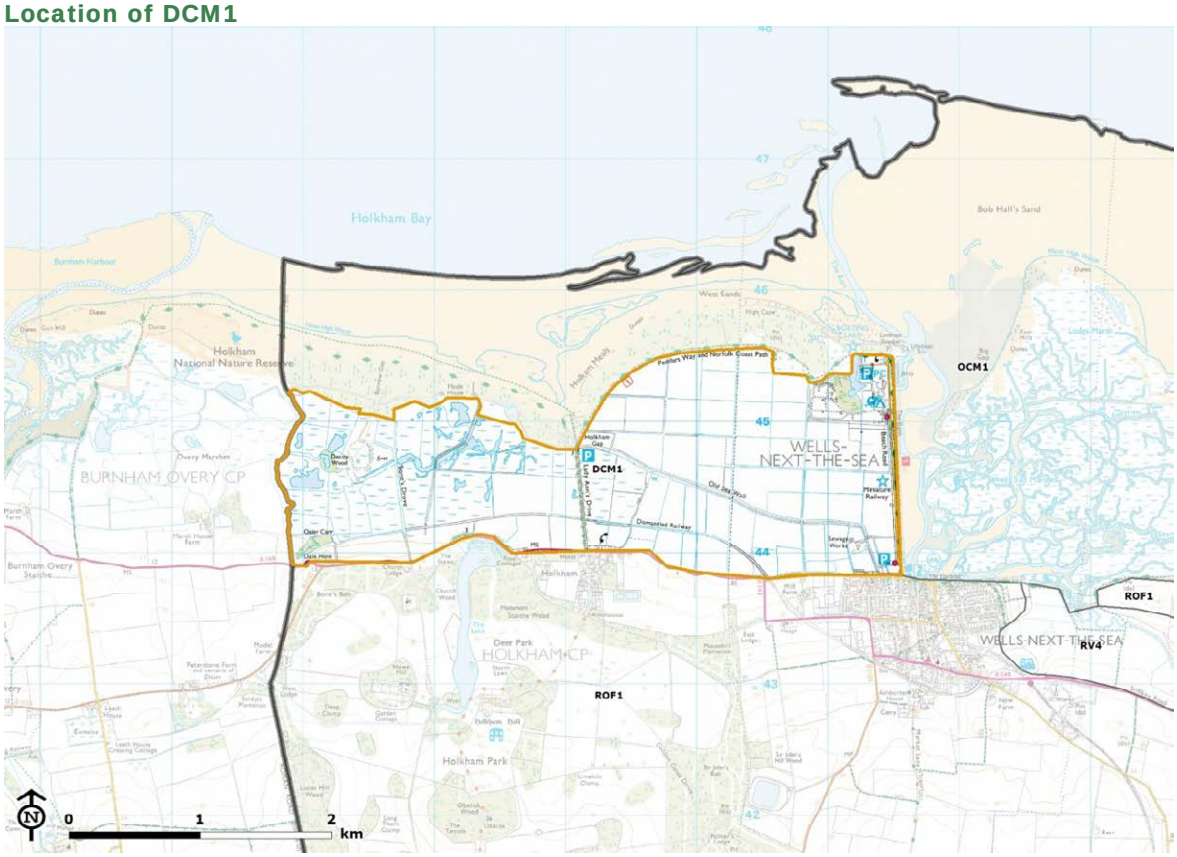
DCM1 - Holkham Drained Marshes

DCM2 - Blakeney, Wiveton, Cley and Salthouse Drained Marshes

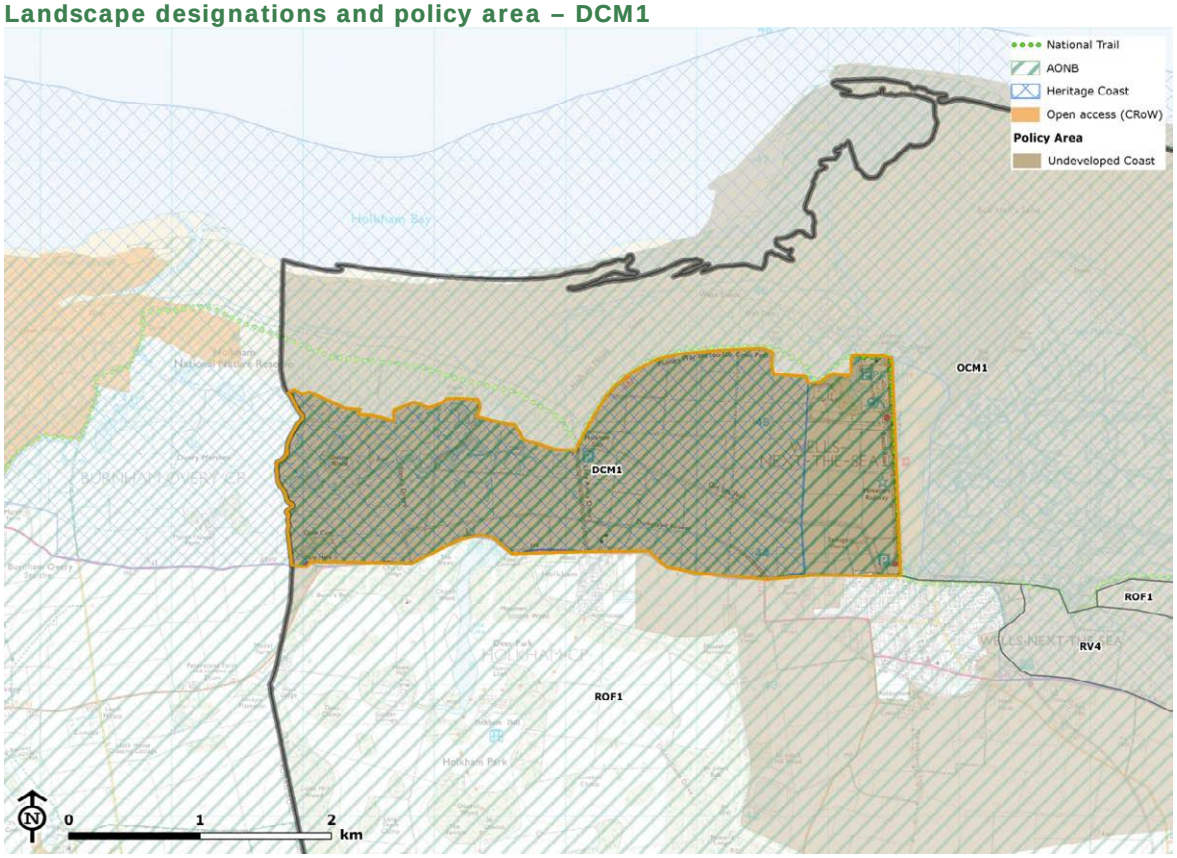
The more remote and wild western part of Holkham Drained Marshes

Drained Coastal Marshes (DCM)

Location of DCM1

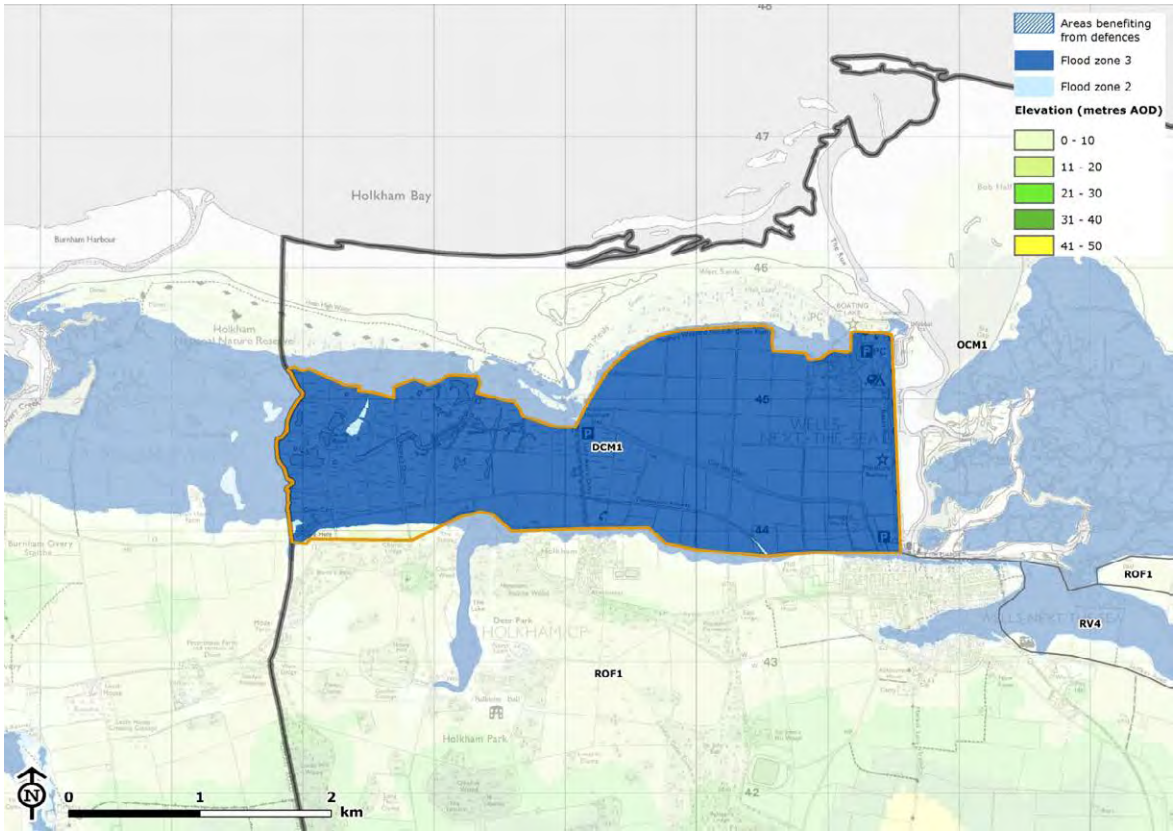


Landscape designations and policy area – DCM1

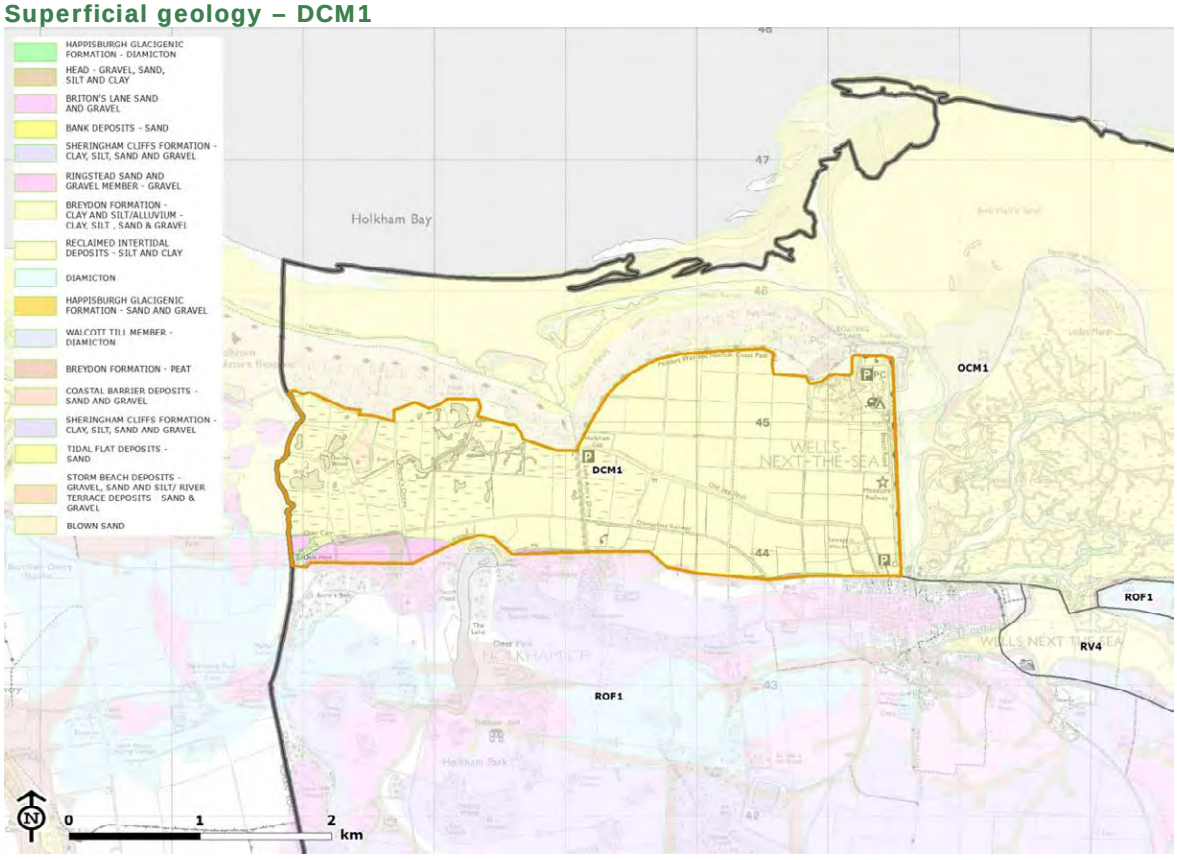


Drained Coastal Marshes (DCM)

