



Heydon Parish Landscape Appraisal

Final Report April 2022



Contents

	Page
1 Introduction	2
Background	2
Methodology and Approach	2
Local Plan Context	2
Green Infrastructure	2
2. Evolution of the Parish	3
Physical Influences	3
Historic Development	3
Map Analysis	4
3. Landscape Character	8
National Character Areas	8
Local Landscape Character	8
Cultural and Natural Assets	10
4. Detailed Analysis	11
Character and Setting	11
Valued Landscape	14
Village Character	15
5. Summary of Findings	21
Special Qualities to Conserve and Enhance	21
Future Change	21
Future Initiatives	22



Strip lynchets on Reeve Hill

Thanks go to members of the Heydon Parish community for collating substantial evidence to inform and support this appraisal and for permission to reproduce a number of their photographs and artwork within the report.

Introduction

Background

Alison Farmer Associates was appointed by Heydon Parish Council to undertake a landscape appraisal of the Parish, in order to articulate the character and special qualities of the village and its environs and to support the preparation of a Community Led Plan. The desire to prepare a Community Led Parish Plan has come from concerns regarding the weight of development and growth in the South Cambridgeshire area. The Community Led Parish Plan will seek to describe and record the village, its qualities, environment and the wishes, wants and needs of the inhabitants, in order to inform future decision making. This landscape appraisal therefore provides an independent assessment and evidence base to support the Community Led Plan.

The Parish of Heydon lies on the southern border of South Cambridgeshire and is a relatively small Parish containing the village known by the same name. The southern fringes of the village lie close to the Parish boundary with Great Chishill and Chrishall. The county boundary between Cambridgeshire and Essex runs along the eastern Parish boundary.

Methodology and Approach

This assessment has been carried out in accordance with Guidelines on Landscape Character Assessment, Guidelines in Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment and guidance on Assessing Landscape Value Outside of National Designations¹. The approach has included desk study and site assessment in January 2022.

Local Plan Context

The current development plan for South Cambridgeshire is the Adopted Local Plan (2018). There are no allocated housing or employment sites adjacent to the village or within the wider Parish. Heydon was designated a Conservation Area in 1979, although no Conservation Area Appraisal has been prepared.

The new Greater Cambridgeshire Local Plan is currently under preparation. Consultation on the Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment included five sites for the Heydon Parish area, namely:

- Heydon Grange Golf Club mixed use development (868.32 hectares)
- Land west of Fowlmere Road (16 dwellings)
- Land south of Heydon Lane (31 dwellings)
- Land west of Chishill Road (31 dwellings)
- Heydon End (8-16 dwellings)

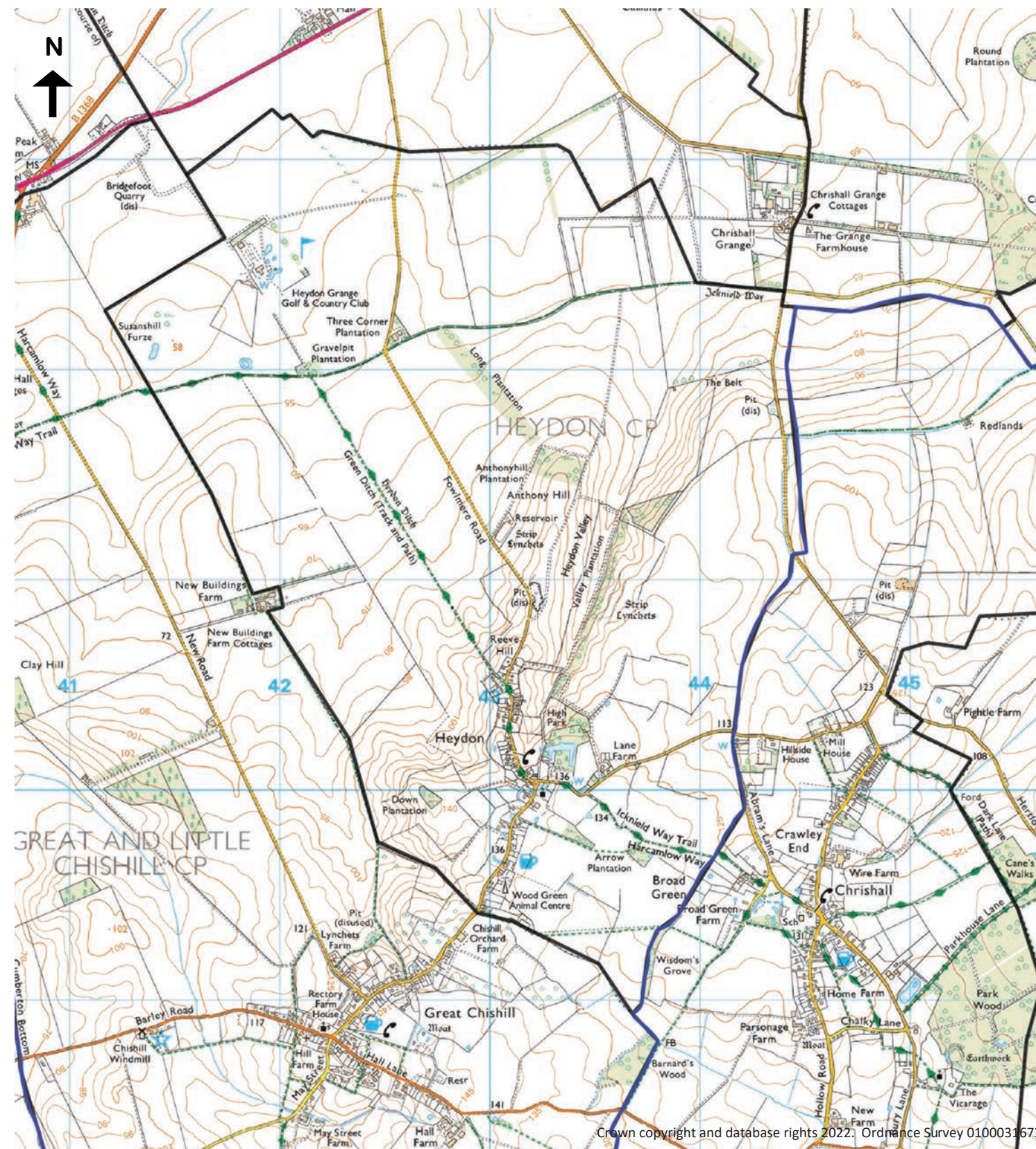
At the time of writing the Local Authority has reviewed the above sites and discounted them as less suitable for development than other options within the Greater Cambridgeshire area.

Green Infrastructure

The Cambridgeshire Green Infrastructure Strategy (2011) highlighted a number of issues and opportunities for South Cambridgeshire. Those which are relevant to Heydon Parish include:

- Intensive modern agriculture has resulted in the removal of hedgerows and the drainage of wetland creating largely open landscapes of large fields, often bounded by gappy hedgerows and drainage ditches. This has reduced biodiversity habitats and fragmented the remaining links between them.
- Many villages feature small fields and paddocks and remnants of early enclosure, which provide a

¹Technical Guidance Note 02/21, Landscape Institute



Map showing extent of Heydon Parish and location of village

local landscape setting and opportunity for people to experience biodiversity and enjoy open spaces and other benefits. They should be considered to be an important part of local Green Infrastructure.

- Areas of calcareous grassland have become fragmented and need to be expanded and linked together in order to produce sustainable blocks of habitat.
- A large part of the district's population will continue to live in the rural areas and there may be local opportunities to enhance Green Infrastructure around and between villages which will serve the village community and enhance the wider strategic Green Infrastructure network.

The Evolution of the Parish

Physical Influences

The Parish of Heydon sits at the junction between an elevated boulder clay plateau, extending beyond the Parish to the south and east and underlying chalk which forms a dramatic and distinct northwest facing scarp the steepest slopes dropping from c.100m AOD to c. 55m AOD. In the north of the Parish around Heydon Grange the chalk is overlain with river terrace deposits comprising sands and gravels and drops in elevation to c. 40m AOD. These three distinct geological strata have influenced the topography, vegetation and land use of the Parish. For example, on the clay soils there is a higher incidence of small ponds and moated sites while on the open chalk there are disused chalk pits. Similarly on the clay there is a higher incidence of ancient woodland whereas the chalk is more open.

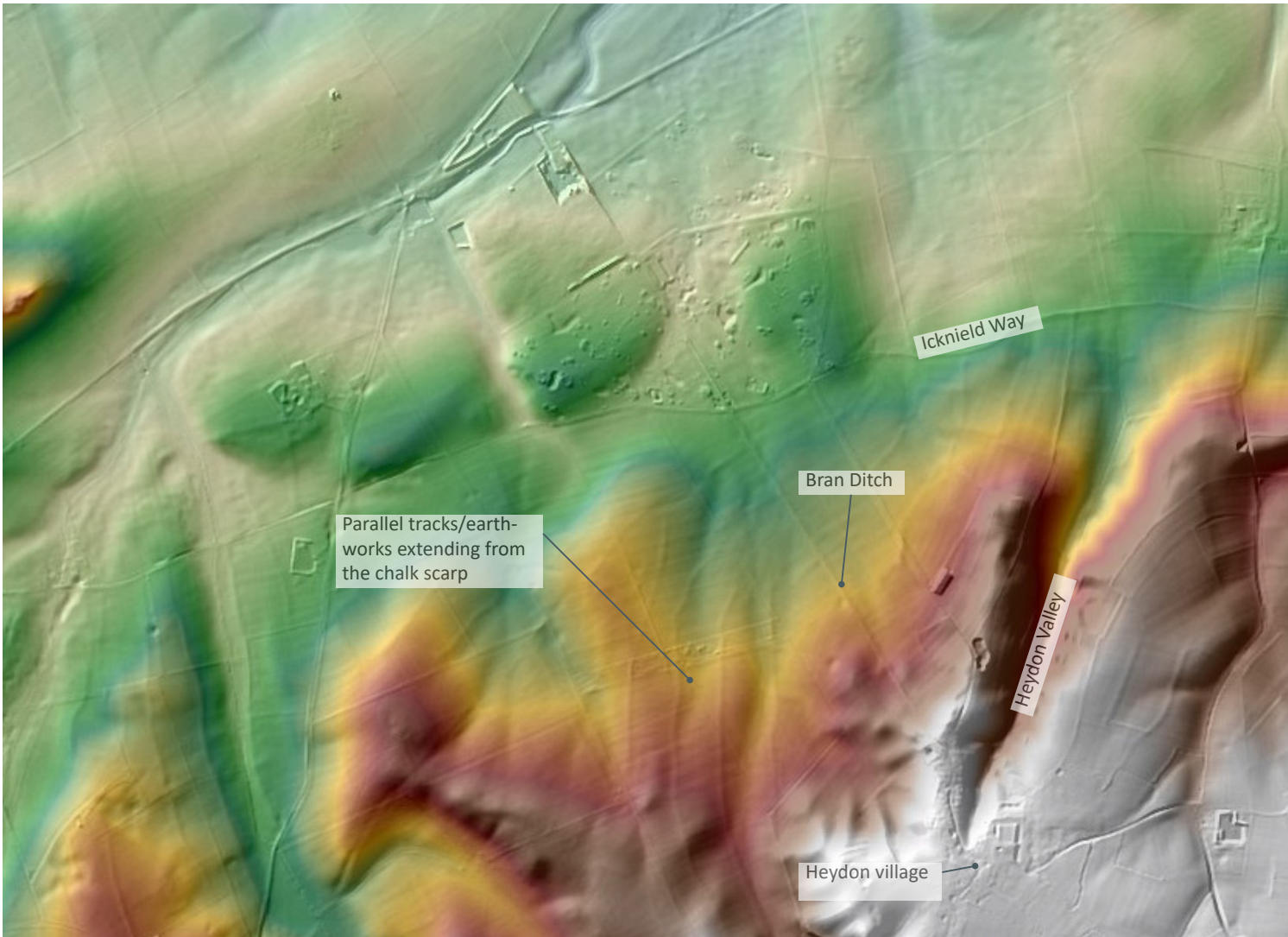
The village of Heydon is located on elevated land at the edge of the steep chalk scarp and at the tip of Heydon Valley, a notable dry valley and rare in the context of Cambridgeshire. One of the highest places in Cambridgeshire lies to the west of the village at c.140m AOD. The distinctive topography of the Parish arising as a result of the underlying chalk geology has had a profound influence on human activity affecting prehistoric routes, territories and providing a natural location for defence. It is no surprise therefore that Heydon is a Parish which is steeped in history with many landscape features being reused over the centuries. As a result, there is a tangible time depth where historic features can be easily traced and read within the present-day landscape. Perceptions of antiquity and continuity are therefore key qualities of the Parish.

