



PLANNING STATEMENT

**Copthall Farm, Breakspear Road South,
Ickenham, Middlesex UB10 8HB
for Daltons Farms**

11 OCTOBER 2019



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Appendix 1 Landscape Character Assessment



1.0 Context

- 1.1.1 Daltons Farms are fourth generation farmers and have been farming in the Ickenham area for the past 100 years. Due to the decline in agriculture it was no longer financially viable to continue dairy farming; therefore in 2006 planning permission was granted for the change of use of former agricultural building to small business lets. The diversification income has enabled Daltons to continue to farm and today they run 50 head of cattle which are primarily fed from hay and bedded on straw harvested from the land.
- 1.1.2 HS2 is affecting the Farm and a huge swathe of land on which a hay and straw crop is currently taken will be lost to the scheme's Safeguarded Area (shown shaded grey on Figure 1 below).

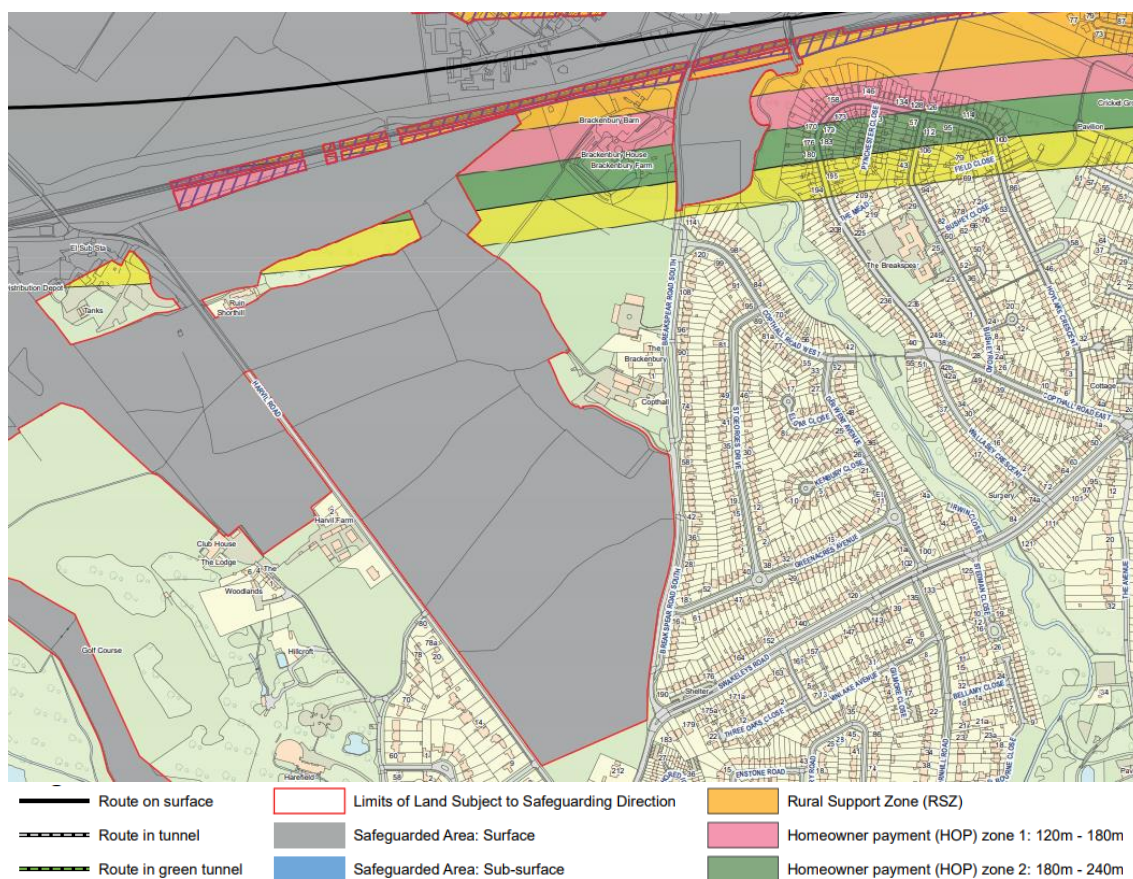


Figure 1: Source HS2 Development Plan Reference PC-01-014-L1

2.0 Location

- 2.1.1 Copthall Farm is located in a relatively urban location to the north west of Ickenham and north of the A40 trunk road in the Borough of Hillingdon.



3.0 Site Characteristics

- 3.1.1 The Farm is identified in the Hillingdon Landscape Character Assessment as being in “Area C3 - New Years Green Undulating Farmland”. The extract of the Landscape Character Assessment is included at Appendix 1 of this report.

4.0 Planning History

- 4.1.1 The previous change of use application (9271/APP/2005/2893) was granted in 2006. The planning consent was subject to a condition which states;

“Notwithstanding the provisions of Parts 6 and 8 of Schedule 2 of the Town & Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (or any order revoking or re-enacting that order) no building on the site (excluding the Copthall Farm house, a listed building, for which listed building consent is in any event required for any alterations to the building or planning permissions required for extensions) shall be extended or constructed without the prior written consent of the Local Planning Authority.”

REASON: In granting this planning permission the Council has had regard to the statements from the applicant’s agent regarding the absence of the need for future agricultural buildings on site, and to protect the openness of the Green Belt in accordance with Policy OL1 of the Hillingdon Unitary Development Plan.”

- 4.1.2 The officer’s report provides further detail behind the condition, stating in paragraph 3.30;

“The conversion of building 6 to non-agricultural uses could result in a situation, should agricultural activities intensify, whereby new building floorspace would be required to accommodate future agricultural activities. This matter has been raised with the applicant, who has stated that “this scheme takes into account all the needs of the farm for covered space under the existing and proposed farming regimes. Proposed conditions would prevent the farmer from building another barn without permission. The application should be decided on the basis of this proposal, not any different scheme that would require planning permission”. This approach is consistent with planning law and is considered to be entirely reasonable to the circumstances of the application. It means that the Council retains control over any new farm buildings at Copthall Farm.”

- 4.1.3 Whilst it is recognised that the Applicant’s statement was entirely veritable and correct at the time of the application it is not the case anymore. Necessarily thirteen years have passed since the consent and at the time that planning permission was granted it was not known that HS2 was to be developed and the impact that it would have on the farming business.

5.0 Proposal

5.1 Current Use

- 5.1.1 The main farmstead and buildings have consent for business uses which generate a supplementary income to support the core farming business which is operated from the land surrounding the farmstead.



5.1.2 The farming enterprise comprises running 50 head of cattle and the harvesting of hay and straw from the land to support the herd.

5.1.3 Compulsory purchase powers have been awarded to HS2 to take a large tranche of land at Copthall Farm during the construction of HS2.

5.2 Proposed Use

5.2.1 There exists an area of hardstanding to the north west of the farmyard which is used by the farming business. The development of HS2 has required the farm to evaluate its current operations and how best to sustain the herd on the land which will not be affected by the land take and disturbance during construction.

5.2.2 It is proposed that a barn be located on the north west of the farmyard on the existing hardstanding. This barn will enable several crops of hay to be taken and safely stored on the farm for feeding the cattle when the grazing is reduced. The barn is proposed to be open sided to ensure operational efficiency for stacking and accessing the bales which are to be stored within.

6.0 Planning Policy

6.1.1 The Hillingdon Borough Development Plan comprises the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part 1 – Strategic Policies, the Extant 2007 saved Unitary Development Plan policies, The West London Waste Plan and the London Plan consolidated with Alterations since 2011 published in 2015.

6.1.2 The Extant 2007 saved Unitary Development Plan policies are expected to be replaced by the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part 2, of which the post examination hearing closed on 8 May 2018 and the Inspectors Report is anticipated this month.