Topography and hydrology – DCM1

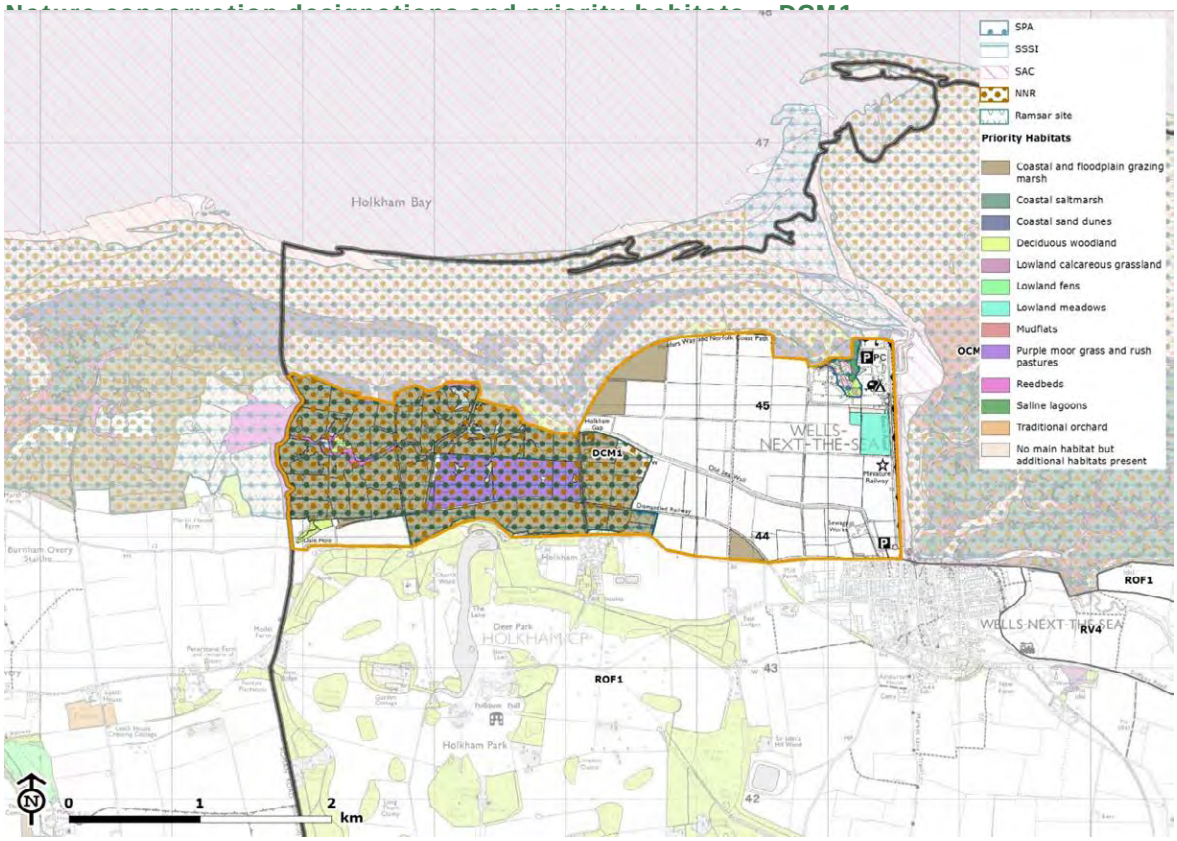


Superficial geology – DCM1

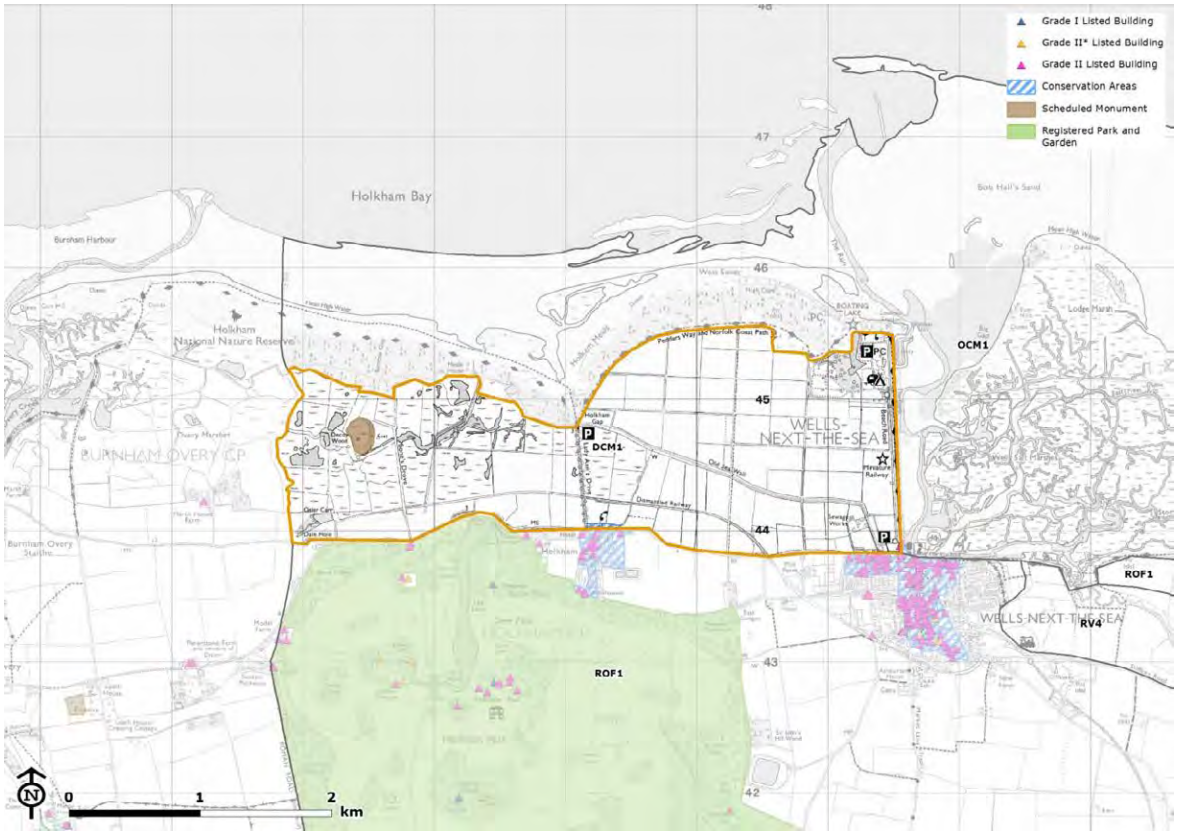


Drained Coastal Marshes (DCM)

Nature conservation designations and priority habitats – DCM1

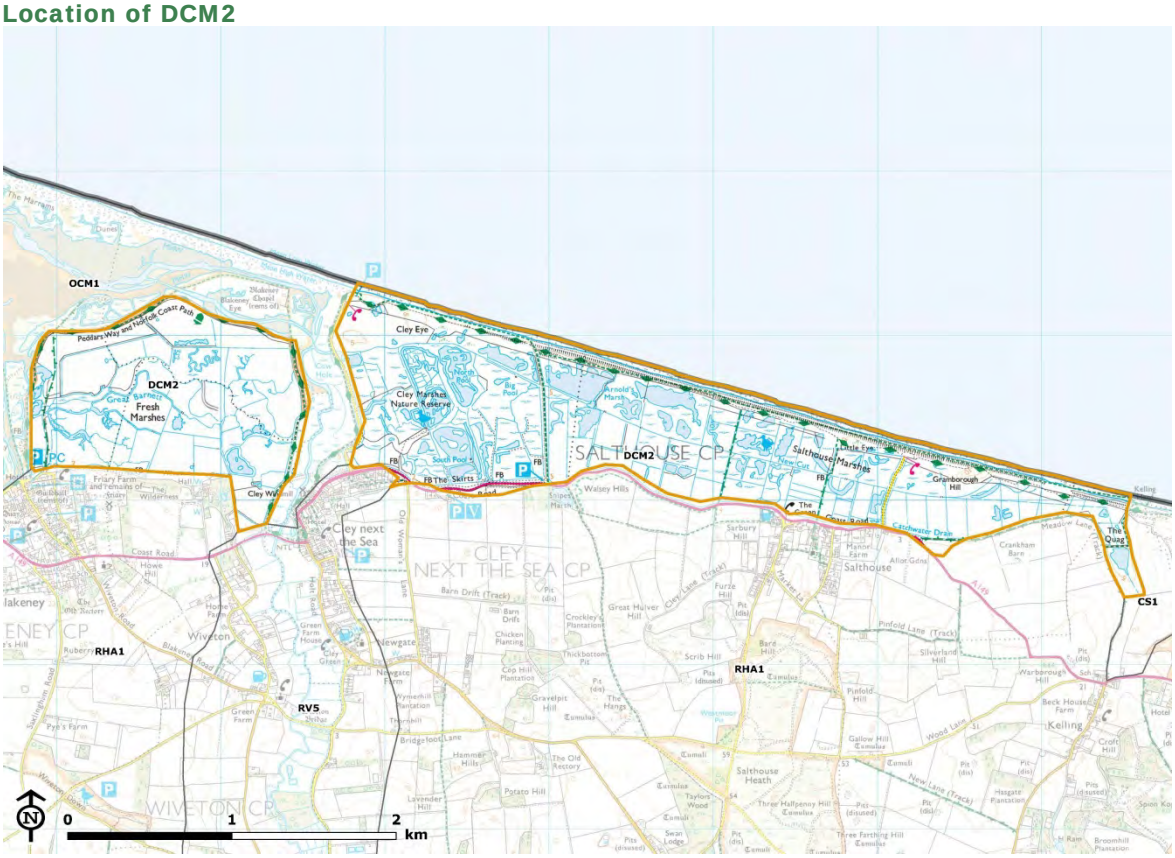


Cultural heritage designations – DCM1



Drained Coastal Marshes (DCM)