Historical Development

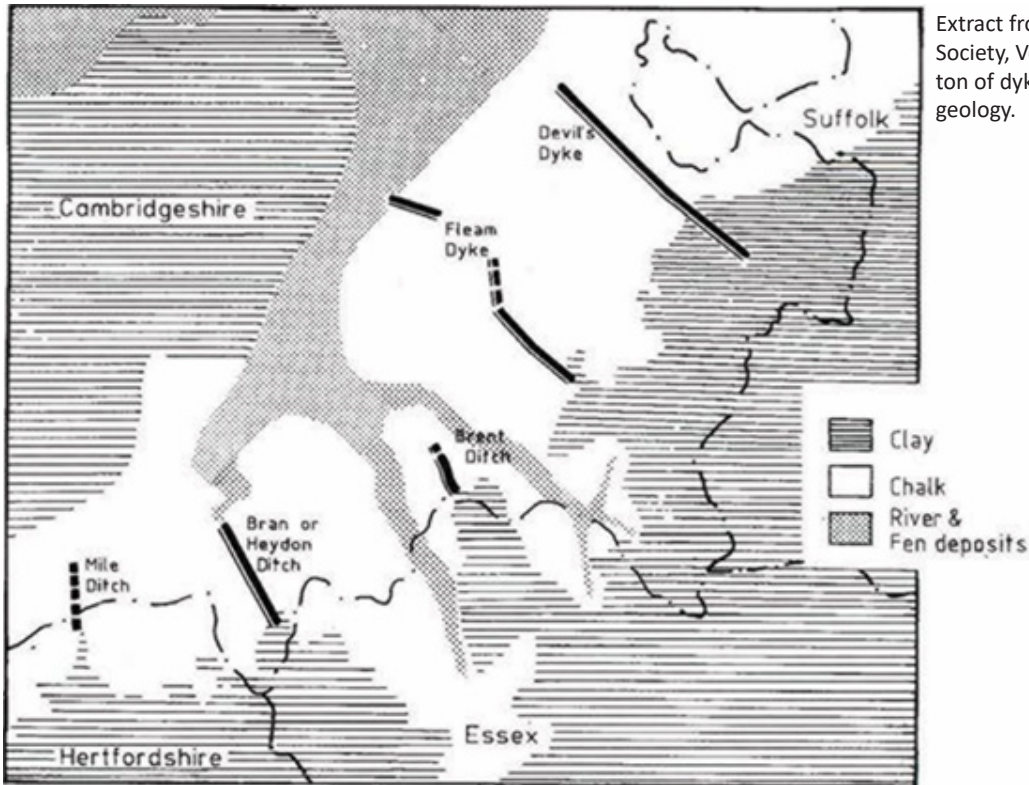
The ancient prehistoric routeway of the Icknield Way runs across the northern part of the Parish just south of Heydon Grange (evident as a track in the present-day landscape and route of the Icknield Way long-distance path). This historic route follows the belt of chalk from the Chiltern Hills through Hertfordshire into Cambridgeshire and then Norfolk. Evidence of Prehistoric activity in the area includes scatters of Neolithic worked flints in and around Heydon Golf Course suggesting possible habitation here, Bronze Age crop marks of barrows near Bran Ditch (also known as Heydon Ditch or Green Ditch) and Iron Age pottery and a quern in the chalk pit to the north of the village. All these finds indicate continued habitation of the area through prehistory. More recently LIDAR indicates a series of linear earthworks / routes which cut across the landscape west of Bran Ditch and which are likely to be prehistoric in origin. They reflect the importance of the open chalk slopes between the top of the chalk ridge and the Icknield Way. This area is especially valuable as an historic landscape with significant potential to reveal evidence from the prehistoric period.

Evidence from the Roman period relates primarily to the site of a small temple on Anthony Hill to the north of the village. This area of higher land forms a distinct knoll or promontory and an understandable location of a building which would form a landmark from the surrounding landscape. Finds from the site include tesserae (Roman mosaic) and a coin of Constantius II.

The key feature relating to the Anglo-Saxon period is that of Bran Ditch, one of four Anglo-Saxon dykes in Cambridgeshire (with possible Iron Age origins) and is likely to have performed a territorial or defence function extending across the path of the Icknield Way. The ditch would have comprised a substantial earthwork 7m wide and 2m deep, extending between Fowlmere to the north of Heydon Parish and heading south across and up the chalk escarpment, terminating at Heydon village. The pattern of the ditches appears to cut across between the wooded high ground of the clay plateau and the wet fen associated with the river valley fens. Although flattened in the middle of the 19th century, the route of the ditch is nonetheless historically important and was scheduled in 2012 (including a buffer zone). It therefore is of national significance in its own right but also in terms of its relationship to the other Cambridgeshire dykes



LIDAR mapping showing parallel tracks/earthworks extending from the chalk scarp



Extract from Proceedings of the Cambridge Antiquarian Society, Vol LXXXV 1996 (page 29) showing the location of dykes/ditches in Cambridgeshire and simplified geology.

making up a parallel system.

Theories have been put forward that the Bran Ditch and distinctive valley of Heydon Valley may have been influential in the location of a currently unlocated confrontation between Boudica and Roman forces . The natural topography of the chalk scarp, forming a sickle shaped curve between Chishill Down and Reeve/Anthony Hill and the deep cleft of the Heydon Valley, may well have been strategically important. The natural promontory of Chishill Down/Down Plantation may have housed a defensive structure even before the Anglo-Saxon period - associated earthworks still evident today may reflect such a site and or may relate to strip lynchets.

The name Heydon appears in Domesday Book as Haidena, perhaps meaning ‘Hay or High Valley’. In the medieval period the village comprised a church manor complex located at the junction of four minor roads. It included Holy Trinity church which is thought to be on a site of worship since the 12th century and a square moated site to the north. The moated site is thought to date to the 13th century and was replaced in the 17th century with the building of a new house on the site of the present day Heydon House (or Heydonbury as it is now known). The Tudor mansion stood within a three-sided moat which later was made part of a lake within designed grounds along with former rectilinear fishponds to the north (evident as earthworks today). Given its elevated location the house was a landmark from the surrounding landscape. In the early 19th Century the house was replaced by the present day house. However, this was not the only moated site associated with Heydon. In the 15th and 16th centuries the land east of the church was the site of another now extinct moated site known as Earles or Earlsbury. Although today the site is open agricultural land, the moat remains visible in aerial photographs and LIDAR and comprises a poorly defined 0.5m deep hollow associated with a scatter of flint and red brick. Contemporary with the Earles site are some of the oldest properties in the village such as Ash Cottage and Bramley Cottage. These latter dwellings reflect a rural vernacular and retain their traditional thatched roofs.

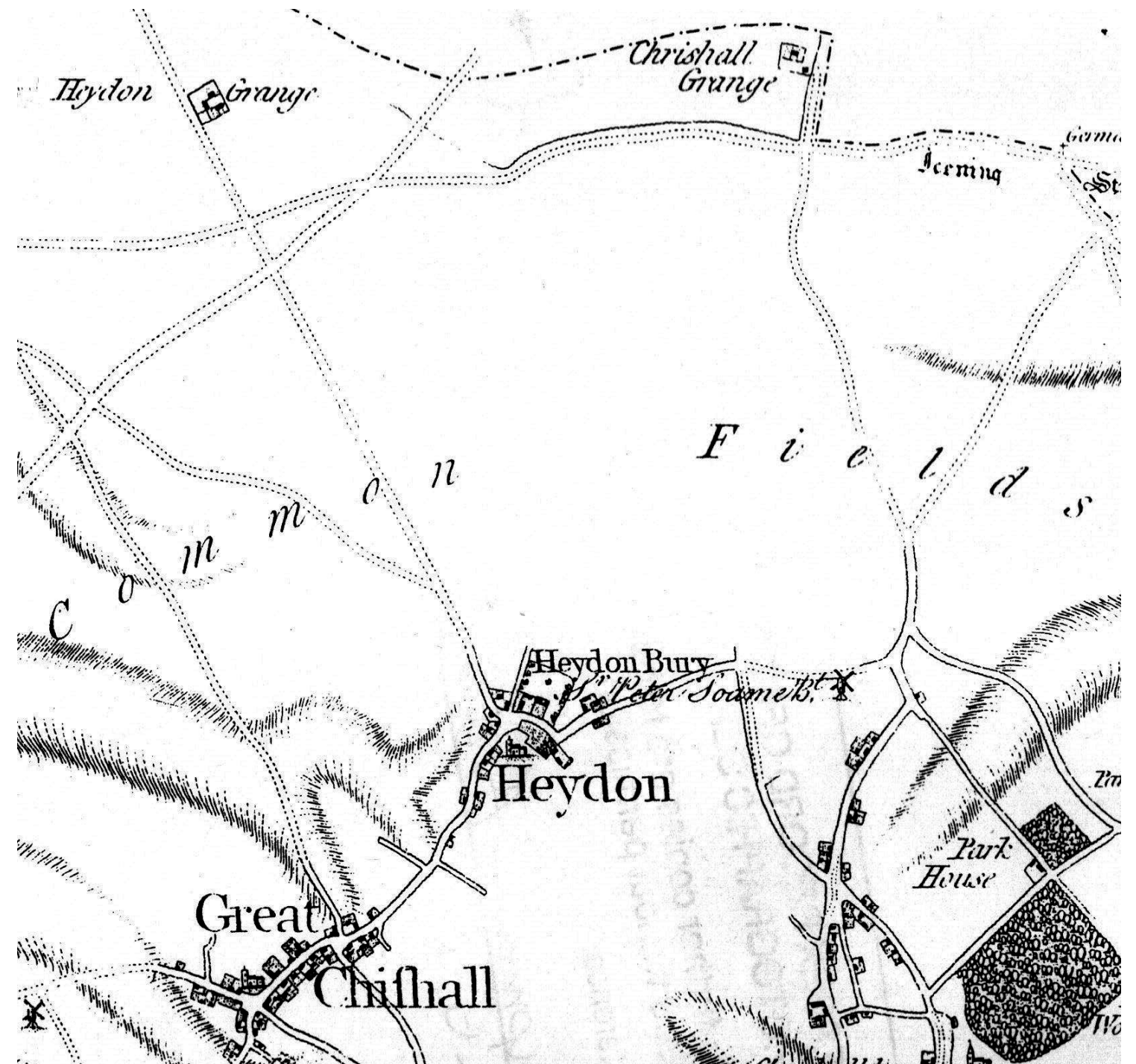
The four routes which formed the crossroads in the heart of the village are still marked by the small village green known as The Triangle (originally The Cross). The route to the north which extended into Heydon Valley is now disused and is marked by a private track leading off the green while the other three routes, (Fowlmere Road to the north, Chishill Road to the south and Heydon Lane to the east) all remain in use.

