



Part 1: Orsett & Baker Street



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Cover image: Orsett village green, from Pound Lane looking west

Inside cover: Approach to St Giles and All Saints Church



Overview

The Rural Settlement Assessment of Orsett and Baker Street describes the origins of this study area through a description and analysis of the archaeological, historic landscape, built heritage, and historical evolution of the village settlement, its context and setting: this provides core information to allow insights into how the past has influenced the present, so we can make informed decisions about its future.

The generally rural area of this settlement retains many of its historical features: the grid-like grain to the field layout provides the backbone to the layout of the settlement presented today and whilst elements of this field system have been eroded, the surviving roads, tracks and footpaths preserve this pattern.

Archaeological significance includes cropmarks from the prehistoric era, the Bronze Age Springfield-style enclosure, Roman, and medieval finds such as Bishop Bonner's Palace. There is archaeological sensitivity to change across a wide central band of the study area but generally less sensitivity to the north and partly to the south.

The historic landscape is dominated by its fen-edge origins, which was historically wealthy through fertile agricultural land and wool production. Large fields remain to this day but

19th century orchards have been removed over time. The historic landscape remains sensitive to change across a large area of the central and northern regions of the area but less sensitive to the south.

Built heritage includes a central designated conservation area, three scheduled ancient monuments and 32 listed buildings notably including St Giles and All Saints Church with its 12th Century origins and the 17th Century Orsett Windmill that dominates the landscape from viewpoints that remain vulnerable, but have the ability to inform well-founded future changes.

At least seven structures have potential for local listing. Change close to or affecting the setting of built heritage is sensitive within four of the 21 Divisions assessed in this study. Whilst eastern regions require the close consideration of heritage assets, the north western regions are less sensitive to change.

Historical evolution of the village is represented by cartographic records from 1777, 1839, 1881, 1897, 1920 and 1938.

The significance of the village today is established by the open space of the crop-mark Scheduled Monument between Orsett and Baker Street.

Rising gently to the south, there are important views from the relatively flat northern areas. Proximity to the Fens presents varying degrees of flood risk but generally arable agricultural fields dominate the area, with some equestrian use, woodland, and relatively sparse water features.

Open space includes the established Orsett Showground and playing fields to the south of the settlement. Proximity to the vehicular A13 route provides strong connection but in itself has curtailed historic footpaths, and cycling is vulnerable to heavy traffic in certain areas. Building heights generally do not exceed two storeys and building density only reaches 80-100 units per hectare in limited specific areas.

The Orsett and Baker Street analysis reveals sensitivities to change in regions of archaeological, historic landscape and built heritage significance but there are also areas less sensitive to change where nearby archaeological evidence, historic landscapes and heritage assets can provide a link to the widespread agricultural history and built heritage of the area.

Introduction



Fig. 2 Orsett High Road

Orsett is located centrally within Thurrock Unitary Authority. Geologically, it divides into two halves, with the northern half comprising London Clay and the southern half comprising Lower Thames terrace sand and gravel deposits which were laid down after the Anglian Ice Age along a former route of the River Thames. There are wide views southwards from the terrace edge across the Thames Valley to Kent.

The area is generally rural in character and retains some of its historical features. Historically the area had a grid-like grain to its field layout, and elements of the field system have been lost, however the surviving roads, tracks and footpaths still preserve this pattern. Orsett Fen was located to the immediate north of the study area, it was linked by Fen Lane to the historic settlement.



Fig. 3 Orsett Figure Ground

1. Archaeology

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The Essex Historic Environment Record ([EHER](#)) includes numerous archaeological sites in the study area, dating from the earliest periods of human occupation in Britain through to the Second World War.

Orsett is particularly notable for the extent and quality of its multi-period crop-mark landscapes, and this is reflected in the Scheduled Monument designations for large parts of the crop-mark complexes adjoining Baker Street.

In the medieval period Orsett formed part of the Bishop of London's holdings, and the Bishop Bonner's Palace site is protected as a Scheduled Monument.

1.2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL ANALYSIS

1.2.1 Prehistoric

The Lower Thames terrace gravels, which comprise the southern half of the study area have been assessed as having Moderate potential for Palaeolithic and Pleistocene remains (O'Connor 2015).

The Scheduled Crop-mark Complex, Orsett (SM1002134) spans several fields between Orsett and North Stifford with the west and southern area bisected by the A13 (Medlycott 2019). The land is largely agricultural apart from the area of the A13 and its associated slip-roads and embankments.

The crop-mark complex comprises rectilinear enclosures, ring ditches and a series of overlapping field systems of prehistoric, Roman and medieval date. Trial-trenching in response to the Lower Thames Crossing proposal has established that the crop-marks represent part of a Late Bronze Age-Late Iron Age settlement and burial ground, with a range of enclosures, round-houses, barrows and other occupation, and agricultural features present.

The archaeological landscape has been demonstrated to extend beyond the Scheduled area both to the north and south.

The Scheduled Springfield style enclosure and Iron Age enclosures south of Hill House, Baker Street (SM1009287) are located between Baker Street and Orsett.

The Springfield style enclosure, is of probable middle-late Bronze Age date, comprises circular ditched enclosure, traces of a circular building and pits are visible within the enclosure. Overlying the Springfield style enclosure is a second enclosed domestic settlement and associated field system. Once again further crop-marks are recorded outside the Scheduled area including a probable burial mound.

Both Scheduled Monuments form part of a larger unscheduled crop-mark complex located to the south and east. This includes further settlement evidence, ring-ditches and multiple phases of agricultural landscape. This in turn forms part of a wider multi-period crop-mark landscape which extends from Mucking in the east to Grays in the west.

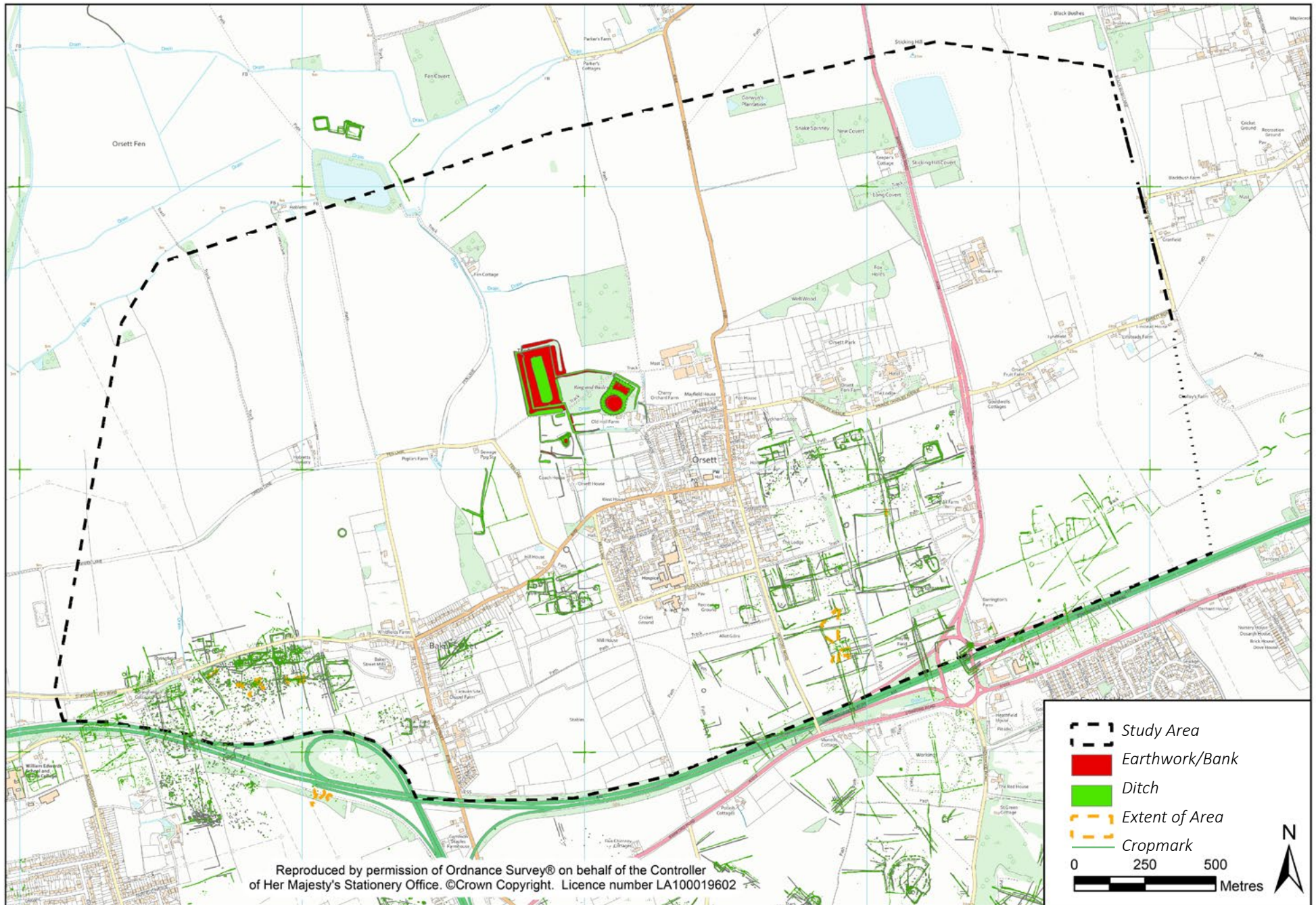


Fig. 6 Orsett: Archaeological crop-marks

1.2.2 Roman

A Late Iron Age and Roman settlement enclosure was excavated in the 1960s at Orsett Cock, prior to the construction of the A13 roundabout (EHER 1859). Again this formed part of a wider late Iron Age-Roman crop-mark landscape of settlement enclosures and fields. More recent excavation to the north of Cherry Orchard Farm has identified the site of what appears to have been a substantial Late Iron Age-Roman settlement site.

1.2.3 Saxon

The place-name Orsett (*Aetorseapan*, meaning 'bank with ponds') is first recorded in 957AD. The Domesday Book describes the manor at the end of the Saxon period, when it belonged to the Bishop of London. The manor was large, covering 13 hides, with 78 resident households, 36 plough-teams (of which 2 belonged to the manor), and woodland for 1000 pigs. It was valued at £35. An additional smaller manor was held by Engelric from the Bishop of London, this comprised 1 hide, 1 manorial plough-team and a second plough-team belonging to a priest.

It is probable that the Saxon manorial centre would be located in the vicinity of the later medieval manor and church, whilst the settlement would have comprised individual farms with a possible focus in the area of the church and manor.

1.2.4 Medieval period

Following the Norman Conquest the manor of Orsett remained as a holding of the Bishop of London. The Domesday Book records that in 1086 the population had dropped slightly to 60 resident households and 24 plough-teams, it was now worth £28. Four Normans (Tidbald, Ansketel, William and Gilbert) appear to have acquired 4 ½ hides out of the manorial holding. In addition Engelric's manor had been acquired by Count Eustace of Boulogne.

Orsett and Baker Street comprised two separate historic settlements, with a further scatter of historic farms and cottages spread out along the linking network of roads and abutting Orsett Fen. The oldest surviving building is the 12th century St Giles and All Saints Church in Orsett, which would have served the religious needs of the entire parish.

Place name evidence suggests that many of the outlying farms are medieval in origin. There are three surviving 15th/16th century houses. The two settlements are linked by roads and surrounded by fields which probably had their origins in the medieval period.

The fields form a distinctive grid-like pattern, with long slightly sinuous boundaries running down from high ground to the north. The historic routeways also form a grid-like pattern, linking the isolated farms with the main roads and the village with the Fen.

Church of St Giles and All Saint's

The Parish Church is 12th century in origin, with extensive 14th and 15th century alterations. It is constructed of flint and ragstone rubble with Reigate stone dressings and a weather-boarded spire. The south doorway dates to c. 1160, and the nave is also 12th century in date.

Bishop Bonner's Palace

Bishop Bonner's Palace Scheduled Monument is a medieval ring and bailey earthwork (SM1002196) located some 400m to the north-west of the centre of the historic settlement of Orsett. It comprises a circular enclosure (200ft internal diameter), surrounded by a ditch c. 50ft wide. To the north is an oblong bailey enclosed by a well-defined ditch, the northern side of which defences are strengthened by a second ditch.



Fig. 7 Aerial view of Bishop Bonner's Palace looking southwards, the ringwork is clearly visible, with the bailey located under the trees beside it. In the top-left of the photo is Orsett Church, Old Hall Farm is located immediately above the earthwork and The Decoy in the bottom-right of the photo.

The earthwork marks the site of a palace of the Bishops of London, who held the manor of Orsett from the late Saxon period onwards. The only building remains consist of a fragment of rubble foundation on the north-west side of the ringwork.

In a wood, 200yds to the west, is a large oblong fish pond, known as The Decoy, which is linked to the ringwork by a network of drainage channels. It is not Scheduled, but appears to have formed part of the overall complex. Ringworks acted as strongholds for military operations and in some cases as defended aristocratic or manorial settlements, as appears to have been the case at Orsett. They are rare nationally with only 200 recorded examples and less than 60 with baileys.

Settlement

There are several surviving late medieval buildings in the study area, Old Hall Farmhouse (LB1111592), Birch Cottage (LB111559), Mill House (LB1111642) and 11-13 High Road and Post Office (LB1147068) are all 15th or early 16th century in origin. In addition a number of the other sites have medieval predecessors as evidenced by the place names, these include Baker Street which is first referenced in 1327, Lorkins Farm (1349), Hobletts farm (1457) and

Loft Hall (1233). It is probable that there were also further medieval sites present within the landscape.

[The 1777 Chapman and André map](#), which has been demonstrated elsewhere to be a good indicator of medieval settlement locations, shows a string of cottages and farms around the edge of Bulphan Fen and spread out along the interlocking lanes and roads. It is probable that there were also further settlement sites associated with the footpaths that cross the area, as has been demonstrated elsewhere in Essex.

1.2.5 Post-medieval and modern synthesis and components

[The 1777 Chapman and André map](#) shows two foci of settlement, in Orsett Village and at Baker Street, as well as a string of cottages and farms around the edge of Orsett Fen and spread out along the interlocking lanes and roads. The [1839 Tithe map](#) shows a very similar settlement pattern, as does the 1875 1st edn. OS map.

Much of this post-medieval landscape survives into the modern landscape, both in the form of individual farms and buildings (both listed and unlisted) and in the wider landscape of roads, lanes and fields.

Orsett Fen remained an extant landscape feature into the 20th century and can still be discerned in the modern field pattern. Surviving built heritage assets included a number of Listed Buildings, these are largely of 16th and 17th century date, and two windmills.

The Orsett Show was first held in 1841, initially as a ploughing match in a field behind the hall. The Show now has its own showground adjoining Rectory Road.

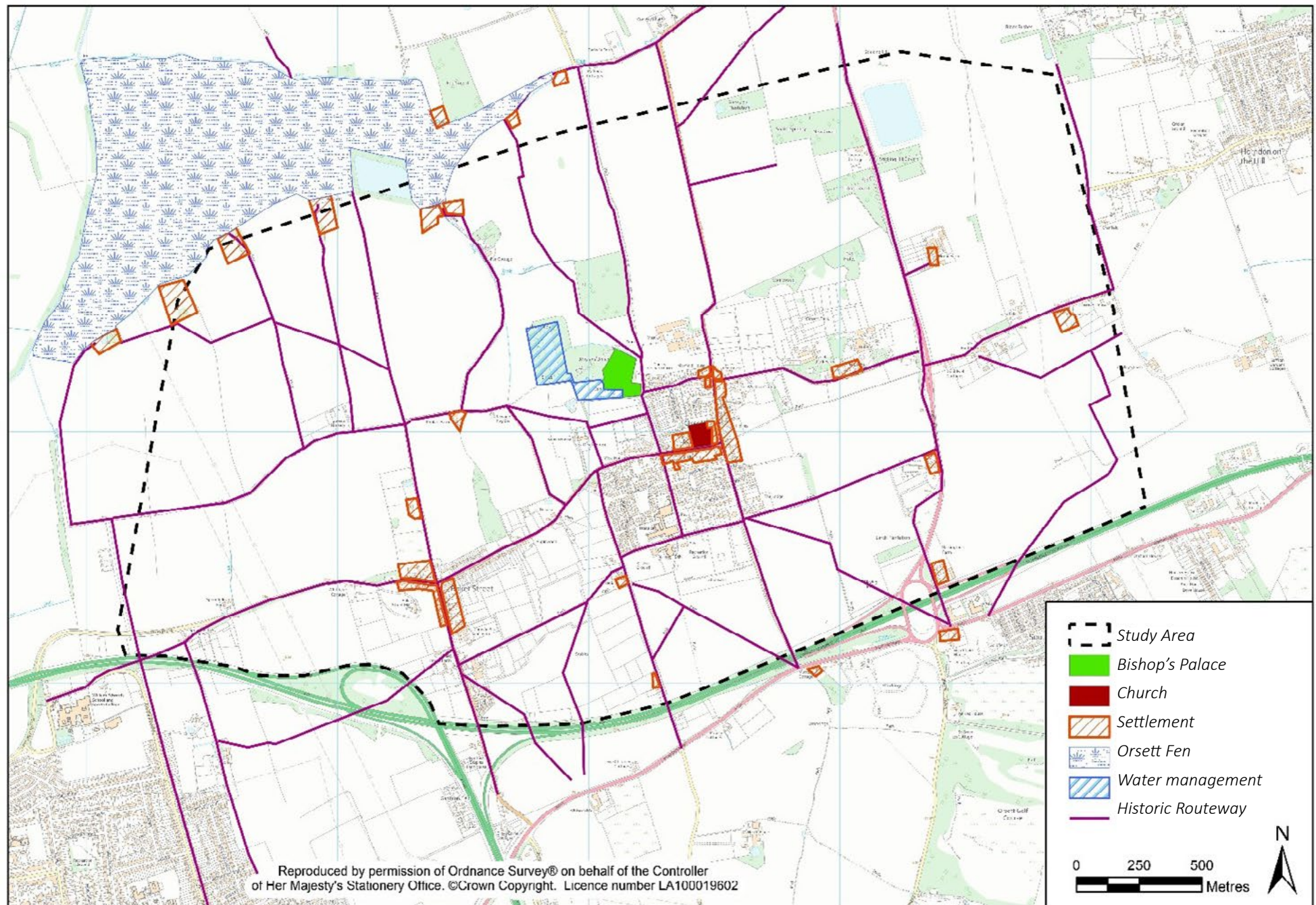


Fig. 8 Orsett: medieval interpretation

Church of St Giles and All Saint's

The medieval church was repaired in 1837 after a fire, and again extensively restored in 1926-7 after a second fire which destroyed the roofs (EHER 5202). The village pound and lock-up are located to the west of the church. The lock-up was moved to its present position on Pond Lane in 1938.

