

## *East of England Archaeological Research Framework Review*

### **Historic Landscape Characterisation in the East of England**

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#### **Summary**

*The national Historic Landscape Characterisation programme, which began with a pilot project in 1993–4, now covers more than half of the counties of England, and work within the East of England Regional Project is particularly well advanced. HLC provides a general understanding of the processes of historical development, change and survival at a landscape scale. This form of study is of increasing significance, given a growing acceptance of the differing forms of landscape characterization as planning and management tools, especially in the context of the large scale developments envisioned for the region.*

#### **HLC in the East of England**

In 2000, when the Eastern Counties *Research Agenda and Strategy* was published, Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) certainly formed a sizeable blip on ALGAO's radar of developing tools and approaches (Brown, N., & Glazebrook, J. 2000), however, it is also fair to say that its full potential was far from realised in that report. At the time Suffolk's HLC project was complete and the lessons learnt there were being applied in Hertfordshire. Essex was just about to start HLC and, although not mentioned in the 2000 paper, it had already been decided to extend the project to Bedfordshire, Cambridge and Norfolk and, ultimately create a truly regional model for the historic landscape. For this reason, unique amongst the county-based projects supported by English Heritage, the East of England HLC developed the role of the regional project coordinator, to ensure a uniformity of approaches and outcomes. Now, four years on, the mapping of Essex, Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire is complete; Cambridgeshire is approaching completion and Norfolk (the last and largest of the eastern counties) is poised to begin a process of mapping, analysis and reporting stretching over the next two years. The East of England regional project HLCs share a common methodology and data structure, which will enable overarching research, using HLC to explore the development and survival of historic landscapes at the regional scale. In addition a forthcoming series of county-based user guides and reports are in progress.

The general aim of all this work was recognised in the 2000 Agenda. HLC fell within:

Priority 4: to increase understanding of landscape, and

Priority 6: to contribute to the management of the archaeological resource

As we will explain later in this paper, it is already fulfilling some of its promise under these headings. The rolling programme is providing some fascinating insights into general patterns of landscape development in the region, and forming the basis for a new approach to strategic planning for the historic environment.

#### **The HLC approach**

HLC takes a step back from the minutiae of archaeological and historic evidence to assemble a broader view of the patterns and processes played out across the landscape. This is not to say, of course, that it takes no account of the evidence already collected and interpreted by archaeologists across the region, far from it. However the starting point is the landscape itself — as a cultural artifact — shaped by human actions over hundreds, if

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not thousands of years. The roots of HLC can be found in the landscape character assessment (LCA) methodology developed in the 1990s by the Countryside Commission and others (Swanwick 2002); but it delves far more deeply into the historic dimension in order to map a generalised and geographically comprehensive understanding of events or processes, of all periods, which remain visible or highly influential in the present landscape. The basic process of constructing HLC is quite straightforward, although it requires considerable academic and professional knowledge and, in its more recent and developed forms, a sound grasp of Geographic Information Systems and relational databases. It is also quite a time consuming process, as the collection of data and the portrayal of the results normally captures a high level of detail (compared to LCA) in order to reflect the complexity of historic processes.

<b>Core Data</b>	<b>Ancillary Data</b>
2-inch scale surveyors maps c.1810	County maps 1825
1 <sup>st</sup> edition national maps (6 inch scale) c.1850	Ancient and Semi-Natural Woodland data
1950s 6-inch maps	English Heritage Register of Historic Parks & Gardens
Modern 1:25,000 maps	Geological Survey Maps
1:10,000 Raster Map	Countryside Character Areas (Countryside Agency)
Land Line (digital mapping) data	Selected historic enclosure and tithe maps
Vertical aerial photographs	Selected sale documents and estate plans

*Table 1 Sources used in the construction of the Essex and Hertfordshire HLCs*

The landscape's principal component features, such as field systems, woodland, parklands, mineral extraction, industrial and urban areas, are examined through a combination of morphological analysis informed by documentary evidence and the results of previous historical/archaeological studies (see Table 1). This information is compiled within a GIS resulting in an electronic map which enables sophisticated display, analysis and interpretation. It is important to emphasise that the East of England HLC method mainly records those historic patterns that are still visible and able to be mapped within the landscape, whether as dominant forms or less obvious indications of past land use or change. However, by using the GIS to record evidence and interpretations of former land use, as well as those patterns which remain visible today, we can create models which explore the dynamics of landscape change — not just the age of different landscape features, but also patterns of cohesive or fragmented survival, or the time-depth reflected in successive changes (See Fig. 5).