The village grew up around the church and manor extending along the main routes which converged on the village from the north and south. Alison Taylor in her book on Archaeology of Cambridgeshire Vol 1: South West Cambridgeshire states that ‘*Heydonbury which lies to the north is a double row settlement, with many small plots which looks as if it may have been a planned settlement for the lower status people.*’ Maps from the late 19th century show it as physically separate from the core of the village and including a smithy (see map to the left).

A key influence on the character of the village has been the association of the manor with the Soame and Braybrooke families since the 17th century. A number of the properties in the village illustrate estate influence in the 19th century including farmhouses and detached or paired workers cottages as well as the village school. The estate was disentailed in 1905 but was not sold until 1945 which may explain the lack of early 20th century development.

In the wider agricultural landscape many of the field boundaries within the Parish date to the period of enclosure in the 18th century. Before this the landscape would have been open supporting pasture and arable stripfields (evidenced in ridge and furrow patterns on LIDAR). Evidence of ploughing on the steeper chalk slopes can be seen in strip lynchets north of Bran Ditch (thought to be Medieval) and also within the plantation on Anthony Hill and on Chishill Down. On the heavier clay soils to the south of the Parish and around the immediate fringes of the village the enclosure pattern is older, evident in its small scale sinuous boundaries and the prevalence of mature hedgerow trees.

The Parish became part of Cambridgeshire in 1895, previously forming part of Essex, the boundary of



Extract from Chapman and Andre Map 1777 - note the map lacks information to the north of the village with no annotation of topography (Heydon Valley) or dwellings known to have existed at that time such as Ash Cottage, Home Farm and Walnut Tree Cottage for example.

which ran to the west of the village. In 1940 a bomb struck the tower of the church and destroyed the tower (stone-built with crenellations) half the nave and the north isle. By 1956 the tower had been rebuilt comprising the copper pitched roof seen today.

Map Analysis

The sequence of maps above and below illustrates how the village of Heydon has evolved over the 18th , 19th and 20th centuries. Importantly the street plan is still effectively that of the medieval village, and the network of lanes and paths are also of antiquity.

In the above map the village at Heydon clusters around the village green and church. Of note is the building to the east of the church in what is now an open field (perhaps the site of Earles). To the north of the village the fourth road leading to Heydon Valley appears to be a dead end leading into common fields. The present day Fowlmere Road does not exist and the road connecting Heydon and Heydon Grange is in alignment with the Bran Ditch.

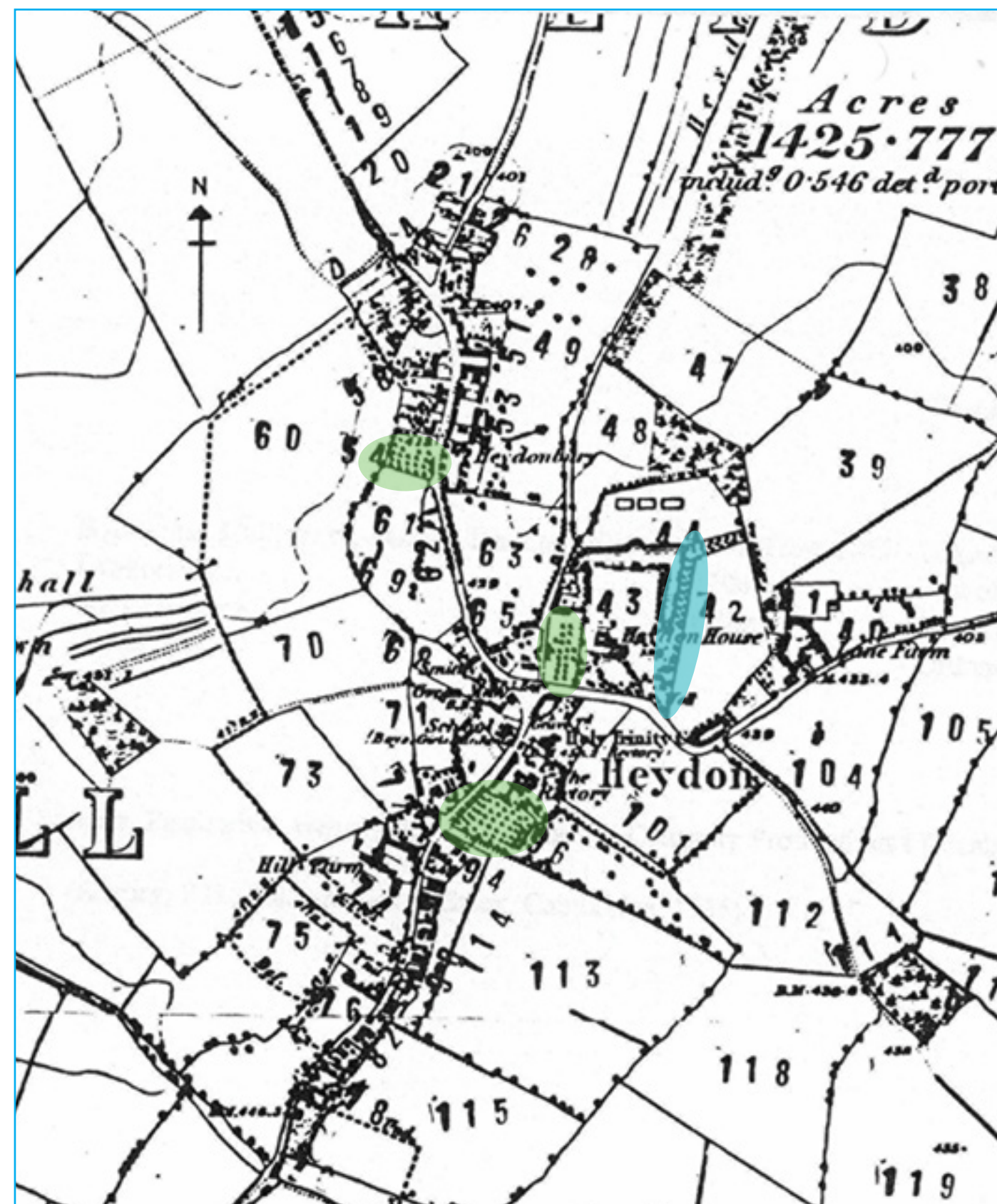


Extract from 1st Edition OS Survey 1799

This map illustrates the extent of piecemeal enclosure prior to the Enclosure Act of the 19th century. The early piecemeal enclosures tend to concentration on the clay plateau and the immediate fringes of the village. It also illustrates the addition of a northern route (on a similar alignment to the present day Fowlmere Road) heading out the village parallel to Bran Ditch and the presence of dwellings north of the village core (missed from the earlier 1777 map, and linear development on the eastern side of Chishill Road.

The map opposite illustrates the village continuing to cluster around the village green and church. Development also focuses around the junction between Fowlmere Road and Bran Ditch and is physically separate from the village core. The direct alignment of the Bran Ditch leading to the core of the village (as seen on the 1777 map) appears to have been realigned with a distinct curve and the increased primacy of a new road (Fowlmere Road) heading north out of the village is also evident. To the south, the village extended along the eastern side of Chishill Road, with Hill Farm located to the west.

There are three clear areas of orchard, the first south of Hill Cottage, the second immediately south of Heydon Place and the third to the west of Heydon House. To the east of Heydon House there is an avenue of trees which may reflect an entrance to the manor house – today a line of lime trees can be seen on the eastern edge of the grounds with a further cluster of limes adjacent to Lane Farm. This area of land is likely to have formed part of the house grounds. This map also shows the fourth route leading north from the



Extract from Enclosure and Tithe Map 1831 highlight areas of orchard (light green) and avenue (light blue)

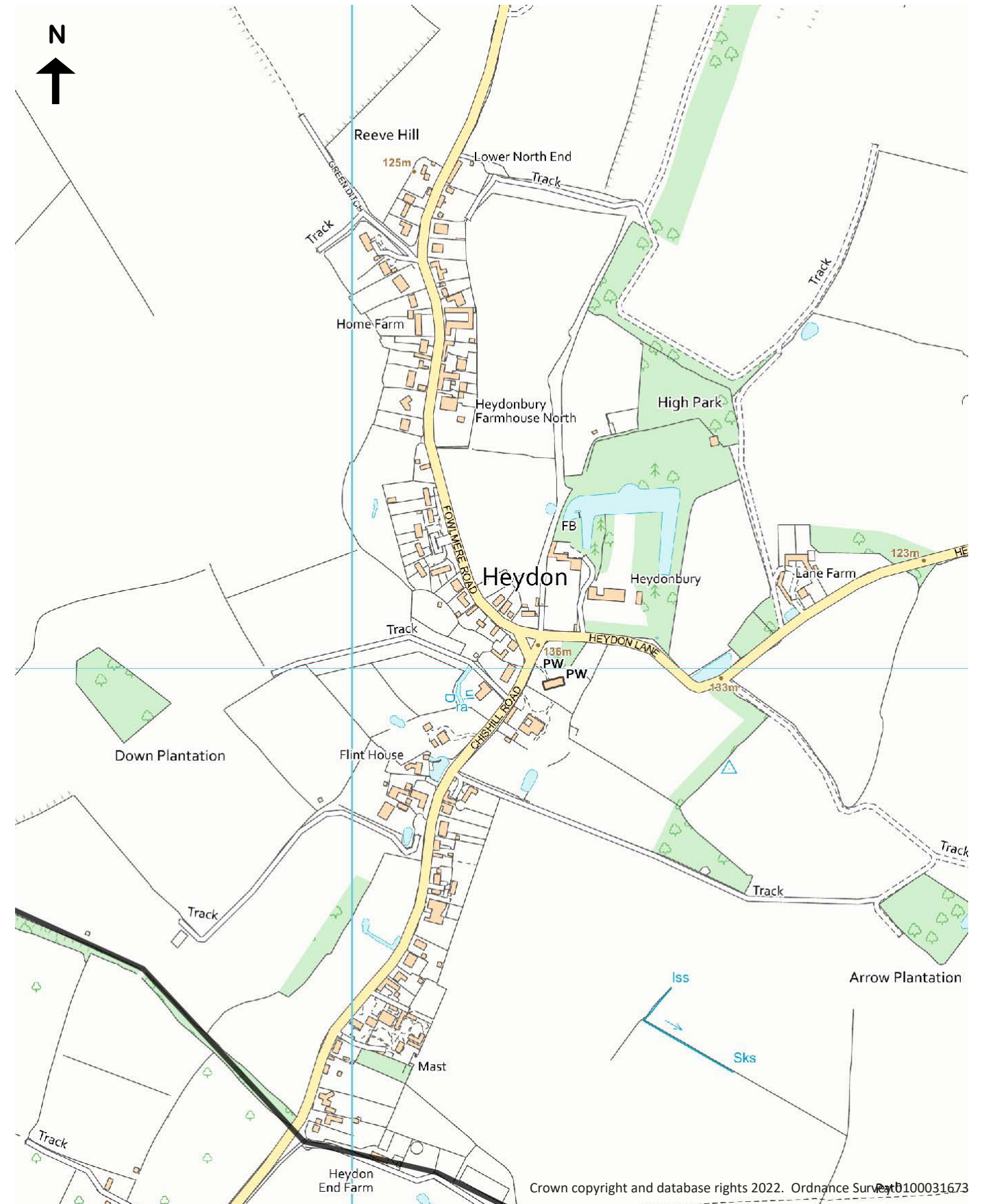
village green into Heydon Valley and the track which Alison Taylor suggests was the original route to Broad Green and Chrishall extending south east from the village pond (also known as Spring Pond). This map also shows the pattern of enclosure with the earlier piecemeal enclosures comprising field boundaries with hedgerow trees.