Settlement

Orsett remained two separate settlements throughout the post-medieval period and into the twentieth century. The primary and largest settlement is Orsett, which was focussed on the High Road and the church and extended along Rectory Road. To the west the hamlet of Baker Street was focussed on the junction of Baker Street, High Road and Stifford Clays Road. The original medieval pattern of scattered farmsteads and cottages remained remarkably intact, with Orsett Hall and Orsett House being the only notable additions to the wider rural settlement landscape. Bishop Bonner's Palace dwindled in status post-Dissolution, with the mid-15th century Old Hall Farm replacing the palace.

Orsett House

Orsett House is located to the immediate west of the village (EHER 35238). It was constructed c. 1740 for Captain Samuel Bonham. [The Chapman and André map of 1777](#) shows that it had formal gardens. These appear to have been enlarged in the 19th century. There is a curiously shaped pond that may have been a garden feature visible on the modern map to the north of the house.

Orsett Hall

Orsett Hall to the north-east of the village is a large Georgian house, built by Richard Baker in the 1770s (EHER 35316). The Hall burnt down in 2007. It was rebuilt in a similar style and is now a hotel. The woodland associated with the Hall echo its role as a sporting estate, with a New Covert, Long Covert, Sticking Hill Covert and Foxholes.

Union Workhouse

The Union Workhouse was located to the south of the village (EHER 15382). It was built in 1837, replacing the original Orsett poorhouse which was located on Baker Street. It was designed to

accommodate 200 paupers. During the World Wars it became a hospital. It was rebuilt as a hospital in 1961 and developed and extended over the subsequent years into what is the current hospital.

Schools

Orsett at one point had seven schools. Of these the Primary School, in School Lane, is the sole survivor. It was constructed in 1848-50 in the Tudor Gothic style.

Mills

The smock mill at Baker Street was built c. 1795, it was replaced by the adjacent early 19th century brick and slate steam mill with an A-frame beam engine by Middleton of Southwark, this remained in use until 1912 (EHER 5122). The adjacent Mill House is 15th-16th century in origin.

The remains of the roundhouse of Orsett Post Mill are located to the west of the Mill Lane (EHER 47636). The mill was built c.1684.

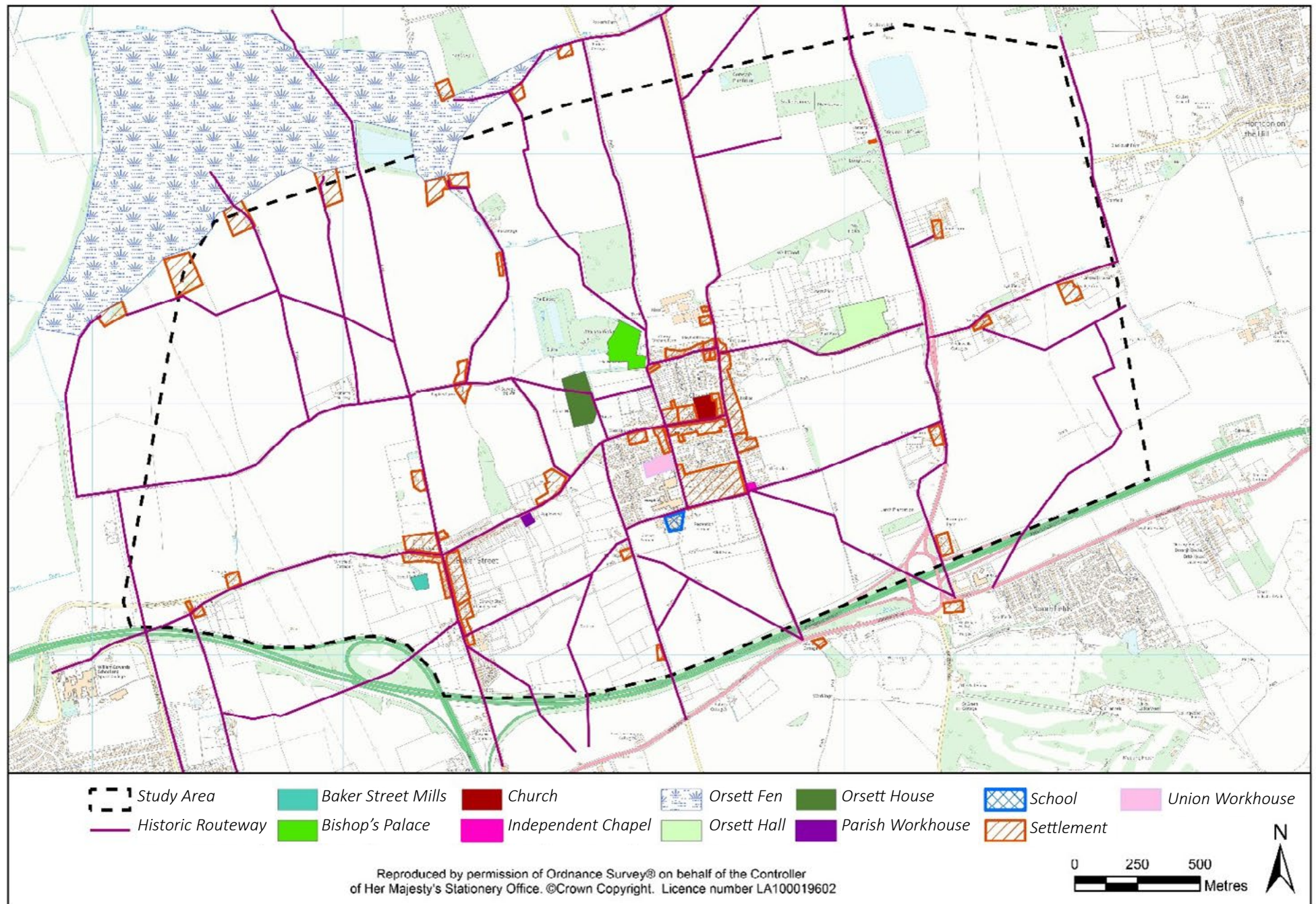


Fig. 9 Orsett: post-medieval interpretation

1.3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL POTENTIAL: SENSITIVITY ASSESSMENT

Excavation and aerial photography have established the survival of extensive areas of complex archaeology, including burials, over much of the southern half of the study area. This is reflected in the designation of three scheduled areas within the study area. Much of the undesignated archaeology can be considered to be potentially of national significance.

The survival of the late medieval and post-medieval built environment is also good and associated below ground archaeology can be anticipated to be present. Calcareous remains such as bone and shell are known to survive, and there is a probability of waterlogged deposits within the ditches associated with Bishop Bonner's Palace and the water management features and possibly in the area of the former Orsett Fen.

The study area for Fobbing has been sub-divided into broad areas based on archaeological potential and a RAG score of Red/Amber/Green was then used to score each of the areas.

Red was used to define those areas of the settlement in which large scale change would have a major impact on designated archaeological heritage assets (Scheduled Monuments, Registered Battlefields and Registered Park and Gardens) resulting in harm to their significance with limited or no prospect of mitigation.

This harm could either be direct (physical changes to the asset) or indirect through changes to their setting. It also includes areas that contain important non-designated archaeological heritage assets which can be considered to meet the NPPF (September 2023) criteria of 'Non-designated heritage assets of archaeological interest, which are demonstrably of equivalent significance to Scheduled Monuments, should be considered subject to the policies for designated heritage assets' (NPPF para. 200, footnote 68) or comprise extensive archaeological sites with no reasonable prospect of adequate mitigation.

Amber defines those areas which contain archaeological heritage assets, both designated and non-designated, whose significance could be harmed through change, however, with appropriate master-planning and mitigation, carefully designed change which removes or reduces any harmful impacts could be achievable. The significance of the archaeological heritage assets and their setting would need to be carefully considered in any proposal with Heritage Impact Assessments required before proceeding to a proposal for site allocation within that area.

Green defines areas where there is little known archaeological heritage impact, or it is thought that the archaeological heritage assets present can be incorporated into any proposal with appropriate mitigation resulting in no harm to their significance.

Note: In all cases above it should be remembered this assessment is based on the known heritage information available either from national datasets or the Essex Historic Environment Record and that there is always the potential for previously unknown archaeological deposits being present within the study area.

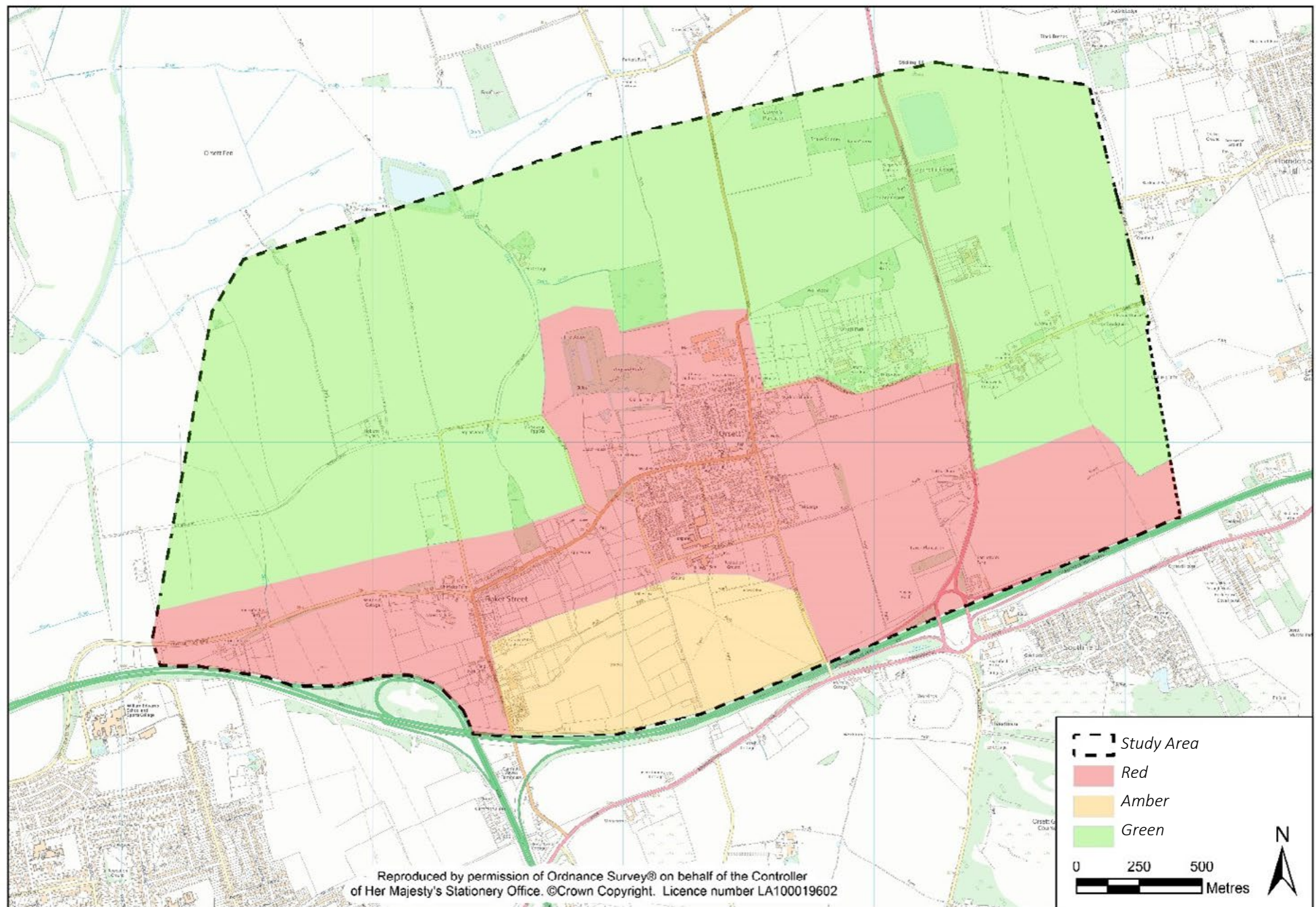


Fig. 10 Orsett: archaeological potential

2. Historic Landscape

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the historic landscape assessment is to understand how the landscape has evolved over time to create the settlement's current character.

This section summarises:

- How the landscape character has developed over time
- Key features
- Key viewpoints
- Management requirements

The initial analysis comprises a review of the published local landscape character assessments and other relevant documents to provide an understanding of the village's setting and any key characteristics.

Site surveys were undertaken to inform a more detailed analysis. This has enabled a finer grained assessment of the sensitivity of parts of the settlement to accommodate new development.

NOTE: It was not possible to undertake detailed surveys to establish which hedgerows met the Hedgerow Regulations 1997 criteria to be considered 'Important'.

2.2 SUMMARY OF LOCAL LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREAS

The Thurrock Integrated Landscape Character Assessment identifies 12 main local Landscape Character Areas (LCA) which have been further subdivided where necessary. The Orsett and Baker Street study area lies within:

LCA H2: Orsett and Horndon on the Hill Open Undulating Farmland

LCA A1: Bulphan Farmland

The key characteristics are listed on pp 20-24. The sub-areas within the study area have been assessed against the LCA key sensitivities and attributes to enable a fine-grained assessment to be made. Opportunities to conserve and enhance the character of the sub-areas is also set out.



Fig. 11 Avenue of Trees off Fen Lane



Fig. 12 Stifford Clays Road over the Mar Dyke

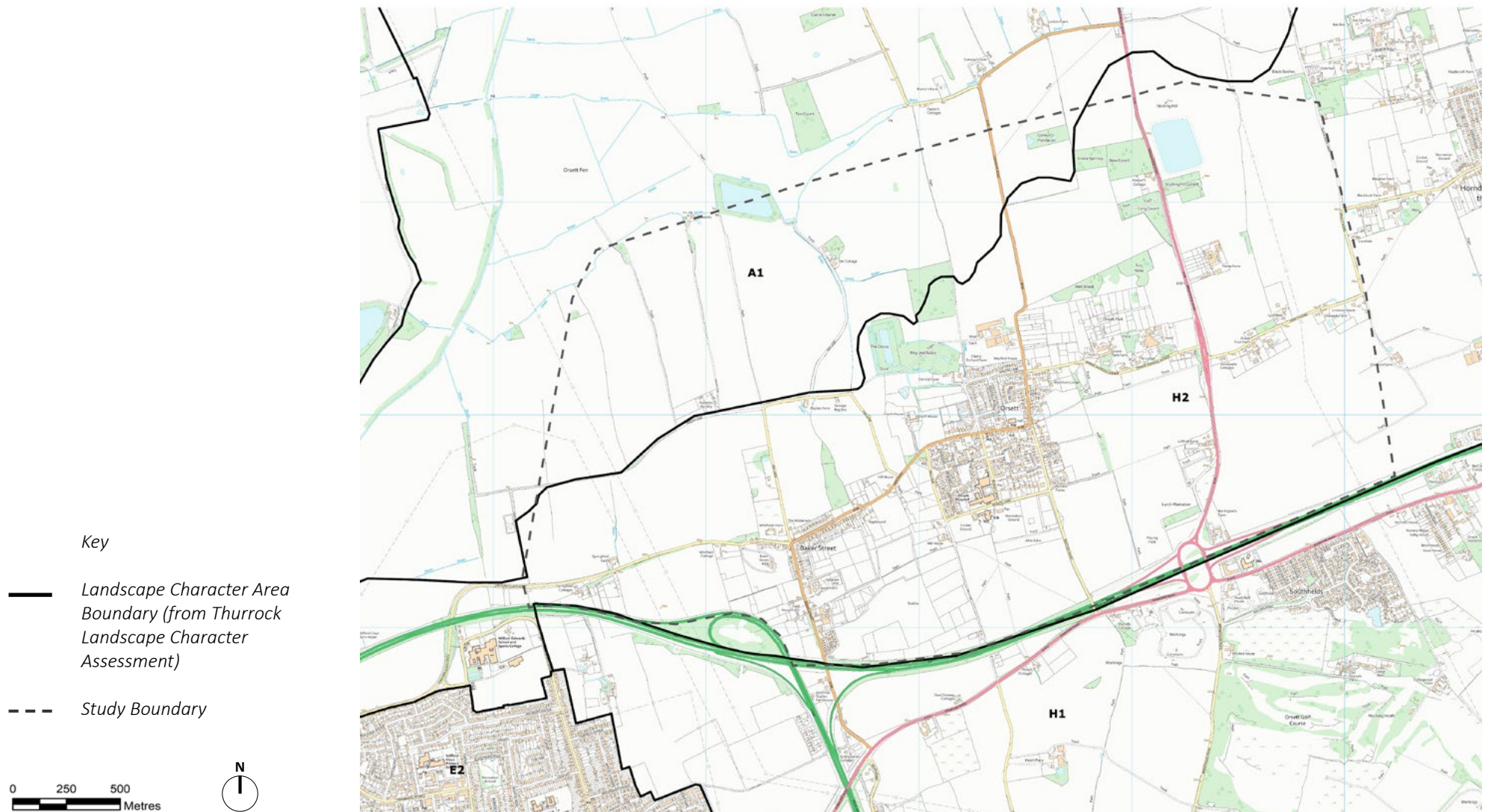


Fig.13 Orsett: Landscape Character Areas

2.3 EVOLUTION OF THE CURRENT LANDSCAPE

The historic nucleated settlements of Orsett and Baker Street are situated on a low ridge. They have historically been separate settlements.