6.1.3 Copthall Farm is located in the Green Belt, it is afforded no other further land designations other than the safeguarding provisions of HS2. The emerging Local Plan does not seek to alter this.



Figure 2 – Extract of Adopted Local Policy Map



6.1.4 Prior to submitting this application consideration was given to the relevant local policies and The National Planning Policy Framework 2019 (“NPPF”) and where necessary assessment of the alignment of local policies with the NPPF.

6.1.5 Saved UDP Policies, in particular OL1 and OL12, outlines the control of development within the Green Belt. Inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. OL1 states;

“Within the Green Belt, as defined on the proposals map, the following open land uses will be acceptable;

(i) Agriculture, horticulture, forestry and nature conservation

The Local Planning Authority will not grant planning permission for new buildings other than for the purposes essential for and associated with the uses specified above. The number and scale of buildings permitted will be kept to a minimum in order to protect the visual amenity of the Green Belt.”

6.1.6 OL12 states;

“The Local Planning Authority will not permit development which will lead to the irreversible loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land Grade 1, 2 and 3A, whether currently in use or capable of still being used for agricultural purposes.”

6.1.7 Local Plan Part 1 Policy EM2: refers to development in the Green Belt, stating;

“The Council will seek to maintain the current extent, hierarchy and strategic functions of the Green Belt, Metropolitan Open Land and Green Chains. Notwithstanding this, Green Chains will be reviewed for designation as Metropolitan Open Land in the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part 2- Site Specific Allocations LDD and in accordance with the London Plan policies.

Any proposals for development in Green Belt and Metropolitan Open Land will be assessed against national and London Plan policies, including the very special circumstances test.”

6.1.8 The NPPF seeks to support the rural economy; paragraph 83 in particular states;

“Planning policies and decisions should enable:

- a) the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings;*
- b) the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses;”*

6.1.9 Furthermore paragraph 145 of the NPPF states;

“A local planning authority should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in the Green Belt. Exceptions to this are:

- a) buildings for agriculture and forestry;”*

6.1.10 The land on which the barn is proposed is in agricultural use but is an area of hardstanding thus is not classed as best and most versatile. Local Planning policies are broadly aligned with



paragraph 145 of the Framework although national policy does not require agricultural buildings to be “essential” for the farming business in this case the requirement for the straw and hay store is considered to be essential for the future of the farming enterprise given the impact of HS2.

- 6.1.11 The nature of the building is wholly agricultural. It has been designed to BS5502 standards which specifies the code of practice for design, construction and loading of agricultural buildings.

7.0 Design & Access

7.1 Amount

- 7.1.1 The land that Daltons Farms farm extends to 87 acres of arable land and the proposed building will have a footprint of 464.5 square metres. The building is to be used of the storage of hay and straw harvested from the land.
- 7.1.2 The size of the building is dictated by the crop that can reasonably be expected to be harvested from the land to support the cattle enterprise.
- 7.1.3 Agricultural portal framed buildings are also constructed in standard dimensions typically of 20 foot (6.096m) bays. Taking all of these factors into consideration requires a five bay building to be provided.

7.2 Layout

- 7.2.1 It is proposed that the building is situated on land which is in agricultural use but is currently laid to hardstanding. The location to the rear of the farmstead will be screened from outside views.

7.3 Scale

- 7.3.1 The height of the building will allow for the safe ingress and egress of agricultural machinery to all sides of the barn.

7.4 Landscaping

- 7.4.1 No landscaping is proposed as part of the application.

7.5 Appearance

- 7.5.1 The image at Figure 3 shows the indicative appearance of the proposed barn.



Figure 3 - Indicative Appearance of Barn 1

7.6 Access

- 7.6.1 Access will be direct from the agricultural land.



8.0 Application Documents

- 8.1.1 The following provides a summary of the application documents which have been submitted via Planning Portal.

REFERENCE	DOCUMENT TITLE
PP-08217155	Application Form
1729/10728/001	Planning Statement (incorporating Design & Access Statement)
1729/10728/002	Location Plan
1729/10728/003	Site Plan
1729/10728/004	Block Plan
1729/10728/005	Proposed Elevations
1729/10728/006	CIL Questionnaire

Table 2

9.0 Summary

- 9.1.1 There is a requirement to provide a hay and straw barn at Copthall Farm following the compulsory purchase and safeguarding of land through the High Speed Rail (London – West Midlands) Act 2017. Although there exist some buildings at Copthall Farm they were converted to business uses in 2006 and their reversion to agriculture is not feasible and would introduce conflicting land uses adjacent to each other.
- 9.1.2 The building is more than reasonably necessarily to enable the continued farming enterprise and is not inappropriate development in the Green Belt.