Extract from 1956 map (Source Historic Maps Scotland)

In the map above the settlement has changed little. To the rear of the properties along Chishill Road are linear allotments. Two of the orchards are still evident.

The map opposite illustrates that in the latter half of the 20th century and early 21st century infill housing has occurred between houses along Fowlmere Road, adjacent to Bran Ditch and in the gap between Heydonbury and the core of the village. Infill housing has also occurred along Chishill Road (including the establishment of Wood Green Animal Shelter – now disused). Other changes include the loss of small orchards.



Extract from present day OS VectorMap

Landscape Character

The Parish of Heydon is included within several landscape character assessments and at a range of scales including National Character Areas (NCAs), Greater Cambridgeshire Landscape Character Assessment and the East of England Typology. All three assessments classify the Parish into two landscapes, namely the chalk hills and claylands.

National Character Areas

The relevant characteristics for the NCA East Anglia Chalk and South Suffolk and North Essex Clayland are set out below.

Key characteristics of NCA 87 East Anglian Chalk include:

- Distinctive chalk ridge/scarp of open, smooth, rolling hills.
- Large regular fields enclosed by low hawthorn hedges, with few trees, straight roads and expansive views to the north
- Large-scale cereal production dominates the predominantly agricultural landscape and within and around settlement there are some areas of pony paddock and stables.
- Traversed by linear historic features.
- Remnant chalk grassland along road verges, ancient linear dykes and disused railway lines, chalk pits supporting chalkland flora and vestigial populations of invertebrates.
- Hill top woodlands emphasise topography.
- Vernacular includes brick and 'clunch' (building chalk) under thatched and clay tile roofs, with some earlier survival of timber frame and areas of former chalk pits.

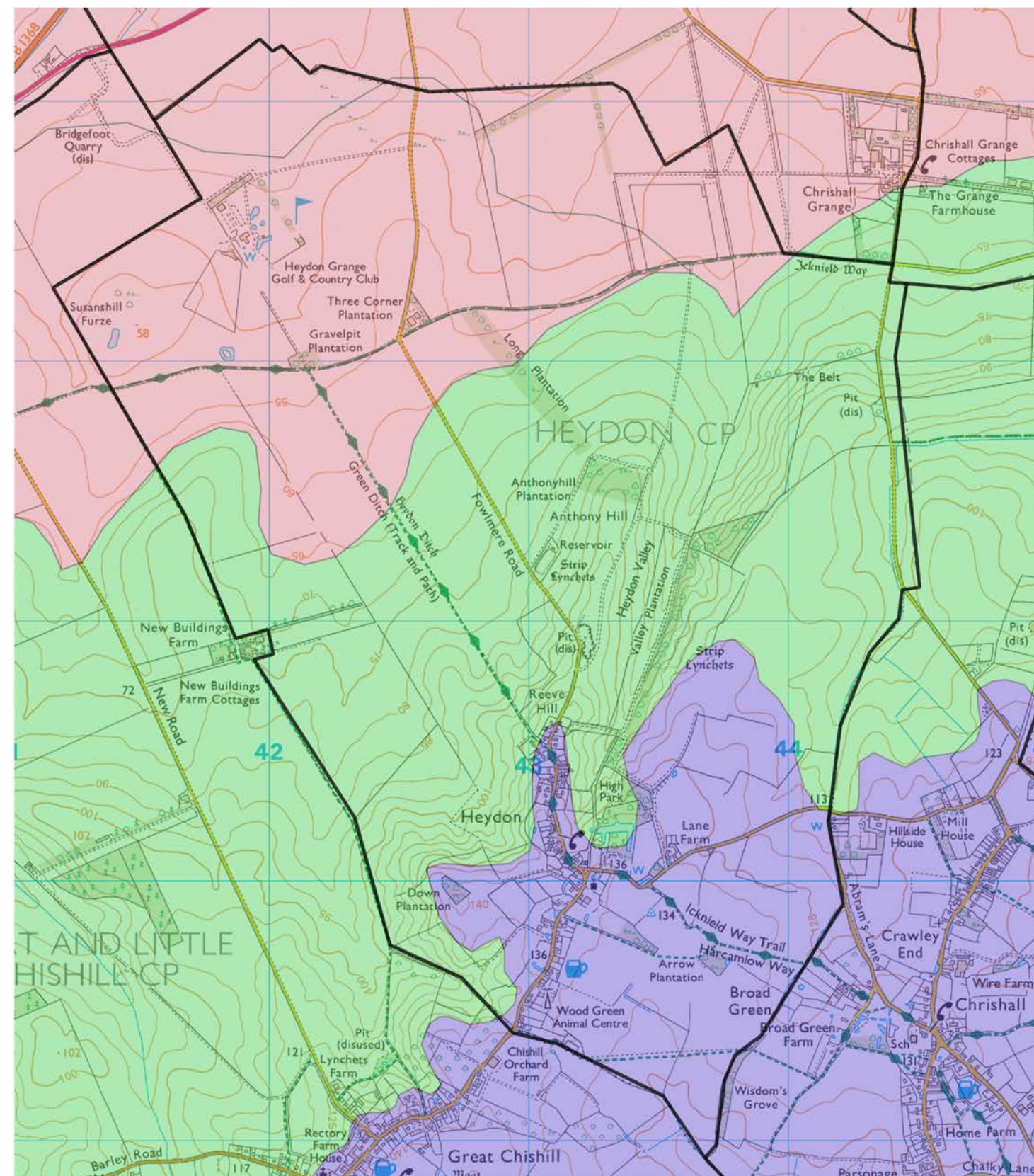
Key characteristics of NCA 86 South Suffolk and North Essex Clayland include:

- An undulating chalky boulder clay plateau is dissected by numerous river valleys, giving a topography of gentle slopes in the lower, wider valleys and steeper slopes in the narrower upper parts.
- South-east-flowing streams and rivers drain the clay plateau.
- Ancient woodlands support the dormouse and a rich diversity of flowering plants on the clay plateau.
- Large, often ancient hedgerows link woods and copses, forming wooded skylines.
- The agricultural landscape is predominantly arable with a wooded appearance. Field patterns are irregular despite rationalisation, with much ancient countryside surviving.
- There is a dispersed settlement pattern of scattered farmsteads, small villages and a concentration of moated farmsteads.
- Traditional timber-frame, often elaborate buildings with exposed timbers, colour-washed render, parquetry and steeply pitched roofs with pegtiles or long straw thatch.
- Winding, narrow and sometimes sunken lanes are bounded by deep ditches, wide verges and strong hedgerows.

Local Landscape Character

The East of England typology divides the Parish into three landscape types distinguishing between the chalk and clay landscape (Wooded Plateau Farmlands) but also subdivides the chalk into Rolling Chalk Hills and Lowland Village Chalklands (refer to Figure 1).

The Wooded Plateau Farmlands are described as a gently undulating plateau, comprising arable land use within an irregular pattern of medium to large sized fields. There are areas of ancient woodland and smaller plantations. It is a settled landscape with scattered farmsteads, hamlets and historic villages. Lanes are



Key

- Parish Boundary
- Lowland Village Farmlands
- Rolling Chalk Hills
- Wooded Plateau Farmlands

Heydon Landscape Appraisal

Figure 1: Landscape Character

rural and sinuous and there is a high frequency of waterbodies comprising ponds and medieval moated sites. The area is drained by small watercourses which flow southwards. Due to the high concentration of woodland copses and ancient sinuous hedgerows with hedgerow trees, this landscape has an established and relatively enclosed character.

In terms of the chalk landscapes the Rolling Chalk Hills are described as an elevated rolling landscape with 'downland' characteristics comprising shallow calcareous soils and some clay deposits supporting arable land use in medium to large scale regular fields defined by hedges. Within Heydon Parish this landscape comprises the steep open slopes of the north facing chalk escarpment and steep slopes of the Heydon Valley. Often this landscape has an open and exposed character with long distance views and historic features such as linear earthworks, strip lynchets and former chalk quarries. The enclosure pattern is regular in form, comprising hawthorn hedgerows with few hedgerow trees, and in some locations there are no hedgerows dividing fields. Much of the land is in arable cultivation with permanent pasture on steeper slopes.

In contrast the Lowland Village Farmlands is described as low lying, gently undulating landscape of calcareous brown soils supporting arable in medium to large scale fields defined by hedgerows with few trees. Within Heydon Parish this area includes river terrace gravel deposits and evidence of former gravel extraction and use as a golf course. Linear plantations/shelterbelts in this landscape may comprise mixed woodland and conifer species reflecting pockets of more acidic soil and landuse is mainly arable in large scale enclosures defined by well-trimmed hawthorn hedgerows.

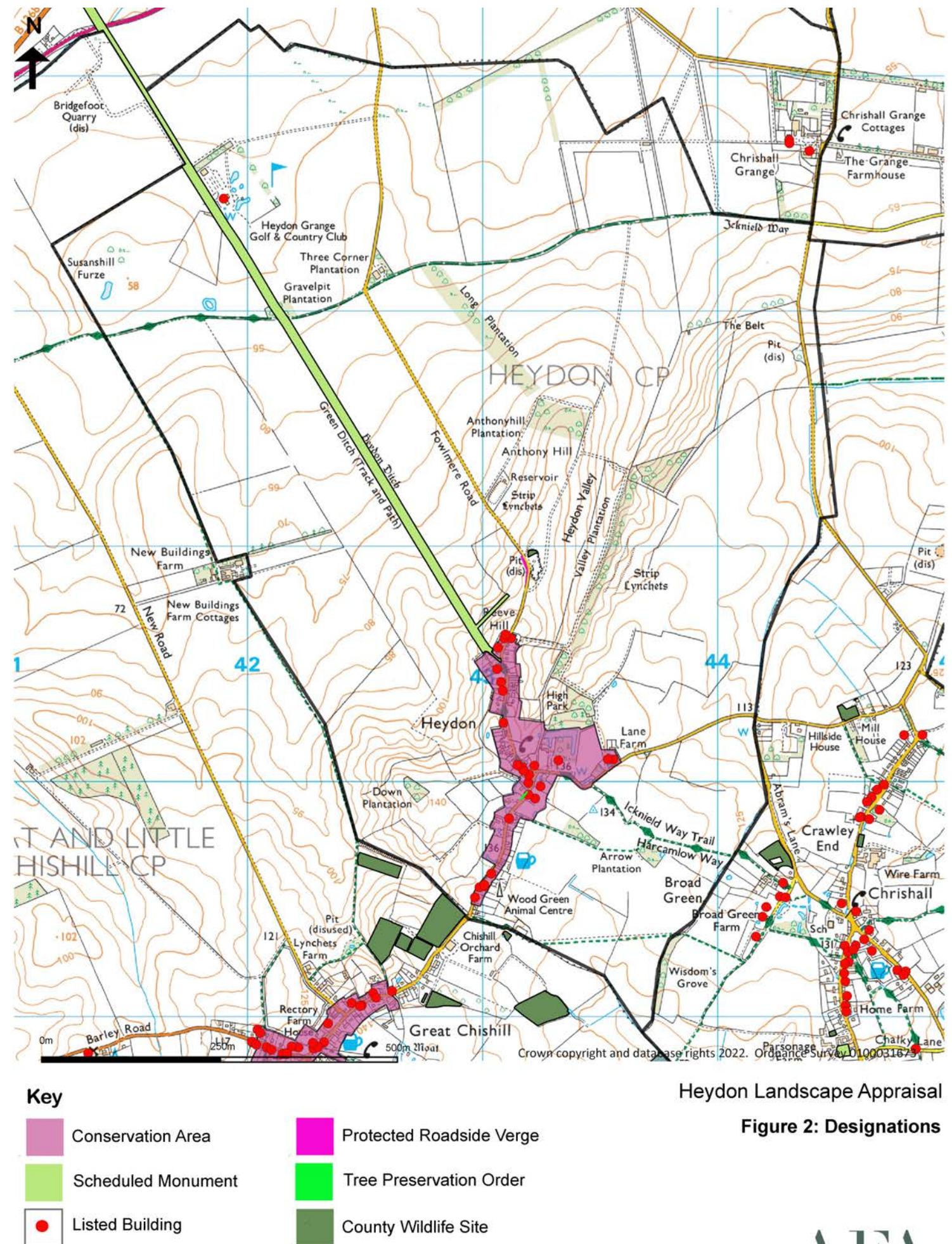
The Greater Cambridge LCA defines Heydon Parish as part of the Southern Chalk Hills Landscape Character Area (7F). This area is noted as forming the highest part of the Greater Cambridge area. Its key characteristics are described as:

