



settled farmland



Integrated landscape character



MAP 27a - Settled Farmland Key Plan

The majority of the Settled Farmland landscape type is gently undulating open arable farmland on deep, well-drained soils, underlain by the sandy, shelly rocks of the Norwich Crag, but developed on deep drifts of Norwich Brickearth. The arable fields are juxtaposed with grass ley/fallow fields, rough grass field margins and areas of isolated parkland. Most fields are bound by Enclosure hedgerows, although many are remnants and there is considerable variation in density and quality. There is a smaller scale field pattern on the edges of settlements, indicating vestiges of the historic field pattern. Field trees indicating the former alignment of hedgerows are the most common and distinctive structural landscape markers in what is an open, exposed landscape.

The part of the Settled Farmland that falls within the AONB is atypical because it is dominated by the perimeter belt of estate woodlands surrounding the historic parkland of Burnley Hall. To the north of the parklands, a broad belt of transitional woodland gradually peters out into the open scrub and fen on the coastal fringes of the Broads. The woodlands enclose a small water body at Holme Broad and Decoy Wood surrounds a historic decoy pond. This is a relatively flat area, drained by a network of tiny valleys. On the coastal fringes of the woodlands, there is a transition to the open dunes, with birch and gorse dominated scrub, interspersed with a varied range of grassland communities. These transitional scrub and carr woodland habitats are of exceptional ecological interest and form a key part of the ecological network of habitats which buffer and extend the wetlands of the Broads.

Burnley Hall is identified on Faden's Map of Norfolk in 1797, as is the adjacent church (which was already in ruins by 1797), although the extensive broadland waterbody to the north has subsequently been lost to marsh and regenerating woodland and there are now a series of much smaller decoy ponds. The village of East Somerton is on the fringes of the woodland fringe and the open arable fields to the south. A network of narrow, rural lanes links East Somerton to the village of West Somerton, which is on the slightly elevated ridge defining the edge of the Thurne River valley to the north. Churches with tall prominent towers, such as that at Winterton, are a feature of the landscape, as are the wind turbines at Blood Hills. On the southern fringes of the AONB, the edge of Winterton is characterised by bungalow and seaside resort type development and often has an exposed, abrupt quality.

Landscape sensitivity and change

The north-eastern tip of the Settled Farmland landscape is within the eastern outlier of the Norfolk Coast AONB and forms part of the landscape setting to the Broads. Key environmental assets which are sensitive to change are:

- Mosaic of carr woodland, scrub, rush pastures, fen, reed beds, sedge beds and natural scrub-grassland mosaics, all of which are valuable wetland habitats and form a key part of the setting for the Broads. Rush pastures, fens, purple moor grass, reed-beds, carr woodlands and grazing marsh are all BAP priority habitats.
- The distinctive historic parkland of Burnley Hall, with its wooded landscape setting, which creates a strong sense of place in and a wooded backdrop to views across the open arable farmland to the south.
- Relatively small-scale field pattern on the fringes of settlements.
- Quiet, narrow, rural roads bounded by hedgerows and hedgerow oaks, which form surviving fragments of the Enclosure landscape patterns.
- Local glimpsed views to the coastal sand dunes.



Variations in character

Variations in character and inherent landscape sensitivities are highlighted in the following distinctive landscape character areas within the Settled Farmland landscape type (AONB area).