These 'fen-edge' settlements are situated outside of the risk of flooding but with easy access to the fertile farmland associated with the fenland. North of the main settlements the land slopes down towards Orsett Fen and the wider Mar Dyke Valley.

By the medieval period Orsett was a wealthy settlement due to wool produced by sheep grazing on the fens as well as for trading in deer and wildfowl from neighbouring areas.

Of all the settlements making up this assessment, Orsett has had the most significant change in landscape features over time and retains a rich time depth in the features present. [The 19th Century OS Maps](#) show a significant increase in the number of trees, woods and orchards recorded. [The 1st Edition OS 6-inch map](#) shows no woods and few trees within the study area. Orsett Hall and the Rectory are shown as having some parkland trees and small woodland belts. An orchard is shown at Cherry Orchard Farm. Trees were shown on some field boundaries.

[The 3rd Edition OS map](#) shows there to have been a significant increase in tree cover. The largest woods were the coverts and shelter belts planted to the north of Orsett Hall. Parkland around Orsett House and The Rectory are also significant. Woodland had also developed around The Decoy by then. There had been a significant increase in the area of orchards with the largest being to the east of Baker Street and east of Brentwood Road.

The network of roads and lanes has remained relatively unchanged over time.

Even in the 19th century there were relatively large arable fields such as to the south of Orsett Hall and west of Brentwood Road. The main changes to the field sizes have been to increase the size of many of the fields to the north of the settlements, achieved by removing some of the internal hedges.

While the orchards have now largely been removed, the plantations associated with Orsett Hall remain.

The study area is unusual in that despite the underlying sand and gravel deposits there has been no significant mineral extraction within the study area, in marked contrast to the area south of the A13.



Fig.14 Orsett: Large oak on Fen Lane with views towards the Mar Dyke

Landscape Character Area LCA H2: Orsett and Horndon on the Hill Open Undulating Farmland

The main settlements of Orsett and Baker Street are within this Landscape Character Area.

The main landscape features include:

- Low lying and gently undulating rural area of productive agricultural land with locally prominent hills at Horndon on the Hill and Sticking Hill.
- Underlying sand and loamy soils give rise to good agricultural land with a network of mature hedgerows and hedgerow trees creating a relatively strong landscape structure, with fields of varying sizes but with a generally irregular pattern.
- Small, rectilinear blocks of deciduous woodland typically associated with coverts and historic orchards contribute important elements to an otherwise open farmed landscape and provide historic and biodiversity interest.
- Settlement pattern of scattered historic halls and farmsteads located along minor roads and historic rural villages of Orsett (a nucleated fen edge settlement) and Horndon on the Hill (a compact hilltop settlement).
- A strong historic landscape pattern of ancient rectilinear fields with hedgerows, historic lanes and roads.
- A strong local built vernacular including medieval timber frame buildings and post medieval buildings rendered in plaster and lime wash, red brick and white and black weatherboarding.
- Expansive views from elevated areas, for example from Horndon on the Hill in all directions and from the northern edges of Orsett over the adjacent Bulphan Fen.

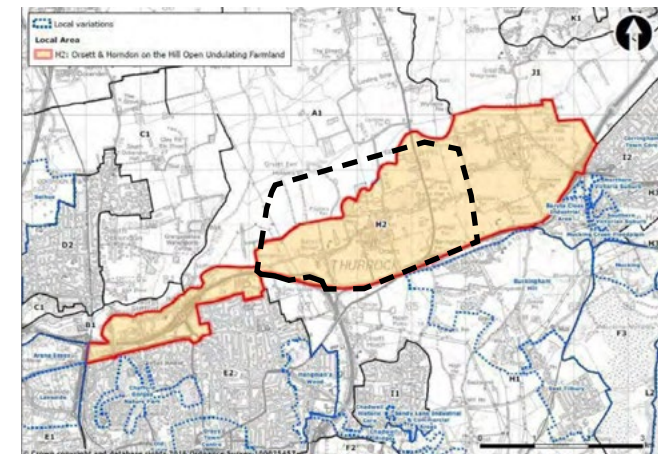


Fig. 15 LCA H2
Study boundary



Fig. 16 Orsett: View from Orsett Road East Linstead Farm

Landscape Character Area LCA A1: Bulphan Farmland

The land north of the settlements are part of this Landscape Character Area.

The main landscape features include:

- An open flat and low-lying landscape, contained within a gentle bowl-like landform that contains the upper catchment of the Mar Dyke which is marked by a line of wetland vegetation.
 - Superficial deposits of alluvium of Head cover the whole area (underlain by clay), giving rise to fine silty over clayey soils affected by ground water which in turn gives rise to moderate quality agricultural land.
 - A mixture of arable and pasture farmland predominates with a few scattered coverts of deciduous trees (a priority habitat) interspersed throughout.
 - Many field patterns have been lost to 20th century intensive farming – some smaller rectilinear pasture fields around Bulphan are more well-defined by field boundaries.
 - Few remaining areas of fenland, although there are some small areas of floodplain grazing marsh (a priority habitat) and an area of Open Access Land at Orsett Fen.
- The area has a tranquil, rural character and a feeling of remoteness with relatively dark skies which contrasts with the built-up and industrial parts of Thurrock

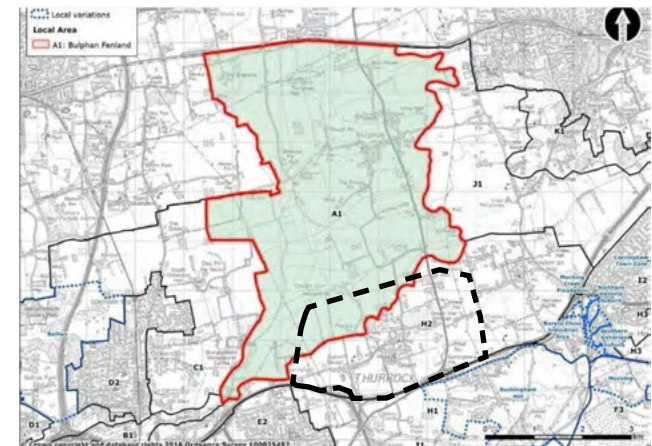


Fig 17. LCA A1
Study boundary - - - - -



Fig 18. Orsett: View from Fen Lane North

2.4 KEY LANDSCAPE FEATURES

Many of the landscape features within the study area deliver a wide range of additional benefits including ecological, flood management, amenity enhancement and places for recreation and play.

Local Wildlife Sites

The long history of relatively intensive farming and loss of wetland and hedges means that the study area contains no designated wildlife sites. However, there are two registered local wildlife sites just outside the study area to the south of Orsett on the south side of the A13.

Woodland

There is some woodland along the north side of the A13, however the majority of dense woodland is located to the north of Orsett - concentrations are associated with the historic Orsett Hall and the Scheduled Ancient Monument Bishop Bonner's Palace.

Trees

There are many Tree Preservation Orders within the village itself, with a particular concentration to the south-west area around the hospital, defining the southern edge of the village as it borders the recreation ground, and to the north-west of Orsett adjacent to the village hall. By contrast there are no TPOs in Baker Street.

Land in Equestrian Use

A significant portion of land at the edge of the village is in equestrian use. This practice of smallholding defines smaller field patterns as opposed to larger agricultural plots which surround the farmsteads further from the village edges.

Orsett Fen

Orsett Fen sits just to the north-west of the study area. This area is common land, and as described in the archaeology chapter was historically connected to the settlement via Fen Lane, which is now used as a popular walking route and bridleway.



Fig. 19 View from Fen Lane up tree lined avenue towards Bishop Bonner's Palace.



Fig. 20 View from the High Road in Baker Street looking North.

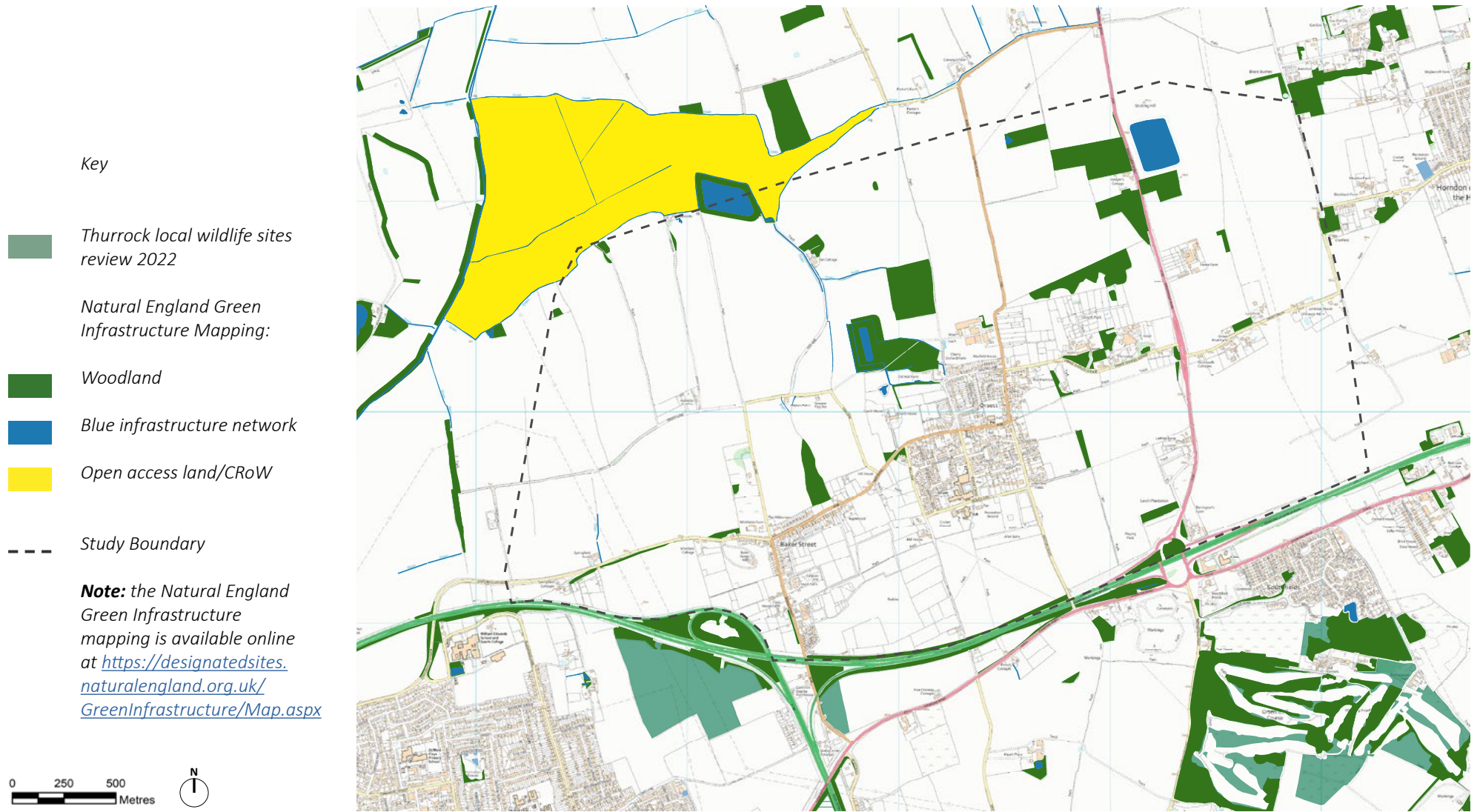


Fig. 21 Orsett: Significant Landscape Features

2.5 HISTORIC LANDSCAPE SENSITIVITY ASSESSMENT

The study area was divided into landscape sub-areas and categorised using the following assessment criteria:

RED

Sub-areas that retain significant historic landscape features that are susceptible to change e.g. open marshland or river valleys.

AMBER

Sub-areas that retain important landscape features such as hedgerows and woodland, which could be retained through appropriate masterplanning and mitigation to help screen/embed any new development into its setting. Some features could be brought into appropriate management.

GREEN

Sub-areas containing few historic landscape features typical of the Landscape Character Type. These areas have a low sensitivity to change

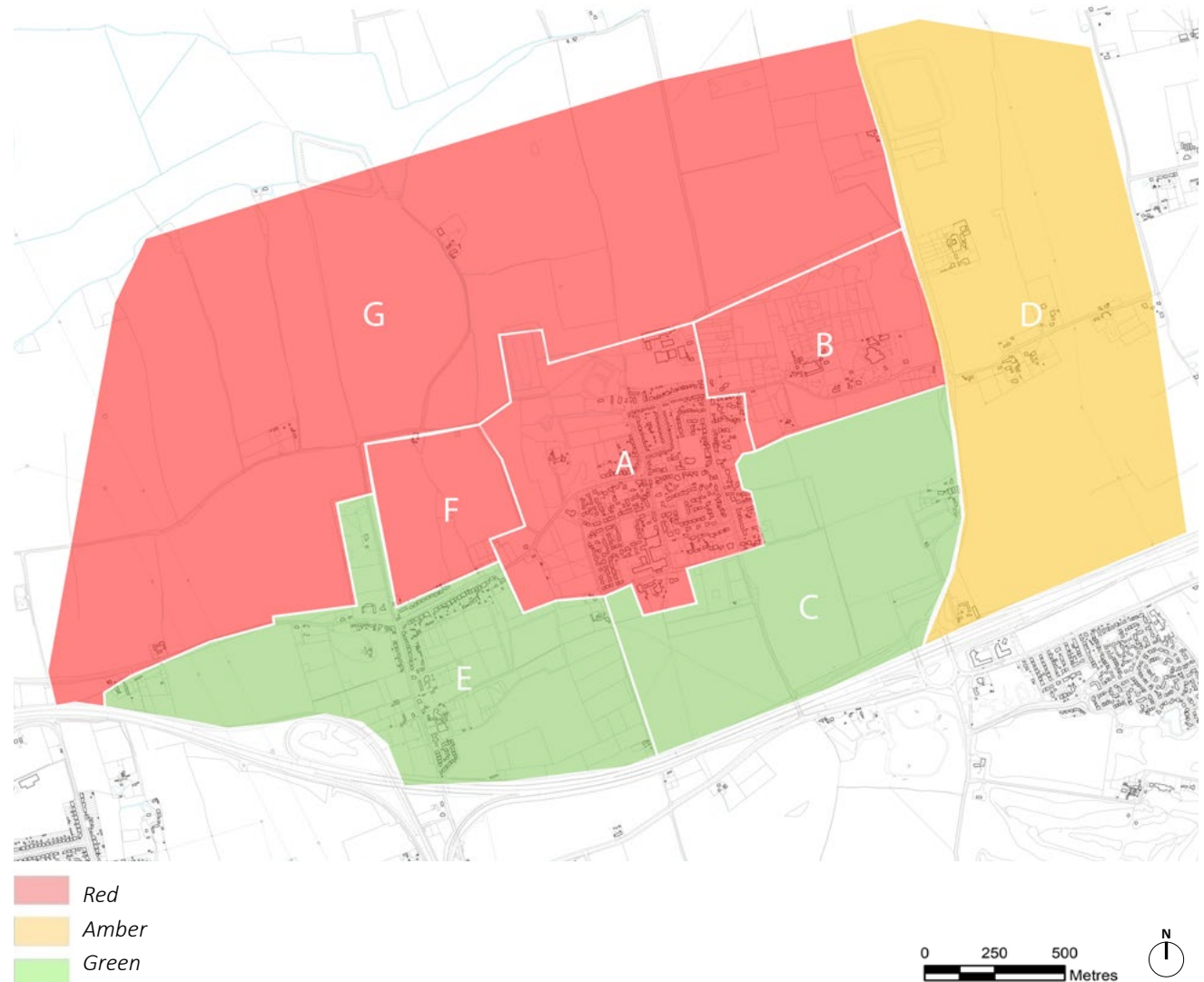


Fig. 22 Orsett: Historic Landscape RAG assessment

Sub-area A. Village centre

The pattern of small woodlands, along with mature hedgerows and hedgerow trees around the settlement and large specimen trees associated with historic sites give rise to a well-structured landscape which contrasts with the more open fenland to the north. The mix of mature broadleaved and conifers specimen trees create a distinctive treed character unusual for Thurrock.