- Distinctive north facing chalk escarpment incised by dry valleys
- Vast, open character with long distance panoramic views to the north
- Scattered areas of priority habitat including deciduous woodland, orchards and mosaic habitats
- Settlement comprises three historic linear villages with intimate well treed character, and scattered isolated farms and cottages

It goes on to describe the landuse as predominantly arable in regular enclosures with smaller and more organic shaped enclosures supporting pasture around villages. It also notes the area feels remote and has a strong sense of tranquillity with settlement comprising 'hilltop' villages which are linear and well vegetated. The enclosed character around the villages creates localised intimacy which contrasts with the wider rolling landform and vistas. It also notes the Heydon Ditch as a distinctive linear earthwork.

The overall chalk landscapes were considered to be in good condition and have a strong character. Sensitivities were noted as:

- Distinctive, elevated landscape that forms locally prominent hills and ridges that contrast with the surrounding, low-lying landscape that is characteristic of Greater Cambridge
- Open, long distance, panoramic views across Greater Cambridge and beyond from this upland landscape
- Scattered woodland including ancient woodland on summits and slopes
- Network of historic routes and earthworks that contribute to the area's sense of place
- Wooded and undeveloped ridgelines are visually sensitive
- Tranquil, often remote rural landscape away from major roadways



Cultural and Natural Assets

The cultural and natural assets of Heydon Parish are illustrated on Figure 3. Heydon Conservation Area covers the majority of the village. Currently there is no Conservation Area Appraisal. Within the Conservation Area there are 25 listed buildings and structures. The oldest buildings date to the 15th and 16th century and include a former barn, granary and cowhouse at Lane Farm, 90 Lower North Road, Walnut Tree Cottage, Ash Cottage, and Bramley Cottage all on Fowlmere Road. Other dwellings which date to the 17th and 18th centuries include Sutton's Cottage, End Cottage and barn, Home Farm and Hill Cottage on Fowlmere Road and The Old Post Office in the centre of the village while along Chishill Road there is the barn west of Halls Cottage, Miss Long's Cottage, Highway Cottage and Greenhill. Properties which date to the 19th century focus on the central core of the village including Heydon House, Heydon Place, Old School House, Cross House but also include a dispersed pattern of pairs of cottages along Fowlmere Road and Chishill Road e.g. Ivy Cottages. In between these historic dwellings are more recent infill houses and collectively this gives an eclectic mix of building styles within the village.

The Conservation Area boundary is not drawn tightly around the built-up areas of the village but also includes open land to the west of Chishill Road including a water feature which has a rectilinear form and is likely to be the remnants of a moated site. LIDAR data indicates other unusual rectilinear features to the north of this, all of which sit within the Conservation Area boundary. However, LIDAR data also indicates another potentially significant archaeological site to the east of the church. This is likely to be the site of Earles, a short-lived manor dating to the 15th and 16th century located next to the churchyard and opposite Heydon House, which is noted in Alison Taylor's publication *Archaeology of Cambridgeshire Vol 1.1997*. If this is the case then this land may form an important part of the historical evolution of the village and subject to further research, could arguably be included in the Conservation Area.

Bran Ditch is listed as a Scheduled Monument. This designation includes the route of the ditch and a 20m buffer zone either side. It also includes the strip lynchets on Reeve Hill. There are also areas of strip lynchets evident in the Heydon Valley, Anthony Hill and north of Down Plantation.

There are no areas of ancient woodland within the Parish although there are some just to the south of the Parish boundary which are visible in long distance views e.g. Barnard's Wood. Despite this Heydon Valley is noted as the only undeveloped wooded valley in Cambridgeshire. There is evidence in some of the woodlands and hedgerows of former coppice management and a number of notable veteran trees. As noted above the enclosure pattern on the clay plateau and in the immediate vicinity of the village pre-dates the enclosure period of the 18th century and a number of the hedgerows and trees are therefore of some antiquity, especially those with sinuous boundaries. In terms of Tree Preservation Orders there is a line of horse chestnut trees along Chishill Road which form part of a group TPO although it is understood that the avenue of Field Maple trees which line the approach to the village along Fowlmere Road is also being considered as a TPO.

The vast majority of the Parish is in arable cultivation although prior to 1945 much of the Parish is likely to have been permanent grassland. Remnant areas of pasture do still exist in Heydon Valley and on some of the steeper slopes. The Heydon chalk pit is a County Wildlife Site valued for its chalk grassland species (22 species were recorded in 2021) and as an area of natural green space for residents to enjoy. The Parish Council own and manage the area and a management plan was prepared in 2004. Steep banks and bare chalk define parts of the perimeter of the pit and there are currently ongoing discussions regarding the sites recognition as a Regionally Important Geological site (RIGs). There is encroachment by scrub, nettles and ruderal vegetation and erosion and reduction in floral diversity due to frequent mowing. Across the road from the chalk pit the road verge is a Protected Roadside Verge and part of the CWS also valued for its chalk grassland species - 17 species of chalk grassland plants were recorded for this verge.

Other landscape features of note are the high concentration of waterbodies on the clay plateau either associated with individual properties or as part of the streetscape. Heydon Parish falls within an amber zone

for Great Crested Newts and it is likely many of the waterbodies within the village are a suitable habitat.

There are three ponds that make a particularly contribution to the character of the village namely:

- Spring Pond (or Village Pond) – previously part of the grounds associated with Heydon House and an important feature when approaching and leaving the village
- Church Pond – located in the church grounds and separated from the green by an evergreen hedge, although historically it was open to the road and used to water horses and swell cart wheels
- Chishill Road Pond which now forms part of Flint House.

Other water features of note include:

- Linear rectangular water feature in the south of the village which may have been a moated site and or linked to the pond opposite 25 Chishill Road to the north (earthwork features are visible in this area on LIDAR).
- Pond associated with the grounds of Heydon Place
- Rectilinear moat within Heydon House grounds



Heydon Chalk Pit (County Wildlife Site)

Detailed Analysis

This section builds on previous sections of the report and seeks to establish more detailed baseline data on landscape context and settlement character.

Character and Setting

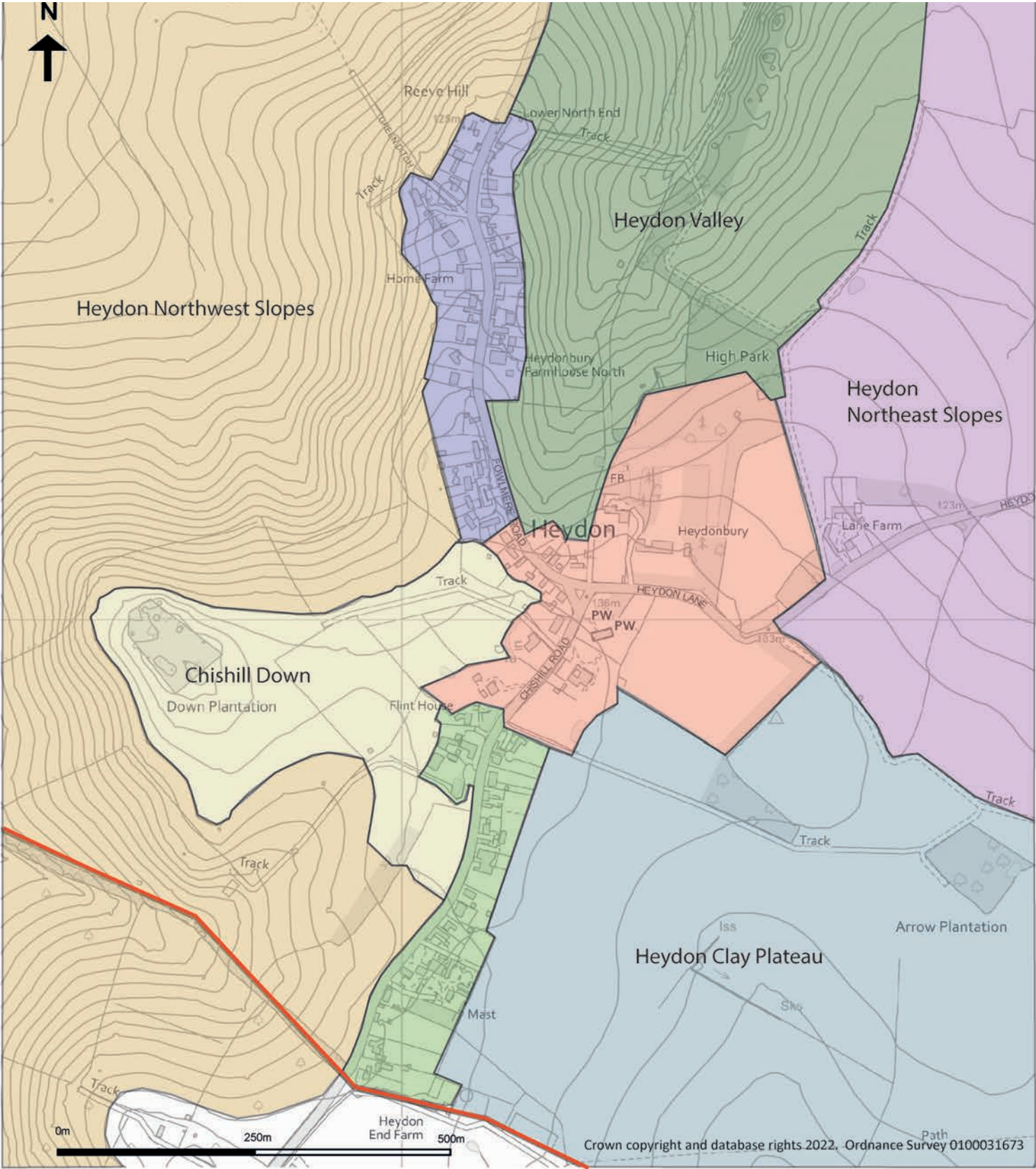
In order to understand how the village of Heydon sits within the landscape and to understand subtle variations in character, the built up areas of the village and the immediate setting of the village have been broken down into a series of landscape units. These are illustrated on Figure 3. The surrounding landscape reflects the varied topography and sense of enclosure as well as the underlying geology of the area and includes the Heydon Valley, Heydon Northwest Slopes, Chishill Down, Heydon Clay Plateau and Heydon Northeast Slopes. A brief description of each of these areas is provided below.