Landscape character area	Distinctive character	Inherent sensitivity
East Somerton Woodlands - SF1	The land around Burnley Hall is a relatively flat plateau and this part of the Settled Farmland is exceptionally well wooded. To the west of Home Broad, West Covert is a semi-natural broadleaf coppice with standard woodland (oak & birch dominated, with ash and areas of willow coppice). Habitats include marshy neutral grassland, reed swamp and areas of tall fen. Towards the fringes of the Broads, Decoy Wood and South Wood form part of a wooded buffer to the Winterton Dunes. These areas comprise a complex local landscape mosaic, with a varied range of habitats including broadleaf semi-natural woodland, acidic and neutral marshy grassland, dry acid grassland and scrub. Small settlements with nucleated form linked by a network of narrow lanes. Open arable farmland to south and long views – often to church towers and the wind turbine at West Farm to the south. Wooded backdrop of transitional woodland on fringes of the Broads to the north. Urban fringe type land uses on the fringes of Winterton.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historic parkland of Burnley Hall and the adjoining ruined church of St Mary's Church • Wooded coverts and the historic former decoy ponds • Extensive mosaic of valuable woodland, scrub and wetland habitats, as well as the transitions between them • Landscape setting of the village and parkland of East Somerton, particularly the small fields on the fringes of the settlement and individual mature trees which frame views across the open arable farmland to the south. • Glimpsed views to the coastal sand dunes

Key forces for change

- Sea level rise and changes to water quality – potential for brackish water intrusion.
- Erosion of the Enclosure landscape pattern due to loss of hedgerows and hedgerow trees as a result of agricultural intensification and damage by agricultural machinery.
- Changes to the agricultural economy and particularly the introduction of agri-environmental grants, have led to positive changes in landscape character – reinstatement or conservation of drainage ditches, hedgerows, carr woodlands and arable reversion to pasture.
- Potential impact of biofuel production.
- Extensive new built development on the fringes of larger villages, such as Winterton, to cater for the holiday/tourism industry.
- Wind turbines.
- Conversion of farm buildings for residential use.



WIND TURBINES CAN PREDOMINATE IN LOCAL VIEWS FROM THE AONB

20 year vision

restore and enhance

New hedgerow and native tree planting on the edge of local villages provides shelter and a strong sense of place, screening intrusive development. Woodlands, copses and shelterbelts extend beyond the villages to form a buffer and a transition to the sensitive wetland and coastal habitats on the margins of the Broads. The woodlands are carefully sited to frame key views to St Marys Church and the coastal dunes.



Integrated landscape guidance

- 1 Conserve and enhance the mosaic of woodland and wetland habitats which is of exceptional biodiversity value and which functions as part of the setting and landscape buffer to the Broads**
 - Give priority to the conservation and enhancement of rush pastures, fens, purple moor grass, reed-beds, carr woodlands and grazing marsh, all of which are BAP priority habitats.
 - Seek opportunities to introduce a greater variety of wetland habitats within the grazing marshes eg ponds, wetland scrapes with reed-beds – for biodiversity enhancement and flood storage.
 - Maintain a separation between freshwater habitats around the Broads and coastal/saline habitat, where possible.
 - Actively manage areas of woodland and scrub at the transition with the Broads to avoid disturbance to other small scale mosaic type and vulnerable habitats such as marsh, acid grassland and the dunes at Winterton.
 - Conserve, enhance and where possible extend wetland habitats, including drainage ditches, broads and wetland scrapes as landscape features and wildlife corridors, aiming to create inter-linked networks of ecological wetland habitats.
- 2 Enhance and restore the Enclosure landscape structure to provide a sense of spatial scale and containment, as well as opportunities for habitat connectivity and linkages**
 - Conserve all existing hedgerows, hedgerow trees, copses and woodlands, which create the principal visual structure of the landscape and contribute the most biodiversity value.
 - Give priority to the conservation and restoration of hedgerows and regeneration/replanting of hedgerow trees along rural roads, which contribute to the gateway landscape setting of settlements. These are often historic, relatively species-rich hedgerows.
 - Conserve all existing woodlands, copses and tree belts, extending them wherever possible to create or enhance connections with the existing matrix of woodlands and hedgerows.
 - Encourage wide field margins within arable fields to enhance the ecological value of the hedgerows as corridors for the movement of wildlife through intensively farmed areas.
- 3 Conserve the landscape setting of the Broads**
 - Avoid the introduction of further wind turbines, which would erode the rural character of the landscape on the fringes of the Broads. The existing turbines are already visible from the Thurne River Valley within the sensitive Broads landscape.
 - Conserve the transitional woodlands which form a key part of the visual setting of the Broads and an important ecological buffer/network.

