



Image: Tarringstone Wonder

Tattingstone Parish Landscape Appraisal

Final Report March 2023



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St Mary's Church Tattingstone Village

Introduction

Background

Alison Farmer Associates was appointed by Tattingstone 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 Neighbourhood Plan. The Neighbourhood 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 Neighbourhood Plan.

The Parish of Tattingstone is located on the Shotley Peninsula, six miles to the south of Ipswich and on the fringes of Alton Water. It comprises three distinct areas of settlement namely Tattingstone Church, Tattingstone White Horse and Tattingstone Heath.

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 2023.

Local Plan Context

The current development plan for Babbergh District is the Adopted Local Plan Alternation No. 2 (2006) and the Babergh Core Strategy (2014). There are three insert maps for each of the areas of settlement within the Parish indicating the built up area boundary and open space. There are no allocated housing or employment sites adjacent to any of the settlements within the Parish. Within the Core Strategy, Tattingstone is classified as a hinterland village whereas in the Topic Paper on the settlement hierarchy for the emerging Local Plan Tattingstone Church is defined as Hinterland Village and Tattingstone White Horse and Heath are hamlet villages. The Babergh and Mid Suffolk Strategic Housing Economic Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA) 2020 included site No. SS0392 in Tattingstone Heath, which has capacity for 5 dwellings. This site is allocated for development in the emerging Babergh and Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan (Ref LS01)

There are three current planning permissions for residential development as follows:

- Homeleigh, The Heath - 2 dwellings (Ref B/15/01085/FUL)
- Land west of 1 Holly Cottages, Church Road, Tattingstone - 1 dwelling (Ref DC/17/02437/RES)
- Mill Cottage, White Horse Hill, Tattingstone - 1 dwelling (Ref DC/17/03886)

A further site at Folly Farm, Tattingstone (SS0336) came forward for employment use in the SHELAA but was discounted due to historic landfilling at the site.

Green Infrastructure

A green infrastructure study was undertaken in 2008 and updated in 2012. This study identified that Alton Water had potential to serve as an area of Accessible Natural Greenspace given the housing envisaged in the Ipswich, Colchester and Clacton areas. Alton Water Reservoir, is managed as a

¹Technical Guidance Note 02/21, Landscape Institute



Map showing extent of Tattingstone Parish and location of the three villages

multi purpose facility providing water supplies, wildlife conservation, aquatic sports and passive recreation. The study noted that *'if additional land could be acquired, particularly on the north and northwest sides of the reservoir, substantial benefit would accrue to the existing and future populations of both Ipswich and Colchester.'* Furthermore opportunities were also noted for the enhancement of habitats and access links in order to reduce fragmentation.

The Evolution of the Parish

Physical Influences

The Parish of Tattingsstone is located on the Shotley Peninsula north of the Stour Estuary and comprises the upper reaches and valley slopes of the Holbrook Valley (now forming Alton Water), while to the west it is flanked by the steep slopes of a tributary valley to the Samford River. These valleys drain southwards into the Stour Estuary and create a gently rolling topography. Between these valleys the landscape is flatter, comprising an area of elevated farmland. The western side of the Parish is dissected by the A137.

Geologically the area comprises rocks formed by sedimentary processes which were deposited over a long period of time in shallow marine or estuarine waters. These soft rocks are capped by sand deposits of outwash which have given rise to good quality agricultural soils including deep well drained fine loam, coarse loam and sandy soils. As a result much of the area is intensively farmed for arable although there are still some pockets of smaller scale pastures associated with settlement edges, the fringes of Alton Water and within the Samford Valley. Only a small portion of the Parish is farmed under environmental stewardship agreements.

Woodland cover is also limited to small blocks of woodland (often ancient) on the elevated plateau and areas of more recent plantation woodland on the fringes of the reservoir. In the area of Tattingsstone Village there is a notable concentration of older veteran trees which relate to former parkland.

The Parish contains three distinct and separate clusters of settlement. The largest of these is Tattingsstone Village which sits centrally within the Parish on the junction between the plateau and the western slopes of Alton Water. Tattingsstone White Horse is located to the north on the eastern side of the reservoir whereas Tattingsstone Heath is located on the open plateau landscape along the A137. Each settlement has different origins which are still expressed in their location, form and character. These settlements are connected by a network of rural lanes which impart a time depth to this landscape.