Heydon Valley

This valley lies to the north and east of the village and forms a steep sided cleft within the chalk scarp. Landuse comprises pasture including grazing for horses. The eastern slopes are defined by the linear woodland of Valley Plantation, while to the west the valley is defined by the vegetated rear gardens of houses along Fowlmere Road and by the promontory of higher land at Anthony Hill. At the head of the valley are the properties of The Old Post Office and Heydon House and its wooded gardens. Due to the steep valley topography and vegetation the landscape has an enclosed and intimate character. There is currently no public access although there is evidence of the former northern trackway leading off the village green. Historic features include the earthworks of the fishponds associated with Heydon House and strip lynchets. There are a number of mature trees and evidence of hazel coppice which add to the established character. The woodland and pastures have a texture character comprising a froth of buttercups and cow parsley in early summer, although in places they appear unkempt or under managed. The area has a strong tranquility and affords some long-distance views to the north. This distinctive character is unique in the context of Cambridgeshire and is especially valued.



View north into the head of pastoral and wooded Heydon Valley. Housing in the distance is that within the core of the village.



Key

Parish Boundary

Local Landscape Character

Village Character

Heydonbury

Heydon Core

South Heydon

Heydon Landscape Appraisal
Figure 3: Local Character

Heydon Northwest Slopes

This landscape forms the western setting to the village flanking the dwellings along Fowlmere Road and also the southern end of the village. It comprises the steep slopes of the chalk scarp and has a distinct westerly aspect. It includes two notable promontories or knolls which are topped by woodland copses which emphasise their form and prominence namely Anthonyhill Plantation on Anthony Hill and Down Plantation on Chishill Down. These hills form important landmarks on approaching the village from the northwest. They are also important landmarks from the wider landscape, the former being visible from the east/Icknield Way and the latter from the south west e.g. Barley and beyond. Due to the steepness of the chalk scarp, historic routes that climb the scarp often become incised forming hollow ways e.g. Fowlmere Road on approaching the village, the top end of Bran Ditch and the former trackway extending northwest from Chishill Road along the Parish boundary. The chalk slopes have a distinct rolling character forming strong sinuous lines, the open slopes affording long distance views northwest from the edge of the settlement and public rights of way. Land use is mainly arable in medium to large scale fields which reflect the regular rectilinear 19th century enclosure. Hedgerows are frequently well trimmed and without hedgerow trees - any notable trees within the farmed landscape tend to comprise linear shelterbelts. On the steeper slopes around Reeve Hill the land is left unploughed as rough grassland.

This landscape, due to its dramatic form, sculptural shapes and wooded knolls has inspired local artists. Its scenic views, natural heritage interest associated with chalk grassland and its cultural heritage interest associated with the Bran Ditch, strip lynchets and numerous archaeological sites make it an especially valued landscape.



View northwest from Reeve Hill looking down Bran Ditch and across the open expansive arable farmland



Painting by artist John Ross



Painting by artist Paula Parish

Chishill Down

This landscape forms a small area of flatter elevated land between the chalk scarp and the edge of the village and reflects the junction between the chalk and the clay plateau. From the northern and southern margins of this area there are elevated open views to the wider landscape and along to the distinctive tree clump of Down Plantation. Away from the edge views are more contained as a result of field boundary vegetation. Landuse is mainly arable but also includes areas of permanent pasture at the rear of properties along Chishill Road. There are no public rights of way. Although this landscape is relatively flat, its small extent and proximity to the scarp face mean it is particularly sensitive to the introduced new vertical elements which may be visible on the skyline and which may interrupt or undermine the visual primacy of Down Plantation on Chishill Down.



View towards Hadley Grange illustrating the flat plateau between the edge of the village and chalk scarp

Heydon Clay Plateau

This landscape forms an area of relatively flat/gently undulating landscape to the south and east of Heydon village which slopes gently to the south and east. Landuse is predominately intensive arable in fields which are medium scale defined by hedgerows with frequent mature hedgerow trees. This coupled with blocks of woodland give an overall enclosed character with some longer distance views. Farm tracks and public rights of way traverse this landscape. Waterbodies such as ponds are a particular feature of this landscape, especially within the village of Heydon which sits within this area. Views to Heydon Church and Spring Pond impart a strong sense of place which has inspired local artists.



View southeast towards Arrow Plantation illustrating the relatively flat clay plateau and woodland copses



Painting by artist Paula Parish

Heydon Northeast Slopes

This landscape forms the chalk slopes on the northeast side of the village. These slopes are relatively gentle sloping more gradually in a northeasterly direction and affording some long distance views out of the Parish.

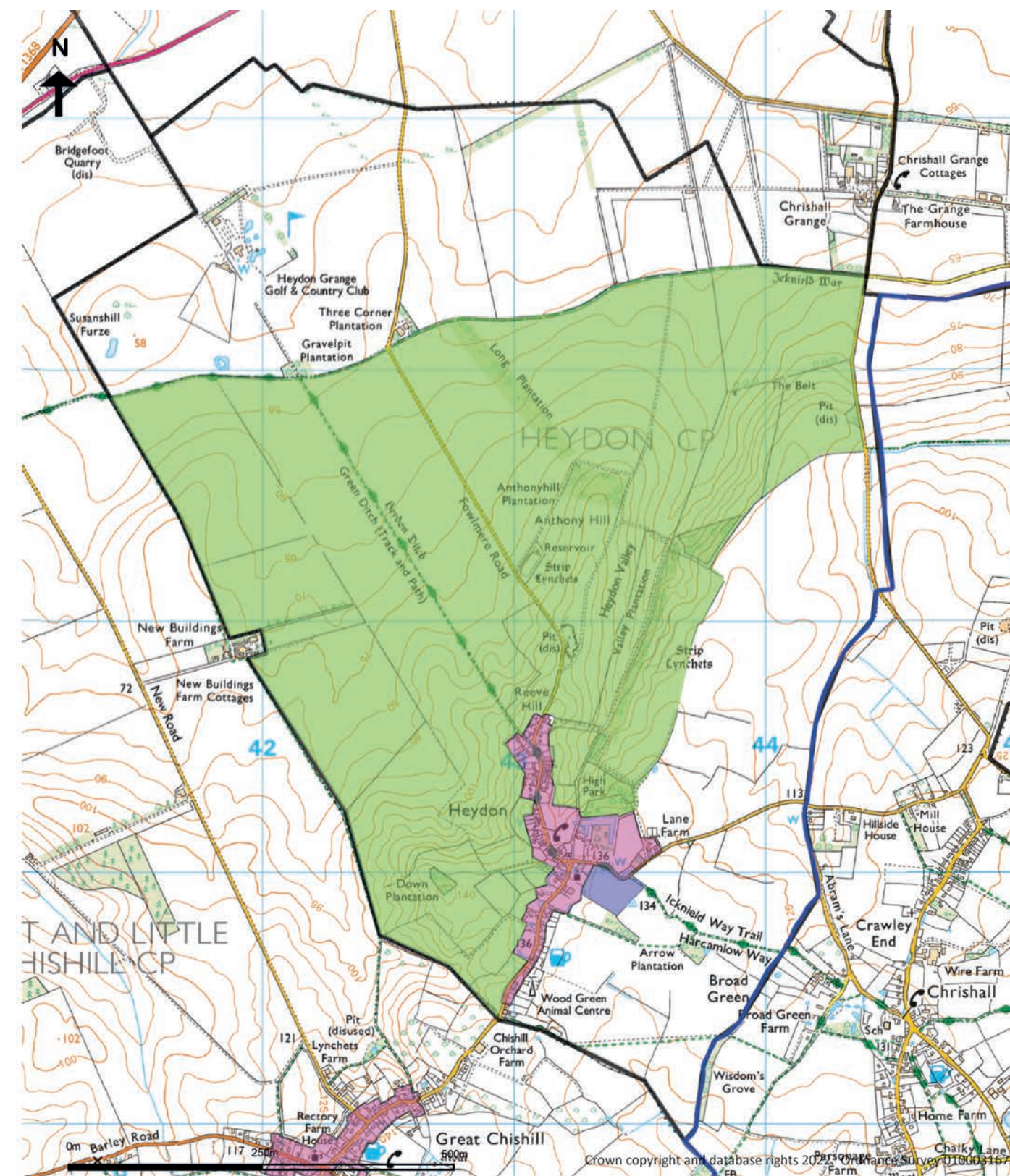


View northeast illustrating gradual sloping chalk farmland and long distance views



Valued Landscape

The special qualities of the landscape in and around the village of Heydon have been described in the preceding sections of this report. This analysis has revealed that not all valued aspects of the landscape are given sufficient recognition. Figure 4 illustrates those areas which are regarded as deserving of further recognition due to their natural and cultural heritage importance or scenic qualities and distinctiveness. Proposals include the designation of a valued landscape and an extension to the Conservation Area to include land east of the church.



Village Character

The following section considers the character, context and setting of the village. The character and form of Heydon enables it to be divided into three discrete areas which are described below.

Heydonbury

Topography and setting

This part of the village sits on a narrow ridgeline which slopes gently in a northerly direction, with the steep scarp slopes to the west and Heydon Valley to the east. Historically development sits close to, but set back from, the break in slope.

Approach and gateways along Fowlmere Road

Anthony Hill/Plantation and Down Plantation frame the approach to the village – these woodlands form notable clumps on an otherwise featureless/open skyline which is glimpsed between the field maple avenue that lines the route. The road climbs gradually along the avenue and then steeply, flanked by hedgerows both sides as it bends the corner. Before reaching the village a break in the hedgerow affords elevated views west across downland slopes, the open plain of arable farmland stretching away in the distance, and east into the deep, wooded cleft slopes of Heydon Valley. On the final approach, the road verge is lost and the route becomes slightly incised between low banks topped by hedgerows, as it ascends Reeve Hill. The village is reached where development begins on both sides of the road and where the gradient lessens. Both gateway properties (Revels Cottage/90 Fowlmere Road (Grade II) and The End Cottage and barn (Grade II) are historic and reinforce the sense of arriving at an historic hilltop village.