Integrated landscape guidance (continued)

4 Conserve the setting of the historic parkland at Burnley Hall and its associated landscape features

- Research, identify and conserve the setting of the historic parkland and important historic features at Burnley Hall and develop appropriate management strategies to facilitate the renewal of distinctive features such as individual specimen trees, the composition of views, distinctive groups of trees and grazed parkland areas.
- Enhance the management, presentation, interpretation and accessibility of the area for its historic value.
- The siting and design of new development should take account of the setting of historic parkland landscapes and the many individual landmarks that are characteristic of the area.
- Identify and conserve views to landmark buildings, particularly Burnley Hall and St Mary's Church.

5 Conserve the character and landscape setting of settlements

- Identify and conserve the remaining open views to the coastal dunes.
- Conserve and frame views to historic churches, for instance the tall knapped flint and dressed stone tower of the church at Winterton.
- New built development (or replacement development) should be designed to incorporate new tree and hedgerow planting so that settlements are integrated within the landscape in an organic way, with trees 'anchoring' and connecting the buildings to existing mature hedgerows. In most cases, hedgerows and tree belts are more appropriate boundaries for development plots than fences or walls.
- Ensure all new built development is consistent with existing settlement pattern, density and traditional built form - encourage sensitive use of building materials and styles to maintain local distinctiveness and character.
- Encourage carefully designed small-scale new tree planting on the fringes of settlements which is designed to provide a positive gateway, replace existing trees, screen locally intrusive structures and frame views to the surrounding countryside.
- Develop positive new planting to integrate existing and extended industrial areas on the fringes of settlements.
- Conserve the character of rural roads, particularly on the approaches to settlements, avoiding improvements (kerbs, signage, access roads with wide sight-lines, standard road widths etc) which will erode the rural character of the landscape.
- Avoid development of agricultural buildings for urban fringe uses or conversion to residential uses in order to retain the rural character of the countryside.