Historical Development

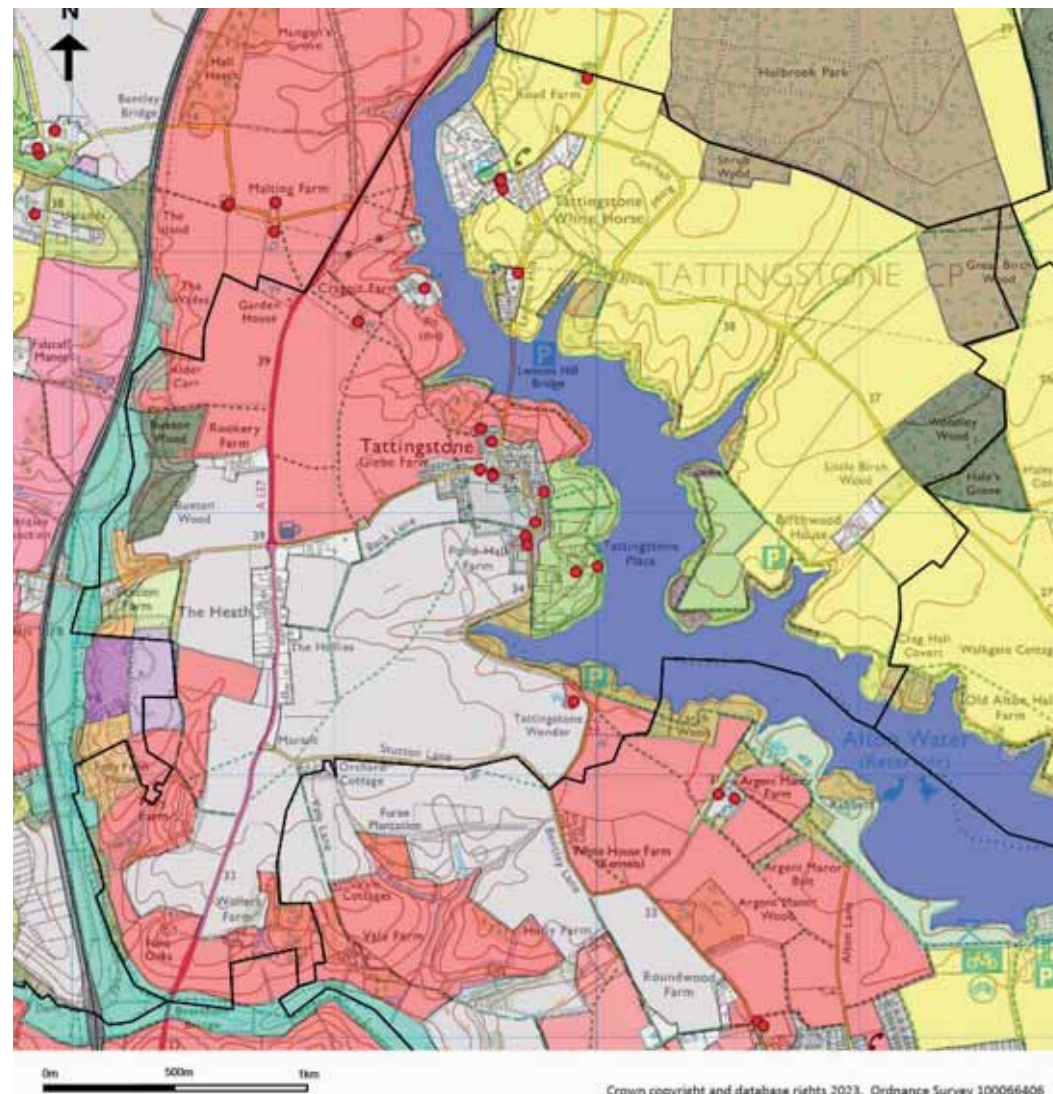
Early occupation of the Shotley Peninsula is evident from crop marks and buried archaeology although the majority of evidence of occupation and manipulation of the land dates from the Medieval Period onwards.

Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) reveals the historical layers within the landscape and the varied patterns they create which influence the present day landscape and sense of place. Figure 2 illustrates that the field enclosure pattern of the Parish comprises three distinct areas. The oldest enclosures occur north of Tattingsstone village and on the steeper slopes fringing the Samford Valley. These enclosures are pre-18th century and are random in their shape and small in scale. To the north of Alton Water the enclosure pattern dates to the 18th century or later and is a larger scale and more regular in form while the elevated plateau landscape between Tattingsstone Heath and Tattingsstone village comprises enclosures which have been altered post 1950's and show signs of boundary loss, resulting in a larger scale open arable landscape.

The HLC mapping also reveals the extent of former parkland landscape associated with Tattingsstone Place but also the woodland associated with a Medieval deer park, Holbrook Park. It also reveals a small area of former heath on the upper slopes of the Samford Valley tributary.











Map Analysis

The sequence of maps below illustrates how the three different clusters of settlement have evolved over the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries. Importantly the street plan in each of the settlements and the network of lanes and paths are of antiquity.