Streetscape and buildings

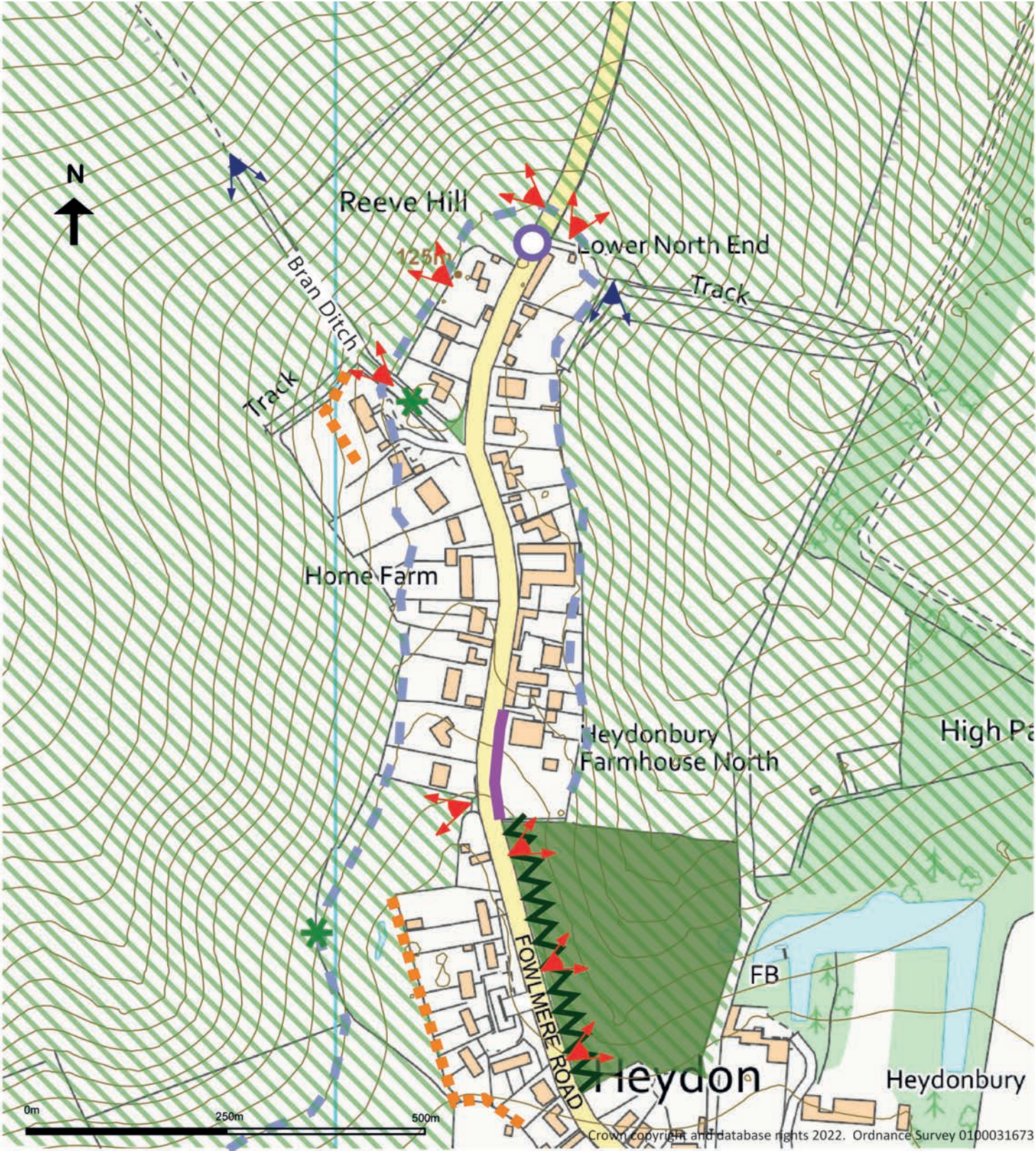
This part of the village comprises a double row settlement with buildings on both sides of the road set within small plots. There are notable farm buildings associated with Home Farm and Heydonbury Farmhouse. Associated barns are located along the edge of road and the oldest properties are often orientated gable end on. Many of the historic properties are single storey or 1.5 storeys in height, whereas more recent infill housing is larger in scale.

Open spaces and gaps

There are two open spaces within this part of the village. The first is a small triangular green/verge at the junction between Bran Ditch and Fowlmere Road. This area marks the top end of the ditch and falls within the scheduled area. It is an incidental area of open space prone to use for signage and street furniture. It marks the historic junction between two important routes. The second is the open frontage along the road east of High Close – here there is no built development and the road is flanked by a native hedgerow. This area affords elevated views over the hedge, down the Heydon Valley. This gap, in association with the mature native hedgerow at Ash Cottage and brick/flint wall at Heydonbury Farmhouse, reinforces the separate character of Heydonbury from the central core of the village around Heydon House.

Edge character

The rear gardens to properties along Fowlmere Road are generally small in size and well vegetated. This, coupled with their position set back from the break in slope ensures that the village is not visually prominent when viewed from the wider landscape. Within the Heydon Valley vegetated rear gardens filter views, although occasional areas of non native hedging such as leyandii, or exposed fencing sit less comfortably within the rural setting. In views from the west dwellings which are most visible are more recent and stand out either due to their height or position on the slopes.



Key

- | | | | |
|--|---------------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|
| | Gateway | | Existing and Potential Open space |
| | Views towards settlement | | Sensitive break in Slope |
| | Views to wider landscape | | Abrupt built edge |
| | Area of Valued Landscape | | Landscape features |
| | Important gap in built frontage | | Visually important walls |

Heydon Landscape Appraisal

Figure 5: Heydonbury



Heydonbury



View north along the scarp to more recent housing which has stated to extend down the slope



Home Farm, Fowlmere Road



Views north along the rear of housing to the east of Fowlmere Road. Rear gardens extend into Heydon Valley and conifer planting appear uncharacteristic

Heydon Core

Topography and Setting

The central core of Heydon is located on elevated land set back from the main breaks in slope, centred around the church and manor house (Heydon House) and the village green (formed by the convergence of a number of routes). Many of the properties in this part of the village are set within generous and well vegetated grounds while others historically performed local amenity functions e.g. the post office, school and pub.

Approach and gateways along Heydon Lane

The outer gateway to Heydon Core is experienced along Heydon Lane which climbs gradually from the junction with Abram's Lane on the Parish boundary becoming incised in places. The gateway is reached where the ground levels off and at Spring Pond where the road bends round to the right. Although a point of arrival is reached here, this gateway is unusual in that no buildings are evident although there is a glimpsed view to the church set within mature trees. The road then widens, flanked by grass verges and an imposing brick wall to the right and lower brick wall to the left. The widening, grass verges and brick walls enhance perceptions of arriving at somewhere important. There are views to areas of open grassland which, coupled with mature lime trees east of Heydon House and remnant park railing, impart a remnant parkland character. There are also glimpsed views towards the church. The main point of arrival is reached at the gated driveway to Heydon House, where a vista towards the village green is possible.

When approaching along Fowlmere Road the gateway is reached just past the open frontage at Bramley Cottage. Here development occurs both sides of the road and a vista towards the central green opens up.

When approaching from the south along Chishill Road the gap in built development comprising the lime trees, park railing and hedgerow associated with Heydon Place signifies the gateway. This is reinforced by the associated hedgerow and horse chestnut trees and collectively this 'vegetated gap' in development marks the arrival at the central core of the village, beyond which views open up to the village green.

Streetscape and buildings

With the exception of the cottages and housing along Fowlmere Road which are located relatively close to the road frontage, dwellings are set back behind vegetation or red-brick/brick and flint walls. The vegetation associated with the church screens it from view.

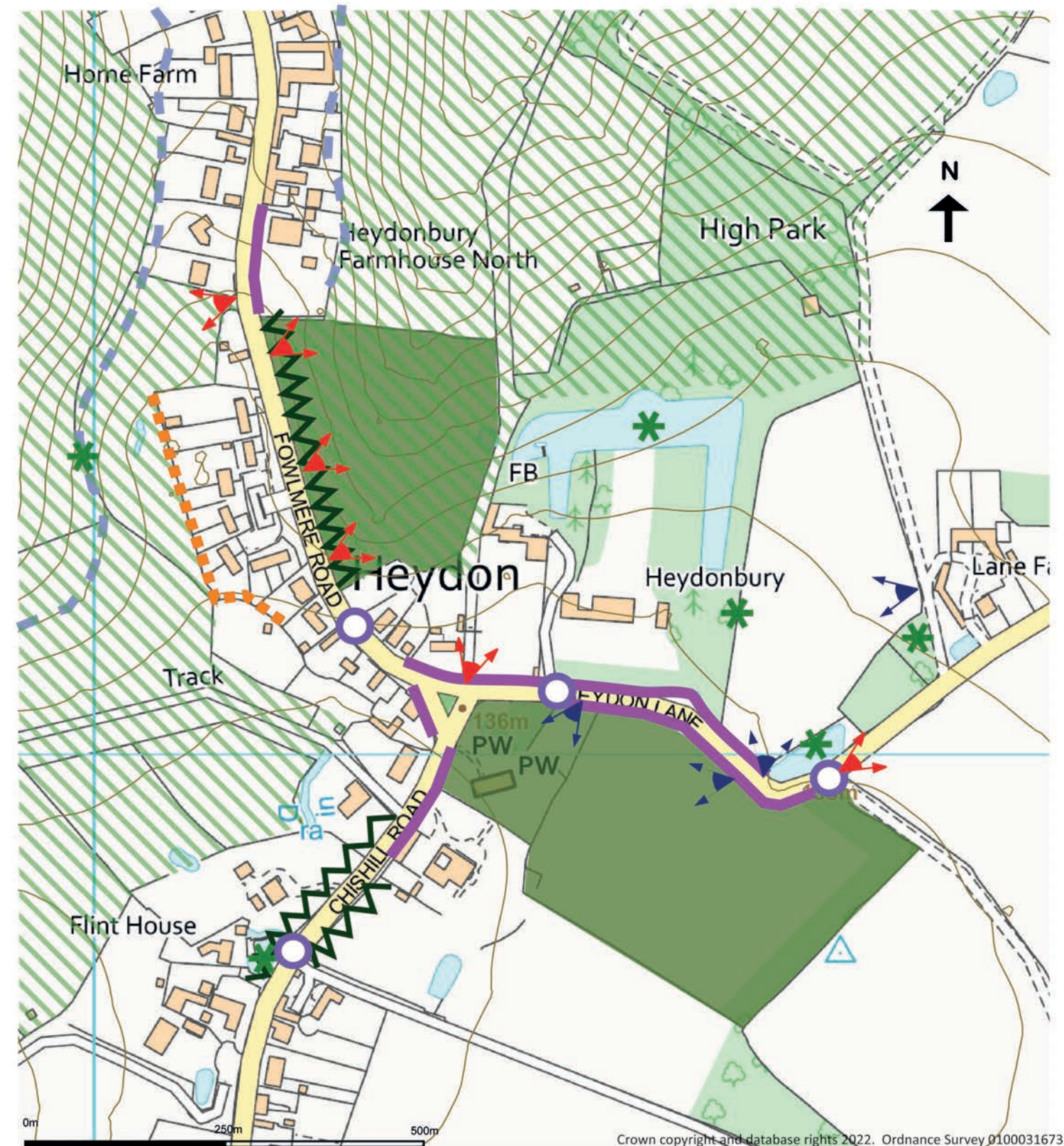
Open Spaces and gaps

This part of the village contains a number of important areas of open space including

- Village Green – this area of open grass marks the centre of the village and is historically important and forms a setting to key listed buildings
- Open and wide grass verges along Heydon Lane as noted above
- Churchyard and pond
- Spring Pond and open pasture east of Church and east of Heydon Place

Edge character and boundary treatment

Due to the concentration and maturity of boundary vegetation there are very limited views towards built development from the surrounding countryside. The exception is perhaps the rear of properties along Fowlmere Road which are visible from Heydon Valley and land west of the former School House.



Key

	Gateway		Existing and Potential Open space
	Views Towards the Settlement		Sensitive break in Slope
	Views to Wider Landscape		Abrupt built edge
	Area of Valued Landscape		Landscape Features
	Important Gap in Built Frontage		Visually important walls

Heydon Landscape Appraisal

Figure 6: Heydon Core

Heydon Core

View across Spring Pond on leaving the village at its eastern gateway



View along Heydon Lane into the village illustrating the imposing brick walling and wide grass verges

Topography and Setting

Heydon End comprises the southern part of the village which extends as a linear line of development along Chishill Road. At its northern end it comprises dwellings on both sides of the road but further south it becomes a single line of dwellings on the eastern side only with some areas of limited back land development associated with the former Wood Green Animal Shelter. To the west of the road the land drops away into a valley on the edge of the scarp while to the east the land forms part of the elevated and relatively level clay plateau.