PLANNING STATEMENT

COPTHALL FARM, BREAKSPEAR ROAD SOUTH, ICKENHAM, MIDDLESEX UB10 8HB

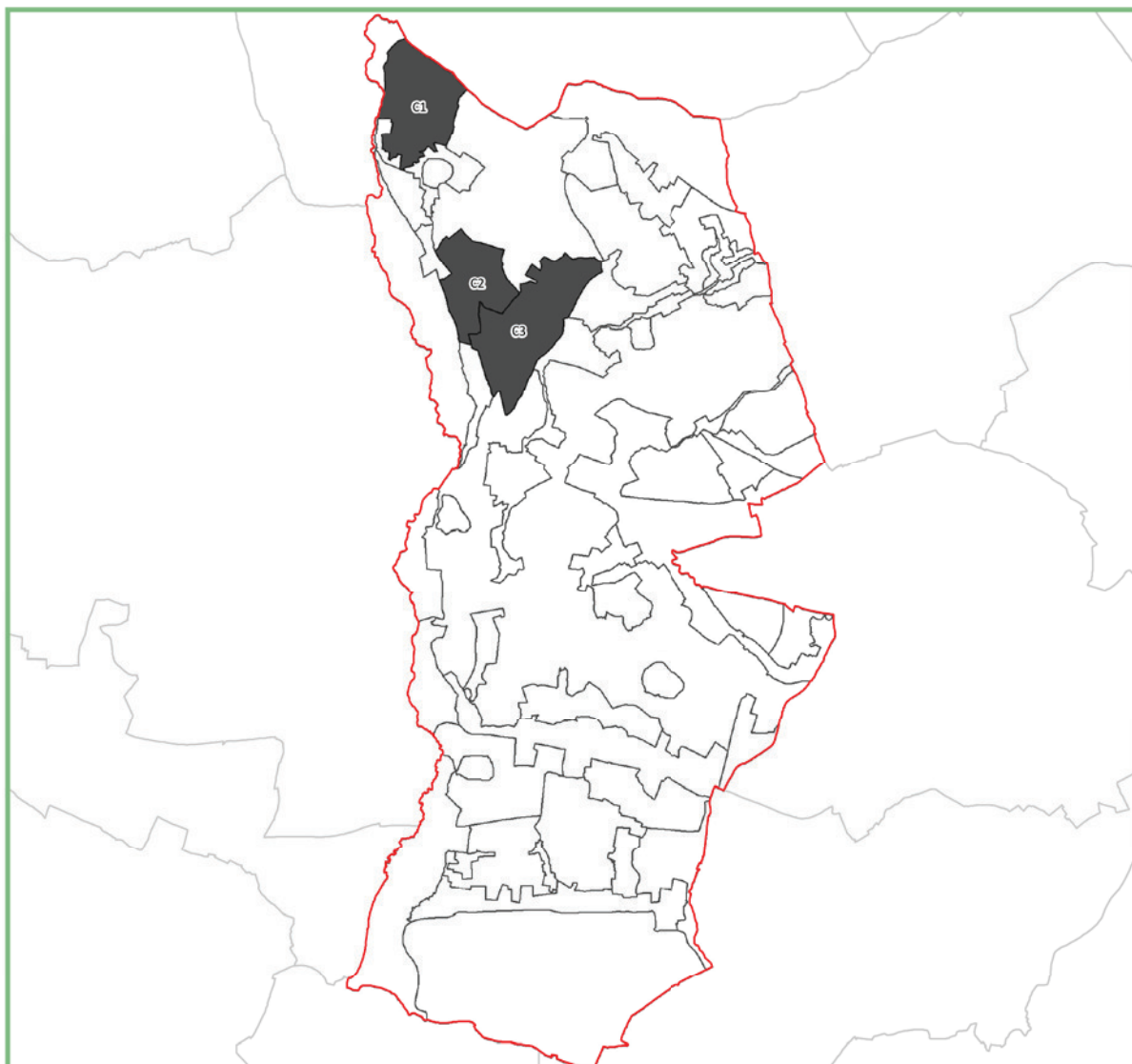
REFERENCE: 1729/10728/001



APPENDIX 1

Landscape Character Assessment

LCT C UNDULATING FARMLAND



LCT C UNDULATING FARMLAND

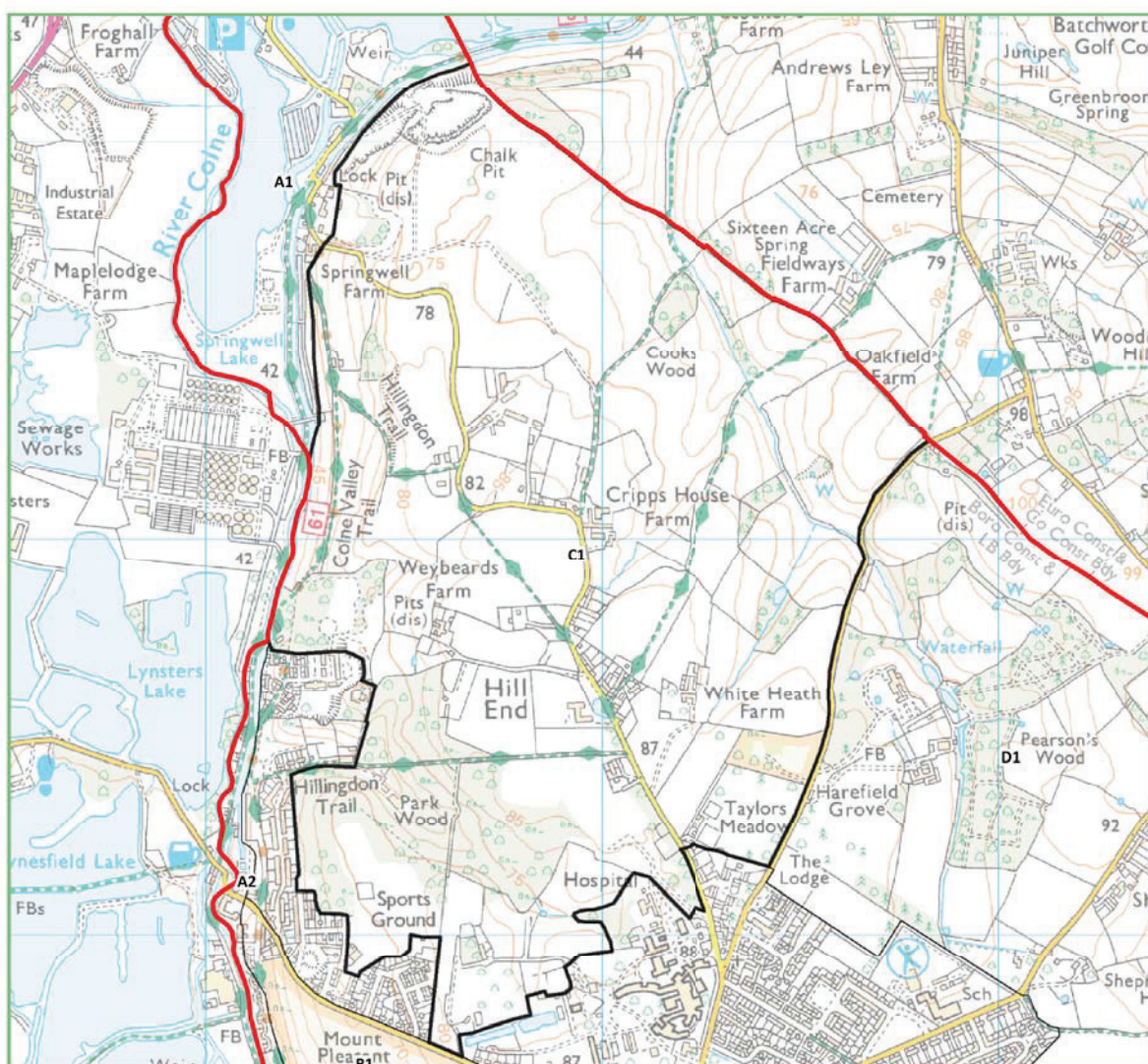
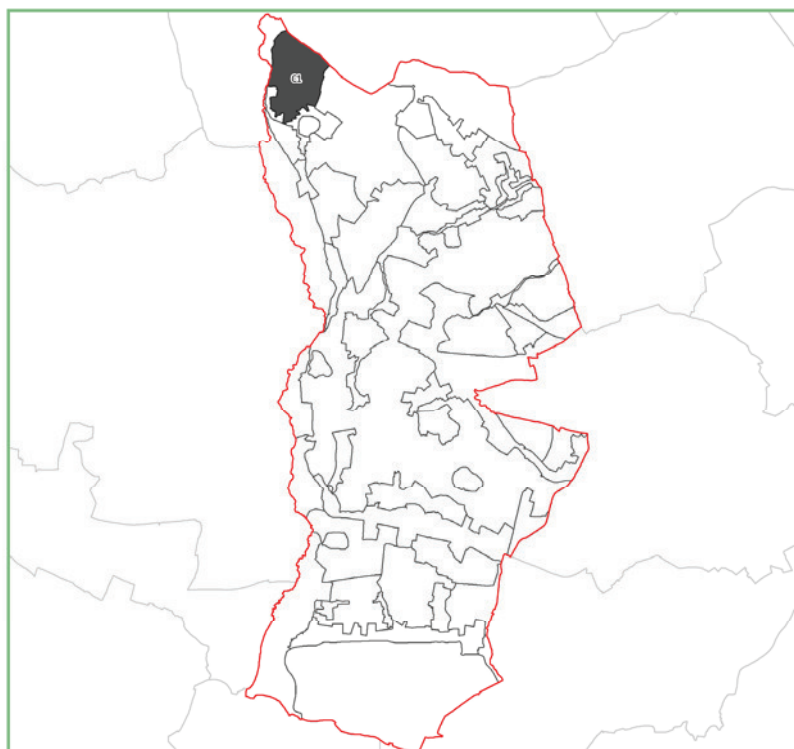
KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- An elevated, gently undulating farmland to the east of the Colne Valley and underlain predominantly by Lambeth Group, Chalk Formation and London Clay.
- A mix of early 18th and 19th century field enclosures, with areas of larger 20th/21st century fields. Farmland is a mix of rough grazing, arable and some pasture, and fields are bounded hedgerows and scattered trees
- Tree cover is often sparse, with some areas of woodland supporting a range of habitats.
- Settlement density is low, comprising scattered farmstead (both modern and historic in character). Built settlement edge are predominantly softened and integrated by hedgerows, trees and garden vegetation but do appear abrupt in places.
- Open views across farmland and west towards the Colne Valley. Settlement or woodland sometimes limits views.
- Footpaths cross farmland, linking farmsteads and features of interest, such as the Colne Valley and Bayhurst Wood Country Park in the adjacent landscape. Some long distance footpaths pass through the landscape.
- Busy roads, pylon lines and interspersed waste and recycling sites occasionally interrupt the landscape and reduce intactness, contributing to an urban fringe character. Away from these features, a rural and tranquil character prevails.