### **Progress in East of England Project**

From its beginning in Suffolk in 1998, the East of England HLC project has developed into a single but evolving methodology covering the rest of the region. As each county is completed the results are used, not only at county scale, but also within a growing model of regional analysis in response to regional issues. In other words it is an exemplar of 'joined-up thinking' which, with the completion of Norfolk in 2006, will provide the first truly regional HLC in England. The goal of course, whether at county or regional scale, is total coverage, i.e. all the current landscape is mapped against a range of historic and modern landscape types. In addition the application has been designed to reflect the dynamics and changes that are evident within the landscape. The methodology allows the HLC to represent changes not only spatially across the landscape but also chronologically using

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various time horizons, inferred from the source material. These represent the palimpsests within the landscape (See Fig 5). Also one may model the HLC, using GIS, as either a 3D terrain model, i.e. a topographic model, or through time, as a series of 'time slices' — therefore one has the potential to generate 3- or 4-dimensional maps.

There is no hierarchy of importance or value attached to the HLC types as the model is created, they are simply descriptive; although, as we explain later, it is possible to explore issues of heritage value or sensitivity as a separate exercise using HLC data.

### **Initial results**

We are certainly not the first to attempt landscape analysis at the regional scale, but we are the first to have such a comprehensive and powerful analytical tool at our disposal. Although the regional model is not yet complete (and most of our efforts have been directed towards data capture rather than detailed analysis) various patterns are already starting to emerge within the current and/or past landscape, supporting some previously held theories, challenging others and generally boding well for future research. Each county has a fascinating mixture of characteristics, some within wider regional patterns, others localised and linked to particular histories. Details of all these patterns will emerge in 2005–6 through the production of first, county, and then regional HLC reports. For the moment, however, we shall give a short description of a few of the key trends and the pressures affecting them, which indicates the scope of expected results.

The HLC demonstrates the extent to which this region's landscape has been, and remains dynamic, especially in comparison to other areas in England. There have been (and continue to be) subtle, accretive changes such as the subdivision or amalgamation of earlier field systems, woodland clearances and new plantations, as well as eras of major concerted change, for example the sweeping effects of the Parliamentary Enclosure Acts in the later 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries (See Fig. 4). In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and particularly the latter part, the pace of change has been extreme. Many parts for the region have been transformed by, for example, the expansion of urban areas and the infrastructure that serves them, or the effects of arable production policies and increased farm mechanisation. However, despite all these changes, the early pre-existing field structure is still a major influence on field patterning and landscape character.

There is a distinctive north-south divide in these early patterns. Southern parts of Hertfordshire and Essex were dominated by, Hertfordshire and Essex and still retain evidence of pre-18<sup>th</sup> century co-axial field systems (potentially Bronze Age), interspersed with much later, formally enclosed heaths and commons. The northern part of Hertfordshire has a pattern of irregular enclosure of common arable and grazing fields, with common arable superseded by parliamentary enclosure along the Chiltern ridge. Central Essex has evidence for an extensive array of early irregular field forms extending northwards into Suffolk and Norfolk, the variety and spatial distribution linked, as we now believe, to cultural factors including patterns of tenure and inheritance (see Martin, E. this volume). Common arable of the medieval 'open field system' which dominated the adjacent Midlands was not extensive in the region, but it did extend south and east across parts of Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire to a high tide mark along the Chilterns and East Anglian Heights (See Fig.3). Isolated examples of Parliamentary Enclosure, enclosing scattered former commons and heaths, are widespread. However the region's strongest examples of Parliamentary enclosure largely reflect the rationalisation of these open fields in the late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries (see Fig.4). Parallel processes of non-legislative enclosure by

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agreement (or by dint of wealth and social status) are generally more influential across the region, and, of course, particularly notable in the reclaimed landscapes of the Fens.