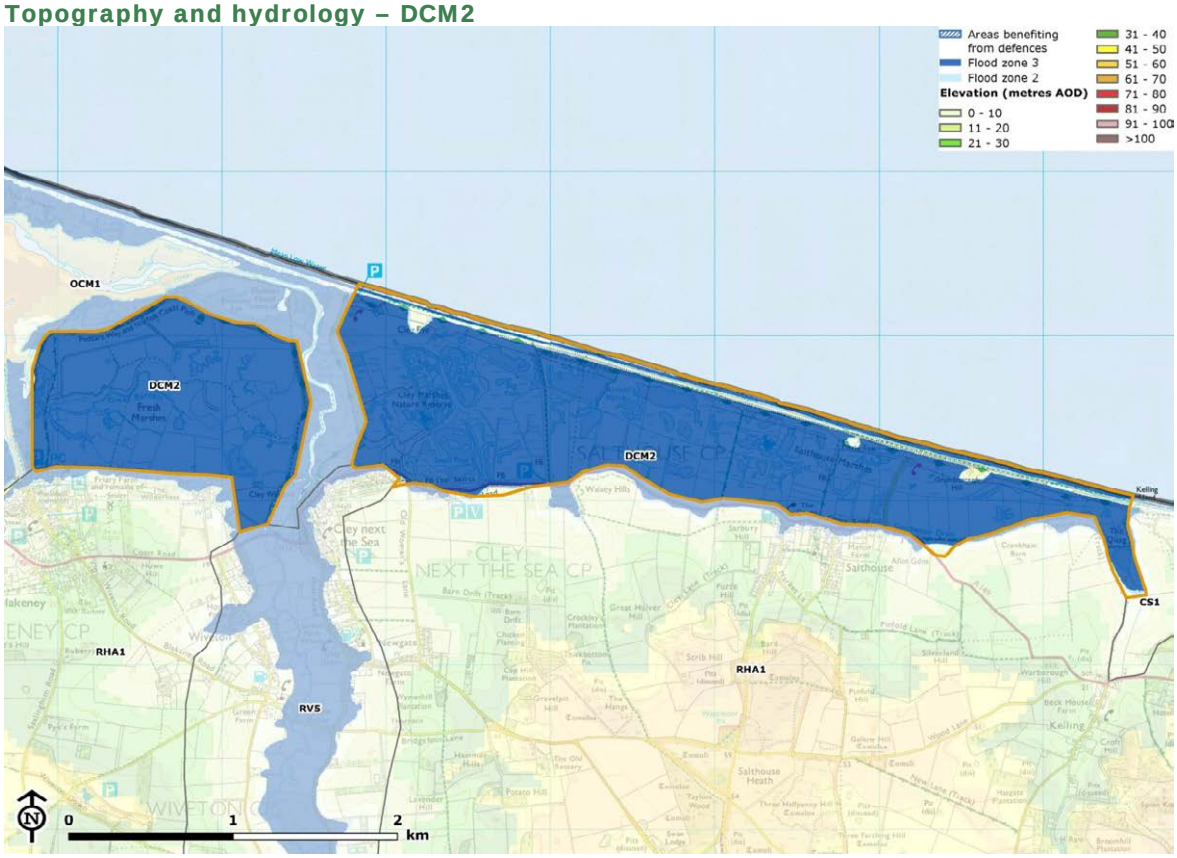
Location of DCM2



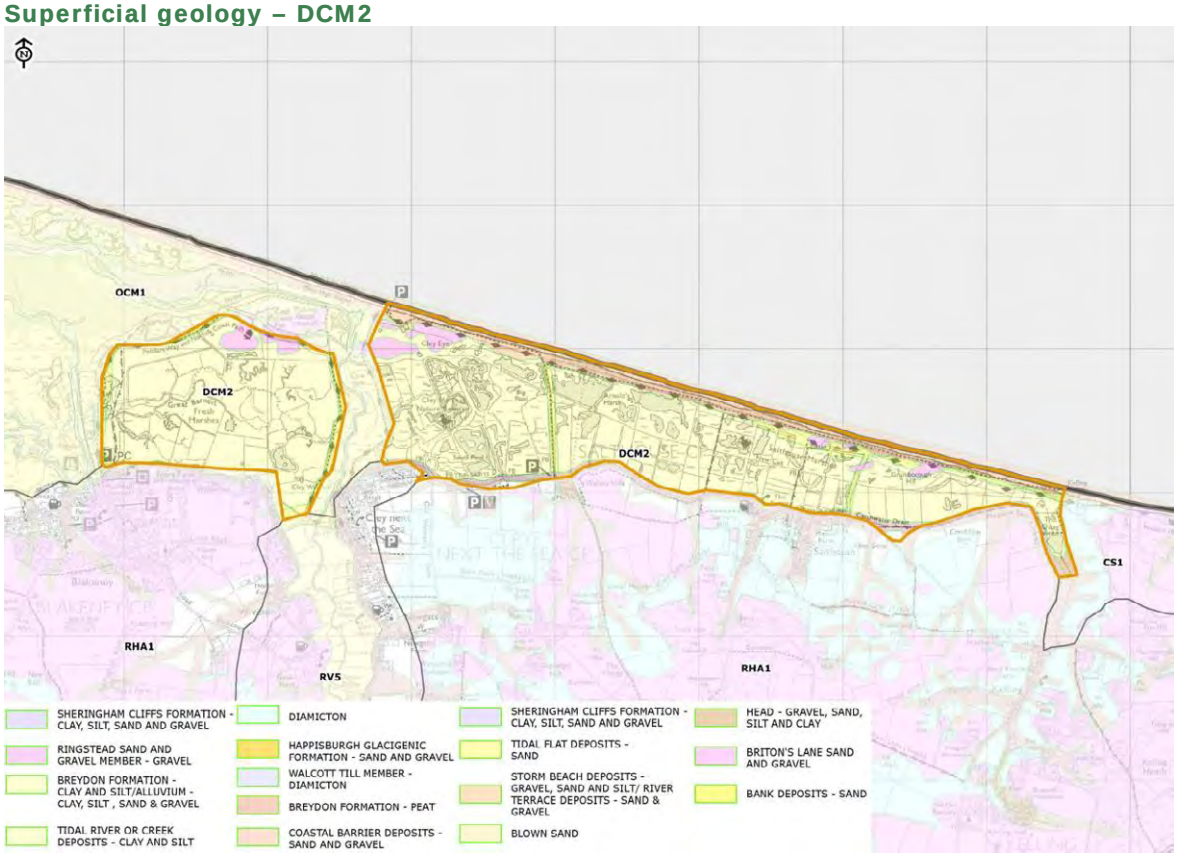
Landscape designations and policy area – DCM2

Drained Coastal Marshes (DCM)

Topography and hydrology – DCM2

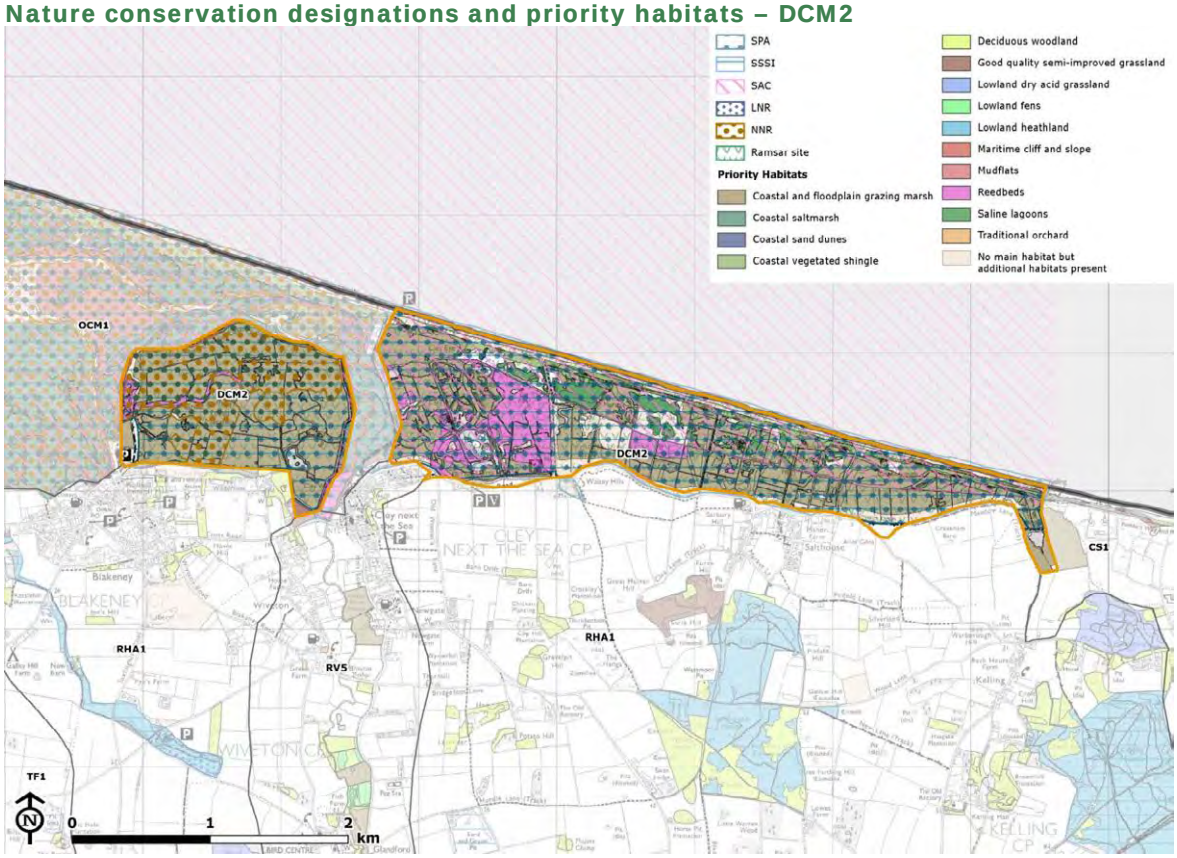


Superficial geology – DCM2

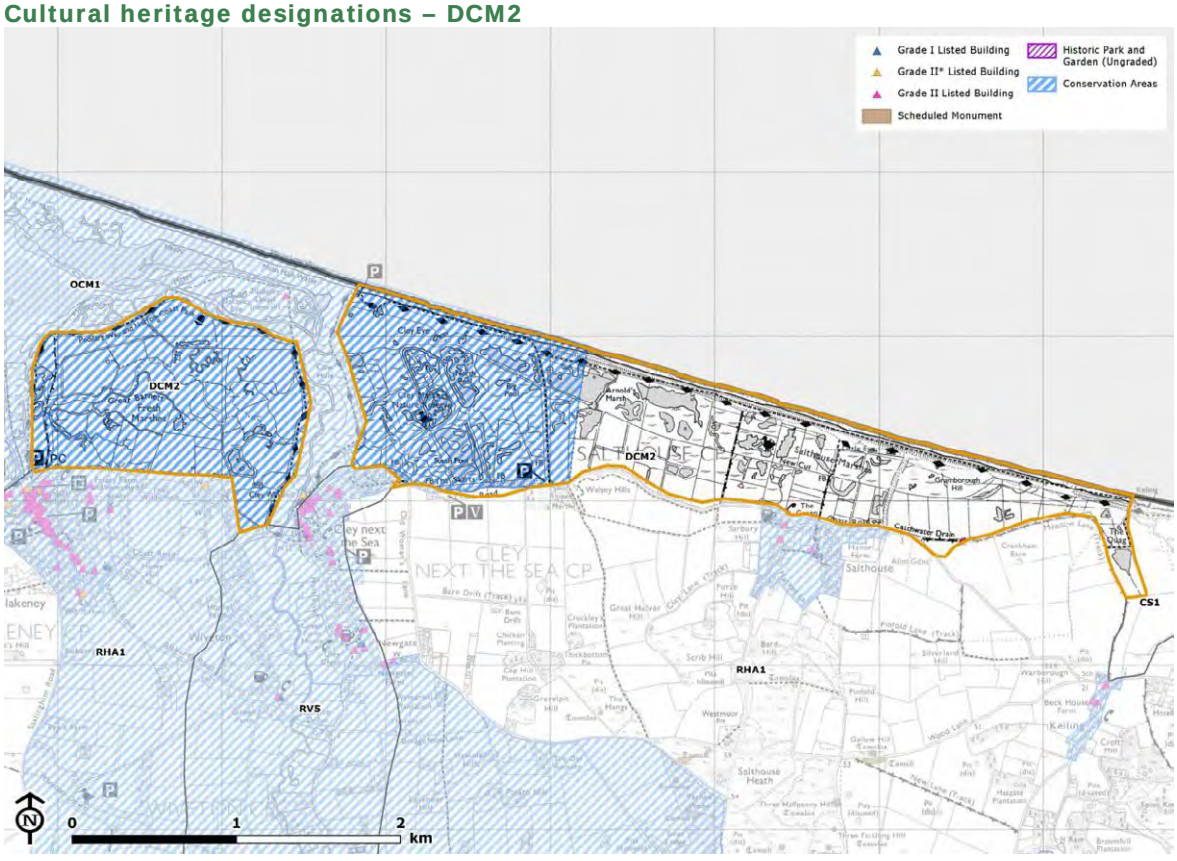


Drained Coastal Marshes (DCM)

Nature conservation designations and priority habitats – DCM2



Cultural heritage designations – DCM2



Drained Coastal Marshes (DCM)

KEY CHARACTERISTICS

1) **A flat, open low lying landscape dominated by grazing marsh and drained farmland**

The Drained Coastal Marshes have been reclaimed from the coastal saltmarshes with much land at or slightly below sea level (due to shrinkage). Soils are derived from marine alluvium and are deep and stoneless, either clayey or calcareous. The land use pattern reflects a history of human intervention. In areas protected by a sea wall are arable fields divided into large geometric fields bordered by grassed banks, straight drainage ditches and low gappy hedges. Along the inland fringes is a smaller scale pattern of more textured and irregularly-shaped pastures. The grazing marsh is drained by meandering rivers and creeks, many of which have been diverted during the drainage process. The area around Cley is a nature reserve with brackish lagoons, pasture, reedbeds and dykes.