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Key

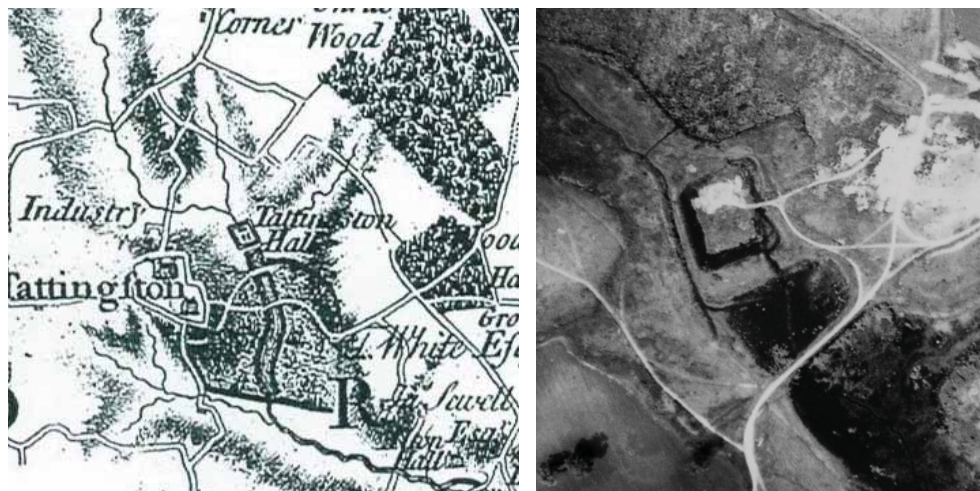
	Parish Boundary		Ancient Woodland
	Pre 18th Century Enclosure		Former Heath
	18th Century or Later Enclosure		Meadow/ Managed Wetland
	Post 1950 Agricultural Landscape		Woodland - Former Medieval Deer Park
	Post Medieval Park		Modern Plantation

Tattingsstone Landscape Appraisal

Figure 1: Historic Landscape

Tattingstone Village

The oldest settlement within the Parish is that of Tattingstone village. Its origins are closely tied to that of Medieval manor site at Tattingstone Hall which was located within the Holford Valley and was mentioned in the Domesday Book of 1086. The church at Tattingstone also dates from around 1250 indicating that the settlement may have begun as a hall/church complex. Evidence of the early farmsteads in the area include Pond Hall Farm on the south side of the village which includes an extant 14th Century farmhouse now associated with a later 18th Century farmstead barns/buildings. Lodge Cottages, north of Tattingstone Place, dates to the 17th century and is thought to have been associated with the hall.



Left: Extract from Hodkinson's Map of Suffolk dated 1733 showing Tattingstone Hall moat and lake, Tattingstone Church, Tattingstone Place and the Workhouse. Right: Extract of aerial photograph of former Tattingstone Hall, moat and fishponds prior to flooding of the area to create Alton Water Reservoir.

By the time Hodkinson's Map of Suffolk (1733) was published it is apparent that Tattingstone Village comprised Tattingstone Hall within the valley, Tattingstone Place (mansion house/parkland built new in 1764), the church and the 18th Century Workhouse (located to the north of the church and established in 1766). Early Medieval fishponds to the south of Tattingstone Hall appear to have been manipulated and incorporated into an area of extensive parkland associated with Tattingstone Place by the 18th century.



Sketch of Tattingstone Place by Henry Davey dated 1853. The former fishpond/lake form the foreground to the elevated mansion house.

The Workhouse continued in operation until the 20th century. Historic maps from the late 19th century show the Workhouse, including a burial ground to the east and the early establishment of a hospital for infectious disease to the west. A number of dwellings can be seen to have established along the road west of the church including Glebe Farm while to the west there is a school. To the southwest of the church is the Rectory and to the south of Tattingstone Place is the Tattingstone Wonder - a folly created by Edward White (local squire) in 1790 comprising a row of cottages disguised as a church by adding a flint façade and a dummy tower (refer to cover image).