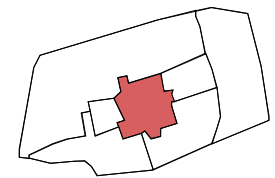
Orsett House which dates from around 1740 retains a small area of parkland north of the High Road as well as small fields enclosed by large hedges. Opposite the main entrance are a group of mature Scots Pine on the green adjacent to the Village Hall.

The former Orsett Hospital site was redeveloped in the 1990s, and many of the larger trees and open greens were retained. Similarly the original Rectory was redeveloped but many of its trees were retained. Rectory Road is very wide, particularly north of High Road. This results in long views over to the Brentwood Hills in the north.

The village centre retains many important landscape features which has a high sensitivity to change. It is therefore given a **RED** rating.



Fig. 23 Mature Scots Pine at Orsett House Entrance



Sub-area B. Orsett Hall

Orsett Hall is one of the largest remaining areas of parkland within the borough with many large mature specimen trees and the small plantations around the main buildings and associated farmland. These are particularly prominent due to their proximity to Brentwood Road and Prince Charles Avenue.

The area south of Prince Charles Road is used for horse grazing which has required the traditional metal estate fencing to be reinforced with wooden post and rail fencing.

Some of the mature trees are showing signs of decline, including those close to the A128 and Prince Charles Road.

The site still retains many important landscape features, is sensitive to change, and is rated **RED**.

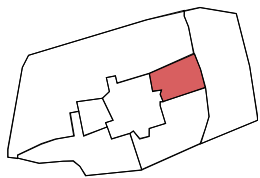


Fig. 24 Orsett Hall Trees

Sub-area C. Land south of Orsett

There is a large tract of land north of the A13 which extends from Mill Lane in the west to the A128 and up to the edge of the Orsett Hall parkland which is largely in arable production and contains few trees or hedges. The area also includes the Orsett Showground and the recreation ground.

Views into and out of this area are limited by topography and infrastructure.

Overall this area has a relatively low landscape sensitivity and is rated **GREEN**.

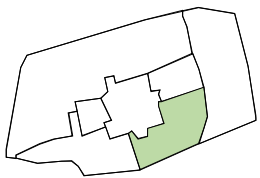


Fig. 25 Orsett Recreation Ground looking east towards Orsett Showground

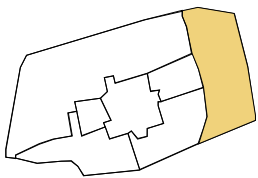
Sub-area D. East of the A128

This area is now predominantly arable farmland although the name of Orsett Fruit Farm relates to the former large orchards that grew around this site. There are some long views towards the Brentwood Hills glimpsed from Orsett Road.

The area retains a largely open, undeveloped character but has few historic landscape features. It is therefore given an **AMBER** rating.



Fig. 26 View North from Orsett Road



Sub-area E. Baker Street

The settlement has developed around a crossroads and extends as ribbon development along Stifford Clays Road, High Road and Baker Street. The area west of Fen Lane retains some larger trees and hedges. The windmill forms a local landmark.

The extent of ribbon development restricts views over much of the surrounding countryside. Many of the fields closest to the settlement are used as horse paddocks. There are however long views north over the Mar Dyke Valley from Stifford Clays Road.

The landscape around the main settlement has relatively limited landscape sensitivity, and this area is therefore rated **GREEN**.

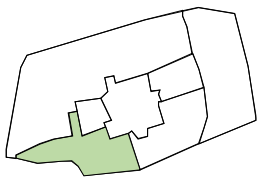


Fig. 27 View from Mill Lane over horse paddocks towards Baker Street.

Sub-area F. Fen Lane

The landscape around Fen Lane forms something of a transition between the settlements of Orsett and Baker Street and the Mar Dyke Valley to the north.

There are large, detached properties set within large gardens on the western section. These contain trees and shrubs which filter some views. However, particularly from the northern section there are long views over the Mar Dyke.

The eastern section is influenced by the treed landscape around Orsett House.

There are several large Oak and Ash growing in the roadside hedges which are attractive features; however several of these are declining due to their age and Ash Dieback.

This area has significant sensitivity due to its position between the two settlements and the long views that are available. For that reason it is rated **RED**.

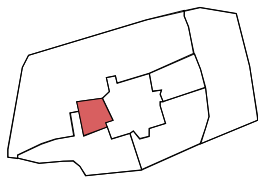


Fig. 28 Large oak on Fen Lane

Sub-area G. Valley Slopes

North of the main settlements the land drops gently northwards into the Mar Dyke Valley. Historically this area contained few trees and hedges and still retains its expansive, open character with long views towards the Brentwood and Langdon Hills.

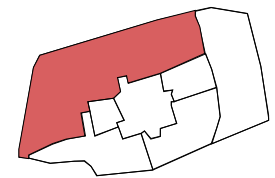
The area is characterised by large fields in arable production. Most of the fields are rectangular with a north south axis. Boundary hedges are of variable quality. There are often significant gaps, particularly associated with internal fields. Often this is due to the impacts of Dutch Elm Disease on the historically prevalent elm. Within this area are scattered plantations that appear to date from the 19th century. The most significant were part of the Orsett Hall estate.

The study area bounds Orsett Fen. The historic boundaries are largely intact, although the fen has been drained and is now a single field in arable production. There are long views north from Conway Road and Footpath 100 over the Mar Dyke Valley towards the Brentwood and Langdon Hills.

Due to the expansive character within this area, it retains some sensitivity despite the lack of many historic landscape features and is therefore rated **RED**.



Fig. 29 Green Lane



2.6 MANAGING FOR THE FUTURE

More than any other settlement in the borough the landscape character of Orsett is heavily defined by its large specimen trees. However, many of the most notable trees are now mature or over-mature and are starting to decline. This will have an adverse impact on the character of the settlement as more trees are lost.

In addition there is an increasing number of diseases which are impacting a range of species. Dutch Elm Disease in the 1970s had major impacts on the hedges and hedgerow trees in the area. It is still present and killing new regrowth. New diseases include Ash Dieback, Oak Processional Moth and Bleeding Canker which is impacting Horse Chestnuts.

There is a need for a programme of planting new specimen trees. The parkland character of the settlement means that there has been a history of planting non-native species including Pines, Wellingtonia and other conifers, London Planes, Robinia. It is possible therefore to plant a mix of species that are more resistant to climate change and have fewer diseases without adversely affecting the local character.



Fig. 30 Baker Street - Stifford Clays Road

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3. Built Heritage

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This section of the report examines the location and characteristics of designated and non-designated built heritage assets within this study area. It highlights how built heritage currently exists within the streetscape and landscape in order to understand how future change may be influenced, shaped, restricted or supported to optimise quality of design, and highlight implications for sustainable communities so that change is compatible with long-standing built heritage.

The study area of Orsett includes the central Conservation Area (CA), three Scheduled Ancient Monuments (SAMs denoted 'a', 'h' and 'l' on page 41) and 32 listed buildings (LB) including one cluster of 15 listed buildings within the Conservation Area. The Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan (CAAMP) can be accessed via <https://www.thurrock.gov.uk/conservation-areas/character-appraisals>

All images included in this section have been gathered from public rights of way and the privacy and property rights of members of the public have been safeguarded at all times. No ongoing policy or development management matters are incorporated.



Fig. 31 Cast iron fingerpost & EIR mailbox (Baker Street)



Fig. 32 Orsett High Road, facing west

3.2 METHODOLOGY

The study area has been assessed by sub-dividing the area into 21 divisions, each assigned a capital letter from 'A' to 'U'.

The designated heritage assets (Listed Buildings and Scheduled Ancient Monuments) have been identified and marked with lower case letters (shown in pink on the map) 'a' to 'u.' All are listed to the right and hyper-linked to Historic England National Heritage List descriptions.

The impact of change upon these designated built heritage assets was then assessed from 23 viewpoints numbers '1' to '23' (shown in blue on the map). At each viewpoint, where possible, photographs were captured around a full 360 degree clockwise rotation from north.

This enables a comprehensive assessment of the potential impact upon the setting of designated built heritage assets, the likelihood of harm, and implications for the character and materiality of potential change.

Divisions 'A' to 'U', designated heritage assets 'a' to 'u' and viewpoints 1-23 are marked on the map opposite.

Designated Heritage Assets:

a [Orsett Crop Mark Complex](#)

b [Baker Street Windmill](#)

c [Baker Street Mill House](#)

d [Thatched Barn at Whitfields](#)

e [Whitfields Farm](#)

f [The Wilderness](#)

g [Poplar's Farmhouse](#)

h [Springfield style enclosure and Iron Age enclosures](#)

i [Slades Hold Cottages](#)

j [Orsett House](#)

k [Old Hall Farm House](#)

l [Bishop Bonner's Palace](#)

m [1&2 Malting Cottages](#)

n [15 Listed Buildings within the conservation area](#)

o [Murrells Cottages](#)

p [Larkins](#)

q [The Bothy](#)

r [Boundary Wall at Orsett Hall](#)

s [Loft Hall](#)

t [Linstead Farm Cottage](#)

u [Cholley's Farmhouse](#)

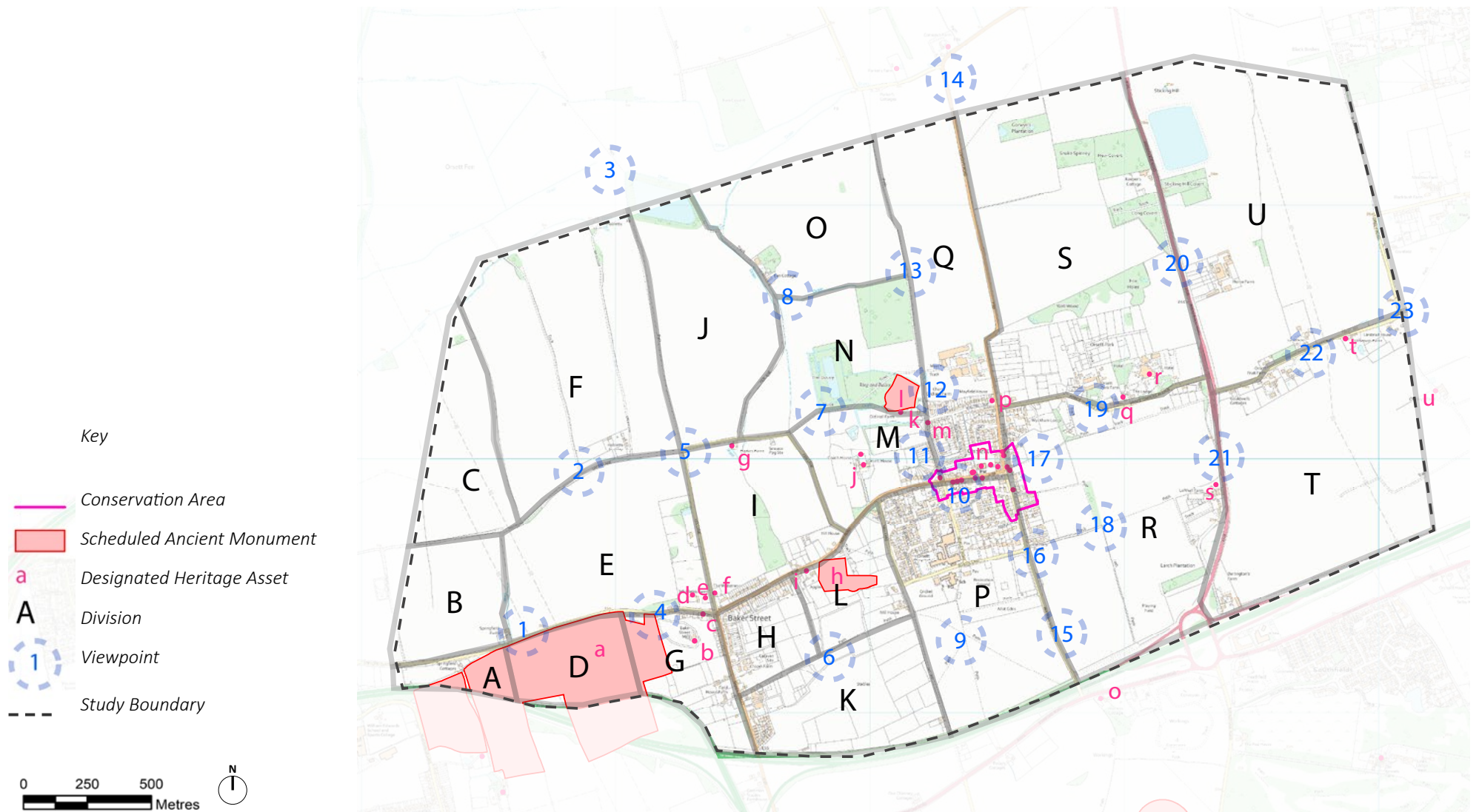


Fig. 33 Orsett: built heritage assessment methodology

3.3 ASSETS OF LOCAL HERITAGE INTEREST

Whilst surveying the study area, it has been possible to shortlist some of the unlisted historic structures for later consideration as non-designated heritage assets i.e. structures that may be incorporated on a *Local List of Historic Assets*:

- Cast iron fingerpost & EIR mailbox (Baker Street)
- The Kings Arms (Baker Street)
- The Whitmore Arms (Orsett)
- The War Memorial (Orsett)
- The Foxhound (Orsett)
- The former Maltings (Orsett)
- The former Literary Institute (Orsett)



Fig. 34 Cast iron fingerpost & EIR mailbox (Baker Street)



Fig 35. The Kings Arms (Baker Street)



Fig 37. The former Maltings (Orsett)



Fig 39. The Foxhound (Orsett)



Fig 36. The Whitmore Arms (Orsett)



Fig 38. The War Memorial (Orsett)



Fig 40. The former Literary Institute (Orsett)

3.4 BUILT HERITAGE SENSITIVITY ASSESSMENT

Summary of Findings:

Of the 21 Divisions assessed in this study the following built heritage impact ratings have been assigned, taking into account the potential impact of change in the area upon the setting of existing built heritage assets, the likelihood of harm, and implications for the character and materiality of potential change:

GREEN

6 No: A B C F O Q

These are Divisions where no above-ground heritage assets are present or implicated by potential future changes.

AMBER

11 No: E H I J K M P R S T U

These are Divisions where the setting, massing, materiality, views of or views from heritage assets would be affected by potential future changes. In some cases the designated assets could provide an architectural lead, in some cases the views and prominence of the asset should be incorporated into any potential future considerations. In most cases substantial or less-than-substantial harm would need to be avoided.

RED

4 No. D G L N

These Divisions contain Scheduled Ancient Monuments that would preclude further change without the approval of the Secretary of State.

Please also refer to the section on archaeology for further information on Schedulings.

The analysis does not seek to update or replace any existing Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan where published. Nor does it intend to challenge the Listing description or gradings previously assigned by Historic England.