2) **Enclosed by natural (sand dunes, shingle banks) or man-made (clay) banks which keep the sea out**

The area is cut off from the sea by a shingle bank (at Cley), a 16m high extensive dune system at Holkham - the 'Holkham Meals', and elsewhere man-made clay banks. Some areas are specifically allowed to flood by managing the water levels.

3) **A dynamic and changing landscape**

Change has long been a characteristic feature of the Drained Coastal Marshes and the area has been subject to repeated reclamation since Roman times. Mapped evidence suggests periods of intensive agriculture followed by temporary reversion to marshland and periods when grazing was dominant. This continues to this day. More intensively farmed areas have relatively dry ditches with steep trapezoidal sides, often with a fringe of Phragmites spp. which is flailed yearly while pasture areas have a higher water table and wet, shallower ditches.

4) **A remote, peaceful landscape, but with some 'honeypots' of activity and built development**

Human intervention is present in the form of drainage ditches and cultivated land, and there is evidence of historic settlement, including the remains of an Iron Age fort in DCM1 and the remains of Blakeney Chapel in DCM2, but today the landscape is largely unsettled. except for 'honeypots' of activity near Holkham, Wells, Blakeney and Cley. There is a large caravan park, car park, a miniature railway and a sewage works at Wells-next-the-Sea; and a toll road and the remains of Holkham railway station close to Holkham.

5) **Nature conservation interest, notably the freshwater marsh which is a haven for breeding birds**

The existing areas of freshwater marsh are important for breeding birds such as redshank and lapwing, and the combination of wetland, grazing marshes and saline lagoons are valuable for wintering wildfowl such as pink footed geese. Even in arable areas, the rush-lined drainage ditches which criss-cross the larger arable fields form an inter-connected network of valuable wetland habitats. These important habitats are recognised by a concentration of nature conservation designations including National Nature Reserves (Holkham in DCM1and Blakeney in DCM2), the North Norfolk Coast SSSI and North Norfolk Coast SPA, SAC and Ramsar sites. The sites are internationally important for a variety of bird species and have distinct and rare wetland ecologies.

The conifer and mixed plantations on the dunes near Holkham are ecologically valuable and contain fragments of heathland (part of Holkham National Nature Reserve).

6) **Evidence of past land use including historic farmsteads and field patterns, salt pans, medieval fisheries and water mills**

While most early settlers lived on the higher land on the fringes of the inter-tidal marsh, there are the remains of a simple Iron Age Fort on a defensible 'dry' enclave at Holkham. There is also evidence of linear 'ladder-type' field patterns and the sites of isolated farmsteads located on higher, more stable land. Faden's Map (1797) shows that the majority of the marsh was common land, used as grazing for cattle, sheep and horses and to supply sedge and reed for building and

Drained Coastal Marshes (DCM)

for animal bedding, as well as habitat for fish, eels and wild birds. The Domesday Book records salt pans on the marshes within this area - saltwater flowing in tidal creeks was diverted into special basins where it evaporated. There is also evidence of medieval fisheries and water mills.

7) **Access provided by tracks and footpaths, and occasional roads**

The Peddars Way long distance path and Norfolk Coast National Trail provide access along the seaward edge of the drained marshes. Lady Ann's Drive provides access to a car park and Orientation Centre at Holkham Gap, while Beach Road in Wells provides public access to the beach and Pinewoods Caravan Park. There are public footpaths across the marsh to the coast in the Cley/ Salthouse area.

8) **Large skies and long views**

The open and expansive sky is significant wherever one is within this landscape type, accentuated by the colour and reflection from the sea. The proximity to the sea, and sea view opportunities are a feature of this Type, especially from the top of the banks than enclose the area.

Characteristics unique to DCM1 – Holkham Drained Marshes

1) **Relationship with the 'Holkham Meals'**

The Holkham Drained Marshes lie behind a line of dunes, known as the 'Holkham Meals' (within OCM1) where the dune crests reach a height of 16m, and a wide beach. The marshes are protected by these coastal dunes and the dense pine woodland planted on them in the 19th Century, together with protection provided by the sea banks to the east (at Wells) and west.

2) **The Holkham Gap**

Documentary evidence suggests that a channel flowed through Holkham Gap connecting Holkham Village to the sea before the saltmarshes were drained and reclaimed. The old sea wall is also a feature further to the south.

3) **Land use is mostly farmland (partly arable and partly grazed)**

This character area is partly pasture and partly arable (wheat, barley, beans and rape). Water control is more orientated towards drainage rather than the creation of wetland habitats and field sizes are larger and more rectilinear than DCM2. There are small areas of scrub and rough hedges associated with some of the boundaries on the higher areas and associated with the former railway line. There are some coniferous woodland belts around the caravan park at Wells-next-the-Sea and a small woodland (for sporting purposes) sited within the arable area of DCM1.

4) **Holkham National Nature Reserve and associated naturalistic habitats**

The western part of DCM1 is a more naturalistic area of grazing marsh with drainage channels and several saline lagoons (brackish lakes/ponds) to the immediate rear of the dunes in OCM1, which are in part affected by water movements in the sand/gravel strata and are affected to a degree by tidal flows (Spring tides only). The area is within the designated Holkham National Nature Reserve and related concentration of ecological designations described above.

5) **Human intervention**

More human intervention exists here than in DCM2.This character area includes drained arable land, a dismantled railway, a car park and visitor centre at Lady Ann's Drive; a large caravan park (Pinewoods) and ancillary buildings, a car park and boating lake accessed by a miniature railway and Beach Road from Wells; and a car park, harbour office, toilets block and playing fields and a sewage works on the edge of Wells. Development along the A149 Coast Road in the adjacent landscape type is also prominent.

Drained Coastal Marshes (DCM)

Wells playing fields situated on the drained marsh behind the banked coastal defence (top), and the view south over the drained marsh to Holkham (bottom).

Drained Coastal Marshes (DCM)

Characteristics unique to DCM2 - Blakeney, Wiveton, Cley and Salthouse Drained Marshes

1) **The drained coastal marshes at Cley and Salthouse have been claimed from saltmarshes behind a shingle ridge**

   The shingle ridge extends from Blakeney Point to Kelling Hard and has a steeply sloping, constantly eroding beach on the other side. The shingle has a unique ecology but is highly unstable and vulnerable. Occasional flooding of the marsh occurs.

2) **Land use is dominated by freshwater wetlands, reedbeds, small pastures, reed fringed ditches and open water scrapes**

   A few small grazing meadows are owned by individuals, and field sizes are generally much smaller in the DCM2. Around the grazed land are more naturalistic areas of brackish lagoons, reedbeds and dykes that have nature conservation interest. The outlying Weybourne section of DCM2 is mainly reedbed and dense bramble / willowherb fed by a small stream which filters out to sea beneath the shingle bank.

3) **Relatively little access and settlement compared to DCM1**

   There is relatively low level of public access to this area compared to DCM1 – restricted to two minor roads to the coast, foot access along the sea walls/ shingle bank and across the marsh to the coast, and some access to the NWT Reserve (although this is limited). The only settlement/ buildings are the remains of Blakeney Chapel (only the foundations and part of a wall still remain) and Cley Windmill which lies on the edge of Cley next the Sea.

Cley Marshes Nature Reserve – DCM2

Drained Coastal Marshes (DCM)

Cley Marshes with the low profile Norfolk Wildlife Trust visitor centre in the background

VALUED FEATURES AND QUALITIES

1) **Areas of coastal grazing marsh, reedbeds, rush pastures, saline lagoons and shingle banks**

   The remaining natural and semi-natural habitats including coastal grazing marsh, reedbeds, rush pastures, saline lagoons and shingle banks are relatively rare and are unique identifying features of this Type as well as being internationally important biodiversity, reflected in the high number of statutory designations. Grazing marsh is of great ecological importance due to its salinity gradient created by saline seepage and freshwater springs, but it is also among the most fragile habitats of the north Norfolk coastline. The naturalistic character provides a contrast to the intensely managed farmland which occupies the inland areas.

2) **The sense of openness, large skies, and quality of coastal light**

   These characteristics provide a sense of space and long views. Expansive views from the sea walls are also valued.

3) **Relative absence of human settlement and remote, peaceful nature**

   The relative absence of settlement (except in focussed 'honeypots') provides a strong sense of remoteness and tranquillity (especially the dark night skies) which provide a contrast to the more developed parts of the coast.

4) **Historic features including remnant historic buildings, historic field patterns, salt pans, medieval fisheries and water mills**

   These historic remains provide time depth to the landscape and an indication of former activity in the area – including grazing of the marsh for cattle, sheep and horses, the supply of sedge and reed for building and for animal bedding, the production of salt in salt pans, medieval fisheries and water mills. The Iron Age Fort on a defensible 'dry' enclave at Holkham indicates early settlement of the area.

Drained Coastal Marshes (DCM)

5) The shingle ridge

The shingle ridge and associated beach are a unique habitat which provides protection for the marshes.

6) Recreational value

The long-distance Peddars Way and Norfolk Coast Path National Trail provide continuous access along the seaward edge. Occasional access via road and track also enables enjoyment of the landscape by visitors.

Many of the Valued Features and Qualities of the Drained Coastal Marshes are considered to contribute positively to Key Qualities of Natural Beauty of the Norfolk Coast AONB, as set out within the current AONB Management Plan. These Key Qualities include:

- Dynamic character and geomorphology of the coast
- Strong and distinctive links between land and sea
- Exceptionally important, varied and distinctive biodiversity, based on locally distinctive habitats
- Sense of remoteness, tranquillity and wildness
- Richness of archaeological heritage and historic environment, particularly that relating to the coast and its character.

FORCES FOR CHANGE / DETRACTORS

1) Changes in water management / sea levels

The balance between freshwater and saline habitats is constantly shifting in response to rising sea levels. The proportions of arable farmland: wet pasture: wetland will depend on levels of coastal defence, the threat of coastal flooding and policy decisions for their management. Saline inundation would see a reversion to salt marsh, for example the occasional breaking down of the shingle bank at Cley - Salthouse has previously resulted in inundation of the freshwater grazing marsh and reedbeds. The Shoreline Management Plan for DCM1 proposes maintenance of the Holkam Dunes as a natural defence and maintenance of the existing flood defences along the Wells flood embankment to the east, but some potential long –term managed realignment of the western edge to create new inter-tidal area (hold the line for now and carry out monitoring and assessments to investigate future realignment). The plan for DCM2 is to hold the line around Fresh Marshes of the west end of Cley Marshes, and to maintain the natural defence provided by the shingle bank along the northern edge of the Cley/ Salthouse Marshes with minimum intervention.