### **Research Potential and Challenges**

As a result of the HLC we shall soon have a geographically comprehensive audit of the region's current landscape as an historic resource asset. Already regional and locally distinctive patterns are being observed, but once work has been completed in the region, we will be able to establish with far greater precision, what kinds of landscape types there are, their distribution, (regional, county and local patterning), what is rare or common, cohesive or fragmented, stable or changed through time. From this data, we can start to develop many areas for research, as well as applications in management and education, for example:

Future research may lead us in many directions, some of which are certain avenues to follow, whereas others require further development — it is an open field. For example current research models are focused on modeling the landscape through time to understand landscape trajectories which help inform various landscape initiatives and impacts; also to further understand lost landscapes so we may have informed landscape reconstruction or restoration to specified periods. Field boundary models are being developed (e.g. as in Hertfordshire) which plot and model boundary change through time — losses and insertions, which show that the landscape is under constant change and has been dynamic through time. HLC is proving excellent in providing a contextual model for various other forms of data e.g. HER, SAM's, LB's. In urban studies the zone from urban to rural is proving complex, and requires further study to understand the processes resulting in this transitional zone. This interface may be a hard or soft edge whereby the urban and rural contexts prove self-effacing. Parish survey work — an ideal context for local outreach and involvement is essential to further inform the HLC process, adding depth and understanding not only to HLC, but also for enriching local studies.

New management models are needed to resolve an ever increasing range of pressures, issues and remits; judgment and value models are required (such as developed in LCS-M11, see Figs.2) to develop HLC beyond the basic assessment/audit process. This subsequently leads to sensitivity models, so we may evaluate the historic landscapes capacity for specified forms of change, or Quality of Life (Swanick 2004). These models may be based on a variety of factors e.g. rarity, antiquity, cohesion. As HLC develops and covers more counties we can model regional configurations reflecting differences and commonality, degree of and drivers of change etc. These may inform decision making models in planning, development control, mineral exploitation, energy (e.g. wind farms), or other forms of change and impacts. HLC may form an element in the new Strategic Environmental Assessments (SEAs), as part of a wider sustainable approach, informing holistic models in landscape management.

These new models could be based on a wide range of criteria, of various types, and may well bring many of the associated issues related to the historic environment and landscape management into sharper focus. They will inform new forms of analysis and information systems to support and enlighten decision making. It must be emphasized that these models or values or judgments are likely to be made in response to current mores and value systems and in response to specific threats, or forms of change within the contemporary political climate. The challenges will be many and far reaching, and HLC models must flex to fit these new scenarios.

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### **Outreach**

The general public may engage further with the HLC as to how it relates to their perception of landscape history, quality, sustainability and change, and how they might be involved in the decision making process of future land management impacting on their locale e.g. Parish studies, village design statements. As the HLC gains higher profile the general public in the form of not only individuals, but schools, local groups and organisations will use the HLC to inform their studies and projects. It is important that the local population engage in the HLC process and thereby more fully with their historic environment.

### **HLC data management and distribution**

As each county reaches completion, new issues and challenges are coming to the fore. These include how to make the HLC available, in an easily understood form. Should it be accessed via the web, and how is access to all this material to be monitored, supported and funded? Training is needed for members of staff so they can, not only make best use of new GIS and IT, but of the HLC in conjunction with other digital, especially historic, data. With increased access to data e.g. via the web, raised expectations, and the impending Freedom of Information Act, there could be real resource issues within each county as the HER staff struggle to respond and keep up with modern pressures and demands for high quality information. The HLC is already proving a very popular dataset in high demand by a wide variety of consultants and groups, as it is seen as a very useful information and management tool.

In addition further thought is needed as to how the HLC data is to be archived, managed and updated not only in each county, but across the East of England Region to maintain this unique regional focus, but similarly at the national level. Serious issues relating to archiving with regular updating and correction, and enhancement of HLC datasets, needs to be addressed, at county, regional and national scales, to ensure we have compatible approaches.