Detailed maps

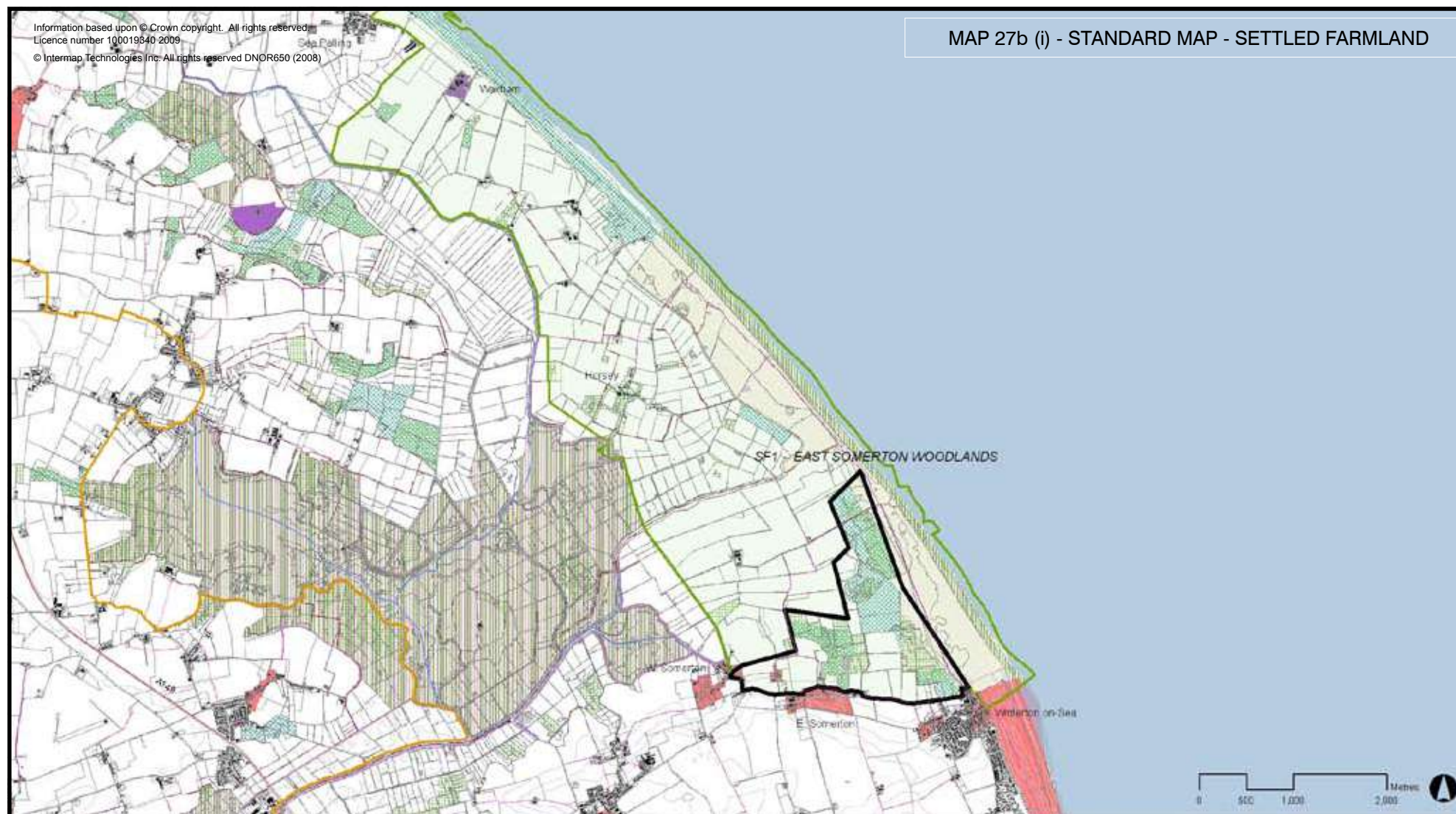
- **Standard** - landform, drainage, rights of way and statutory designations
- **Biodiversity** - ecological networks ¹
- **Historic landscapes** - broad historic landscape character types ² and data from the Historic Environment Record ³

¹ Norfolk Wildlife Trust on behalf of the Norfolk Biodiversity Partnership, July 2006, *Ecological Network Mapping Project for Norfolk*

² Norfolk Landscape Archaeology, January 2009, *Norfolk Historic Landscape Character - a report on the Norfolk Landscape Characterisation (HLC) Project*

³ www.heritage.norfolk.gov.uk - provides a computerised, searchable database (with integrated digital mapping) of all areas of known archaeological activity, sites, finds, cropmarks, earthworks, industrial remains, structures and historic buildings in the county

MAP 27b (i) - STANDARD MAP - SETTLED FARMLAND



Statutory Designations

- Ramsar Site
- Special Protection Area
- Ancient Woodland
- Site of Special Scientific Interest
- County Wildlife Sites

- Local Nature Reserve
- Forestry Commission Woodland
- Special Area of Conservation