2) Changes in agriculture

Mapped evidence suggests periods of intensive agriculture followed by temporary reversion to marshland over the years. Most recently there has been a trend towards a reversion from arable to pasture and fen land cover with consequent raising of the water levels and seasonal management strong moves to increase (through agri-environment grants and special area payments / agreements). It is unclear how such schemes will be affected following the UK's departure from the EU.

3) Recreation-related development and visitor pressures

Past development of the caravan park, car park, shops and associated lighting and traffic at the Wells-next-the-Sea beach area has eroded the rural and remote character of this part of the marshes. There is continued development pressure from tourism related development such as recreational uses, car parking and retail/café and associated lighting which could continue to have an adverse impact on the naturalistic character of this sensitive landscape including the wider

Drained Coastal Marshes (DCM)

views unless strictly controlled. Upgrading of existing features can also erode the rural/ remote character. Large numbers of people can also cause erosion of habitats.

4) **Changes in neighbouring areas inland affecting views**

The open character of this landscape means that any changes on the rising land to the south can affect views and the character of the open coastal marshes. This includes lighting - it is possible to see lights from many miles along the coast.

5) **Potential eutrophication of rivers and dykes**

This could arise as a result of run-off from adjacent agricultural farmland, affecting habitats and ecological communities and changing the character of the water courses.

6) **Climate change**

Climate change could affect the habitats found in this area through sea-level rise resulting in greater inundation and frequency of the marshes by saltwater.

7) **Renewable energy development**

The growth in renewable energy has resulted in continued pressure for off shore wind turbines, that could be visible from this remote landscape, affecting its perception of remoteness and or create a 'limit' to the skyline and horizon.

View west over Holkham Drained Marshes from Lady Ann's Drive, which provides access to Holkham beach

Drained Coastal Marshes (DCM)

LANDSCAPE VISION

The vision for this landscape type is an expansive, transitional coastal landscape, which is undergoing a gradual long-term transition from farmland to inter-tidal environment with natural wilderness qualities. Key features of geomorphological and habitat value are conserved within an increasingly natural, shifting mosaic of marsh and wetland habitats fringed by pasture and visitor numbers are managed to ensure the remote and naturalistic character of the landscape predominates.

LANDSCAPE GUIDELINES

1) **Conserve the naturalistic character and nature conservation value**

   Manage the area for the conservation of habitats and for its nature conservation value over other objectives. Conserve, and extend where possible, the remaining natural and semi-natural habitats including coastal grazing marsh, reedbeds, rush pastures, brackish and saline lagoons and shingle banks.

   Consider the location and design of built development in adjacent inland landscape types (including consideration of lighting at night), ensuring that development does not detract from the sense of naturalness associated with the Drained Coastal Marshes.

   Consider opportunities to address existing light pollution by means of replacement downlighting or complete removal of lighting where possible both in and close to the marshes.

2) **Continue reversion from arable to pasture and pasture, grazing marsh and wetland**

   There has been a trend towards a reversion from arable to pasture and fen land cover with consequent raising of the water levels and seasonal management through agri-environment grants and special area payments / agreements. This should be continued to enhance the naturalistic and dynamic character of the landscape, and the value of its habitats for nature conservation.

3) **Enhance habitats in farmland areas**

   Protect, enhance and where possible expand, habitats of purple moor grass, rush pastures and lowland meadow habitats, transitional areas of heathland and grassland where these emerge from the marsh and buffer agricultural land, mixed shelterbelts, drainage ditches and minor watercourses (lined with grassy banks, reeds and reedmace).

   Minimise the risk of eutrophication of rivers and dykes as a result of run-off from adjacent agricultural farmland by minimizing use of fertilizers and adding buffer strips where fertilizer is in use.

4) **Maintain the sense of openness, large skies, and views with a remote character**

   Conserve open views across the sea from sea banks, and the naturalistic nature of views across the marshes. Provide opportunities for visitors to stop and appreciate these views. Avoid introduction of vertical elements which would interrupt the skyline and distract from the open views.

   Ensure any offshore wind farms are not so close or 'dominant' in views as to detract from the naturalistic and remote character associated with this type.

5) **Ensure that visitor related facilities do not detract from the expansive, remote coastal character that people have come to enjoy.**

   Avoid built structures generally, but where development including visitor related structures (such as bird hides, visitor and amenity facilities) is considered essential, ensure that it is designed to exceptionally high standards using natural materials so that they do not detract from the inherent naturalistic character of the landscape.

   Ensure car parks are rural in character, suitable for their naturalistic context – planting cannot be

Drained Coastal Marshes (DCM)

relied upon to screen such developments in such an open context and so the design and materials will be critical. New tourist facilities such as camping and glamping should be located close to existing facilities and well integrated into the landscape setting

6) **Manage recreational access sensitively, prioritising nature conservation**

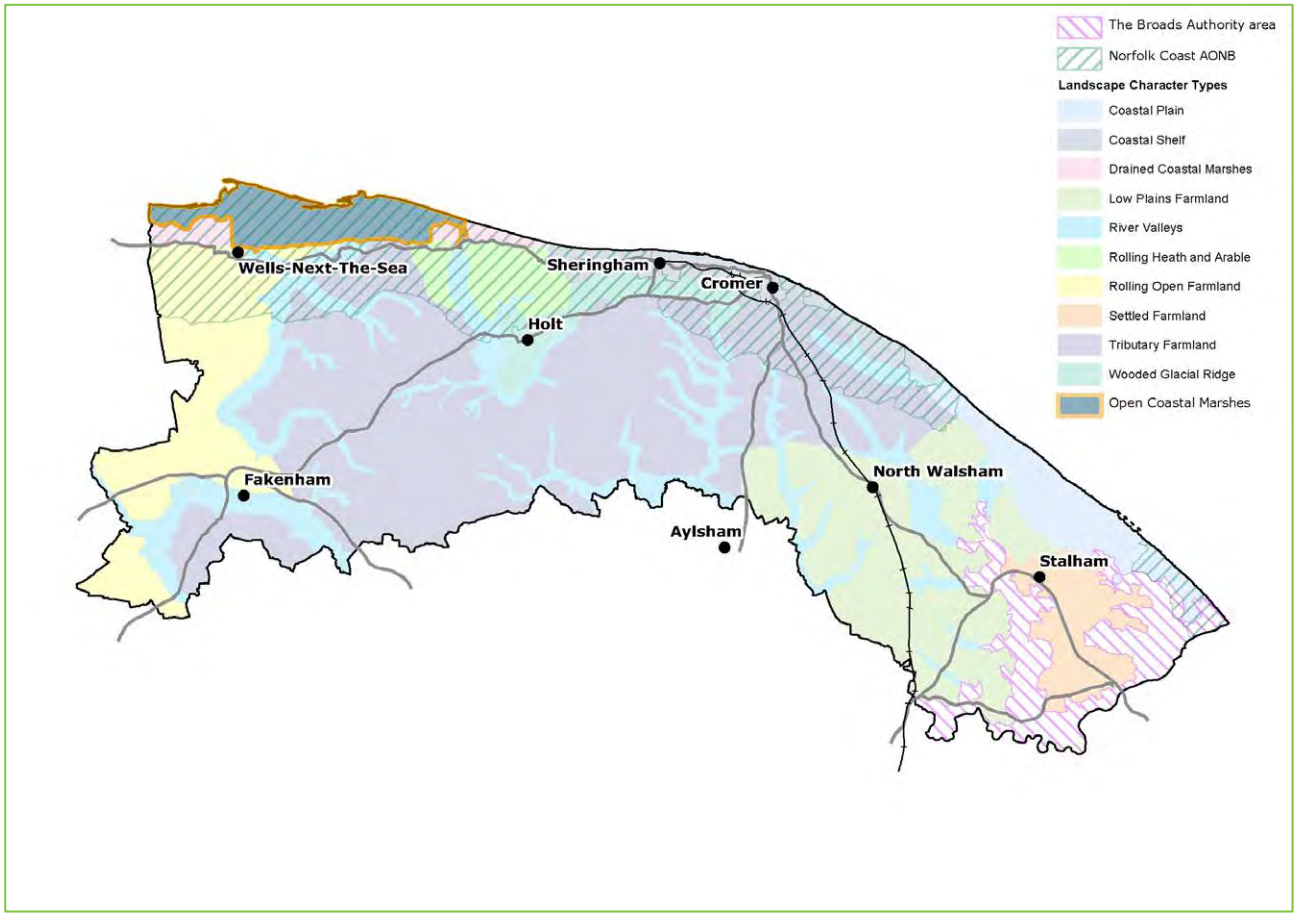
Develop coordinated management of recreation throughout the Drained Coastal Marshes to protect sensitive habitats and species. Ensure roads remain rural and 'track like' in nature, and tracks and footpaths remain suitable to their remote context.

7) **Prepare for climate change, rising sea levels and coastal change**

Enable the natural coastal processes to develop coastal habitats by investigating opportunities for potential long–term managed realignment of areas to create new inter-tidal marshes.

View east from Salthouse Little Eye over the extensive shingle ridge (DCM2)

Open Coastal Marshes (OCM)



Open Coastal Marshes (OCM)

SUMMARY

The Open Coastal Marshes Type is characterised by an open, low-lying and naturally dynamic coastal barrier beach system with one of the largest single areas of undrained saltmarsh in Europe. Extensive areas of saltmarsh, with characteristic creek patterns, have formed behind a protective barrier of sand and shingle bars, which in some areas have led to the formation of significant areas of dune habitat. The marine and coastal habitats form a complex mosaic of shallow seas, intertidal sand and mud flats, coastal vegetated shingle, saline lagoons, salt marsh and creeks, largely devoid of any settlement and dominated by natural dynamic processes. All of this landscape carries the highest designations in relation to its landscape and ecological value.

The mean low water mark, or the channel entrances at Wells and Blakeney, delineates the northern boundary beyond which is the open sea. At its western end, the Open Coastal Marsh meets Drained Coastal Marsh at Wells-next-the-Sea, the boundary clearly marked by The Bank (Beach Road). At its eastern end, the Open Coastal Marshes meet more Drained Coastal Marshes at Blakeney. The southern (inland) boundary of the Type is defined by rising land associated with the Rolling Open Farmland and Tributary Farmland Types, and a series of intermittent sea defences (lengthy earth embankments and the hard quayside defences at Wells Quay, Blakeney and Cley).