Guidance on the distribution and licensing of HLC data needs to be formulated. The HLC is complex data requiring careful use, interpretation and application: this requires appropriate training. Unfortunately, it is currently open to potential misuse and interpretation. Increasingly HLC is being used for an ever widening variety of uses and applications, which requires careful monitoring and management, with up to date records. To ensure conformity, and assist increasingly beleaguered heritage departments, national, regional and local guidelines and models need to be formulated on all these issues to facilitate and enable them to work effectively and efficiently. Greater resources will also be needed to adequately support these new activities and responsibilities.

### **Applied HLC in the Eastern Counties**

HLC gives us a basis of knowledge, an understanding of landscape dynamics and survival, which can be drawn upon for many areas of management. The ability to determine what may be scarce, unusual or typical in any given area can be a major tool in directing conservation resources through agri-environment funding or formulating policies at local government level for the support and maintenance of landscape character. The full suite of HLC applications awaits publication of the analytical reports for each county (and ultimately for the region) as these will provide a proper platform for the definition of historic landscape issues in relation to local authority policy objectives. The most likely area where HLC will have an impact is rural management — the identification of characteristic or significant landscape themes, which can be supported through targeted

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management and financial support. This is already being piloted in other areas of England in relation to the new Environmental Subsidy: the emerging second pillar of the Common Agricultural Policy set to replace Countryside Stewardship and Environmentally Sensitive Area payments with a new tiered system of countryside management grants.

However, even in its present incomplete form we are finding many uses and applications for the East of England HLC. Specific applications have already been developed in Hertfordshire in advance of the county report (which is due in September 2004). Here, the HLC mapping has been combined with more detailed fieldwork and documentary research provide an assessment of the impact of various options for mineral extraction in the county (Dyson-Bruce, Bryant & Hunn 2004). Also in Hertfordshire HLC has also been used to assess the likely impact of the westward expansion of Stevenage, to suggest the means by which the more sensitive aspects of the historic landscape could be safeguarded by good design, and to encourage developers and planners to think creatively about the way in which the area's historic patterns can be woven into the new development giving it a sense of place and origin (Dyson-Bruce 2002).

### **Landscape capacity & sensitivity**

Perhaps the most innovative use of HLC in the region to date has been in response to the Government's 'Sustainable Communities' plan — ambitious proposals for a massive housing increase in southern England over the next 20–30 years centered on four 'Growth Areas' to the north and east of London (ODPM 2003). Three of these key areas impact on the region:

1. 'Thames Gateway': a series of interconnected urban renewal and expansion schemes reaching some 65km along the Thames estuary east of London
2. 'Milton Keynes/South Midlands' (MKSM): a group of major county towns and conurbations stretching from Luton to Northamptonshire
3. 'London-Stansted-Cambridge (LSC) Corridor': an ellipsoidal area extending some 60km north of London's urban fringe

Government believes that, taken together, these Growth Areas have the potential for nearly one million new homes in the period to 2031. Not surprisingly, great emphasis is being placed on the regeneration of poor quality housing areas and the reuse of previously developed land; but these targets for growth cannot be achieved merely within the limits of existing urban spaces. New sites are being sought adjacent to, or in the vicinity of existing towns and villages, with wide-ranging implications for the agricultural and rural landscapes which border or separate these settlements.

A concern shared by English Heritage and professional heritage managers in the local authorities was that the initial spatial assessments produced to support the selection of development areas (Buchanan & Partners 2003, East of England Regional Assembly 2003) paid little regard to the significance of the historic environment. The usual suspects — scheduled monuments, listed buildings, conservation areas — were all paraded of course, but it takes very little thought to realise how meaningless these designations are, when used in isolation, to construct a model of the historic environment.

The position held by county archaeological staff and English Heritage was unequivocal — the historic landscape is a key factor in defining the future of the area. Every place has historic character and origins, and these provide a valuable resource for employment, education, understanding and enjoyment — fundamental to the character of the places, where people live and work. This wider historic environment provides an essential foundation for the quality of life of these new communities. Therefore, if the evolution and

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character of an area's urban and rural landscapes were understood and analysed, within the planning process, then new development could be more sympathetically located and designed, to draw benefit from the special qualities of the historic environment.