Constituent LCAs

- C1 – Hill End Undulating Farmland
- C2 – South Harefield Undulating Farmland
- C3 – New Years Green Undulating Farmland

LCA C1 HILL END UNDULATING FARMLAND



LCA C1 HILL END UNDULATING FARMLAND

KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- An elevated, gently undulating small scale farmland landscape steeply rising to the east of the Colne Valley and underlain by Lambeth Group and Chalk Formation with overlying gravels.
- Fields of rough grazing and paddocks are delineated by hedgerows with trees and wooden post and rail fencing, and interspersed with small woods.
- Predominantly 19th century field enclosures, with areas of 20th/21st century enclosure interspersed.
- Park Wood is a large ancient woodland in the south of the area, and recognised as an SSSI with a diverse range of woodlands and bird species.
- A tributary to the River Colne crosses the north east of the area along with several streams and ponds are scattered throughout - adding to the diversity of habitats within the farmland landscape.
- Settlement density is low, comprising scattered farmsteads and linearly dispersed settlement spread along Springwell Lane and Hill End Road, which runs through the character area.
- Contained by Mount Pleasant and Harefield to the south. Modern edge development along this boundary is often well integrated by hedgerows, trees and garden vegetation.
- A dense network of footpaths including several long distance footpaths, the Colne Valley Trail, Hillingdon Trail and the London Loop, well serve the landscape and connect it to places of interest, such as the Colne Valley and Bishops Wood Country Park.
- Open views across farmland, with important views west over the Colne Valley. Woodland and topography occasionally limit views, with wooded field boundaries often providing a backdrop.
- Away from modern edge settlement a rural character prevails and a low diffusion of people contributes to a sense of tranquillity.

LCA C1 HILL END UNDULATING FARMLAND

DESCRIPTION

Location and Boundaries: The character area lies in the north of Hillingdon Borough predominately within the *Ruislip Plateau Natural Landscape Area* (London's Natural Signatures), with the west edge situated within the *Colne River Valley Natural Landscape Area*. The borough administrative boundary forms part of the western edge and the northern edge of the character area, with the landscape character continuing north into Hertfordshire. The settlement edge of Harefield forms the southern boundaries of the character area and the valley top of the eastern side of the Colne Valley defines the area's western boundary. The small scale undulating character of this landscape distinguishes it from the flatter, larger scale farmland and large blocks of woodland to east.

Landscape Character: A gently undulating small scale farmland landscape elevated and steeply rising above the Colne Valley to the west. Fields of rough grazing and paddocks are typically delineated by hedgerows and wooden fences. The network of native hedgerows and mature hedgerow trees provide important wildlife habitats in this agricultural landscape. Old Park Wood, recognised as a SSSI supports a range of woodland types, and generates a strong sense of enclosure in the south west. Pockets of calcareous grassland are located at Springwell Lane Chalk Pit, Springwell Pit Wood and Summer House Lane Chalk Pit, which forms part of the East Colne Valley Chalk Pits, a Site of Borough Grade I Importance. Settlement density is low with scattered farmsteads and small scale linear clusters of settlement, largely confined along Springwell Lane and Hill End Road. Numerous long distance and local footpaths cross farmland and connect to features of interest, such as the Colne Valley and Bishop's Wood Country Park. Long views occur across open farmland and west across the Colne Valley. However, undulating topography, high hedgerows and areas of woodland occasionally confine and limit views.

Geology: Underlain centrally by a large area of Lambeth Group, with Seaford Chalk Formation and Newhaven Chalk Formation elsewhere. In the north, a large pocket of Winter Hill Gravel overlays the underlying geology, with Gerrards Cross Gravel formation in the south.

Topography/ Landform: An elevated and gently undulating landform to the east of the Colne Valley, with land rising steeply along this boundary. The highest ground is at Hill End (85m AOD). Several small streams and tributary rivers cut into the landscape, and create gentle undulations.

Hydrology: A tributary to the River Colne crosses the north east of the area, with several smaller branching streams. Small farm ponds are scattered through the area, and occasional ponds occur in association with woodland.

Land Use and Settlement: The area is predominantly rough grazing and paddocks. Fields are small to medium sized and bounded by hedgerows and wooden post and rail fencing with some evidence of boundary loss. Trees also delineate field boundaries, often forming a wooded backdrop to views. Occasional small woods are

LCA C1 HILL END UNDULATING FARMLAND

interspersed between farmland, with the exception of Park Wood in the south, a relatively large, and prominent woodland.

Settlement density is relatively low with scattered farmsteads throughout the area and small scale linear clusters of settlement. Settlement is largely confined along Springwell Lane and Hill End Road, the single main route through this landscape, a winding rural road often enclosed by tall hedgerows.

The modern settlement edges of Mount Pleasant and Harefield contain the area to the south, with typically render and red brick properties, and a dominant settlement edge character. Trees along field boundaries and garden vegetation occasionally soften the built edge and provide integration with adjacent farmland landscape. Harefield Hospital is a prominent building on the southern boundary of the character area.

Several long distance footpaths cross farmland and link settlement to features of interest in adjacent landscapes including the Colne Valley and Bishop's Wood Country Park. These are the Colne Valley Trail, Hillingdon Trail and the London Loop. Numerous smaller local footpaths also cross the landscape.

Biodiversity: The network of native hedgerows and mature hedgerow trees provide wildlife habitats in the agricultural landscape. Old Park Wood, a Site of Metropolitan Importance and recognised as an SSSI, is located in the south of the area. This woodland supports a range of woodland types, such as alder woodland, and is home to a diverse range of birds. East Colne Valley Chalk Pits is a Site of Borough Grade I Importance, located along the eastern boundary of the character area, comprising a chalk outlier overlooking the Colne Valley. This site is made up of four separate chalk pits, three of which are located within this area, namely, Springwell Lane Chalk Pit, Springwell Pit Wood and Summer House Lane Chalk Pit. Small pockets of calcareous grassland are located within each, along with a diverse range of flora and fauna, with many orchid species. Another ecologically important area within the landscape is White Heath Farm and Harefield Grove, which consists of pastures, arable fields, copses and hedgerows. Much of this site is improved and semi-improved pastures, with a number of ancient species rich hedgerows. Patches of oak-ash woodland, rough land and scrub add to the ecological value and character.

Historic Environment: Three Grade II listed buildings are found within the character area, namely, Cripps Farmhouse; A barn south east of Cripps Farmhouse, and White Heath Farmhouse. A large area of ancient woodland is located in the south of the character area, at Park Wood. Springwell Lock Conservation area spreads into the north west of the area incorporating the disused chalk pit. This conservation area is recognised for the old brick arch bridge and lock which lie in the adjacent Colne Floodplain, and its distinctive riparian landscape setting, located close to the river and canal.

Perceptual/ Experiential Landscape: This is a relatively small scale farmland landscape contained by topography, areas of woodland and settlement (to the south). Some views are open across farmland, with long views west over the Colne

LCA C1 HILL END UNDULATING FARMLAND

Valley including to the sewage works outside the borough boundary. Woodland and the undulating topography occasionally limit views elsewhere, with wooded field boundaries providing a backdrop to many views.

Modern development along the character area boundary and running along Springwell Lane and Hill End Road, fragments the landscape in places, reducing intactness and contributing to an urban fringe character. However away from these influences a rural character prevails, and a low diffusion of people contributes to a sense of tranquillity.