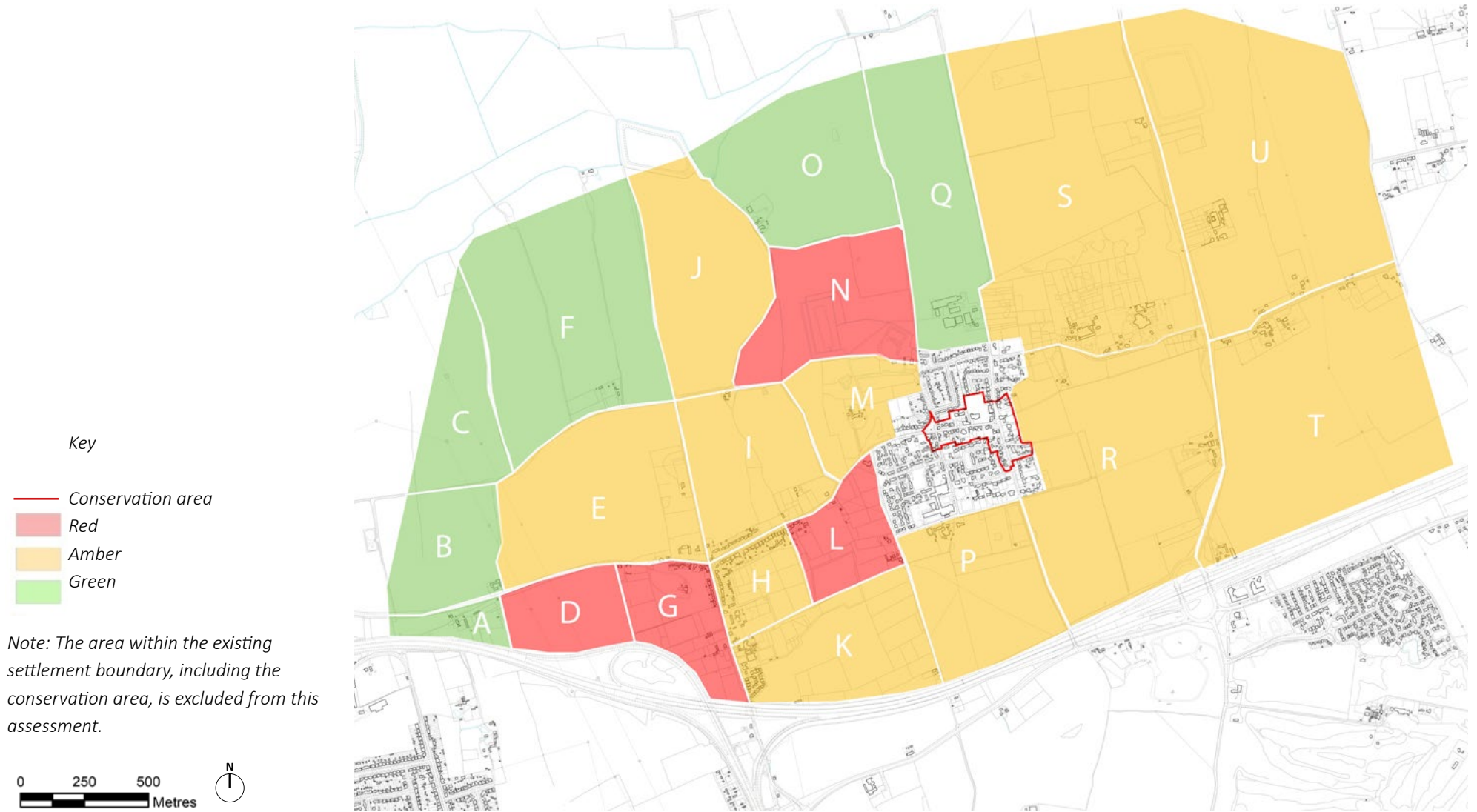


Fig. 41 Orsett: built heritage sensitivity assessment

Division A

West of Baker Street and approximately 14 Ha bounded by Stifford Clays Rd to the North, A13 to the South and pylons to the east.

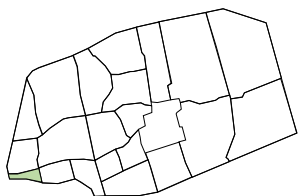
The view south from Stifford Clays Rd is largely obscured by shrubs of the hedgerow. However, there are glimpses of the contour-free agricultural and equestrian use, for example past Springfield Cottages.

No heritage assets are visible from or affected by this Division so its heritage impact potential is rated **GREEN**.



Fig 42. Image of Division A looking south from Viewpoint 1 from Stifford Clays Road adjacent to Springfield Cottages . Google Streetview as no image could be safely captured

Note the Kerry Rd Grays tower block to the south



Division B

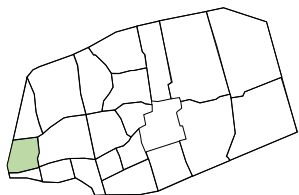
West of Baker Street and approximately 28 Ha bounded by Green Lane to the North and west, Stifford Clays Rd to the South, and Pylons to the east.

The view from viewpoint 1 shows contour-free agricultural land with high voltage pylons to the east.

No heritage assets are visible from or affected by this Division so its heritage impact potential is rated **GREEN**.



Fig 43. Image of Division B looking north from Viewpoint 1 along Green Lane from Stifford Clays Road. From Google Streetview as no image could be safely captured



Division C

Northwest of Baker Street and approximately 33 Ha, triangular in shape and bounded by Green Lane to the South, the boundary of the study area to the west and the high voltage pylon line to the east.

The view north-west from viewpoint 2 shows contour-free agricultural land with high voltage pylons to the west.

No heritage assets are visible from or affected by this Division so it's heritage impact potential is rated as **GREEN**.

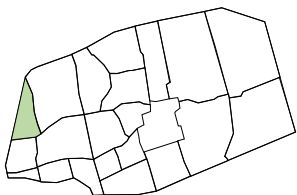


Fig 44. Image of Division C looking north west from Viewpoint 2 along Green Lane

Division D

West of Baker Street and approximately 13 Ha, bounded by Stifford Clays Rd in the North, Baker Street Windmill to the east, the A13 to the south and the high voltage pylon line to the east.

The view south from viewpoint 4 is completely obscured by roadside hedgerow and shrubs. However, this area features Scheduled Ancient Monument 'a' the Orsett Cropmark Complex and potentially with views of the Baker Street Windmill listed building 'b'

Because of the scheduling of the ancient monument, no change would be permitted without the approval of the Secretary of State. So the heritage impact potential is rated as **RED**.

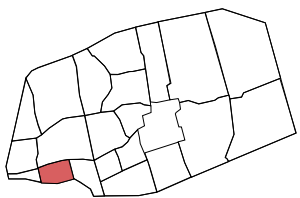


Fig 45. Image of Division D from Satellite Imagery as vegetation screens the view south from Stifford Clays Rd.

Division E

Northwest of Baker Street and approximately 43 Ha, bounded by Green Lane to the north, Fen Lane to the east, Stifford Clays Rd to the south and the high voltage pylon line to the west.

The view south from Viewpoint 2 towards Baker Street is entirely agricultural and without contours. However, as this area features c17 thatched, Grade II listed building Whitfield Farm Barn 'd' and timber framed and plain tiled c18 Whitfield Farmhouse 'e,' change in the south-east of this area would affect the setting of this area and potentially the views of the Baker Street Windmill listed building 'b.'

Because of the proximity of the south-east extent of this division to characterful listed buildings, the heritage impact potential is rated as **AMBER** as change would have to be compatible with the setting, massing and, materiality of these listed buildings.

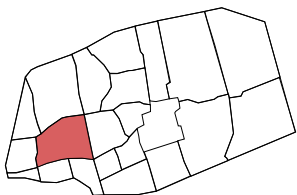


Fig 46. Image of Division E looking south east from Viewpoint 2. Note the pylons to the south west, however, the view to listed building 'e' (Whitfield Farm - below left) and its barn 'd' (below right) of Baker Street are distant and obscured by mature trees.



Fig 47. Whitfield Farm



Fig 48. Whitfield Farm barn

Division F

North of Baker Street and approximately 88 Ha, bounded by the study area boundary to the north, Fen Lane to the east, Green Lane to the south and the high voltage pylon line to the west,

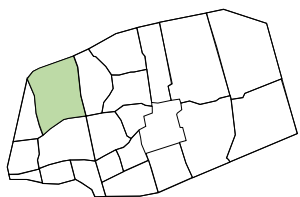
No heritage assets are visible from or affected by this Division so it's heritage impact potential is rated as **GREEN**.



Fig 49. Image of Division F looking north west from Viewpoint 2.



Fig 50. Image of Divison F looking north from Viewpoint 2 with the woodlands adjacent to non-designated Hobletts Farm and the rising land behind are clearly visible to the north.



Division G

Immediately west of Baker Street and approximately 11 Ha, bounded by Stifford Clays Road to the north, the road titled Baker Street to the east, the A13 to the south and the western boundary of Baker Street Mills private tenure.

An important part of the settlement of Baker Street, without CA protection, the road-facing c15 Grade II white weather-boarded Orsett Mill House 'c' dominates the Stifford Clays Rd streetscape whilst its industrial partner c18 Grade II Baker Street Mill 'b' is almost completely obscured from view either by Stifford Clays Road roadside hedgerow and garden vegetation or from the road entitled Baker Street by contemporary developments.

The southernmost part of this Division is unaffected by heritage assets but potential change of this privately owned semi-urbanised Division would be dominated by the need for compatibility with the setting. This division is rated **RED**.

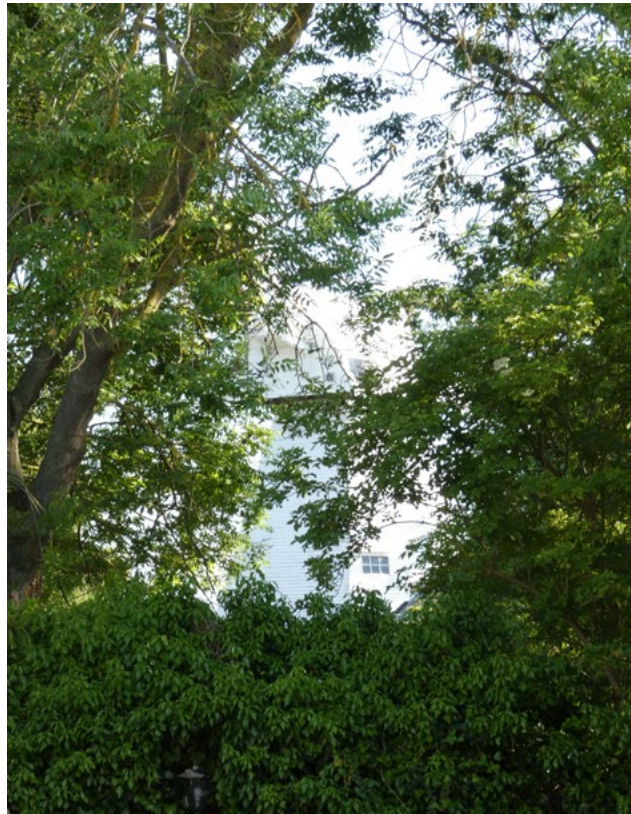
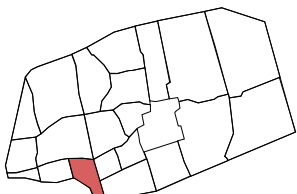


Fig 51. Baker Street Windmill obscured by trees from Stifford Clays Road



Fig 52. Baker Street Windmill obscured along the east side of the Baker Street road



Fig 53. Grade II listed Mill House.

Division H

Southeast and south of central Baker Street and approximately 7 Ha, bounded by the rear gardens south of High Road to the north, the western extent of the tenure of c17 Listed building Slades Hold Cottages tenure 'i' to the east, and public footpath No 96 to the south.

Now in equestrian use, this back-land area currently allows distant views of Baker Street Windmill particularly prevalent from Viewpoints 6 and 9 and great care must be taken to preserve these views. Similarly, the setting, massing and thatched and plastered timber framed materiality of adjacent c17 Listed building Slades Hold Cottages 'i' must not be harmed For these reasons, the Division heritage impact rating is set at **AMBER**.

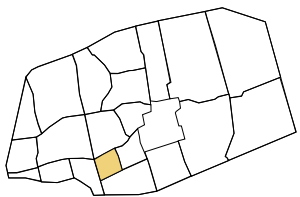


Fig 54. The current equestrian use as viewed from Viewpoint 6



Fig 55. The distant view of the windmill from viewpoint 9 afforded by the currently unobscured vista shown above



Fig 56. c17 Listed Building Slades Hold Cottages

Division I

Northeast and north of Baker Street and approximately 27 Ha, enclosed by Fen Lane to the west, north and east and by High Road to the south. This area is currently in equestrian use to the south and agricultural use elsewhere.

The northern extent features c16/17 timber framed and plain-tiled Grade II listed building 'Poplars Farmhouse' 'g', the south west of this Division provides an open vista from (and of) listed building 'i' Slades Hold Cottages and the south west abuts the 3 listed buildings 'd' (Whitfield Barn) , 'e' (Whitfield Farmhouse) , and Grade II c18 'The Wilderness', 'f'

The setting, massing and materiality of these designated assets would be at risk of harm from change of this Division so must be taken into account when considering future change.

This division is rated **AMBER**.

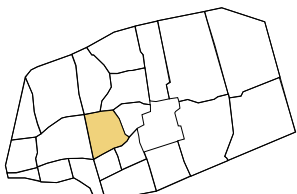


Fig 57. Grade II listed Poplars Farm of Fen Lane to the northeast



Fig 58. The Wilderness on Fen Lane



Fig 59. The open aspect view north from Slades Hold Cottages.

Division J

North of Baker Street and north-west of Orsett and approximately 34 Ha, enclosed by Hobletts Farm reservoir to the north, Fen Lane to the north east, High Road to the south and Green Lane to the west

The area is currently entirely agricultural land but the land rises from listed building Poplars Farm 'g' so any change of this area has the potential to affect the setting of that designated heritage asset.

The setting of listed building would be affected by change of the south of this Division so the heritage impact is rated as **AMBER**.

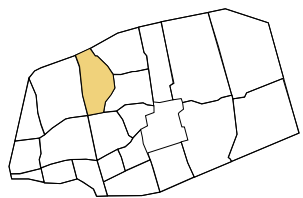


Fig 60. Open views to the west from Viewpoint 8



Fig 61. Grade II listed Poplars Farm that sits centrally to the southern border of this Division



Fig 62. Distant hedgerows of Fen Lane from Viewpoint 7

Division K

Southeast of Baker Street and southwest of Orsett and approximately 26 Ha, enclosed by Footpath No. 96 to the north, Mill Lane to the east, the A13 to the south and Baker Street road to the west.

Whilst this area is generally unaffected by designated heritage assets, views to the north west from Viewpoint 6 afford an excellent vista of Baker Street Windmill, and for this reason any potential change should respect and enable those views. This is particularly important as they become obscured in Viewpoints closer to the Mill itself.

For this reason the heritage impact rating of the area is set to **AMBER**.

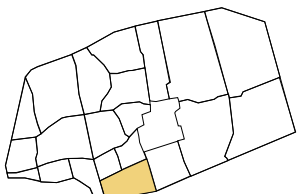
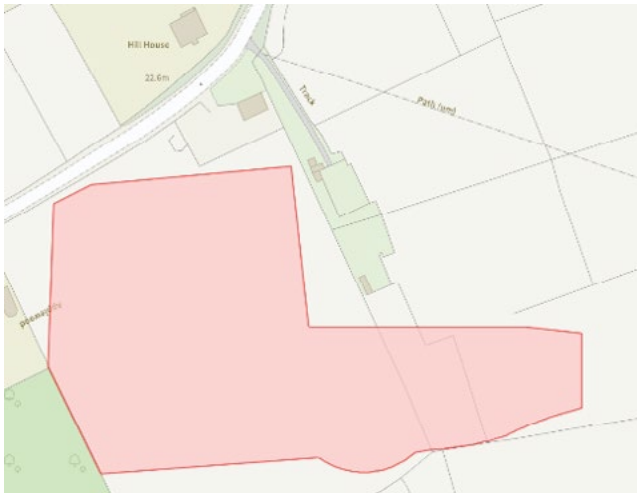


Fig 63. Distant views of Grade II listed Baker Street Windmill must be protected by any potential change within Division K

Division L

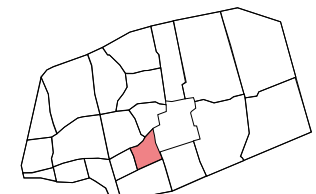
Marking the eastern border of Baker Street and the western extent of Orsett, and approximately 12 Ha, enclosed by High Road to the north, Mill Lane to the east, Footpath No. 96 to the south and the extent of private tenure of Slades Hold Cottages to the west: this Division importantly contains Scheduled Ancient Monument 'h' the Springfield style enclosure and Iron Age enclosures. This is outlined by Historic England in the map below.



For this reason, change would require approval from the Secretary of State so the heritage impact rating is set to **RED**.



Fig 64. The scheduled ancient monument Springfield style enclosure and Iron Age enclosures are indistinct from Viewpoint 6 but undesignated Mill House of Orsett's Mill Lane (not to be confused with the Grade II listed Mill House of Baker Street's Mill Road) is visible in the distance, south of the Village Hall.



Division M

Northwest and bordering the settlement of Orsett, the north of this approximately 15 ha Division is bounded by the scheduled ancient monument 'l', *Bishop Bonner's Ring and Bailey*, *Pound Lane* to the east, High Rd to the south and Fen Lane to the west.

At the centre of this zone lies c18 red brick Grade II* listed building 'j' Orsett House, although obscured from the public highway by mature vegetation, change around this historic asset would need to respect its setting, massing and high status as a fine gentry house with carriage house and separately listed gate with piers.

To the north east lies c15c Old Hall Farmhouse - listed building 'k' of which only the curtilage listed barn (image bottom left) is visible from the public highway. Across Pound Lane, on adjacent Maltings Lane, lies modest c17 listed building 'm' 'Maltings Cottages' providing a potential architectural lead for modest dwellings in this semi-rural location. This division is rated **AMBER**.

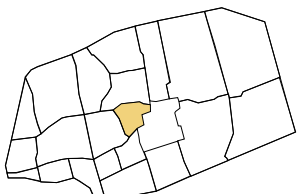


Fig 65. Obscured views of Orsett House



Fig 66. Curtilage listed barn of Old Hall Farmhouse



Fig 67. Maltings Cottages

Division N

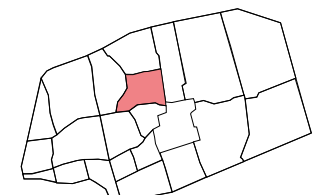
Northwest of Orsett and approximately 18 ha in area, central to this Division lies the scheduled ancient monument *Bishop Bonner's Ring and Bailey*. This is shown below on a map by Historic England.



It is largely obscured by foliage from public rights of way. The northern boundary is set by a field edge, to the east lies Public Footpath 100 to Bulphan; the west is marked by Fen Lane. Also included is Grade II c15 Old Hall Farmhouse listed building 'k' which is not visible from the public highway. The dominance of the scheduled ancient monument and Grade II listed building would require that change in this area would require approval from the Secretary of State so the heritage impact rating is set to **RED**.