Component Areas

There is one area of Open Coastal Marsh in North Norfolk, in the north-west of the District:

OCM1 – North Norfolk Open Coastal Marshes

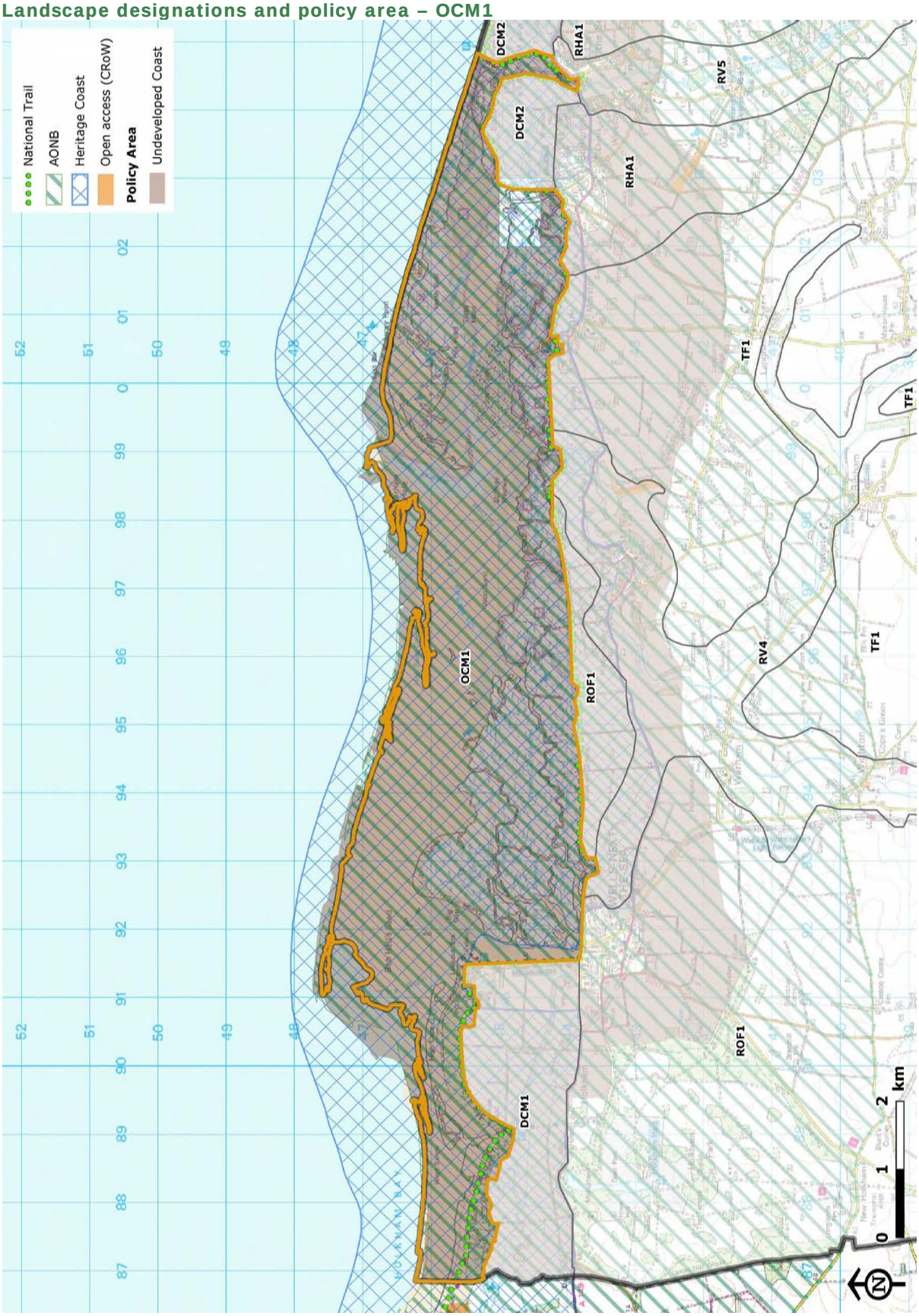
Holkham bay and beach with coastal pine woods in the background

Open Coastal Marshes (OCM)

Location of OCM1

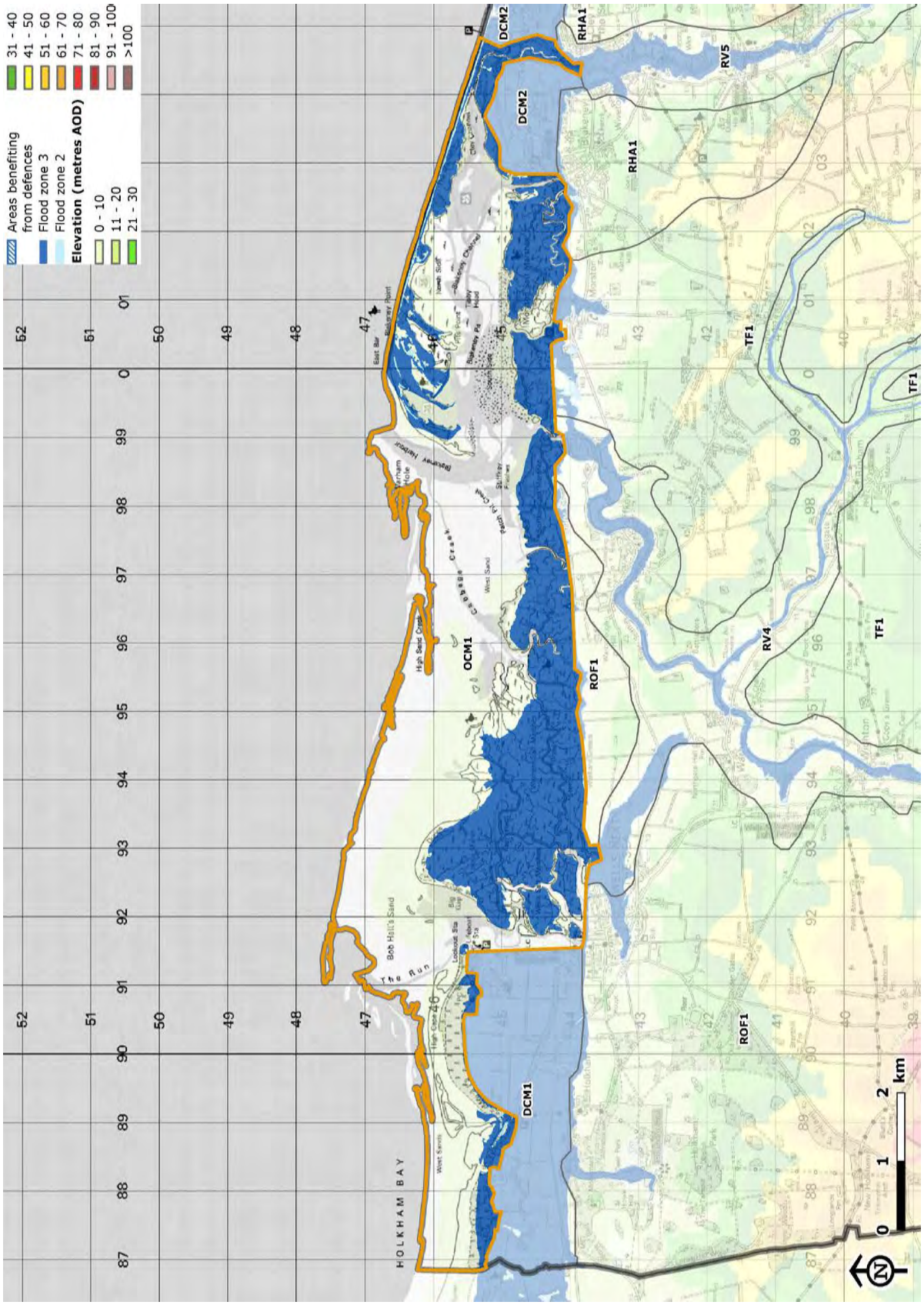
Open Coastal Marshes (OCM)

Landscape designations and policy area – OCM1



Open Coastal Marshes (OCM)

Topography and hydrology – OCM1



Open Coastal Marshes (OCM)

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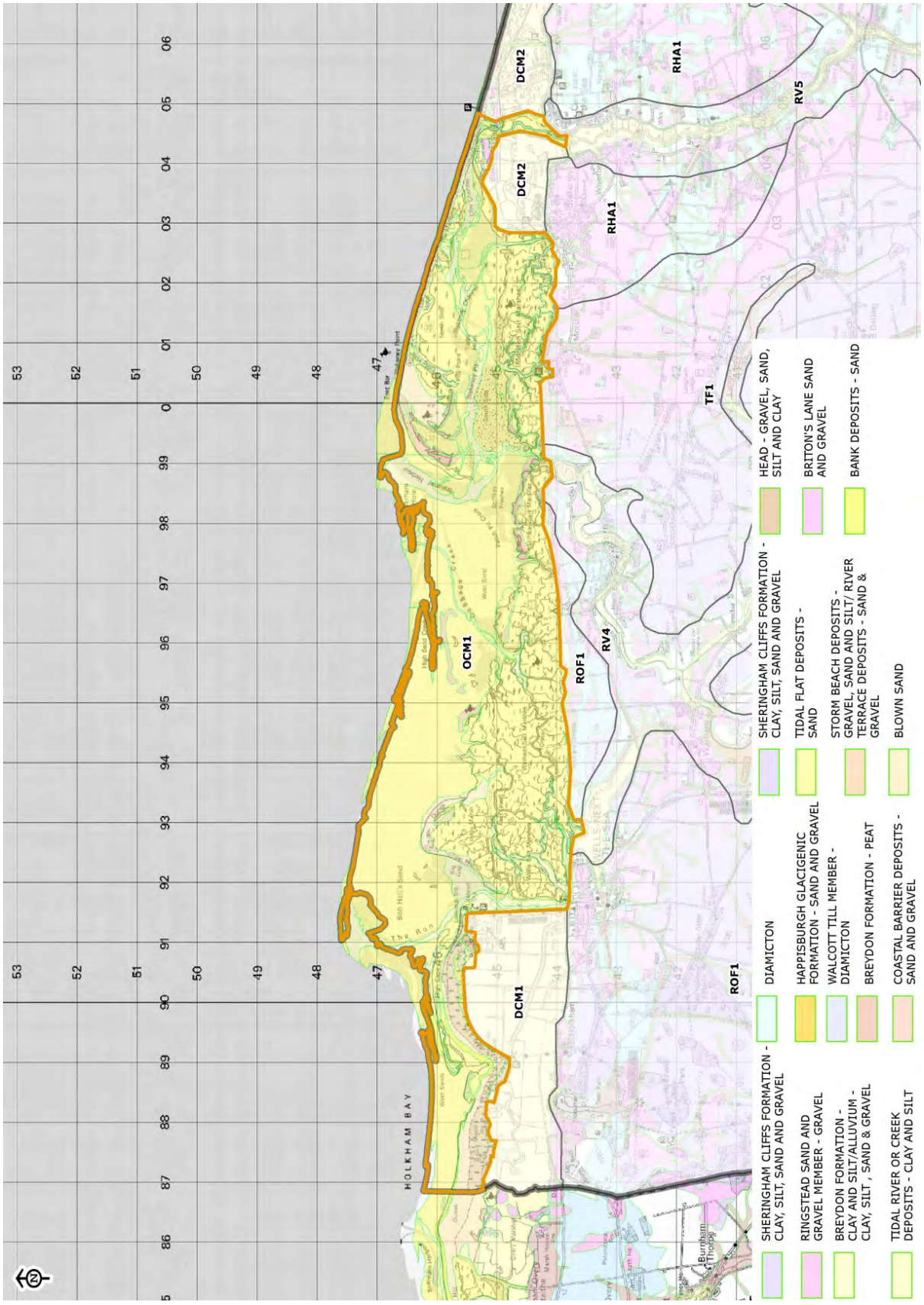
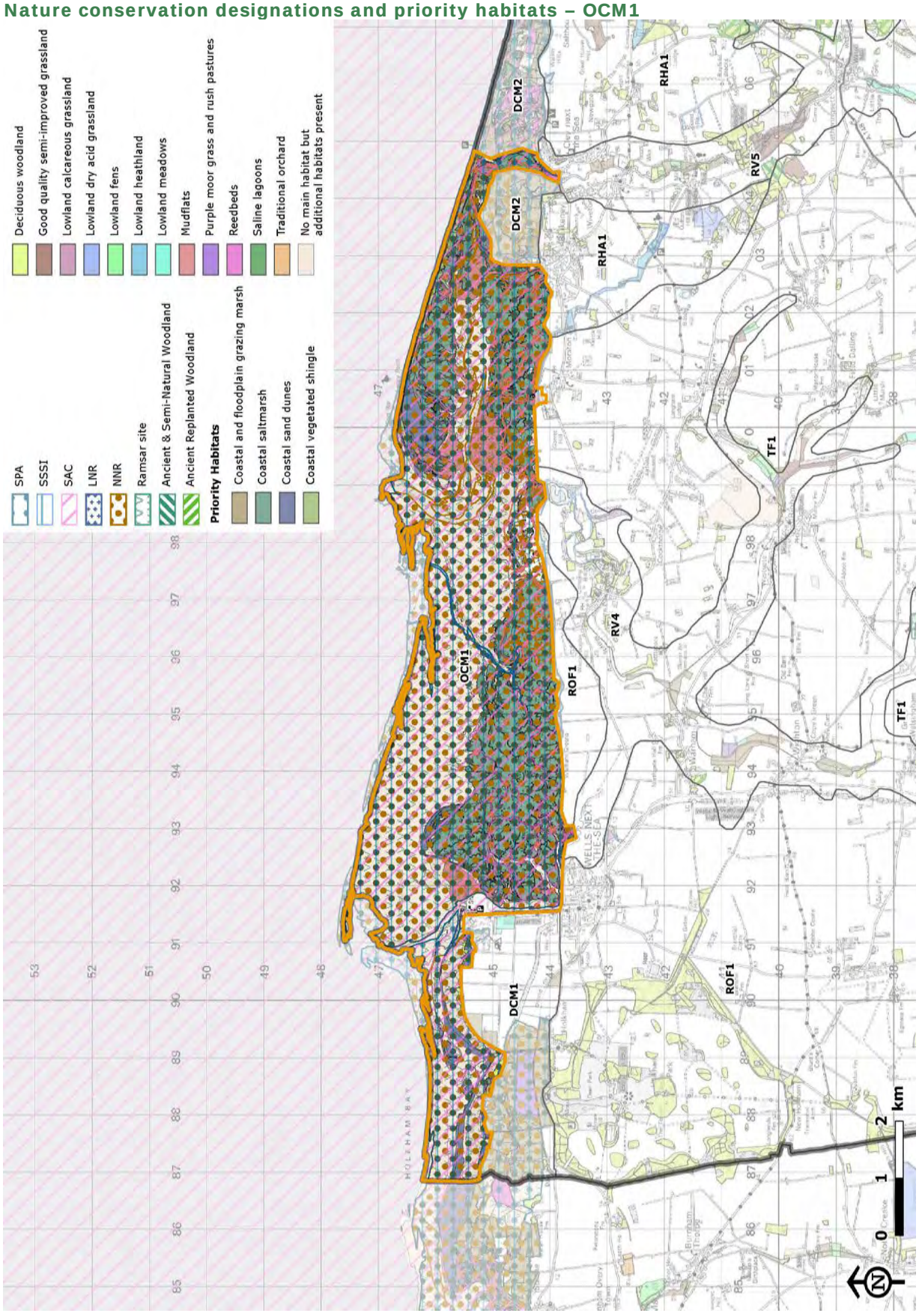