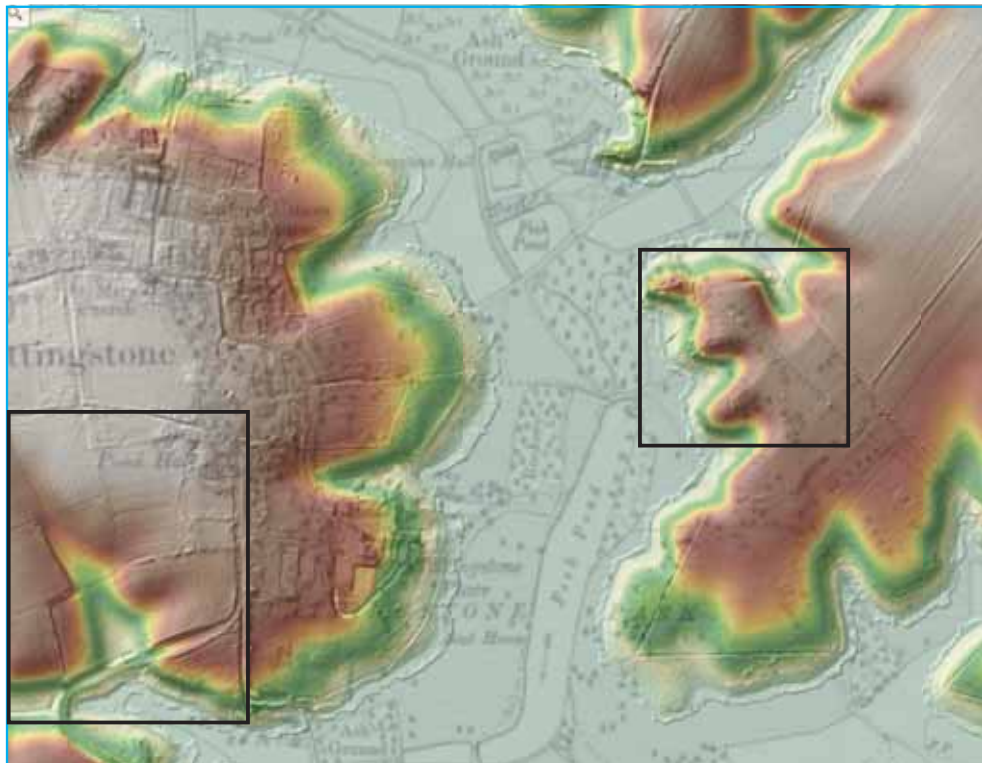
Extract from the 1904 OS Map (Source: Historic Maps Scotland)

In the 1930s the Workhouse was closed and became St Mary's Hospital as illustrated on the map to the right. Much of the rest of the village remained with the exception of new dwellings along Green Lane overlooking the Church. This later mapping also indicates the existence of a number of small orchards associated with Lodge Cottages and north of Green Lane. The parkland of Tattingstone Hall, including boundary tree belts, remains intact.

In the latter half of the 20th century the village saw the greatest change associated with the construction of a number of small housing estates including The Close to the northeast of the village and The Glebe to the west. It was also in the 1970's that Alton Water Reservoir was constructed



Extract from the 1958 OS Map (Source: Historic maps Scotland)



Lidar image overlain with 1958 OS Map illustrating extent of landscape lost to Alton Water and areas of small scale enclosures and ridge and furrow (square boxes)



Lodge Cottages (Grade II)



Extract from current OS Mastermap showing new housing at The Close and Glebe Close. (Crown copyright and database rights 2023. Ordnance Survey 0100031673)

resulting in the flooding of the valley and the loss of Tattingsstone Hall, farm buildings, a severing of the parkland landscape and the construction of Lemon's Hill bridge. The overlay of the 1950's OS map with Lidar data reveals the extent to which the landscape was altered. This Lidar imagery also highlights the presence of ridge and furrow in the former parkland to the east of the reservoir and also the small scale pattern of fields that once existed west of Pond Hall Farm.



View north along Church Road looking towards The Rectory with the park railing of Tattingsstone Place to the right and mature oak on the small green at the junction with Back Lane.

Tattingstone White Horse

Tattingstone White Horse originally established on the former A137 to Ipswich, at the crossroads with the road leading south to Tattingstone Village (Lemons Hill). The oldest buildings in the village date to the 17th century and include the White Horse Inn and a pair of cottages known as Ceduna and Cosy Nook. A line of buildings can just be made out on the Hodkinson's map (1733) while late 19th century OS mapping shows a smithy and Inn and a number of additional dwellings to the north and south, forming more of a cluster. Within the valley to the west there was a hamlet called Millbrook and the site of a water wheel on the Tattingstone Brook. By the mid 20th century development can be seen to have extended down the valley slopes to the west, and new housing had been constructed along the eastern side of Lemons Hill, southeast of the crossroads. Further along Lemons Hill are a number of older properties including The Walk (early 16th century) and Poplar Farm. These were isolated rural dwellings until new infill Council Cottages had been built between them in the 1920's, creating a separate small outlier of dwellings.

As with Tattingstone Village, Tattingstone White Horse experienced major changes as a result of the creation of Alton Water. Whilst creating a new setting to the village to the west, it also resulted in the severing of the A137 such that the village no longer sat on a major route. The A137 was diverted to the north effectively acting as a by-pass.