Designations:

- Greenbelt
- Countryside Conservation Area: North West Hillingdon
- Sites of Borough Grade I Importance: East Colne Valley Chalk Pits
- Site of Importance for Nature Conservation: Medipark Site, Harefield; White Heath Farm and Harefield Grove
- Sites of Metropolitan Importance: Old Park Wood, Harefield
- SSSI I No. Old Park Woods, Harefield
- Conservation Areas: Springwell Lock
- TPOs: Springwell chalk pit, Harefield; Plantation east of Springwell chalk pit, Harefield; Cooks Wood, Harefield; Springwell Lane, Harefield; Wood adjacent to gravel pit off Springwell Lane; Springwell Lane; Wood north west of Weybeards Farm, Springwell Lane; Park Wood, Harefield; West side of Hill End Road; Former North Wards, Harefield Hospital

EVALUATION

Landscape and Visual Sensitivities:

Potential landscape and visual sensitivities are:

- The patchwork of farmland fields and occasional woodlands, in close proximity to the settlement edges of Mount Pleasant and Harefield. Without appropriate management an urban fringe character could prevail over rural character.
- Woodland, particularly Park Wood (ancient woodland) which supports diverse flora and fauna, and provides recreational opportunities.
- The calcareous grasslands at Springwell Lane Chalk Pit, Springwell Pit Wood and Summer House Lane Chalk Pit which need active management to retain character and geological and biodiversity interest.
- The hedgerow network and hedgerow trees, which provides visual unity and a wildlife corridor.

LCA C I HILL END UNDULATING FARMLAND

- Streams and ponds which add to the diversity of habitats in the farmed landscape.
- Open views across farmland, with important long views west over the Colne Valley.
- Limited roads which are rural and winding in character which could be vulnerable to further development and widening.
- The relatively low density of settlement which would be vulnerable to further expansion and over development.
- The rural and tranquil character that prevails away from modern settlement edges which would be vulnerable to further expansion and over development.



Gently undulating farmland interspersed with small woods



Small scale fields, often paddocks and rough grazing with wooden fence and hedgerow boundaries with mature hedgerow trees



A network of footpaths, often enclosed by scrub and trees



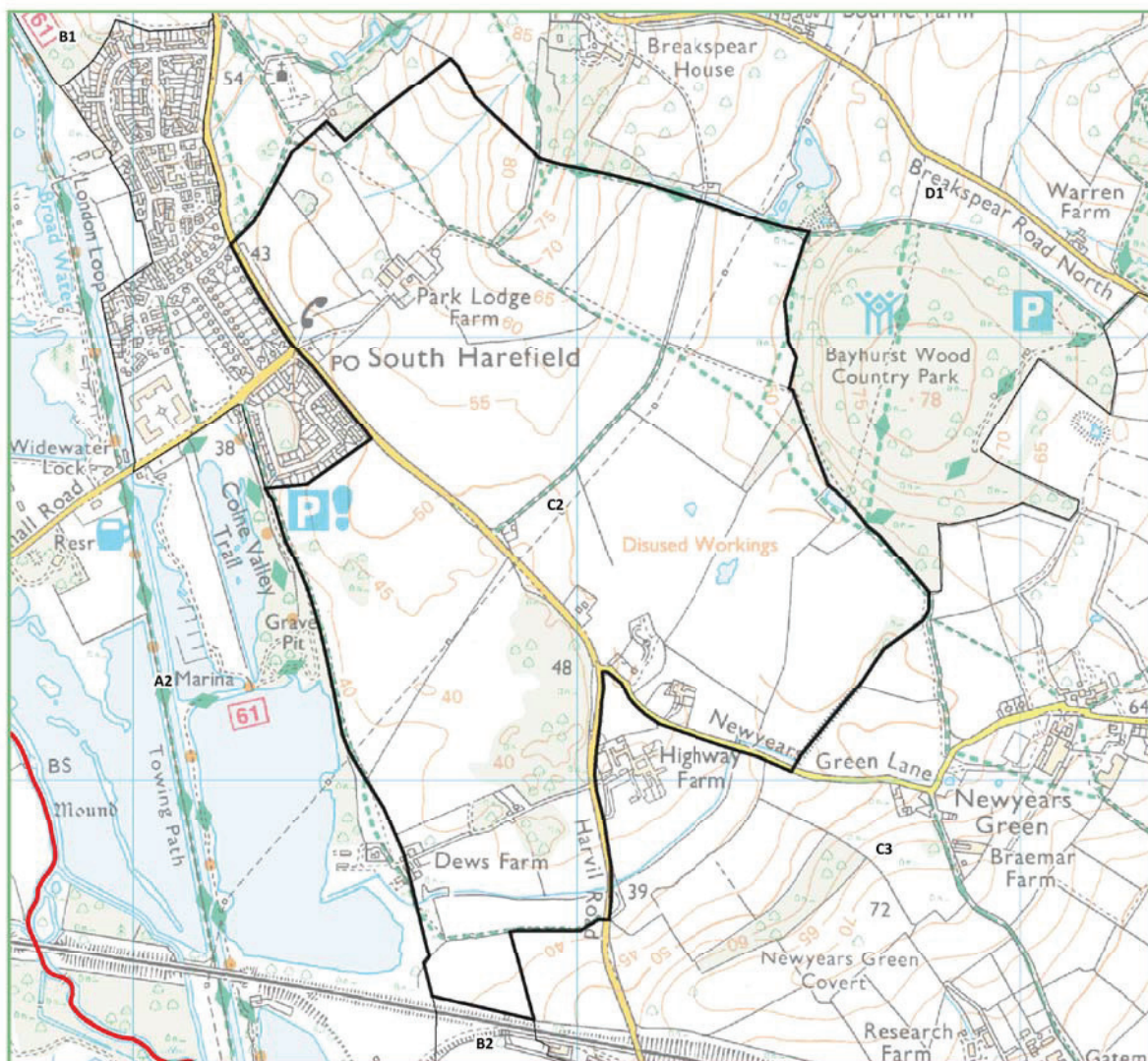
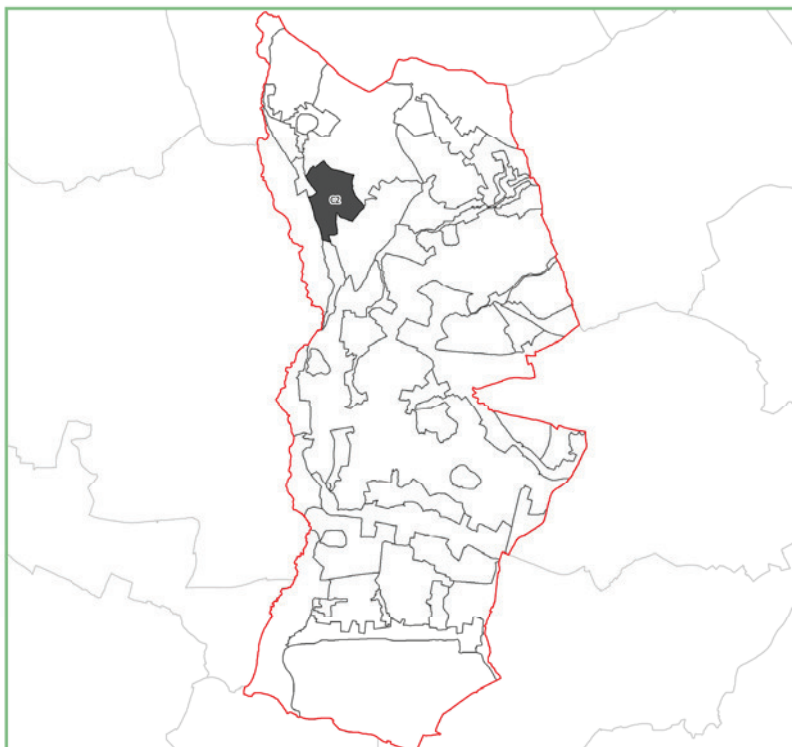
Rural winding roads enclosed by high dense hedgerows