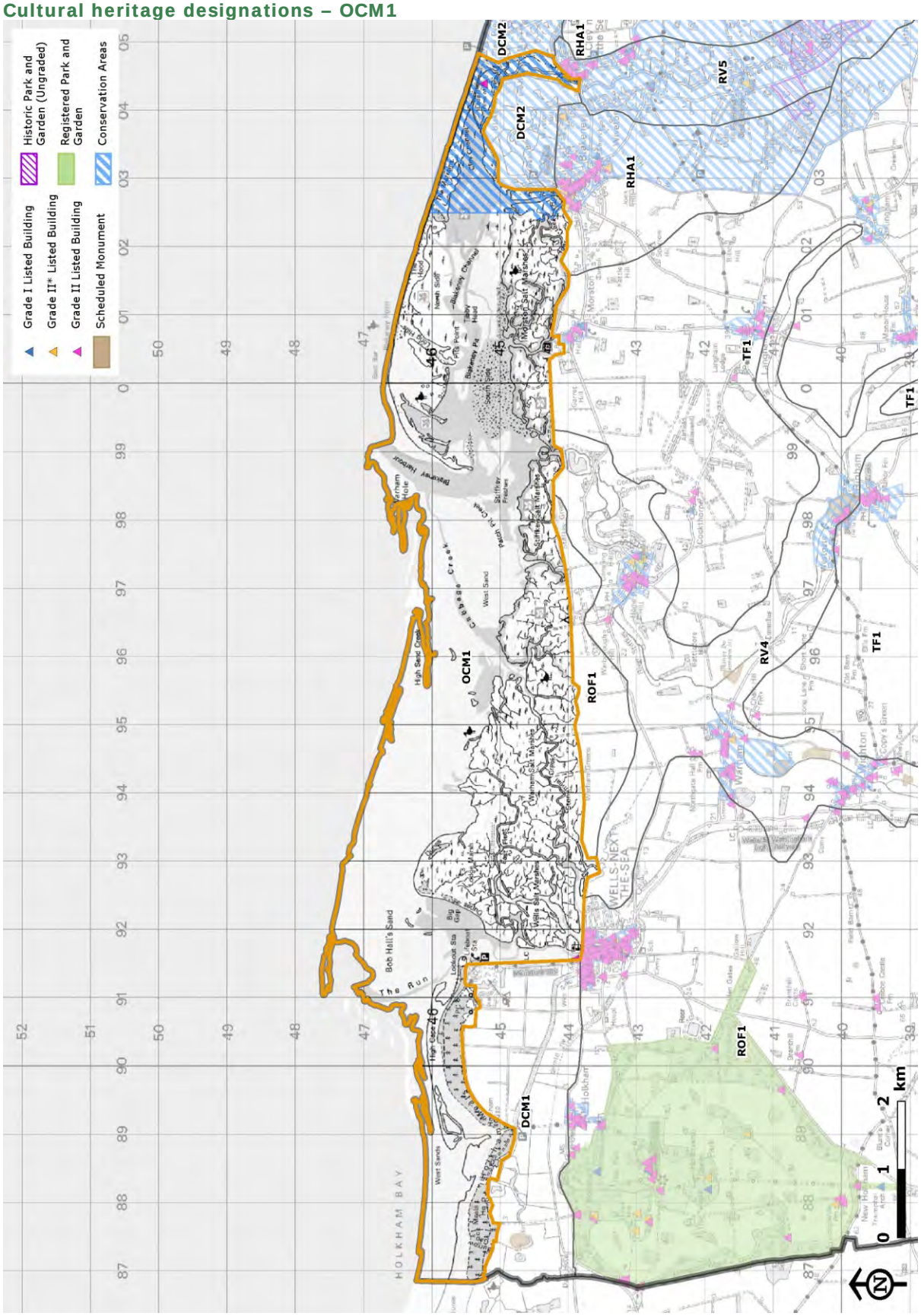
Open Coastal Marshes (OCM)

Nature conservation designations and priority habitats – OCM1



Open Coastal Marshes (OCM)

Cultural heritage designations – OCM1



Open Coastal Marshes (OCM)

KEY CHARACTERISTICS

1) Flat, open landscape of saltmarshes, creeks, sand bars and mudflats

The low lying coast is one of the few examples of a barrier system in Europe. The whole is a valuable complex of saltmarshes generally developing behind sand dunes and shingle structures, together with extensive areas of intertidal sand and mudflats. Some sandbars have formed sand dune complexes (in one instance with Corsican Pines).

The topography is generally very flat except for small rises where dunes have formed on the seaward side of the marsh (rising no more than 7m). The creeks within the marsh are a significant element throughout the Type, and vary greatly in width from less than 1m to over 60m. The large sandy lagoon at Blakeney (3 miles long) is a major feature of the Type.

2) A constantly changing natural landscape

The whole dynamic of the marsh, creeks and dunes is constantly changing, both with the tides and through growth / shrinkage over longer timescales. The salt marshes are relatively stable with gradually changing communities of plants in some places. The mud flats and sandbanks are liable to change location, species content and extent more readily. The middle and upper levels of Holkham's saltmarshes are home to Sea Aster and Sea Lavender which form a misty-blue haze when in flower.

3) Holkham Meals sand dune system and pine woods

The sand dune systems contain a great diversity of plant species and important transitions from pioneer to mature. The 'Holkham Meals' have distinctive Corsican and Black pines and are valued for their distinctive skyline and unusual ecological system (part of the National Nature Reserve).

4) Little human interference and absence of settlement

Some human intervention has altered the line of creeks (Blakeney Cut, Wells-next-the-Sea Harbour, Stiffkey Harbour and several other similar re-directions), but natural forces have created the majority of the landscape and the area remains a natural landscape. Settlement is largely absent, except for a few individual buildings (e.g. Morston look out, Blakeney Point former RNLI station and Wells RNLI station, beach huts and hides). At Wells, an outer harbour has been developed that now hosts maintenance vessels that service the offshore wind farms. The maintenance boats and dredging vessel is now a prominent detracting feature.

5) Great nature conservation interest and a haven for breeding birds

The area contains many priority habitats including mud flats, coastal salt marsh, coastal sand dunes, coastal vegetated shingle and reedbeds. The muddy creeks, flooded daily by the tide, are a perfect place for breeding birds and the marshes are of international importance, reflected through the many designations (part of the Wash and North Norfolk Coast European Marine Site, a Special Protection Area (SPA), Special Area of Conservation (SAC), SSSI, National Nature Reserve and Ramsar site).

6) Boats are a feature, their masts prominent in the flat landscape

Moored boats are within the creeks (at Wells-next-the-Sea, Stiffkey, Morston and Blakeney) and within the large lagoon at Blakeney. Different sizes of boat tend to inhabit comparably sized creeks. Most of the boating activity now comprises leisure use with dinghies and small craft, although at Wells-next-the-Sea and Blakeney, larger yachts are present. There are boat parks at Blakeney and Morston and smaller more ad hoc boat parks at Stiffkey Freshes and at Stiffkey marsh

7) Absence of roads but many footpaths and trackways

Footpaths and trackways provide access to the harbours / creeks and bird hides. A footpath follows the southern edge of the Type to form a continuous long distance path (Peddars Way and Norfolk Coast Path National Trail). There are two large car parks associated with the villages of

Open Coastal Marshes (OCM)

Morston and Blakeney on the boundary of the Type, which are very prominent, especially in the summer when many cars are present and due to window glare.

8) Long, uninterrupted views

Long views across the open marshes to rising dune lands on the seaward side of the Type and to rising land in inland areas to the south. There is an open and expansive skyline in which boat masts are a characteristic feature.

Sunset at Freshers Creek, Stiffkey

VALUED FEATURES AND QUALITIES

1) Natural character and nature conservation value

Extensive natural and semi-natural habitats including coastal saltmarsh, coastal sand dunes and mud flats are relatively rare and provide internationally important biodiversity and geodiversity, reflected in the high number of statutory designations. The natural character provides a contrast to the intensely managed farmland which occupies the inland areas.

2) Relative absence of human settlement and intervention

The general absence of settlement and human intervention provides a strong sense of remoteness, tranquillity and wildness (and dark skies at night).

3) The sense of openness, large skies, and quality of coastal light

These characteristics provide a sense of space and long views.

4) Recreational value

The beaches, footpaths, bird hides and boat moorings provide significant recreational value and

Open Coastal Marshes (OCM)

enable managed enjoyment of the landscape by visitors.

Many of the Valued Features and Qualities of the Open Coastal Marshes are considered to contribute positively to Key Qualities of Natural Beauty of the Norfolk Coast AONB, as set out within the current AONB Management Plan. These Key Qualities include:

- Dynamic character and geomorphology of the coast
- Strong and distinctive links between land and sea
- Exceptionally important, varied and distinctive biodiversity, based on locally distinctive habitats
- Sense of remoteness, tranquillity and wildness.

The Open Coastal Marsh has a strong natural character, sense of remoteness and tranquillity

FORCES FOR CHANGE / DETRACTORS

1) Recreational pressure from boating activities including organised boat trips

Increases in boating activity over the years has created significant numbers of moorings for yachts and other craft at Blakeney ('The Cut' near the Village and 'The Pit' near Blakeney Point) and at Wells-next-the-Sea and Morston.

The development of boat trips (to Blakeney Point and the seal grounds) has encouraged large numbers of cars to Morston. The parking of cars on the hard is highly visible from this Type. These effects can detract from the wild/ natural character of the Type.