In the time made available to comment on the emerging proposals it was not possible to construct complete assessments for the LSC and MKSM growth areas, not least as we were limited by the geographical coverage of the HLC (Cambridgeshire, for example, was not completed). However, we were able to produce case studies based on the core areas, and subsequently develop the methods from these areas to create a complete model for the Thames Gateway. These projects have been very much at the 'cutting edge' of HLC work, so while each case study is robust and reliable according to its design, the methodology has continued to evolve at a rapid pace.

Our first pilot study focused on the London-Stansted-Cambridge corridor, in particular a section which lies at the heart of the urban expansion debate in this area — the landscape straddling the border between the counties of Hertfordshire and Essex to either side of the M11 motorway. This area (c.675km<sup>2</sup>) is expected to take a substantial proportion of the quarter to half million new houses allocated to the overall Growth Area. These must somehow be fitted into or focused around a pattern of pre-existing towns such as Harlow, Bishops Stortford and Great Dunmow. Currently, this is a landscape dominated by rural villages, hamlets and isolated farmsteads.

The foundation for this study was the combined Hertfordshire and Essex HLC, which provided a descriptive model of the broad grain of the historic landscape, as it is perceived today, but without placing emphasis on any particular aspect. The combined HLC map (Figure 1 provides a highly simplified version) does not ascribe values to the various components of the landscape; rather it portrays the dominant characteristics based on an archaeological interpretation of the evidence in a series of polygons ascribed to descriptive types — for example groupings of fields with similar origins, which retain the same degree of historic features. This alone provides considerable insight into the historic landscape within the study area: for example, in contrast with many popular perceptions of this area, it has been highly altered in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, but still retains significant elements of 'ancient countryside' — long established patterns of irregular fields related to scattered settlement (Rackham 1986, 4–5). Fields enclosed before the 18<sup>th</sup> century, many of which have likely origins in the medieval period, are most pronounced in the northern part of the study area. The area to the west has a high proportion of late 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century boundary changes, within a pre-existing, pre-18<sup>th</sup> century field systems. Ancient woodland also survives in numerous small pockets throughout this area — its distribution related to the dispersed pattern of historic settlement and the former presence of medieval hunting forests and parks. Even the southeastern area, often regarded as little more than a series of 'prairie fields' resulting from increased farming mechanisation and the removal of field boundaries in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, has not completely lost its historic origins. They survive in the irregular outer boundaries of the enlarged fields, and in the distribution of intact areas of informal and irregular fields surrounding older settlements and following shallow river valleys. Equally, however, the HLC portrays the significant impacts of more recent history — the expansion of the main urban settlements (Harlow, Bishops Stortford and Great Dunmow) and communication routes (Stansted Airport and the M11 motorway) and the re-organisation of the earlier landscapes affected by these developments.

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Highly informative as this was, we had to go beyond this neutral (in policy terms) analysis, and populate our patterns with more precise ‘meanings’ in order to influence the future. This involved nailing our colours to the mast, so to speak, and assigning values to the HLC types in the area. These values represent a purely professional judgment based on the survival of elements which represent the ‘time-depth’ visible in the present landscape — their significance in terms of age, rarity or special interest and their sensitivity to change. Numerical scoring systems were used in this process as a guide to help rationalise the data. The main purpose of scoring was to structure our definition of the issues that apply within the study area. The results explained in tables, matrices and other written information formed a sensitivity ranking, showed what it applied to and the differing capacity of HLC types, or groups of types to absorb change (e.g. Table 2).

Sensitivity	Criteria	Capacity for change
Moderate (5-6)	Legible pre-20 <sup>th</sup> century fieldscapes and enclosure patterns, some of which retain visible elements of earlier patterns; also commons and wooded plantations which have remained essentially unaltered since the 19 <sup>th</sup> century	Less static areas of landscape which are capable, in principle, of absorbing a moderate degree of change
	Historic landscapes likely to be of local significance	Sensitive to the cumulative impact of small scale changes  Presumption against development that significantly alters the character and fabric of the historic environment  Further area assessment essential
	Diffuse and sporadic patterns of surviving pre-20 <sup>th</sup> century fields are dominant in the study area. Although of lower sensitivity than surviving patterns from earlier dates, these areas provide the ‘glue’ that binds the older landscapes to the present – buffering core areas of high sensitivity and allowing more recent landscapes to be appreciated within an historical context.	