Settlement edge of Mount Pleasant in the south, which contains the character area

LCA CI Hill End Undulating Farmland

LCA C2 SOUTH HAREFIELD UNDULATING FARMLAND



LCA C2 SOUTH HAREFIELD UNDULATING FARMLAND

KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- A large scale and open landscape, with gently undulating and sloping landform, predominantly underlain with Lambeth Group.
- Noticeably flatter in the south, with a more undulating topography in the north.
- Predominantly large scale 20th/21st century, geometric, arable farmland, with some areas of rough grazing, and bounded by hedgerows and scattered trees.
- Tree cover is relatively sparse with the exception of Dew's Dell, a Site of Borough Grade I Importance, which supports a range of habitat types, including dry acid grassland, woodland and marshland.
- Settlement density is low, comprising scattered farmstead, with occasional large modern agricultural buildings/sheds prominent in the landscape. The modern settlement edge of South Harefield runs along the north west boundary. A number of scattered small, rural farms, dating to the 1900s, and located along the boundary.
- Views are often open across farmland, with long vistas north east towards Bayhurst Wood and west over the Colne Valley.
- Crossed by the busy Harvil Road, a number of pylon lines, and interspersed by several waste and recycling sites, all of which reduce the intactness of the character area, and contribute to an urban fringe character. Away from these features, a rural and tranquil character prevails.
- Footpaths cross farmland and link farmsteads to features of interest in adjacent landscapes including the Colne Valley and Bayhurst Wood Country Park.

LCA C2 SOUTH HAREFIELD UNDULATING FARMLAND

DESCRIPTION

Location and Boundaries: The character area lies in the north west of Hillingdon Borough within the *Ruislip Plateau Natural Landscape Area* (London's Natural Signatures). The settlement edge of South Harefield and the valley top of the eastern side of the Colne defines the area's western boundary. The character area is transitional to *Character Area C3 New Years Green Undulating Farmland*, which lies to the south east. The large scale and open landscape, with gently undulating and sloping landform distinguishes it from smaller scale farmland landscape to the south east.

Landscape Character: A large scale and open landscape, largely comprising 20th/21st century enclosures of arable farmland and some rough grazing. A gently undulating and sloping landform, predominantly underlain with Lambeth Group, however noticeably flatter in the south. Settlement is sparse with scattered farmsteads, typically modern, with large agricultural buildings. However, some small rural farms remain, scattered along the boundary, dating back to the 1900s. The modern settlement edge of South Harefield marks the north west boundary. Tree cover is limited. With important habitats at Dew's Dell, supporting a range of habitat types, including dry acid grassland, woodland and marshland. Long views are afforded across open farmland, with important views north east towards Bayhurst Wood and west over the Colne Valley. Footpaths link these areas of interest, crossing farmland. Although a rural character and pockets of tranquillity exist, the busy Harvil Road, a number of pylon lines, and several waste and recycling sites, reduce the intactness of the landscape and contribute to an urban fringe character.

Geology: The area is underlain predominantly with Lambeth Group, with a thin sliver of Seaford Chalk Formation and New Haven Formation along the western boundary. A small pocket of London Clay underlies the character area in the north.

Topography/ Landform: A gently undulating and sloping landform, which lies to the east of the Colne Valley. In the south landscape is noticeably flatter, with a more undulating topography in the north. The highest ground is also in the north, near Park Lodge Farm (80m AOD), and from here the land slopes down south east towards the Colne Valley, at approximately 40m.

Hydrology: A small tributary to the River Colne crosses the south west of the area and small scattered ponds are located in the east of the area.

Land Use and Settlement: The area is predominantly large scale arable farmland, with some areas of rough grazing. An area of smaller fields is found in the north, close to the settlement of South Harefield. Fields are geometric, bounded by hedgerows and hedgerow trees. Elsewhere tree cover is relatively sparse, with the exception of the south west of the area, which has a relatively large area of woodland north of Dews Farm.

LCA C2 SOUTH HAREFIELD UNDULATING FARMLAND

Settlement density is low with farmsteads scattered throughout the area. The modern settlement edge of South Harefield runs along the north west boundary. Red brick and render are common building materials.

Harvil Road is the only road which passes through the landscape, however this road is relatively busy. A waste and recycling site is a notable feature in the south of this area. A number of pylon lines also transverse this area.

A number of local footpaths cross the landscape, particularly in the north of the area, linking farmsteads to features of interest in adjacent landscapes including the Colne Valley, Bayhurst Wood Country Park and Ruislip Woods National Nature Reserve.

Biodiversity: The network of hedgerows and hedgerow trees provide wildlife habitats in the agricultural landscape. Dew's Dell, a Site of Borough Grade I Importance, is a relatively large area adjacent to Harvil Road, east of Dew's Farm, with a range of habitat types, including dry acid grassland, woodland and areas of marshland. Within the areas of acid grassland, orchids and herb-rich grassland species occur. Woodland is typified by young oaks and silver birch. A small part of Bayhurst Wood Country Park, which forms part of Ruislip Woods and Poor's Field Site of Metropolitan Importance, filters into the area in the north west. Here, varied and diverse woodland exists, and sessile oaks, hornbeam and beech are typical.

Historic Environment: Park Lodge Farmhouse is a Grade II listed building located at Park Lodge Farm in the north of the character area. Relics of another Grade II listed building are situated adjacent to the character area boundary in the north, specifically, the garden walls to the east and south of church gardens nursery cottage. The character area is largely 20th century enclosure, with scattered 1900s rural farms on edges of character area.

Perceptual/ Experiential Landscape: This is a large scale, open farmland landscape. Views are open across the patchwork of farmland, towards built edges (South Harefield), or wooded field boundaries. Bayhurst Wood lies on rising ground to the north east of this area providing a backdrop to views across farmland and a point of reference. There are panoramic views west across the Colne Valley.

In places the landscape has a rural character with uninterrupted views across farmland and few roads. However modern development along the north western edge, the presence of a waste site, large modern farm buildings and some unmanaged boundaries fragment the landscape, reduce intactness and contribute to an urban fringe character.

Designations:

- Greenbelt
- Site of Metropolitan Importance: Ruislip Wood and Poor's Field.
- Site of Borough Grade I Importance: Dew's Dell

LCA C2 SOUTH HAREFIELD UNDULATING FARMLAND

- TPOs: Copse, Harefield Moor, Harefield; Copse south of Moorhall Dell, Harefield; Dew's Dell, Harefield

EVALUATION

Landscape and Visual Sensitivities:

Potential landscape and visual sensitivities are:

- The hedgerow network and trees, which provides visual unity and a wildlife corridor.
- Occasional areas of woodland which contain a diversity of tree species and provide wildlife habitats.
- Ponds which add to the diversity of habitats in the farmed landscape
- Views across open farmland with long views north east to Bayhurst Wood and west over the Colne Valley.
- The relatively, low density of settlement (comprising farmsteads), which would be vulnerable to further expansion and development.
- The limited number of roads which would be vulnerable to over widening and over development.