Extract from 1904 OS map (Source: Historic Maps Scotland)



Old postcard of Tattingstone White Horse Public House with its distinctive wooden carved white horse as the pub sign



Extract from current OS Mastermap showing new housing extending along roads to the east and south. (Crown copyright and database rights 2023. Ordnance Survey 0100031673)

Tattingstone Heath

Tattingstone Heath as the name suggests appears to have been associated with an area of common or heath and is located along the A137 and along Church Road. It is unclear from the Hodkinson's map of 1733 if there were buildings along the main road or Church Road at that time, but by the 19th century OS mapping records a line of properties on the western side of the A137 and also along Church Road towards Tattingstone Village. OS mapping from the mid 20th century illustrates a number of small orchards which were associated with these dwellings as well as the establishment of the Methodist Chapel (founded in 1801 and rebuilt in 1842 and 1877) with an associated Sunday School.

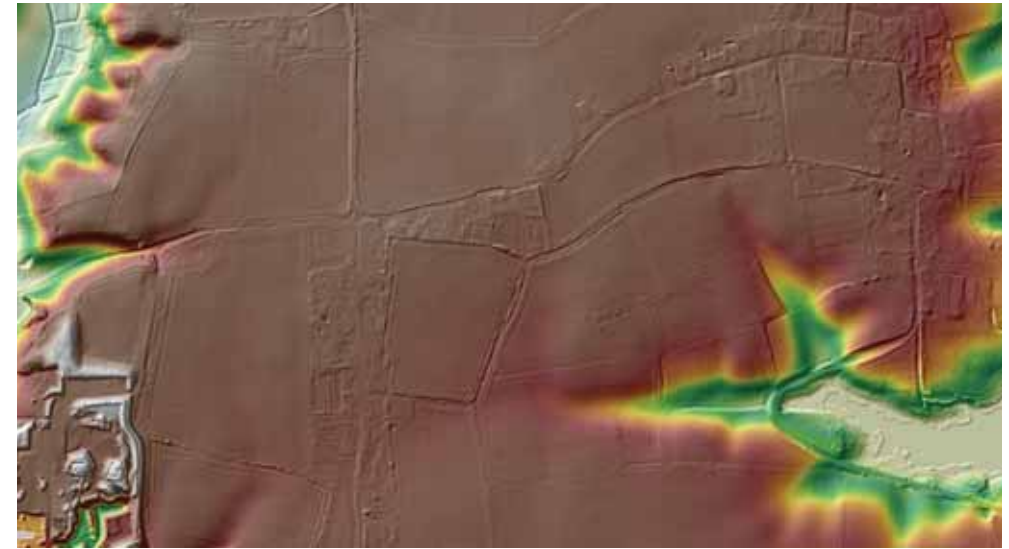


Extract from 1896 map (Source - Historic Maps Scotland)

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Extract from 1958 map (Source - Historic Maps Scotland)



Lidar Image of Tattingstone Heath revealing the distinctive square enclosure to the southeast of the village and its connection to Back Lane

Of particular note in the two maps above is the distinctive alignment of Back Lane - a route which connected the southern edge of Tattingstone Heath with Pond Hall Farm within Tattingstone Village. This route follows a deliberate alignment around a square field to the south and east of Tattingstone Heath. This can also be clearly seen on the Lidar image above. The incised nature of the lane, with distinctive hedge banks, indicates it is of considerable antiquity. Given that the name of the village is Tattingstone Heath, there is a possibility that the distinct square was the location of a former common which connected to the early Tattingstone Village via Back Lane.



Over recent decades housing development has occurred on the eastern side of the A137 and has started to obscure the western side of the square enclosure. Development has also extended along the A137 in a southerly direction.

Significantly this settlement has not focused on the crossroads and forms two separate clusters of development - one to the east along Church Road and one to the south along the A137.

Extract from current OS Mastermap showing new two separate areas of linear housing. (Crown copyright and database rights 2023. Ordnance Survey 0100031673)

Landscape Character

The Parish of Tattingstone is included within several landscape character assessments and at a range of scales including National Character Areas (NCAs), Suffolk County Landscape Typology and the Shotley Peninsula and Hinterland Landscape Character Assessment. The latter two assessments classify the Parish into two primary landscapes, those associated with the plateau landscape and those associated with valleys.