Table 2 Extract from the sensitivity matrix for the London-Stansted-Cambridge study (Went, Dyson-Bruce & Vindedal 2003)

This table, and the maps that illustrate this information, are specific to the HLC polygons — comparatively fine-grained units of shared present character and historic origin (Fig 2a). The next step was to develop broad character-based sensitivity zones, which have a greater bearing on strategic planning for the scale of change envisaged for the Growth Area. These sensitivity zones (Fig 2b) reflect a generalised pattern, based on the underlying type-based sensitivity analysis, and demonstrate the dominant trends in the study area — areas of local historic character and sensitivity. Profiles written for each zone explain the combined value of historic components. Together these attributes allowed an assessment of each zone’s capacity to absorb change, structured under a number of themes — for example the likely affects of landscape fragmentation; measures that could be taken to secure or improve the historic character; inspiration that could be drawn from historic themes in planning terms to benefit from and support a particular ‘sense of place’. It did not produce a map of absolute constraints — rather an exploration of the issues that had to

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be weighed, together with those arising from other capacity studies, before embarking on significant change. The result was a geographically comprehensive assessment of the key levels of sensitivity for the historic landscape within the study area — an assessment of each area's capacity to withstand change without the significant alteration of character. The pattern is complex, reflecting diverse themes of continuity, adaptation and change present in the modern landscape, but this approach, and particularly the more detailed work, which underlies this brief paper (Went, Dyson-Bruce & Vindedal 2003), allowed us to engage with the regional planners at the appropriate scale for the analysis of strategic development questions.

The LSC case study was the first stage in a wider process of engagement with the challenges presented by the Growth Area proposals. Developing this model was a very instructive process — taking us, as archaeologists, beyond the traditional realm of landscape interpretation into new areas of values and cultural significance, the assessment of which are of increasing concern within the heritage sector (e.g. de la Torre 2002) and particularly in areas on the urban fringe (e.g. Swensen 2002). The LSC study was a first step in this direction. The HLC approach provides an effective foundation for the comprehensive assessment of the historic landscape, but it is not in itself a holistic tool for the historic environment. Other issues need to be addressed, particularly layers of information related to the fundamental contribution of the built heritage and the 'underlying' importance of buried archaeological remains. These three main elements of the historic environment (the rural landscape, the built heritage and the archaeological resource) have been taken more fully into account in a recent study of the Milton Keynes area, where a combination of East of England and Buckinghamshire HLC data was used as the framework for an examination of other data from the Heritage Environment Record (HER) and statutory designations (Green & Kidd 2004). More elaborate still is the Thames Gateway Project (a partnership between English Heritage and the County Councils for Essex and Kent) where work is ongoing to produce a complete study of the Growth Area creating character profiles for each distinct strand of information — historic landscape, built environment and archaeological background — and formulating patterns of sensitivity as combined or separate thematic studies of the capacity of the historic environment to absorb new development. Progress on this study will be found, together with the reports of the earlier work, on the English Heritage website (see <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/characterisation>)

### **Conclusions**

The national HLC programme, sponsored by English Heritage, now shows us, for over half the country, with more coverage on the way, rich and diverse patterns of change and/or continuity, which underpin present landscape character. This is a major new tool for the management of our cultural heritage, complementing tried and tested approaches, such as statutory designation and development control, but going further than either in terms of understanding, portraying and ultimately managing the broad grain of the landscape in historic terms. Previous techniques are very effective at the localised scale, for example at the scale of the individual building or monument, but HLC engages with the wider landscape without being drawn unduly towards prioritised or selected highlights. In this respect HLC fits well with the 2000 *European Landscape Convention*, which firmly places chronological and anthropomorphic aspects at the heart of landscape definition, and therefore places archaeologists at the heart of future management debates involving the big picture. HLC, it is hoped, will equip the regions' archaeologists with a very suitable tool for work within the framework of the Convention, and also within the range of emerging

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landscape-scale initiatives such as Regional Spatial Strategies (the recent successor to Regional Planning Guidance), Strategic Environment Assessments (SEA) and Government sponsored indicator projects such as 'Countryside Quality Counts'.