Large scale flat open farmland

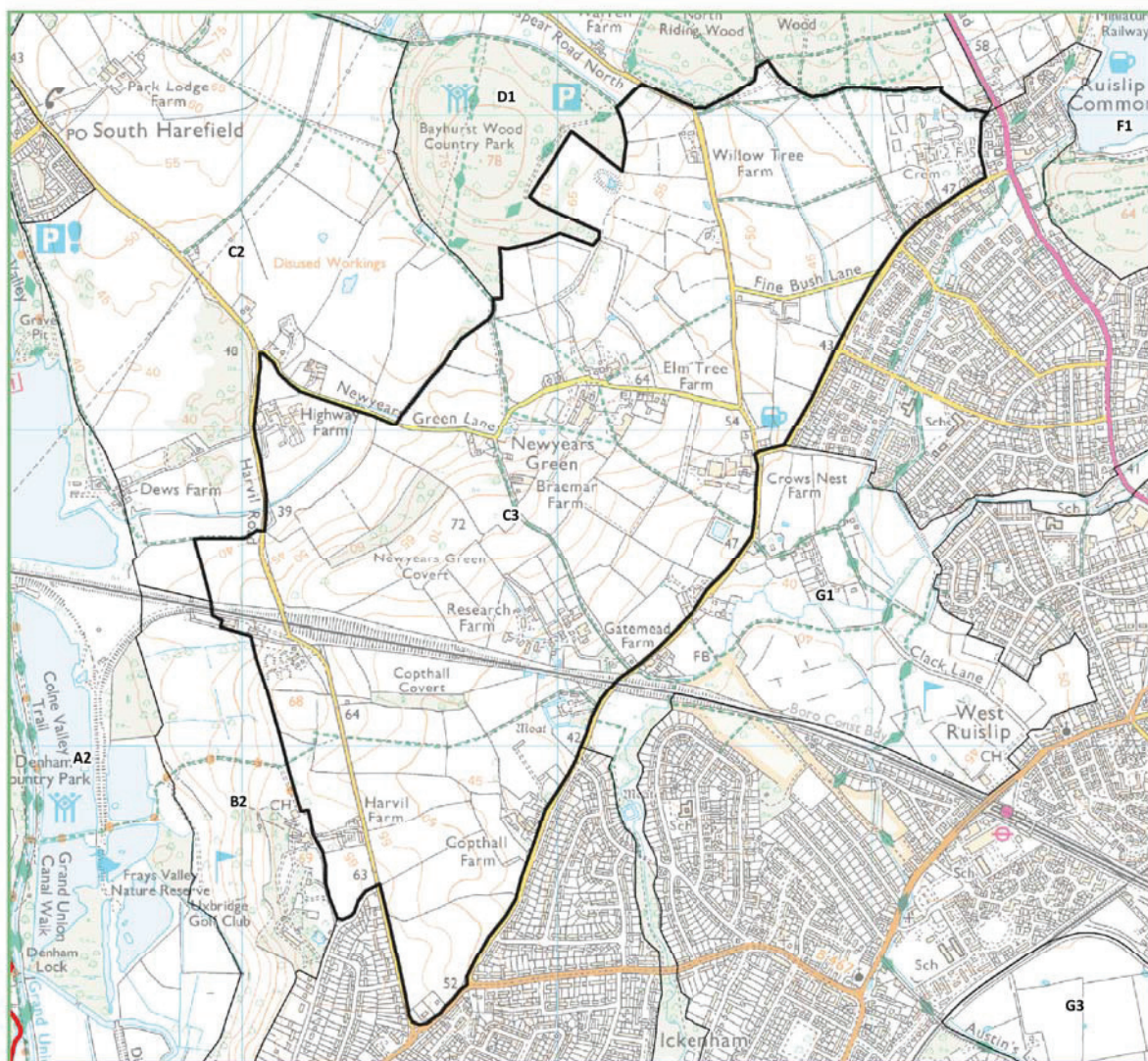
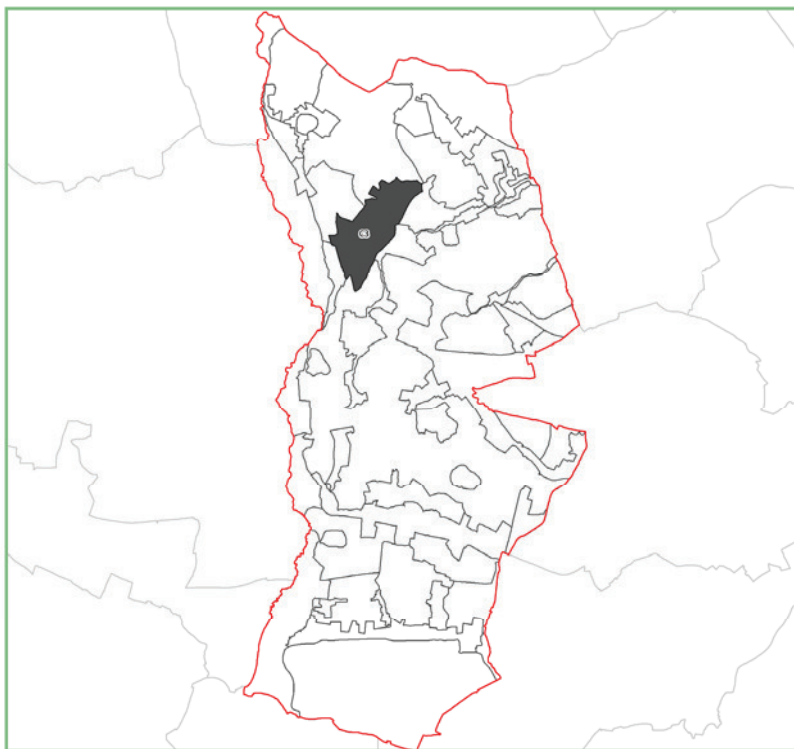


Long views over farmland towards the Colne Valley



Settlement edge of South Harfield

LCA C3 NEW YEARS GREEN UNDULATING FARMLAND



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KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- Gently undulating small scale farmland landscape to the east of the Colne Valley, underlain by London Clay.
- Fields of pasture/rough grazing and paddock are delineated by native hedgerows or wooden post and rail fencing. Fields systems are 18th century irregular and 19th century enclosures.
- Mature hedgerow trees (oaks) are distinctive landscape features, rising above low cut hedgerows in an otherwise sparsely treed landscape.
- Newyears Green Covert and Copthall Covert are linear strips of woodland with large woodland blocks outside the area providing a wooded backdrop to farmland. Newyears Green Covert has recently been extended with a young plantation to the west.
- Brackenbury Railway Cutting and Newyears Green Covert are Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation supporting woodland and unimproved pasture - along with scattered field ponds they add to the diversity of habitats within the farmland landscape.
- Settlement density is low with farmsteads dispersed throughout the area. A number of farm houses are historic in character with large modern agricultural buildings/sheds prominent in the landscape.
- Contained by Ruislip and Ickenham to the east and south. The built edges are predominantly softened and integrated by hedgerows, trees and garden vegetation but do appear abrupt in places. Visually contained by woodland to the north.
- A medieval moated site scheduled monument and a Grade II listed house are located at Brackenbury Farm on the edge of Ickenham.
- Unmarked rural roads and busier roads cross the area. The London-High Wycombe railway line crosses the south in cutting, largely hidden within the wider landscape.
- Views are varied - open across the patchwork of farmland, towards built edges or contained along hedged roads. Bayhurst Wood and Ruislip Wood provide a distinctive backdrop to views and a point of reference.
- The presence of a number of waste and recycling sites.
- Footpaths cross farmland and link settlement to features of interest in adjacent landscapes including the Colne Valley and Bayhurst Wood Country Park.

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DESCRIPTION

Location and Boundaries: The character area lies in the north of Hillingdon Borough within the *Ruislip Plateau Natural Landscape Area* (London's Natural Signatures). The settlement edges of Ickenham and Ruislip form the southern and eastern boundaries of the character area. The valley top of the eastern side of the Colne defines the area's western boundary. The small scale undulating character of this landscape distinguishes it from the flatter, larger scale farmland and large blocks of woodland to north.