National Character Areas

The Parish of Tattingstone sits within National Character Area (NCA) 82: Suffolk Coast and Heaths. Key characteristics of NCA 82 which are relevant to the Parish include:

- A predominantly low-lying landscapeChanges in relief are slight.
- Rivers flow west - east forming intimate, twisting alluvial valleys.
- Inland valleys contain small-scale historic patterns of irregular drained meadow enclosure, bounded by elm hedgerows.
- Ancient broadleaved woodland and parkland wood pasture cloak the southern river valley and estuary slopes.
- Settlement is sparse, with small, isolated villages and farmsteads.
- Traditional buildings utilise soft-hued red bricks with straw thatch, pantiles or peg tiles. Some are rendered and painted (often in 'Suffolk Pink') while others (including churches) use locally occurring split or knapped flint.
- Alton Water (or Alton Reservoir) is a manmade reservoir. It is the largest area of inland water in Suffolk with a circumference of more than 13 km.
- Public access is extensive both on the land and on the rivers. The sense of tranquillity and wildness is integral to the distinctiveness of the NCA, inspiring many writers, artists and naturalists, and supports the area's popularity as a recreation and tourist destination.

Local Landscape Character

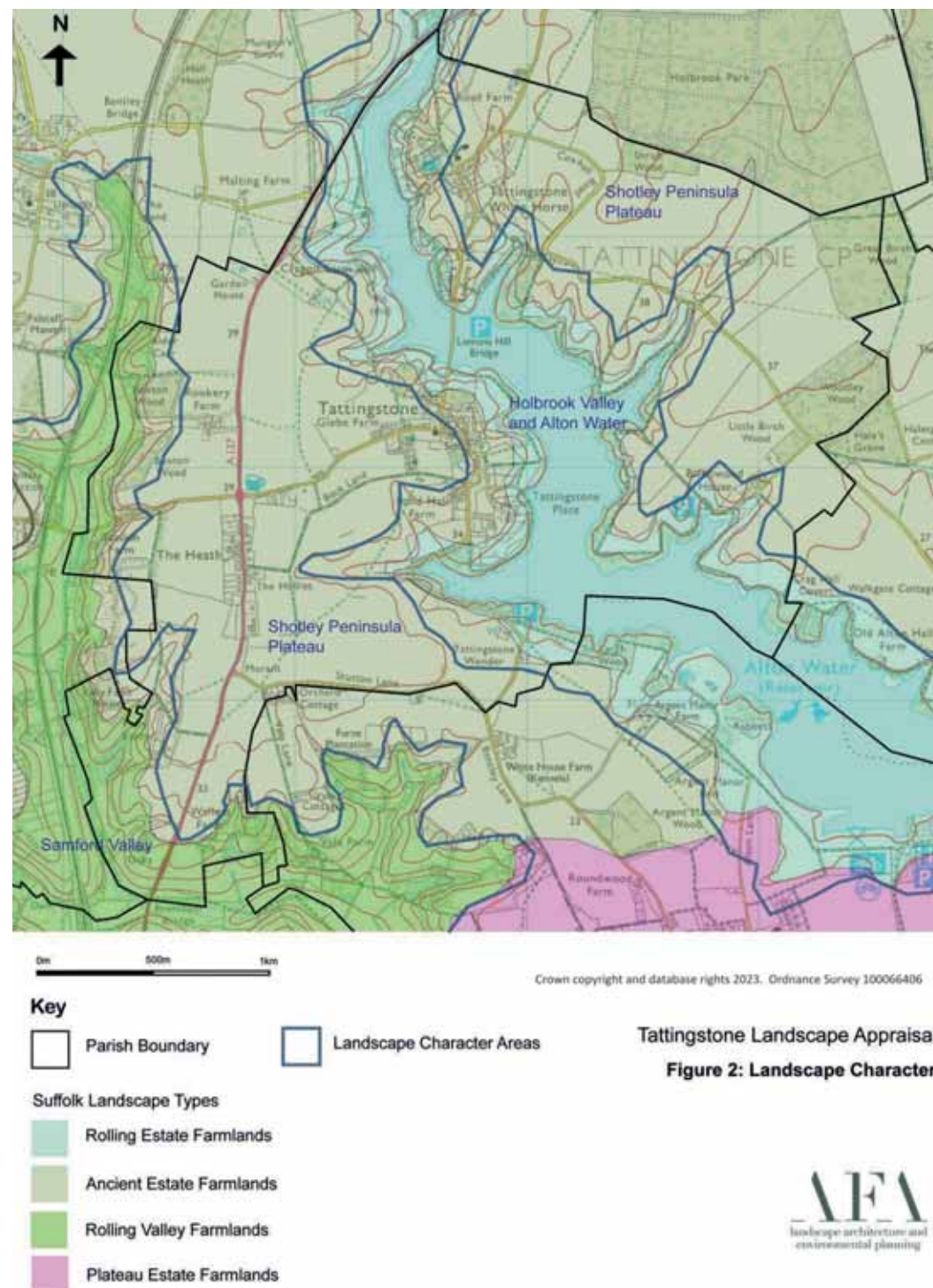
The **Suffolk Landscape Character Assessment** divides the Parish into three landscape types as illustrated on Figure 2.