There is still much work to do, but the East of England HLC is well on course for completion, only a few years' hence. It is already finding wide application in areas of research and management, and future applications will no doubt be even more diverse, hopefully drawing in greater public participation as well as more effective integration with HER data and other forms of landscape character assessment. The future is certainly promising, and this promise should be capable of much greater expression and expansion, in any future edition of the region's research agenda and strategy.

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[heritage.org.uk/conserving historic places/promoting characterisation/sustainable communities](http://heritage.org.uk/conserving-historic-places/promoting-characterisation/sustainable-communities))

### **Figures and tables**

*Table 1 Sources used in the construction of the Essex and Hertfordshire HLC*

*Figure 1 The LSC study area: simplified HLC types*

*Figure 2 A: HLC sensitivity values. B: HLC sensitivity zones*

*Figure 3 Illustrating the distribution of pre-18th century landscape field systems – work in progress*

*Figure 4 Illustrating the predominantly 19th century landscapes – mainly Parliamentary or later enclosure – work in progress*

*Figure 5 Illustrating landscape areas which have undergone varying degrees of change through time i.e. Palimpsests – work in progress*

### **Appendix: County Patterns**

**Bedfordshire** is distinctive in having much Parliamentary Enclosure, in areas overwritten by later formal designed field systems relating to the estates within the county e.g. Duke of Bedford Estate.

**Hertfordshire** has the greatest number of historic informal parklands of all the regions' counties, yet many of these have been re-used for recreational pursuits (largely golf courses) which is perhaps not so surprising given the urban pressures in the most urbanized (non-metropolitan?) county in England. Yet even in such a heavily populated and pressurised county there is tremendous surviving time depth in the landscape, particularly in the origins and survival of early field enclosure. There is a distinctive north-south divide in these early patterns. The southern half of the county was dominated by and still retains many pre-18<sup>th</sup> century co-axial field systems (potentially Bronze Age), interspersed with much later formally enclosed heaths and commons. The northern half has a pattern of irregular enclosure over common arable, superseded by parliamentary enclosure on the Chiltern ridge. In both 'zones', wherever the soil is suitable for arable there have been varying levels of boundary loss due to farm intensification in the post WWII years. Conversely, in many areas to the south the landscape has seen recent sub-division with new boundaries inserted to support the peri-urban phenomena of pony paddocks and hobby farming.

**Essex** is a very complicated county, with a complex range of field systems and processes of enclosure that require much further study. There is a distinct patterning of early pre-18<sup>th</sup> century enclosure across the county, divided, rather like Hertfordshire, between a range of co-axial forms to the south and a variety of irregular field patterns to the north. Also, as in Hertfordshire, Essex underwent a period of significant field boundary loss during the latter part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In some areas this process was extreme, and much has been said in negative terms about the transformation of the landscape in this period. But an important point, highlighted by HLC, is the extent to which the broad structure of earlier field patterning remains identifiable within the landscape and contributes to character of the county and region.

Modern urban and industrial development predominates in the south, within Thurrock, but the early field patterns survive between.

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**Suffolk** is a divided county, east –west and north –south. Parliamentary Enclosure with large modern forestry blocks exist to the west over the fens and heaths and to the east over the Sandlings. A central zone of early enclosure is further subdivided, with a predominantly co-axial pattern in the north, and a predominantly irregular enclosure pattern in the south. There is little modern urban development or infrastructure, in comparison to Hertfordshire, Essex and Bedfordshire.

**Cambridgeshire** has a distinct patterning of fen enclosure to the north-east, also exhibiting a great deal of boundary loss in the 20thC. However again, despite these recent changes, these distinct field patterns are discernable, and add considerably to the landscape character to this area. There are common arable fields, with later Parliamentary Enclosure, with the horse based race and trotting tracks in the south.