Fig 68. The scheduled ancient monument west of Viewpoint 12 is obscured by vegetation.



Division O

North of Orsett and approximately 22 Ha, bounded by the study area to the north, Footpath 100 to the east, the field boundary of Bishop Bonner's field to the south and Fen Lane to the west.

This area is currently under agricultural use and as no heritage assets are visible from or affected by this Division it's heritage impact potential is rated as **GREEN**.

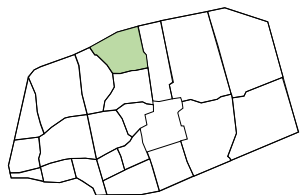


Fig 69 & 70. Agricultural land unaffected by built historic assets viewed west (below) and north west (above) from Viewpoint 13

Division P

Due south of Orsett's current settlement boundary of School Lane and approximately 29 ha, bounded by the School and allotments to the north, Rectory Road to the east, the A13 to the south and Mill Road to the west, this area is currently under agricultural use and is generally unaffected by heritage assets. However, it affords one of the few and very clear distant views of c17 Grade II Baker Street Windmill 'b'.

To preserve this vista, from Viewpoints 9 (top) and 15 (bottom) for example, and to highlight the presence of historical industrialised agriculture, potential future changes must enable views of this heritage asset in perpetuity for the benefit of future generations. For this reason, the heritage impact potential of this area is rated as **AMBER**.

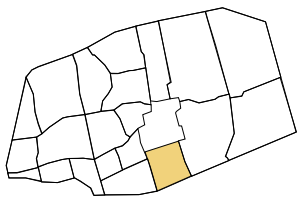


Fig 71 & 72. View from viewpoint 9 & 15

Division Q

North of Orsett and approximately 25 ha, bounded by the study area boundary to the north, Conway's Road to the east, Cherry Orchard Farm and the contemporary development (lower left) along Maltings Lane to the south and Footpath 100 to the west.

Currently in agricultural use (top image) with generally no heritage assets affected by this Division. Note, however that adjacent Division N features the scheduled ancient monument 'I' Bishop Bonner's Palace, Ring and Bailey. The heritage impact potential is rated as **GREEN**.

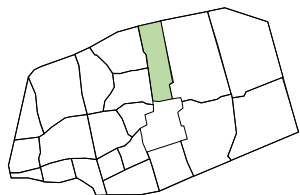


Fig 73. Agricultural use of Division Q



Fig 75. Contemporary development along Maltings Lane



Fig 74. Cherry Orchard Farm

Division R

East and south of Orsett's current settlement boundary of Rectory Road and approximately 66 ha, bounded Prince Charles Avenue to the north, the A128 Brentwood Rd to the east, the A13 to the south and Rectory Road to the west. This area is currently under agricultural use with equestrian use to the north. It also houses the Orsett Showground to the south-west. Importantly, although only affecting the easternmost boundary, c18 Grade II listed building Loft Hall farmhouse 's' provides evidence of high status agricultural dwellings in the area. Five of Orsett's central 15 listed buildings lie along the eastern flank of Rectory Road including The Whitmore Arms of local heritage value.

Orsett Hall and Park lie to the north and these are considered in Division S.

The heritage impact potential of this area is rated as **AMBER**: this affords respect to the setting, massing and materiality of Grade II listed Loft Hall, although it could potentially provide an architectural lead for future change, and because the area abuts five listed buildings and unlisted local heritage assets on Rectory Road between Fordham Row and Penn Close.



Fig 76. The Whitmore Arms



Fig 77. Detail of Loft Hall seen from Viewpoint 21



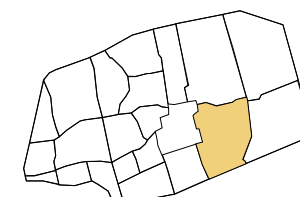
Fig 78. Viewpoint 18 shows distant Loft Hall



Fig 79. Entrance to Orsett Showground at Viewpoint 15



Fig 80. Orsett Showground from Viewpoint 16



Division S

Northeast of Orsett and approximately 88 ha, bounded by the study area boundary to the north, the A128 Brentwood Road to the east, Prince Charles Avenue to the south and Conway's Road to the east. Currently largely in agricultural use.

The area contains unlisted Orsett Hall with its Listed Boundary Wall 'r'. Importantly, west of Orsett Hall lies c16 timber framed 'The Bothy' (bottom right) 'q' that is a Grade II listed building. Also to the south-west lie c17 timber framed Grade II listed 'Larkins' of Conway's Road (top left) 'p' and heavily adapted unlisted former Maltings that is of Local Heritage interest.

The heritage impact potential of this area is rated as **AMBER**: this affords respect to the setting, massing and materiality of these Grade II listed heritage assets.

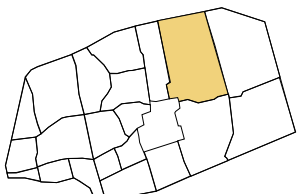


Fig 81. Grade II Listed Larkins



Fig 82. Former Maltings that is of Local Heritage Interest



Fig 83. c16 timber framed 'The Bothy'

Division T

East and south and well outside Orsett's current settlement boundary, this approximately 80 ha Division is bounded by Orsett Road to the north, the study area to the east, the A13 to the south, and the A128 Brentwood Road to the west.

Currently under agricultural use (main image from Viewpoint 22) it is bordered by two important listed buildings: to the west lies c18 Grade II listed building Loft Hall farmhouse 's' considered in Division R that provides evidence of high status agricultural dwellings in the area and to the north is c16 Grade II listed Linstead Farm 't' (lower right)

To respect the setting, massing and materiality of these listed building the division has a heritage impact rating **AMBER**.

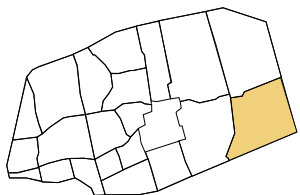


Fig 84. Viewpoint 22 showing agricultural use of Division T



Fig 85. Grade II Listed Loft Hall Farmhouse (see Division R)



Fig 86. Grade II Listed Linstead Farm

Division U

East and north and well outside Orsett's current settlement boundary, this approximately 92 ha Division is bounded by the study area boundary to the north and east, Orsett Road to the south and the A128 Brentwood Road to the west.

Currently under agricultural use (main image looking north from Viewpoint 22) it is only bordered by listed building c16 Grade II listed Linstead Farm 't' (image lower right, opposite page), to the south, considered in Division T

To respect the setting, massing and materiality of this listed building the division has a heritage impact rating **AMBER**.

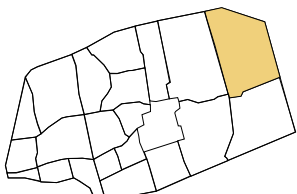


Fig 87. Viewpoint 22 looking north showing agricultural use of Division U

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4. Historical Evolution

1777 Chapman & Andre Map

This map can be viewed online at <https://map-of-essex.uk/>

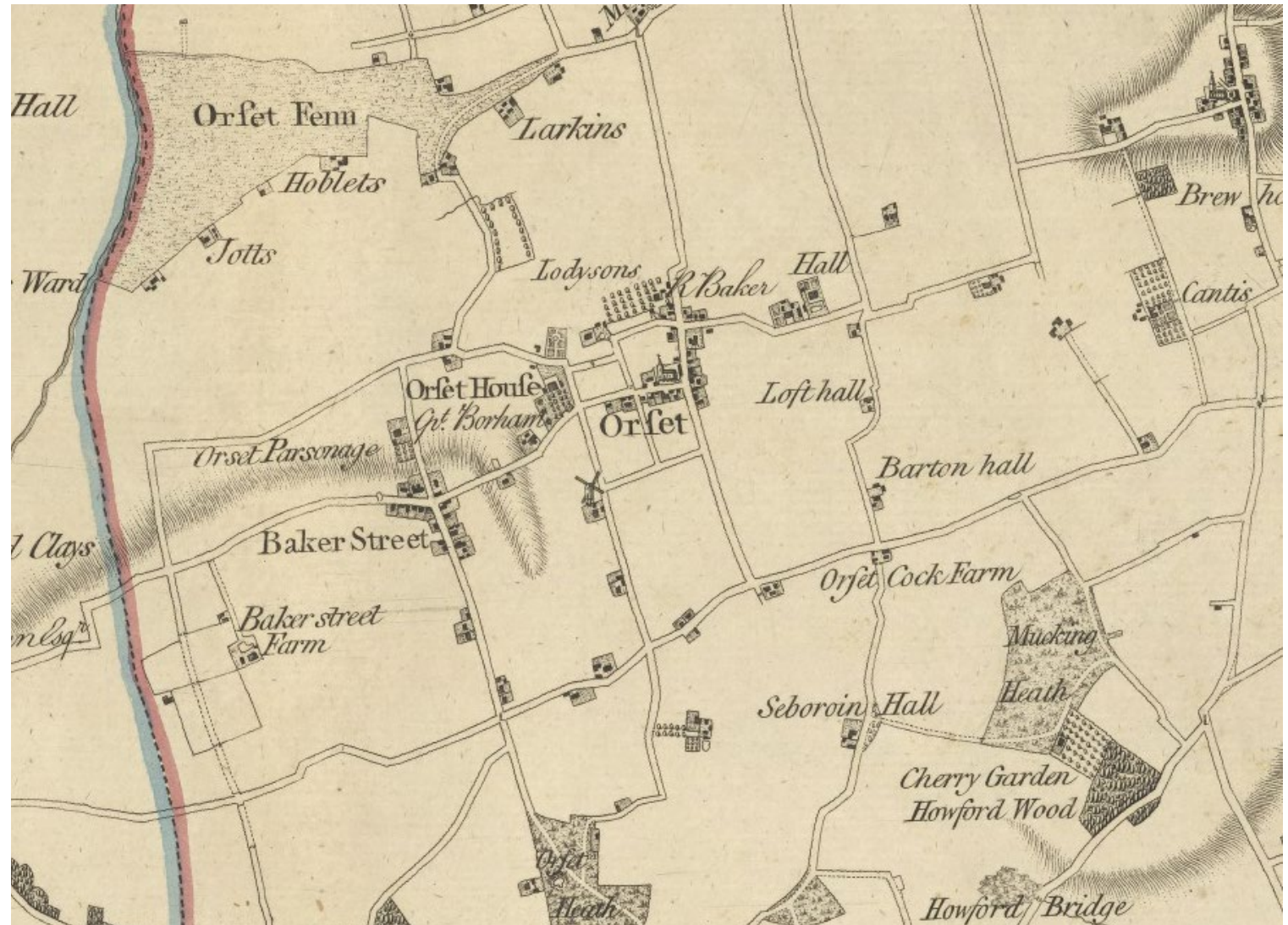


Fig 88.

1839 Tithe Map

Digital images of the Tithe maps have been added to <https://www.essexarchivesonline.co.uk/> and CD copies of these maps can be seen at the Saffron Walden Access Point.



Fig 89.

1881 First Edition OS Map



Fig 90.

1897 Second Edition OS Map



Fig 91.

1920 Third Edition OS Map

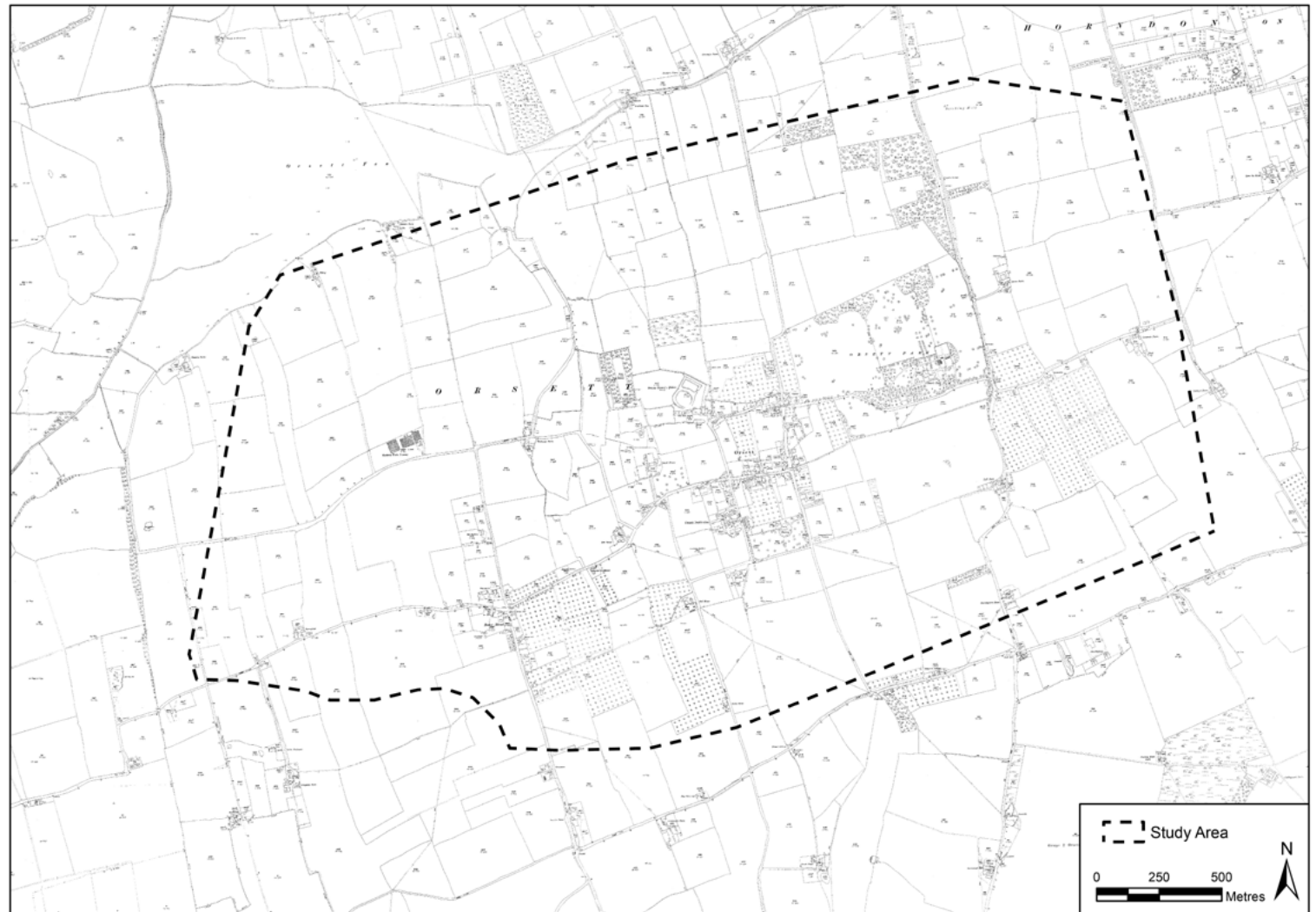


Fig 92.

1938 Fourth Edition OS Map



Fig 93.

NB. Some of the data from the northern part of the study area is missing

5. The Village Today

5.1 SETTLEMENT PATTERN

Orsett and Baker Street are separated by the open space that surrounds the scheduled ancient monument (Orsett Crop-mark Complex) and therefore read as two distinct settlements, and each has their own settlement pattern.

Orsett, which is larger than Baker Street, has a meshed street pattern which is roughly square in plan. Baker Street has a more linear pattern, with most buildings fronting onto two perpendicular roads- Baker Street and the High Road.

Despite this, the two settlements can be considered a whole and part of the same place. Orsett- with its Church, Primary School, and Village Shop- supports Baker Street in terms of amenities. The links between the two are therefore an important consideration in any understanding of how the place works.

The edges of both settlements are defined by a transition from a denser pattern of dwellings with road frontages to individual dwellings or farmsteads set within larger plots or gardens. This is particularly true to the east of the village along Prince Charles Avenue and Brentwood Road.

The construction of the A13 road to the south of both settlements has caused severance between the village and the wider area, this can be read particularly clearly to the south of Baker Street, where a few dwellings which historically could have been considered part of the settlement are separated from much of the village to the north.



Fig. 94 High Road from Baker Street



Fig. 95 Orsett Figure Ground

5.2 TOPOGRAPHY & VIEWS

Orsett sits in a relatively level area, with the ground sloping gently upwards from the north of the village towards the south.

The High Road which runs between Orsett and Baker Street sits parallel to the contour lines and both settlements therefore sit at a similar vertical level, with Orsett sitting marginally higher to the south.

There are significant views of the village boundary from the lower ground in the north looking up the hill to the south (lower image)



Fig 96. View from Rowley Road looking north over the village green and down the hill.



Fig 97. View from Fen Lane up the hill towards the back gardens of houses on Baker Street.