Approach and gateways along Chishill Road

On approaching Heydon from Great Chishill the road climbs gently in elevation and the open agricultural land between the two settlements just beyond the Parish is important in retaining a sense of separation. Although dwellings start almost upon entering the Parish, the wider village is not perceived due to the geometry of the road and development occurring on just one side. The western edge of the road is defined by a mature hedgerow with some views across rolling landform to Down Plantation and wider landscape. It is not until reaching Miss Long’s Cottage that a stronger sense of arriving in the village is obtained in part due to the vista along the street and the closing in of views. Beyond the gateway the land starts to level off and views out to the wider landscape become more constrained, this coupled with the start of the footway signals a greater sense of arrival within the village.

Streetscape and buildings

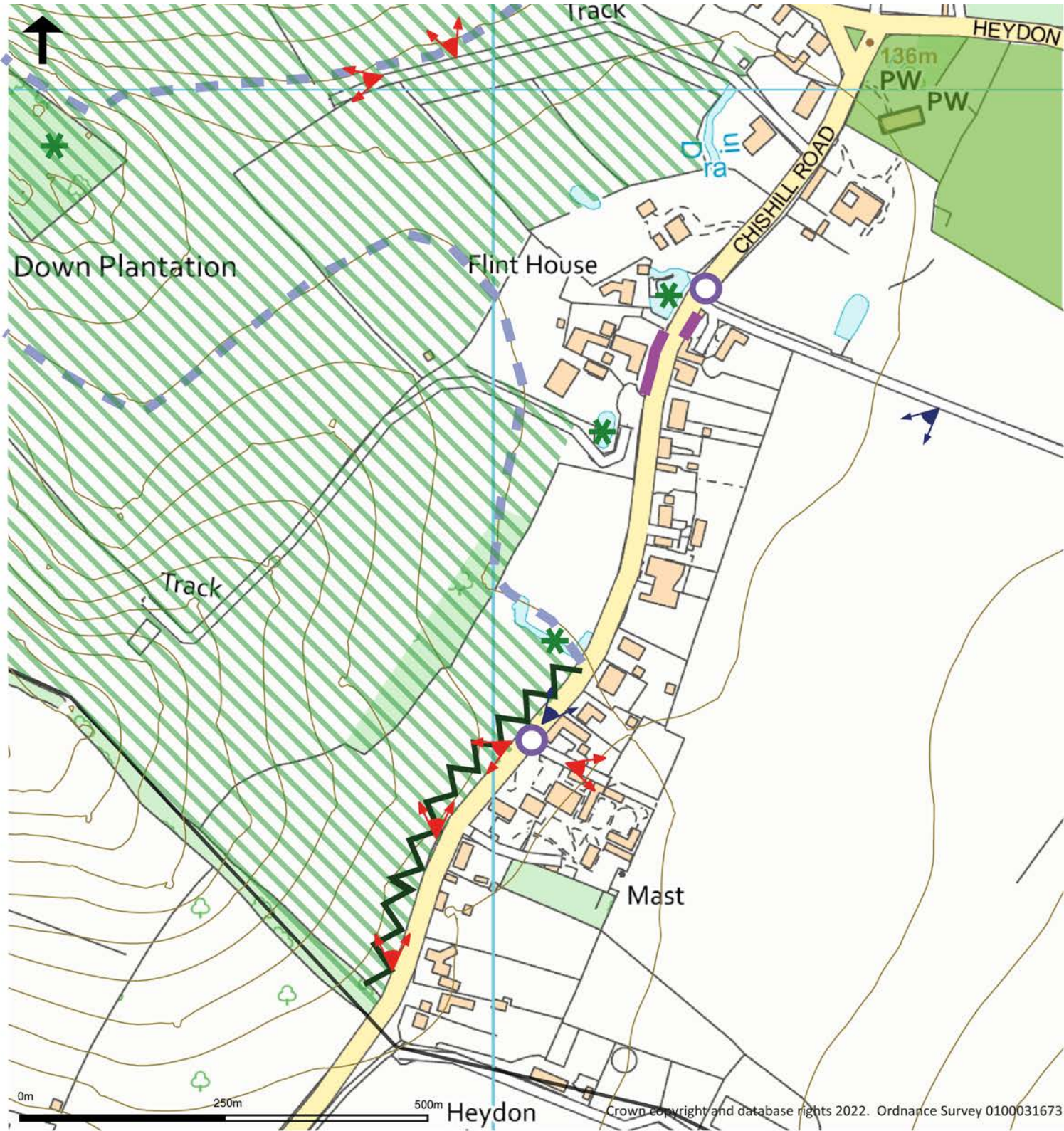
Curtilage treatment of properties in this part of the village comprises a mix of picket fencing, walling and hedgerow. The position of buildings relative to the road is also varied with some of the older properties located onto the edge of the road while more recent infill properties are set back with front gardens and drives.

Open Spaces and gaps

There are no notable areas of open space in this part of the village. However, there is an important open frontage to the west of Chishill Road. This open frontage enables the wider landscape to penetrate into the village ensuring a strong connection to its rural context. This open frontage is also a defining characteristic of this part of the village and distinguishes it from that of Heydonbury and the core.

Edge character and Boundary treatments

The rear of properties is generally well vegetated but in places there are sections of garden fencing and non-native hedging such as leylandii. This outer boundary to the settlement marks the previous extent of allotments associated with the properties.



Key

Gateway

Views Towards the Settlement

Views to Wider Landscape

Area of Valued Landscape

Important Gap in Built Frontage

Existing and Potential Open Space

Sensitive break in Slope

Abrupt built edge

Landscape Features

Visually important walls

Heydon Landscape Appraisal
Figure 7: South Heydon



South Heydon



View south along Chishill Road illustrating the mature lime trees along the boundary of Heydon Place



57 Chishill Road and Miss Long's Cottage with Highway Cottage in the background



View along the rear gardens of dwellings on Chishill Road illustrating the vegetated character and some areas of fencing and conifer planting

Summary of Findings

Special Qualities to Conserve and Enhance

The above analysis has demonstrated that Heydon is a special place, not just due to its history and the extent to which historic features remain visible and tangible but also because of its unique and dramatic landscape setting. In terms of open space and open frontages these have been found to make a particular contribution to the character of village, gateways points and sense of arrival. More widely the village has been found to sit within a landscape of high value as a result of its scenic qualities and cultural and natural heritage interest.

The following conclusions can be reached as to the special qualities of Heydon Parish which, wherever possible, should be retained and enhanced. Special qualities include:

- Distinct open northwest facing chalk slopes
- Secluded pastoral character of Heydon Valley penetrating into the village
- Linear form of development along Fowlmere Road
- Single sided development along Chishill Road
- Eclectic character of housing
- Lack of visibility of development from the wider landscape
- Distinct character in terms of the three parts of the village
- Open frontages which reinforce individual character of the three areas and sense of arrival at the village core

Future Change

Heydon village has evolved gradually with some of the most significant change occurring in the last century as a result of limited infill development. This has resulted in an eclectic mix of housing styles and ages. The most significant development has occurred at High Close where the introduction of a small housing estate of similar style units has undermined the gap between the core of the village and Heydonbury and introduced dwellings with a relatively prominent abrupt edge. The analysis has also indicated that buildings which extend down the slopes, or are two storey located close to the break in slope, are generally more visually prominent in views from the wider landscape.

Based on this understanding, the following changes should be avoided in future:

- Creation of abrupt edges to development with little vegetation or landscape on the edge of settlement
- New infill housing which appears out of scale in terms of height and mass and blocks important gaps between buildings/connections to the landscape
- Housing development with single housing types which contrast with the organic and eclectic styles and orientation of buildings in the village
- Planting of leylandii hedging and trees or other urban curtilage treatment such as fencing
- Large scale vertical features which interrupt the unfettered sinuous skylines
- Ad hoc incremental development along rural lanes between Heydon and Great Chishill

- Development within the setting of important heritage assets including Bran Ditch and Heydon House (Heydonbury) which undermines the landscape setting and historic significance of these features

Not all areas are equally sensitive to development and this assessment has indicated that the areas which have greatest capacity to accommodate some small-scale development lie to the southeast, on the clay plateau. Areas include the brownfield land associated with the former Wood Green Animal Shelter site but might also include some linear development along the track south of Heydon Place and potentially along the track east of Spring Pond. Where it is concluded that areas have some capacity for development it should not be assumed that these areas are free from sensitivity. Great care will be needed to ensure that development reflects the character and form of the village and does not adversely affect the character of the gateways. Consideration should be given to incorporating small groups of cottages rather than a single development, dwellings of a single type or a scale property which is not in keeping with the historic vernacular of different parts of the village.

Change can of course occur beyond the village and the wider landscape of the Parish is also sensitive to development, especially those areas which are considered to reflect a valued landscape. The open chalk slopes to the north and west of the village are sensitive to tall vertical structures, large scale farm buildings or solar farm development, as a result of their open character and distinctive skyline and hilltops. These landscapes are vulnerable to development which disrupts the strong sinuous lines and unfettered skylines of the chalk scarp and which create a greater sense of enclosure or dramatically alter land use patterns. This landscape is also vulnerable to agricultural practices which damage buried archaeology. Whilst the Heydon Valley is more enclosed in character, this area is vulnerable to change which undermines its rural, pastoral and tranquil qualities.

Future Initiatives

The landscape management and development guidelines contained in the Greater Cambridge LCA aim to safeguard the character of the countryside and settlements of the chalkland landscapes by ensuring new development integrates positively with the existing character. It therefore provides a framework of broad principles that all development in the countryside will be required to follow.

In addition to these guidelines, this assessment has highlighted a number of initiatives which could be taken forward and seek to safeguard the special qualities of the village and its setting. These initiatives are set out below.

- Seek an **extension of the Conservation Area** to include the land to the east of the church and the site of the former moated site of the Earles
- **Recognise in planning terms the valued landscape** defined in Figure 4 comprising the Heydon Valley and steep northwest facing chalk slopes and scarp between the village and the Icknield Way
- **Recognise areas of open space** which make a contribution to the settlement character such as the triangle of grassland at the top of Bran Ditch, the village green, Earles and Spring Pond and the church yard and pond, as well as those areas which would benefit from improved public access e.g. the top of Heydon Valley.
- **Improve footpath connections and access** to the high quality landscape setting of the village and extensive views from the chalk scarp.
- Improve the **management of areas of chalk grassland** including the Heydon Chalk Pit but also other areas of grassland including the triangle of grassland at the top of Bran Ditch, village green, graveyard, road verges and areas of permanent pasture through a local campaign similar to Bookhams Blue Hearts Wildlife Verges Project¹. This initiative should seek to deliver the aspirations of the Cambridgeshire Green Infrastructure Strategy.
- Recognise the **importance of the open frontage** along Fowlmere Road opposite High Close and that along Chishill Road which enables the landscape to penetrate into the village and reinforce its unique and dramatic local context and setting.
- **Identify veteran trees** within the Parish and **consider TPO status** where trees make a particular contribution to the village character e.g. limes along Chishill Road. Prepare a management plan for key trees to improve longevity and plan for succession planting.
- Consider selective tree removal or pruning to **open up views** of the church from the streetscape within the village, and to enhance sense of arrival/place.
- **Retain the open gap** between Heydon village and Great Chishill beyond the Parish boundary and avoid changes which undermine perceptions of separation. Incremental development which substantially reduces these gaps, blocks important views to the surrounding landscape or intensifies urban character should be avoided.

¹ <https://www.facebook.com/bookhambluehearts/>