Heritage

- Scheduled Ancient Monuments
- Conservation Areas
- Historic Parks and Gardens

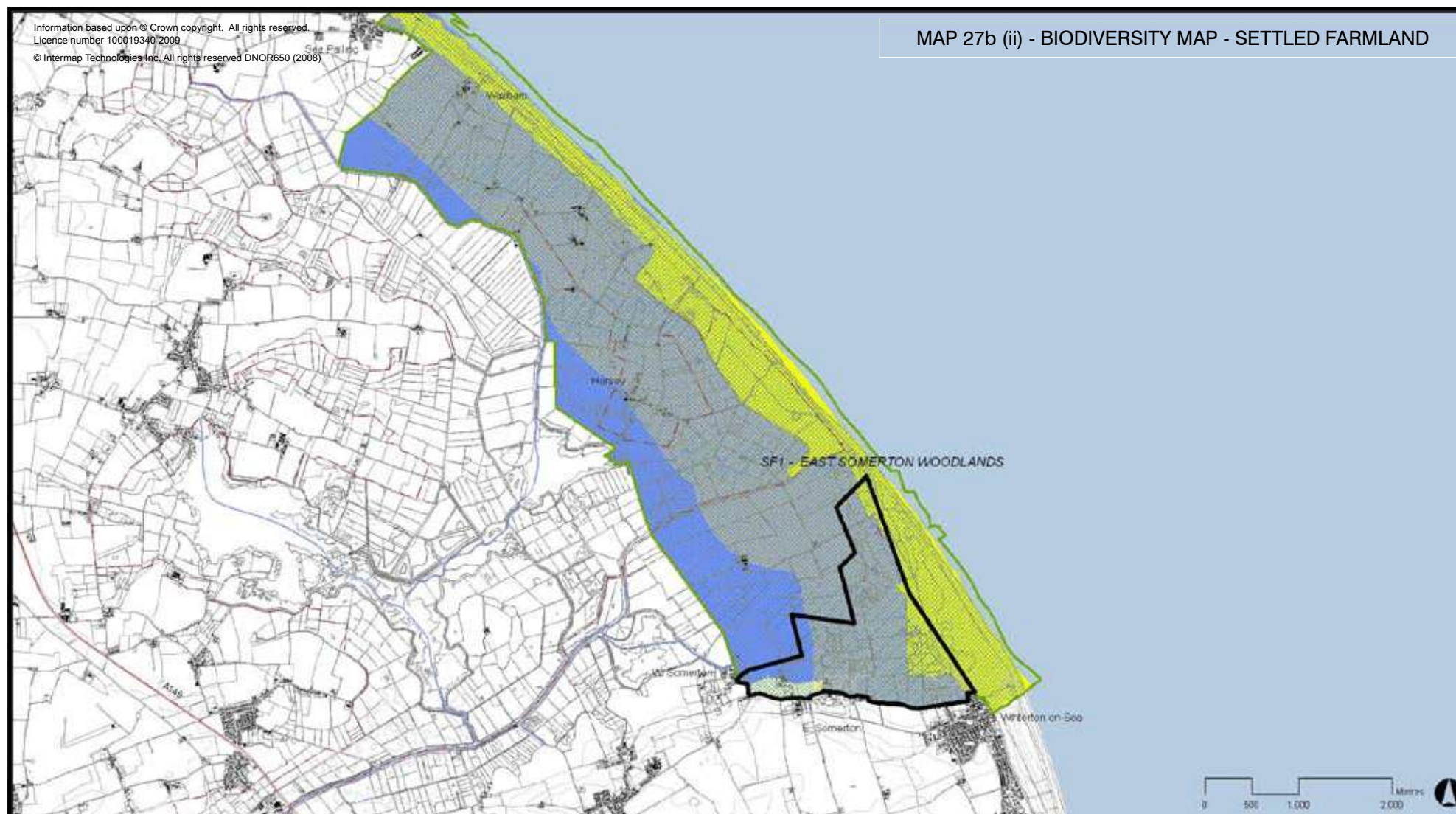
Connections

- National Cycle Route
- Cycleways
- Long Distance Path
- Footpath
- Bridleway
- Restricted Byway

Topography

- Contour Line (Interval 5 m)
- 30 m Contour Line
- 50 m Contour Line

- 'A' Road
- 'B' Road
- Main River
- Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- Settlement
- District Council Boundaries



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|--|-------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Core Woodland Area | Coastal Habitat Enhancement Zone | Coastal Buffer Zone |
| Zone of General Habitat Enhancement | Calcareous Grassland Core Area | Broads & River Buffer Zone |
| Zone of Grassland-Heathland-Woodland Enhancement | Core Habitat Corridors | |
| Wetland Habitat Enhancement Zone | Paston Bam Bat Site Management Area | |

- 'A' Road
- 'B' Road
- Main River
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- District Council Boundaries