The Ancient Estate Farmlands form an elevated plateau and are described as a relatively flat central spine with sloping sides, dissected by river valleys. It contains large scale arable farmland and has an open character despite blocks of ancient woodland.

In terms of the valley landscapes the Rolling Estate Farmland is described as comprising gentle valley sides and evidence of parklands. Within Tattingstone Parish this landscape comprises Holbrook Valley and Alton Water. Much of the land is in arable cultivation with some notable areas of ancient woodland and permanent pasture on steeper slopes.

In contrast the Rolling Valley Farmlands which form a separate valley system to the west and south are described as sloping valley sides that can be complex and steep in places and where enclosure pattern is small and organic.

The **Shotley Peninsula and Hinterland LCA** closely follows the division of landscape set out in the Suffolk Typology defining three unique character areas as illustrated on Figure 2. These include Shotley Peninsula Plateau, Holbrook Valley and Alton Water and Samford Valley respectively. The key characteristics for each are as follows:



Shotley Peninsula Plateau

- Deep loamy soil that originated as wind-blown sediments from glacial sources giving rise to fertile soils and predominately Grade 2 Agricultural Land
- Elevated, open, exposed, gently undulating plateau/shoulder of land, drained by small shallow valleys particularly in the southeast between Holbrook and Erwarton
- Predominately arable farmland defined by rectilinear hedgerow enclosures and woodland blocks giving rise of an often open and defined landscape
- Extensive areas of ancient semi-natural woodland and some mixed conifer plantation which form blocks of woodland and create visual structure to the otherwise open, relatively flat landscape
- Hedgerows along lanes frequently comprise suckering elm with pollarded oaks and holly
- Dispersed estate farmsteads are the predominate settlement pattern reflecting former medieval halls and parks (e.g. Pannington Hall and Bond Hall) and remnant areas of parkland including Bentley Hall, Bentley Park, Bentley Manor and Belstead Hall
- Settlements of Bentley, Belstead, Woolverstone, Stutton, Holbrook, Chelmondiston and Shotley, many of which include extensive areas of late 20th century housing development
- Concentration of historic manor houses, churches and farms particularly in the west
- Old lanes remain in the landscape as farm tracks and footpaths e.g. Old Hall Lane and Bentley Lane
- Occasional long distant views to a wooded skyline but there are no views to the estuaries which lie in close proximity to the north and south
- Views to isolated properties are commonplace giving rise to a settled but predominately quiet back-water character

Holbrook Valley and Alton Water

- Flat valley floor made up of seasonally wet clays overlying alluvial deposits and peat with freer draining soils on the valley sides
- Sinuous and incised valley of the Holbrook the upper reaches of which have been significantly altered with the creation of a reservoir (Alton Water) in the 1970's
- Land use comprises a mixture of arable and pasture on the valley sides with patches of wet pastures within the valley floor
- Alton Water is a small scale reservoir defined by gentle sloping valley sides giving the appearance of a large linear lake
- The fringes of Alton Reservoir are well vegetated with a mixture of woodland and scrub enclosing views - some areas of ancient woodland including hazel coppice and woodbanks
- Alton Water is valued for its birds offering breeding bird habitat for species such as Common Tern in summer and as a refuge/roost for wildfowl during winter months
- The area is generally unsettled although there are occasional farmsteads on the edge of the valleys or on locally higher spots and the historic settlements of Holbrook and Tattingstone on the valley sides
- Strong but informal recreational focus around Alton Water including fishing, cycling, quiet water sports and good parking, footpath and cycle path provision
- Alton Water reservoir and Holbrook Valley are strongly concealed from views in the wider landscape and visible only from close proximity - this landscape does not have a strong presence in the wider landscape

Samford Valley

- Valley floor made up of seasonally wet clays overlying alluvial deposits and peat with freer draining soils on the valley sides
- Acidic soils reflected in presence of broom, birch and bracken in lane verges and hedgerows
- Narrow, intimate and enclosed valley landscape with steep valley sides, river bluffs and natural springs
- Areas of wet pasture/meadows and alder carr along narrow valley floors defined by ditches
- Small scale hedgerow network on valley sides enclosing arable and pasture land uses
- Areas of ancient woodland and some conifer plantations including sweet chestnut and coppiced hazel as well as areas of fruit growing/orchards on south facing slopes



View south across Alton Water towards Holbrook School

- Pattern of dispersed farmsteads connected by narrow lanes sometimes incised on steep valley sides
- Railway line and pylons dissect this valley landscape running north south
- Rights of Way are fragmented and sparse - this is not a readily accessible landscape
- Deeply historic and unspoilt landscape

Cultural and Natural Assets

The cultural and natural assets of Tattingsstone Parish are illustrated on Figure 3. There is no Conservation Areas associated with the settlement however there is a cluster of listed buildings within Tattingsstone Village as well as a scattering of listed buildings in the north associated with farmsteads and Tattingsstone Wonder in the south. These listed buildings express the local vernacular styles found across the Shotley Peninsula and contribute to local distinctiveness.