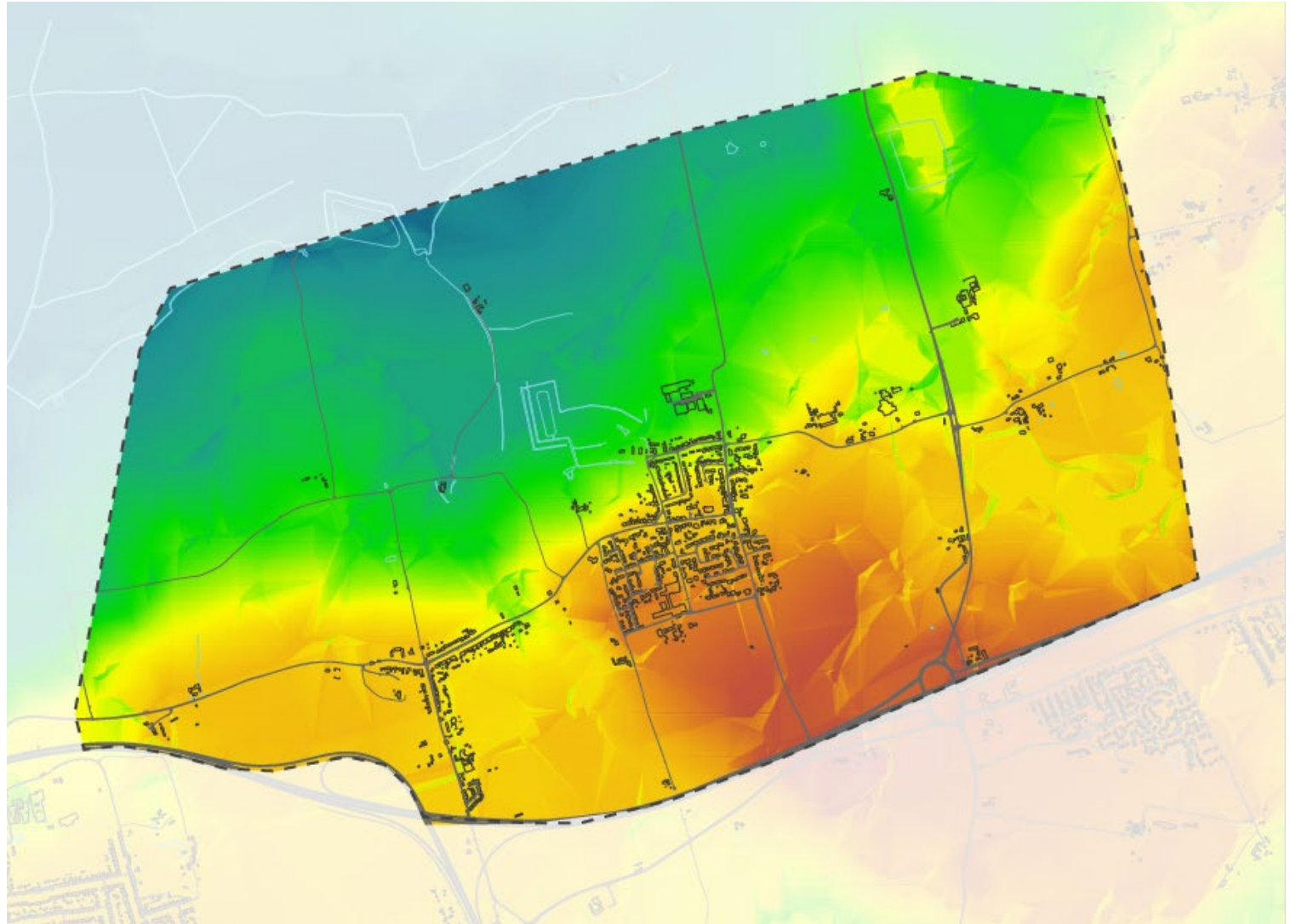
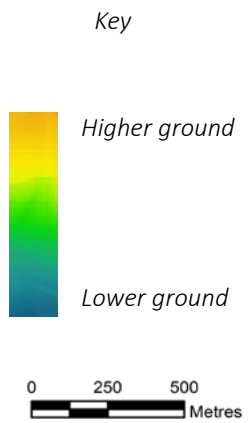


Fig. 98 Orsett Topography

5.3 FLOOD RISK

Orsett Fen to the north-west of the village sits at the lowest point (just outside the study area) and the areas adjacent to it are most subject to flooding.

There are several areas around the north-west boundary within Flood Zone 3, due to the presence of the Mar Dyke and its considerable catchment to the immediate west of Orsett.

The landscape associated with the Mar Dyke, typified by the Orsett Fen to the north-west of the village, is of a historic Fenland character with a large number of drainage ditches following field boundaries, draining from east to west into the river.

The village itself features some flood risks associated with surface water. There are several flow paths passing south to the north through the village towards Orsett Fen. This follows the general topography of the village and it's setting above Orsett Fen.



Fig 99. Fen lane in May 2023

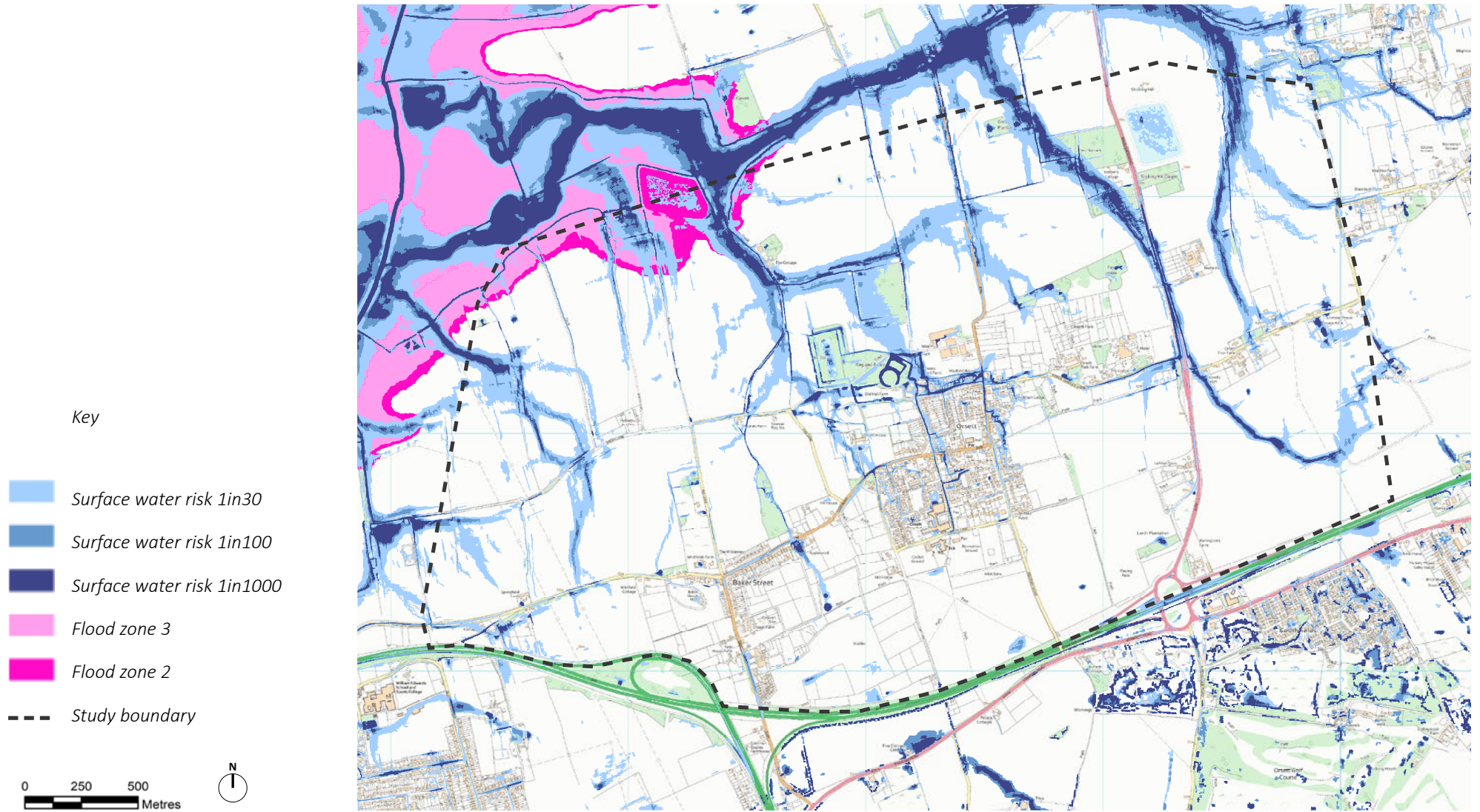


Fig. 100 Orsett Hydrology

5.4 OPEN SPACE

Public Green Spaces

There are very few green spaces within the village itself, as most accessible open space is concentrated towards the southern edge of Orsett in the form of playing fields and activity areas.

There is a small triangle of green space at the centre of Orsett on the High Road which has historic significance as the site of the “village lock up- last used in 1848 and re-erected on the site in 1948.” The churchyard also provides a green space within the historic centre of Orsett.

The development on the former hospital site included a public open space within the scheme. This is a fenced green area with a small war memorial section.

There is also garden commemorating Diana Princess of Wales which was created by the people of Orsett in 1997. This is adjacent to the Foxhound public house.

Activity Areas & Playing Fields

The Orsett Bowls Club is located on Rowley Road opposite the hospital. The recreation ground to the south of School Lane hosts the cricket club and a playground for young children as well as an

adult exercise area with outdoor gym equipment. The field to the west of the primary school is also registered as a playing field however this is not publicly accessible and used only by the school.

The Orsett Park Royals Football Club uses playing fields to the south-east of the village, adjacent to the A13, and these fields are also occasionally used as parking for the Orsett Showground on an event day.

Orsett Showground

As described in the archaeology chapter, the Orsett Showground is an outdoor events venue and the site of the annual Orsett Country & Farm Show which was first held in 1841. The site also hosts other events such as family fun days, classic car shows and community bonfire night celebrations.

Allotments

The Recreation ground is bounded to the south by allotments. As a result of the relatively small garden sizes in Orsett, these serve an important function and are well used, with minimal vacant plots, and like many of Thurrock’s allotments are oversubscribed with long waiting lists.



Fig 101. Orsett Churchyard



Fig 102. Orsett Allotments

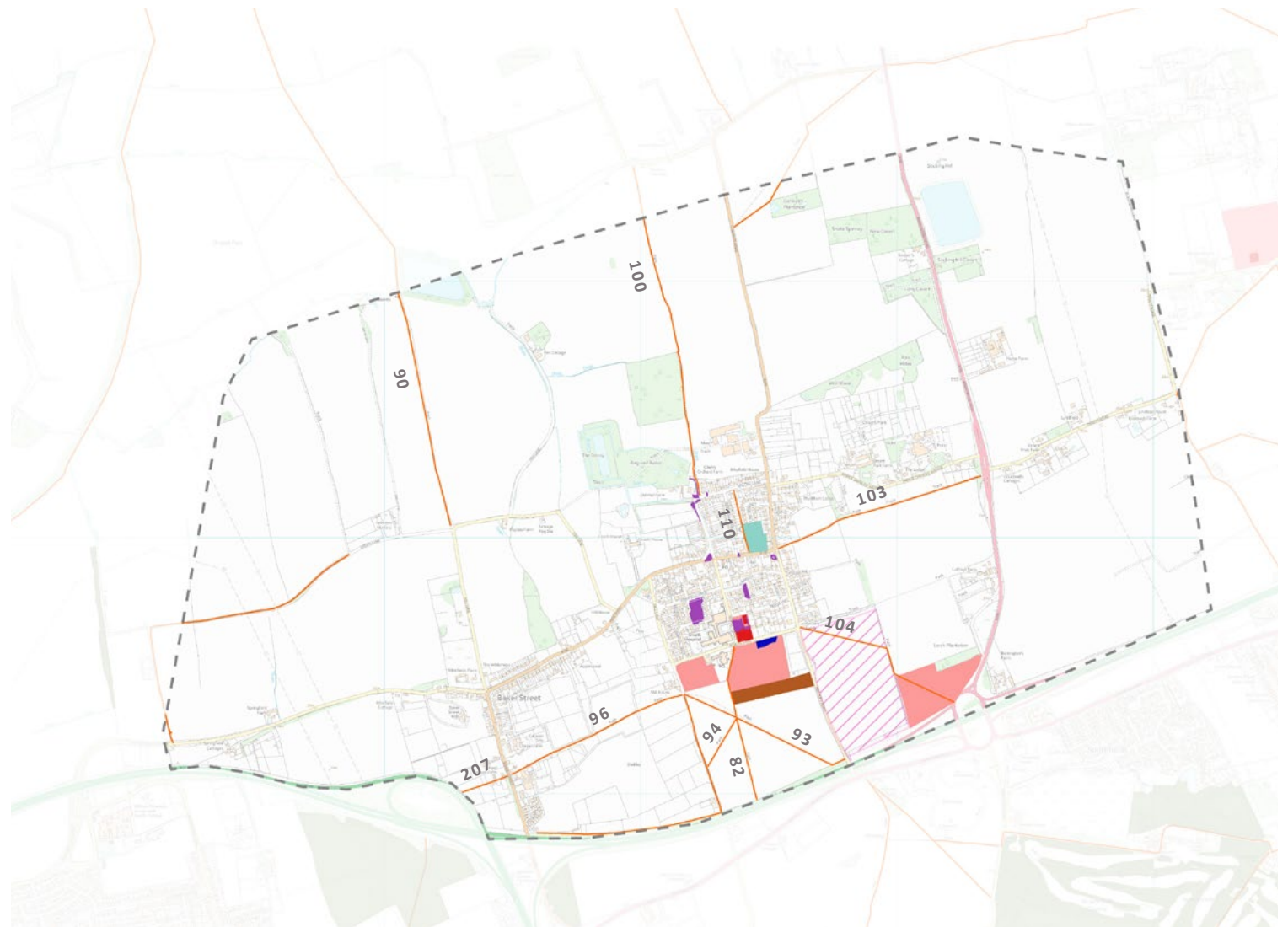


Fig 103. Orsett Open Spaces

5.5 MOVEMENT & ACCESS NETWORK

Highways & Road Network

Orsett village is well connected in terms of road network due to proximity to the A13.

Public Rights of Way

The village has several footpaths which align with some of the historic routeways as interpreted in chapter one. These now serve as pedestrian connections with neighbouring villages and areas of common land.

Footpath 100 links to Bulphan in the north, which can be reached in roughly one hour on foot, and footpath 90 connects to the common former fen land. Footpath 103 connects to Horndon on the hill in the east, which can be reached in roughly 45 minutes on foot.

There is some pedestrian connection between Orsett and Baker Street (footpath 96 cuts across land in equestrian use) however the main walking route along the High Road has only a single footway which is intended to be shared by cycles and pedestrians.

Severance

The footpaths to the south have suffered from severance since the construction of the A13. There is no longer a pedestrian route across the A13. Routes 207, 94 and 82 are now all dead ends, and routes 93 and 104 terminate at large traffic-dominated junctions, making pedestrian connection through to Southfields and Stifford Clays on the other side of the A13 almost impossible.

Cycle routes & Bike-ability

There is a signed cycle route running east-west through the village of Orsett connecting to Grays in the west and Horndon on the Hill in the east. The route becomes only one way (westwards) heading out of the village on North Stifford Road.

Other non-marked routes are subject to variable amounts of traffic depending on the time of day but can be used as local connections to nearby villages, e.g. Rectory Road connects to Bulphan in the North.