Landscape Character: A gently undulating small scale farmland landscape underlain by London Clay. Fields of pasture/ rough grazing and paddock are typically geometric in form delineated by native hedgerows with distinctive mature hedgerow trees (oaks) or wooden fences. Small linear woodlands, such as Newyears Green Covert and Copthall Covert, hedgerows and scattered field ponds provide valuable habitat diversity within the agricultural landscape. Settlement density is low, consisting of scattered farmsteads, with large modern farm sheds/ agricultural buildings and a number of historic farm houses. Ruislip and Ickenham border the character area to the east and south respectively. Several rural roads cross the landscape, linking settlement, and the London-High Wycombe railway line passes through the south of the area. Footpaths cross farmland and connect the area with adjacent areas such as the Colne Valley and Bayhurst Wood Country Park. Long views occur across open farmland, however, topography, high hedgerows and settlement edge confine and restrict views. Bayhurst Wood and Ruislip Wood provide a distinctive backdrop to views and a point of reference. The presence of a number of waste/recycling sites and unmanaged boundaries interrupt the rural farmland character and emphasise the urban fringe location.

Geology: Underlain by London Clay formation with a transition to Lambeth Group at the northern and eastern boundaries.

Topography/ Landform: A gently sloping and undulating landform to the east of the Colne Valley. The highest ground is at Newyears Green Covert (70m AOD) from here the land slopes down northwards to a tributary of the Colne and southwards to the River Pinn. The landform also slopes eastwards from the Colne Valley top (68m AOD) to the River Pinn.

Hydrology: A tributary to the River Pinn crosses the east of the area and a tributary to the Colne runs partly along the northern boundary. Small farm ponds are scattered through the area.

Land Use and Settlement: The area is predominantly pasture/ rough grazing and paddocks. Fields are geometric, with some more irregular, bounded by native hedgerows or wooden post and rail fencing. Hedgerow trees (oaks) are a distinctive feature, rising above low hedgerows within an otherwise sparsely treed landscape. Newyears Green Covert and Copthall Covert are linear strips of woodland with

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large areas of woodland outside the area (at Bayhurst Wood and Ruislip Wood) forming wooded backdrops to farmland.

Settlement density is low with large farmsteads scattered throughout the area. Large farm sheds/ agricultural buildings are prominent in the landscape. A number of the farmhouses are listed buildings and historic in character (e.g. St Leonard's Farmhouse, Crow's Nest Farmhouse and Copthall Farmhouse). The modern settlement edges of Ruislip/ West Ruislip and Ickenham contain the area to the east and south. Properties on the edge of Ickenham are set back from the road; hedgerows and trees along field boundaries and garden vegetation soften the built edge and provide integration with adjacent farmland landscape. The built edge of Ruislip is less screened and more prominent in views. Red brick and white render are common building materials.

Unmarked rural roads and busier roads cross the area, contained by hedgerows. The London-High Wycombe railway line crosses the south of the area in cutting and is largely hidden within the wider landscape. A number of waste and recycling sites are notable in this area (e.g. Newyears Green Lane).

Footpaths cross farmland and link settlement to features of interest in adjacent landscapes including the Colne Valley, River Pinn, Bayhurst Wood Country Park and Ruislip Woods National Nature Reserve. The majority of this landscape is within the Colne Valley Regional Park.

Biodiversity: The network of native hedgerows and mature hedgerow trees provide wildlife habitats in the agricultural landscape. Newyears Green and Brackenbury Railway Cutting are Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (Borough Grade I and II respectively). The Newyears Green site comprises an unimproved pasture and a narrow strip of woodland (Newyears Green Covert). A diversity of woodland trees include oak, ash, hornbeam, silver birch, beech and lime, field maple and wild cherry. The grazed pasture contains species rich damp patches around a pond and spring (including sneezewort a typical herb of ancient grasslands). The Brackenbury Railway Cutting site supports dwarfed oak woodland and a tall herb population.

Historic Environment: A medieval moated site scheduled monument and a grade II listed house are located at Brackenbury Farm on the edge of Ickenham. Newyears Green Covert probably dates from the nineteenth century when small farm were planted to accommodate the demand for hunting and shooting in Victorian England.

In the north and south of the area, fields are 18th century irregular enclosure. In the centre of the area, to the south of New Years Green, 19th century field systems are present.

Perceptual/ Experiential Landscape: This is a small scale farmland landscape contained by topography, woodland and settlement. Views are open across the patchwork of farmland, towards built edges (Ickenham and Ruislip) or contained

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along hedged roads. Bayhurst Wood and Ruislip Wood lie on rising ground to the north of this area providing a backdrop to views across farmland and a point of reference.

In places the landscape has a rural character with uninterrupted views across farmland. However modern development along its edges, the presence of a number of waste sites, large modern farm buildings and some unmanaged boundaries fragment the landscape, reduce intactness and contribute to an urban fringe character.

Designations:

- Greenbelt
- Colne Valley Regional Park
- Scheduled monuments: 1 No. Brackenbury Farm medieval moated site
- Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation: 2 No. Newyears Green (Borough Grade I) and Brackenbury Railway Cutting (Borough Grade II)
- TPOs: Copthall Covert

EVALUATION

Landscape and Visual Sensitivities:

Potential landscape and visual sensitivities are:

- The patchwork of farmland fields in close proximity to the settlement edges of Ickenham and Ruslip. Without appropriate management an urban fringe character prevails over rural character.
- The hedgerow network, which provides visual unity and a wildlife corridor.
- Hedgerow trees which are distinctive visual features in a sparsely treed landscape.
- Narrow strips of woodland (coverts) which contain a diversity of tree species and provide wildlife habitats.
- Field ponds which add to the diversity of habitats in the farmed landscape
- Views across open farmland with a patchwork of fields delineated by hedgerows and hedgerow trees.
- Views to Bayhurst Wood and Ruislip Wood which provide a wooded backdrop, point of reference and sense of place.
- The intact 19th century field systems and 18th century irregular enclosures.
- Unmarked, hedged roads which retain a rural character contrasting with the busier roads.

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- The relatively, low density of settlement (comprising farmsteads), which would be vulnerable to further expansion and development.



Fields of pasture delineated by hedgerows. Hedgerow trees are a distinctive feature



Gently undulating landform with rough grazing farmland. Large farm buildings area prominent with farm houses historic in character



Open views across farmland with woodland on rising topography in the adjacent landscape providing a backdrop



Settlement edge of Ruislip which borders the character area



Hedged roads cut the area, some rural in character and others busier



A number of waste and recycling centres are located in this area

LCT C UNDULATING FARMLAND – STRATEGY & GUIDELINES

Constituent LCAs

- C1 – Hill End Undulating Farmland
- C2 – South Harefield Undulating Farmland
- C3 – New Years Green Undulating Farmland

Strategy/ Vision: Conserve and enhance this open farmland landscape, with pockets of woodland and wooded field boundaries. Maintain the rural and tranquil character that occurs away from settlement edges and seek to enhance integration of the built edges with the rural landscape.

Landscape Guidelines:

- Conserve and enhance the network of hedgerows, and hedgerow trees. Gap up hedgerows and seek to plant hedgerow trees.
- Conserve and manage the small areas of woodland to improve biodiversity value, provide enclosure in the landscape and form an important part of the landscape pattern. Maintain connections between woodlands and hedgerows to provide wildlife corridors.
- Promote appropriate management of farmland, to help generate a wildlife rich habitat, and visually attractive landscape.
- Maintain the essentially intact rural character, with limited urban influences - settlement and roads.
- Ensure that new buildings and development is sensitively integrated into the landscape through careful siting. Seek to soften and integrate existing urban edges with the landscape, through additional planting.
- Conserve the historic field patterns (early 18th and 19th century enclosures) and avoid further divisions or expansions.
- Maintain open views across fields, and avoid introducing large scale elements (such as pylons and masts) which would disrupt important views and the open landscape character.

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