2) Changes in neighbouring areas inland affecting views

The open character of this area means that any changes on the rising land to the south can affect views and the character of the open coastal marshes. Development in adjacent areas has the potential to increase light pollution. This limits the capacity for new development in land adjacent

Open Coastal Marshes (OCM)

to this Type.

3) Changes in water management / sea levels

The imposition of different water management processes (natural or man-made) can affect vegetation height / colour / texture. Sea level change could also affect this finely balanced ecosystem.

4) Recreation-related development

Features such as hides, lighting, small car parks, golf courses, camping and glamping facilities andr other human related interventions can have an adverse impact on the 'wild' and natural character of the landscape, as can large numbers of people in the landscape which can cause erosion of habitats and disturbance to species.

5) Climate change

Climate change could affect the delicate ecosystem of the marshes by through sea-level rise resulting in 'coastal squeeze' and loss of the marshes. Marshes may accrete vertically over longer time periods, but be vulnerable with rapid rises.

6) Renewable energy development

Sheringham Shoal wind farm and other new off shore wind farms (e.g. Dudgeon) are visible from this remote landscape and have the potential to affect its perception of remoteness and/or create a 'limit' to the skyline and horizon.

7) Coastal change

Coastal change is likely to comprise a continuing increase in sediment along the coast, with the barrier beach at Blakeney Spit moving towards the west by up to 3.5m a year, and a general movement of beaches towards the land during storms, including dunes at Blakeney Point. Other areas such as Holkham fore-dunes have grown in recent years. The rollback of barriers is causing a gradual overall loss of saltmarsh area, although this has been offset by the development of some new saltmarsh behind newly-formed barriers.

LANDSCAPE VISION

The vision for this landscape type is a naturally dynamic landscape comprising a mosaic of salt-marsh, mud and sandflats, shingle and dunes, which is shaped by the tides where natural forces predominate. An area which prioritises the conservation and enhancement of the highly valued coastal ecosystem and its wilderness qualities, including dark skies at night and scenic unspoilt views, and with sensitively managed recreational access.

LANDSCAPE GUIDELINES

1) Conserve the natural character and nature conservation value

Conserve the intertidal mudflats and saltmarshes as important winter-feeding areas for waders and wildfowl, protect the dune systems along the coast as habitats for a rich diversity of flora, protect, restore degraded areas of coastal vegetated shingle beaches and maximise the nature conservation value of saltmarsh vegetation on The Wash through re-introduction of grazing where appropriate and where there is an historical tradition of grazing. Retain small transitional areas of heathland and grassland where these buffer agricultural land at the edge of the marsh.

2) Protect and enhance the wild and remote character

Avoid built structures generally, but where small structures (such as hides) are considered essential, ensure that they are designed to exceptionally high standards using natural materials and avoid invasive lighting so that they do not detract from the inherent 'wild' character of the

Open Coastal Marshes (OCM)

landscape.

Consider the location and design of built development in adjacent inland landscape types (including consideration of lighting at night), ensuring that development does not detract from the sense of naturalness and remoteness in the Open Coastal Marshes.

Consider opportunities to address existing light pollution by means of replacement downlighting or complete removal of lighting where possible both in and close to the marshes.

3) Maintain the sense of openness, large skies, and quality of coastal light

Conserve open views across the sea, marshes and adjacent coastal slopes. Provide opportunities for visitors to stop and appreciate these views. Avoid introduction of vertical elements which would interrupt the skyline and distract from open views.

4) Manage recreational access sensitively, prioritising nature conservation

Develop coordinated management of recreation throughout the Open Coastal Marshes to protect sensitive habitats and species. Consider careful screening or restricting / relocating car parking from the foreshore whilst ensuring that recreational access to the landscape at suitable locations (existing footpaths / trails) is maintained and enhanced. Any facilities which seek to accommodate the needs of visitors to the area and recreational activities should be designed to manage and limit the impacts of recreational visitor pressure on the sensitive features of this landscape.

5) Prepare for climate change

Enable the natural coastal processes to continually develop coastal habitats as long as this does not conflict with the Shoreline Management Plan.

The Open Coastal Marsh beyond Wells-next-the-Sea harbour

Appendix 1 - Glossary of Terms

Term	Definition
AOD	Above Ordnance Datum (sea level).
Agricultural Land Classification	The classification of agricultural land in England in Wales.
Analysis	The process of breaking the landscape down, usually in descriptive terms, into its component parts in order to understand how it is made up.
Ancient woodland	Woodland which is believed to have had a continuous woodland cover since at least 1600AD and has only been cleared for underwood or timber production. It is an extremely valuable ecological resource, with an exceptionally high diversity of flora and fauna.
AONB	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty – a statutory national landscape designation.
Approach	The step-wise process by which a landscape assessment is undertaken.
Arable	Land used for growing crops.
Assart	The informal enclosure of private farmland by encroachment into woodland or heath.
Assessment	An umbrella term used to encompass all the many different ways of looking at, describing, analysing and evaluating landscape.
BAP	UK Biodiversity Action Plan priority species and habitats were identified as being the most threatened and requiring conservation action under the UK BAP. The original lists of UK BAP priority habitats were created between 1995 and 1999 and were subsequently updated in 2007. See http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-5155 for further information.
Biodiversity	The measure of the variety of organisms present in different ecosystems.
Brownfield site	A development site which is re-using land previously developed.
Built form	The characteristic nature of built development.
Carr woodland	Marsh or fen woodland in waterlogged terrain. Characteristic trees include alders and willows.
Characteristic	An element that contributes to local distinctiveness (e.g. narrow winding lanes, vernacular building style).
Classification	A process of sorting the landscape into different types, each with a distinct, consistent and recognisable character.

Condition	A judgement on the intactness and condition of the elements of the landscape.
Coppicing	The traditional method of woodland management in which trees are cut down to near the ground to encourage the production of long, straight shoots, which can subsequently be harvested.
Crag	A sequence of sandy, marine bedrock deposits laid down in the gradually cooling climatic conditions of the Pliocene, leading up to the 'Ice Age'. They outcrop in the eastern parts of Norfolk. The **Norwich Crag** is about 2 million years old, and contains fossil remains of mammals and molluscs.
Description	Verbal description of what a landscape looks like. This is usually carried out in a systematic manner, but it may also include personal reactions to the landscape.
Drift	The name for all material of glacial origin found anywhere on land or at sea, including sediment and large rocks.
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
Element	A component part of the landscape (e.g. hedges, roads, woods).
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.
Equine development	A term used to describe areas on the fringes of settlements which are dominated by horse paddocks, stable buildings and associated paraphernalia.
Eutrophic	The state of a water body when it has an excess of nutrients usually derived from agricultural fertilisers. The process by which a water body becomes overloaded with nutrients is known as **eutrophication** and leads to a dense plant population, the decomposition of which kills animal life by depriving it of oxygen.
Feature	A prominent, eye-catching element (e.g. wooded hilltop, church spire).
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.
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.
Geodiversity	The variety of rocks, minerals, fossils, landforms, sediments and soils in an area, together with natural processes, such as erosion and landslips that may still be active.
GIS	Geographic Information System
GPS	Global Positioning System

Grassland	Land used for grazing. Grassland can be improved (by management practices) semi-improved (modified by management practices and have a range of species less diverse than unimproved grasslands), or unimproved (not treated with fertiliser, herbicide or intensively grazed and consequently species diversity is high).
Greenfield site	A development site, usually on the fringes of a settlement, which has not previously been used for built development.
Habitat	The natural home or environment of an animal, plant, or other organism.
HLC	Historic Landscape Characterisation
Hydrology	The science dealing with the occurrence, circulation, distribution, and properties of the waters of the earth and its atmosphere.
Intact	Not changed or diminished.
Land cover	Combinations of land use and vegetation that cover the land surface.
Landmark	An object or feature of a landscape or town that is easily seen and recognized from a distance, especially one that enables someone to establish their location.
Landscape	The term refers primarily to the visual appearance of the land, including its shape, form and colours. However, the landscape is not a purely visual phenomenon; its character relies on a whole range of other dimensions, including geology, topography, soils, ecology, archaeology, landscape history, land use, architecture and cultural associations.
Landscape capacity	The degree to which a particular landscape character type or area is able to accommodate change without significant effects on its character, or over change of landscape character type. Capacity is likely to vary according to the type and nature of change being proposed.
Landscape character	A distinct pattern or combination of elements that occurs consistently in a particular landscape.
Landscape character area (LCA)	A unique geographic area with a consistent character and identity, which forms part of a landscape character type.
Landscape character type (LCT)	A generic term for landscape with a consistent, homogeneous character. Landscape character types may occur in different parts of the county, but wherever they occur, they will share common combinations of geology, topography, vegetation or human influences.
Landscape condition	Based on judgements about the physical state of the landscape, and about its intactness, from visual, functional and ecological perspectives. It reflects the state of repair or intactness of individual features or elements (relating to that feature's primary condition or ultimate *desire*).

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.
Landscape value	The relative value that is attached to different landscapes. In a policy context the usual basis for recognising certain highly valued landscapes is through the application of a local or national landscape designation. Yet a landscape may be valued by different communities of interest for many different reasons without any formal designation, recognising, for example, perceptual aspects such as scenic beauty, tranquillity or wildness; special cultural associations; the influence and presence of other conservation interests; or the existence of a consensus about importance, either nationally or locally.
Local Plan	A development plan prepared by local planning authorities.
LWS	Local Wildlife Site
Marl	Sedimentary rock of soil consisting of clay and carbonate of lime, formerly used as fertilizer.
Marl pit	A small pit resulting from the extraction of marl, which has often subsequently been filled with water to form a small field pond.
Natural character	Character as a result of natural or semi-natural features such as woodland, grassland, hedgerows etc.
NCA	National Character Areas - defined within the *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.
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NNR	National Nature Reserve
Nucleated settlement	A settlement that is clustered around a centre, in comparison to a linear or dispersed settlement.
Open-field system	An area of arable land with common rights after harvest or while fallow. The fields date from the medieval period and are usually without internal divisions (hedges, walls or fences).
OS	Ordnance Survey
Outcrop	The emergence of a stratum, vein or rock at the surface.
Parliamentary fields / enclosure	Fields formed by a legal process of enclosure (or inclosure), typically during the 18th and 19th centuries – by passing laws causing or forcing enclosure to produce fields for use by the owner (in place of common land for communal use).
Pastoral	Land used for keeping or grazing sheep or cattle.
Pollarding	A traditional woodland management practice in which the branches of a tree are cut back every few years to

	encourage new long, straight shoots for harvesting. Differs from *coppicing* because the cuts are made at sufficient distance from the ground to prevent them from being eaten by animals.
Ramsar site	Wetland site as designated by criteria agreed at the Ramsar convention.
Remediation	Process by which a contaminated or damaged site is repaired and brought back into more general use.
Remnant	A part or quantity left after the greater part has been used, removed, or destroyed.
Riparian habitat	Riverbank habitat.
SAC	Special Area of Conservation
Scheduled Monument	Nationally important archaeological sites or historic buildings, given protection against unauthorised change.
Semi-natural vegetation	Any type of natural vegetation which has been influenced by human activities, either directly or indirectly.
Sense of Place	A person's perception of a location's indigenous characteristics, based on the mix of uses, appearance and context that makes a place memorable.
Sensitive	The response to change or influence.
Skyline	The outline of a range of hills, ridge or group of buildings seen against the sky.
SPA	Special Protection Area (for birds)
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest
Time depth	The time period expressed in the landscape, or the extent to which the landscape reflects a certain time period (a landscape with greater time depth will comprise older elements than a landscape with lesser time depth).
Topography	Combinations of slope and elevation that produce the shape and form of the land surface.
Valued attributes	Positive features and characteristics that are important to landscape character and that, if lost, would result in adverse change to the landscape.
Vernacular	Buildings constructed in the local style, from local materials. Concerned with ordinary rather than monumental buildings.
Veteran tree	A tree which is of great age for its species and is of interest biologically, culturally or aesthetically.