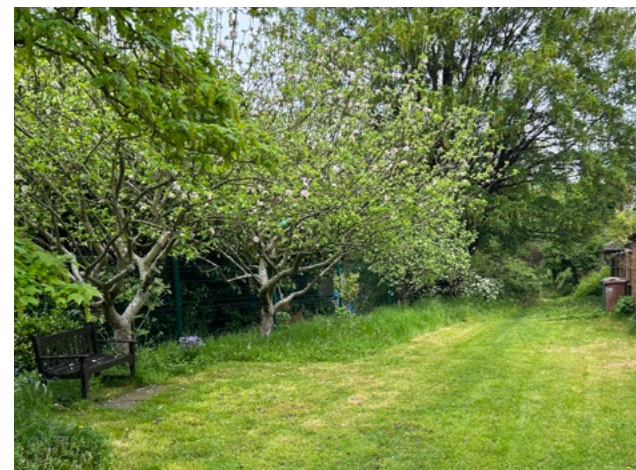


Fig 104. Start of footpath 100 towards Bulphan



Fig 105. Footpath 110 next to the Church

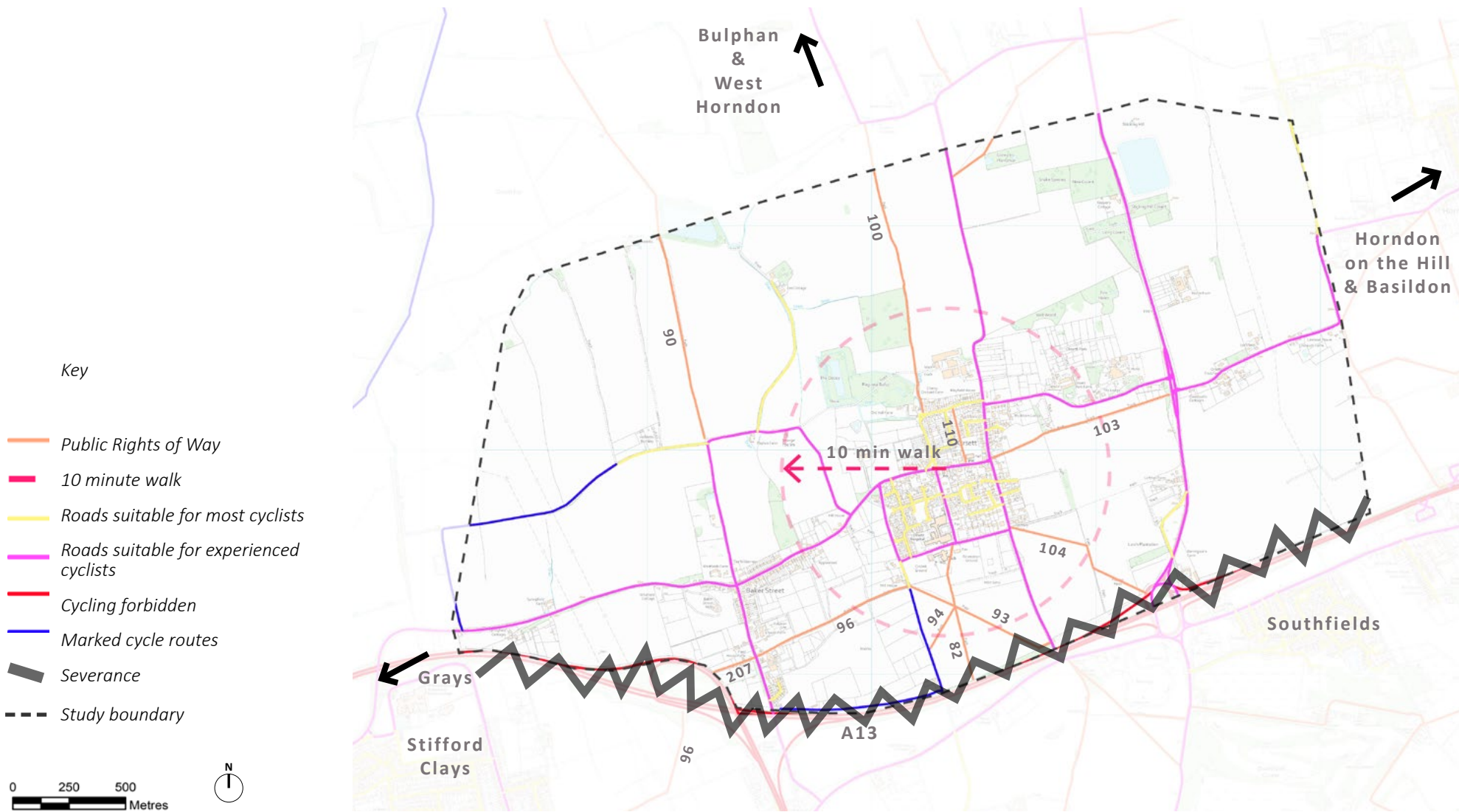


Fig 106. Orsett Movement & Access

5.6 STREETScape

The pattern of building in the historic centre of Orsett is defined by frontages that are built up to the pavement edge, so that the road has a strong sense of enclosure. The sections overleaf show how more recent development has tended away from this pattern. Despite the road remaining a relatively similar width, frontages have crept away from the pavement edge meaning that the further development is from the centre of the village, the lesser the feeling of enclosure on the streets.

The development on the former hospital site (section B) is relatively dense with building heights of 2-2.5 storeys. The road widths here are wider than the historic centre, with tree planting and car parking taking up the extra width.

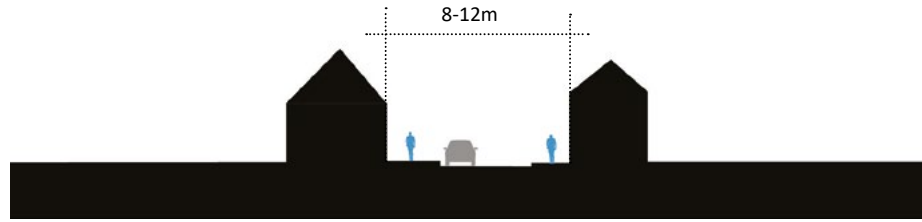
The post war council-built development in the north of Orsett is predominantly 2 storey buildings with large front gardens.

The roads at the edge of Orsett and in Baker Street have very few buildings fronting onto the pavement, with most buildings being less than 2 storeys, with large front gardens so that there is almost no sense of enclosure on the road.

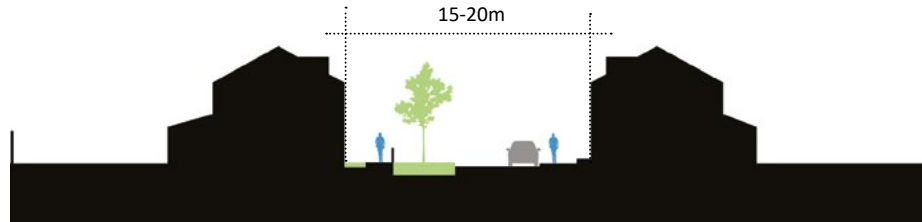


Fig 107. Orsett & Baker Street Sections Key Plan

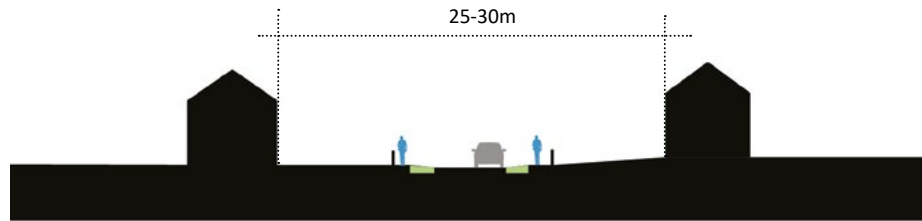
Section A
High Road East



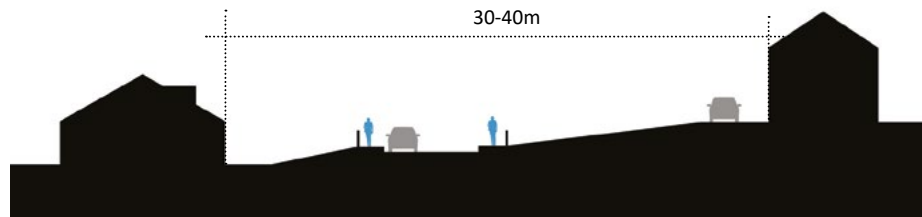
Section B
Wingfield Drive



Section C
Ridgewell Avenue



Section D
High Road West



Section E
High Road (Baker Street)

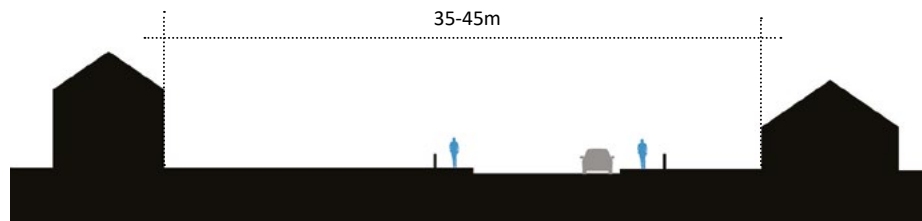


Fig 108. Orsett Street Sections

5.7 DENSITY

Through the identification of plots of land which have been developed at the same time, it is possible to build a picture of the way in which Orsett and Baker Street have grown incrementally, and how the density changes across the village. (see map opposite)

There are some rare examples of pre-war high density terraced housing at 80-100 units per hectare on Malting Lane and Rowley Road.

On average the density of these specific typologies is much higher than the density of the conservation area when calculated as a whole which equates to roughly 17 units per hectare.

Much of the village outside of the conservation area was built post-war. In general, these 20th century developments are built at medium to low density.

More recent 21st century developments have tended towards slightly higher densities than previously, at around 30-40 units per hectare, such as the development on the former hospital site in Orsett, which was approved in 2003, and the development at Woolings Close in Baker Street, which was approved in 2013.



Fig 109. Low density, 1.5 storey houses on the High Road in Orsett



Fig 110. Medium density, 2 storey houses in the post-war development to the north west of the village



Fig 111. High density terrace, Malting Lane



Fig 112. High density terrace, Rowley Road



Fig 113. Orsett Density

5.8 BUILDING HEIGHTS

Orsett is a traditional village comprising predominantly low-rise buildings and the common use of half storeys with usable floor spaces within the attics.

More recent additions to the village outside of the conservation area have also adopted the dormer style with half storeys. This is particularly noticeable in the development on the former hospital site which makes up for a large proportion of the 2.5 storey buildings within the village.

The number of storeys does not necessarily relate to the height of the building. The tallest building in the village is the spire of St Giles & All Saints Church, which is just 1.5 storeys, and some of the taller buildings within the conservation area are just two storeys with large floor to ceiling heights.

It is interesting to note that the taller buildings in the study area tend to be the older, historic buildings: Crown House and 26 Rectory Road (both pictured right) are examples of significant taller historic buildings within the conservation area. Orsett House, and Orsett Hall are examples of taller buildings which sit outside of the village.

Baker Street is generally less tall than Orsett, with most buildings being 2 storeys or less. The exception is the recent development to the south at Woolings Close in which all dwellings are 2.5 storeys.

Throughout the village there is a range of roof forms. The most common roof form is double pitched but with the wider elevation facing onto the road, however there are also examples of mansard roofs, cat slides and hipped gables (as shown below at 8 High Road)



Fig 114. 26 Rectory Road



Fig 115. Crown House & 8 High Road



Fig 116. 15 Wingfield Drive



Fig 117. Orsett Building Height

5.9 BUILDING TYPES

Most buildings in Orsett and Baker Street are used for residential purposes, and there is an even spread of housing typologies.

The oldest buildings in the village feature a less suburban built form- often either terraced or semi-detached to adjacent structures and fronting directly onto streets, or large detached houses which sit outside the village.

Most of the houses within the conservation area and fronting onto the High Road and Rectory Road are either detached or semi-detached, with the larger detached farmhouses located towards the edges of the village.

The houses in the post war development to the north-west of the village are mostly semi-detached, and those in the more recently developed former hospital site are mostly terraced.

Retail uses tend to be located on the High Road: there is one village shop in Orsett, and various pubs- one in Baker Street and two in Orsett. The typology of flats over shops is common here.

Other types of building use tend to be located towards the outskirts of the village.

The major additional land use within Orsett is the hospital, which sits opposite the primary school to the south of the village.

Baker Street has a holiday caravan letting business and riding school- both of which occupy agricultural style buildings. Orsett Hall, on Prince Charles Avenue, currently provides a collection of hospitality uses including a gym, florist, hotel, and a seamstress- functioning as a micro-economy for weddings.

The village hall and the cricket club are located at the edge of Orsett village, and these are both housed in contemporary buildings likely built in the mid twentieth century.



Fig 118. The Village Hall



Fig 119. Orsett Stores



Fig 120. The Foxhound public house



Fig 121. Orsett Building Type



6. Glossary of Terms

ABBREVIATIONS

- NHLE** National Heritage List for England
- HER** Essex Historic Environment Record
- NPPF** National Planning Policy Framework
- SAM** Scheduled Ancient Monument
- LB** Listed Building
- CA** Conservation Area
- OS** Ordnance Survey
- LCA** Landscape Character Area
(referring to the Thurrock Integrated Landscape Character Assessment 2023)
- LCT** Landscape Character Type
(referring to the Thurrock Integrated Landscape Character Assessment 2023)
- SSSI** Site of Special Scientific Interest
- PROW** Public Right of Way
- AOD** Above Ordnance Datum (above sea level)

HISTORIC PERIODS

- Prehistoric** – approx. 10,000 BC to AD43
- Mesolithic** – Approx. 10,000-4,5000 BC, hunter-gatherers
- Neolithic** – 4,500-2000BC, first farmers
- Bronze Age** – 2,000 BC-800BC, first use of metals
- Iron Age** – 800BC-AD43, first use of iron
- Roman** – AD43-410
- Saxon** – AD411-1066
- Medieval** – AD1066-1536
- Post-medieval** – AD1536-1900
- Modern** – AD1900-present

GLOSSARY

A-frame beam engine – type of steam engine

alluvial deposits – soil deposited by rivers, either former river beds or on floodplains

arable - land on which crops are grown

Arts and Crafts style – architectural style typically in the 1880s moving away from imitation of the past

backland development – development that happens to the rear of a property

Bailey – part of a castle that contains the non-defensive structures

barrel-lined – a well or pit that has been lined with a barrel to stop the sides falling in

belfry – bell-tower

brick footings – brick foundations

broadleaved trees – deciduous trees

bund or bud-wall – bank, usually blocking sound or view

carriage house – building in which a carriage is housed

causeways – raised walkway between ditches or across damp ground

calcareous remains – archaeological finds high in calcium, such as bone, teeth and shell

chancel – eastern end of a church where the altar is based

cropmark – mark in cereal crop that shows buried archaeology, due to differential ripening of the crop

curtilage – area of land or a structure that belongs to a building, such as a yard, garden, wall or outbuilding

deposition – deliberate placing of objects in the ground

The Dissolution of the Monasteries - 1530s, closure of the monasteries and seizure of their land and goods under Henry VIII

The Domesday Book – inventory of land-holdings taken in 1086 by William the Conqueror

dormer windows – windows set into a roof

drift-ways – horizontally

droving roads – road which livestock are moved along, usually link farms to areas of pasture

dyke – water-filled ditch or accompanying bank

(archaeology) enclosure - usually a prehistoric or Roman settlement enclosed by a substantial ditch

equestrian use – used for horses

escarpment – steep side to higher ground

extant - surviving

fens – boggy or marshy area

fieldscape – landscape made up of fields

find-spots – location where an archaeological find has been made

frontage – front of building, usually on to the main road

fulling-pit – pit which cloth was processed in to partially felt it

gentry house – dwelling with higher status

grain – (in this context) the pattern of fields, which tends to be rectilinear in Thurrock

Gothic style – architectural style between 13th and 16th centuries typically with pointed arches

head deposits – glacial deposits left as the glaciers thawed

hides – medieval measurement of land, approx. 50 ha.

horse stud – part of a horse's harness

jettied – overhanging upper-storey on a timber-framed building

lancet window – tall thin window headed with a pointed arch

lava quern-stones – stone used for grinding grain to make flour made of lava imported from Germany (Roman in date)

limestone dressings – limestone architectural detailing to windows, doors, etc

lock-up – building for locking-up the drunk and disorderly in

lynchets – earthwork formed by repeated ploughing, usually medieval in date

manorial holding – land held by one manor, can include tenanted farms

marshland – wet ground

(Saxon) mint – location where money was coined

moneyer – person who operated a mint

messuages – house with outbuildings and attached plot of land

mill mound – mound on which a windmill stood

munition plant – factory creating weapons

nave – main part of a church

The Norman Conquest – 1066, England occupied by the Normans under William the Conqueror

nucleations – cluster of buildings

palaeo-environmental deposits – organic remains recovered from waterlogged soils, such as peat; they hold information on past environments

Palaeogene period – geological time period 66-23 million years ago, period when London Clay was formed

Palaeolithic – 400,000- 10,000 BC

palstave – Early Bronze Age axe-type

pasture – land on which animals are grazed

paupers – (historical) poor people in need of aid

The Peasant's Revolt – 1381, uprising by peasants against the Poll Tax

piecemeal redevelopment – unplanned development

pillbox – hexagonal concrete World War II defensive structure

plotland development – early 20th century development characterised by self-build settlements

plough-teams – team of oxen used for ploughing, the number of plough-teams gives an indication of amount of arable land in an area

post-hole structures – below ground remains of buildings that were originally constructed of posts

post-mill – windmill which is supported by a central post

pound – field for locking up stray cattle in

rapier – short bladed sword

ring-ditch – the encircling ditch of a Bronze Age barrow, usually only survives as a below-ground feature in an area that has been heavily ploughed

riverine marshlands – marsh by a river

Roman burial urns – pot in which a cremated Roman is buried

rough pasture - land on which animals are grazed, tuftier grass and more scrub than pasture

round-house – a circular house, usually prehistoric in date

rural tied - agricultural dwellings

saltire bracing – X-shaped as in the St Andrews Cross

scarp edge – steep side to higher ground

seawalls – earthen bank enclosing former marsh keeping the sea out

settlement morphology – layout of the settlement

sherds – bits of pottery

shrubland – land with rough vegetation or small and irregularly spaced trees and bushes

slag – residue from metal-working process

smock-mill – type of windmill characterised by sloping weather-boarded sides

spur – a side projection

spire – pointed top part of a tower – typically on a church

stratigraphy – archaeological layers

streetscape – the overall shape, patterns and architectural rhythm developing within a street

tenements plots – plots of land containing a house, outbuildings and garden or yard within a village or town

tenure – rental agreement

(geology) terrace – escarpment along the Thames marking former extent of the Thames

trackway – path or unmetalled road

tracts of marshland – area of marsh

tripartite- divided into three parts

Tudor style - architectural style typical of the 16th century

Turret and Gun position - concrete World War II defensive structure

torc – gold or bronze neck ornament

vestry – room in church for priest to change clothes, hold meetings, etc

wash-house – building for washing clothes in

watching-brief – archaeological monitoring and recording during building-work

waterlogged deposits – soils with high water content such as peat

weatherboarded – building clad in timber planks boards

wharf – quay for ships to moor up against

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