On the northern boundary of the Parish is an extensive area of ancient broadleaved woodland - Holbrook Park. This area of woodland is historically associated with a former Medieval Deer Park and contains a number of large sweet chestnut coppice stools.

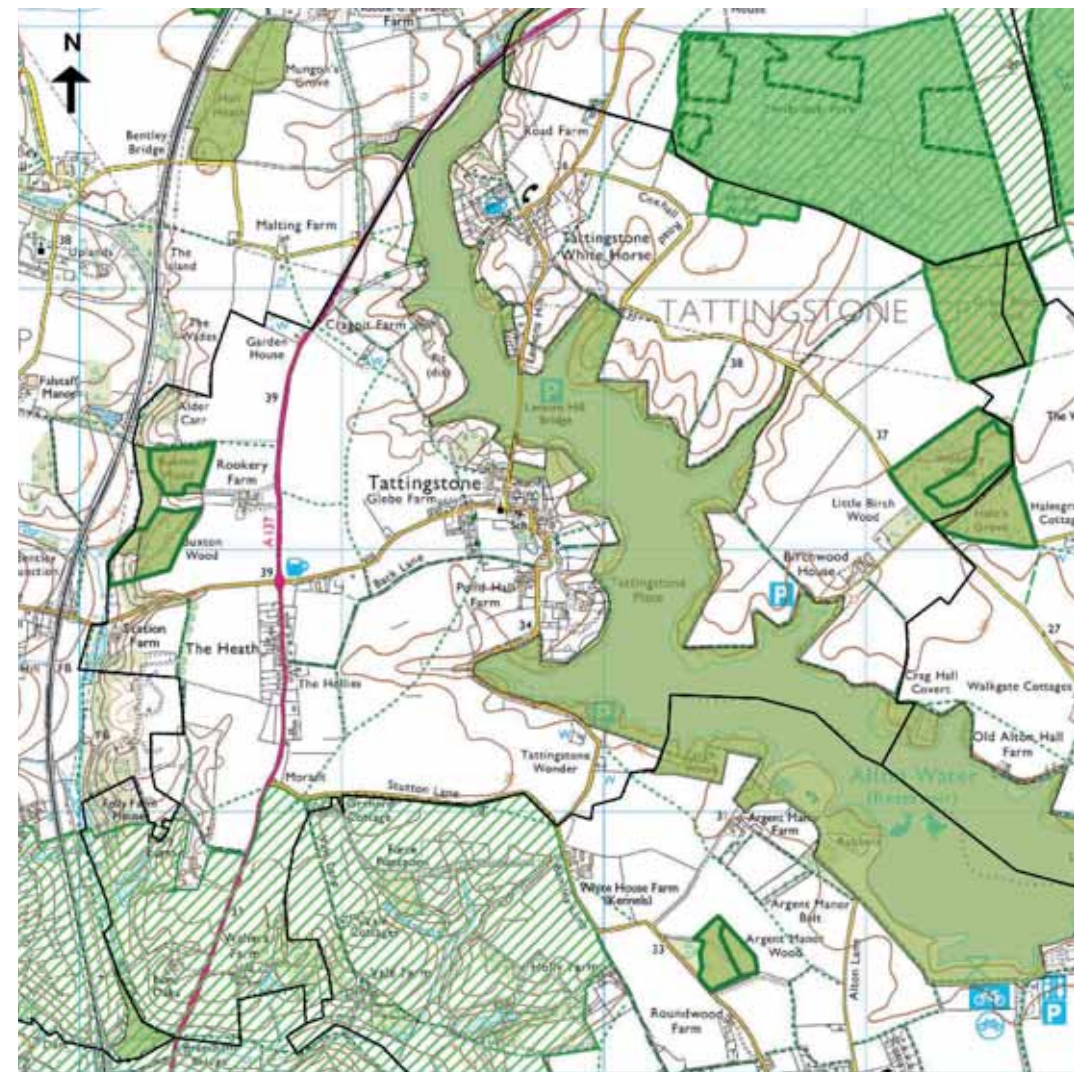
Other areas of ancient woodland also exist to the east at Great Birch Wood, Woodley Wood and Hale's Grove, all of which display an exceptional carpet of bluebells in Spring. Further ancient woodland can be found along the Samford Valley at Buxton Wood and all of these woodlands are designated as Site of Nature Conservation Importance (SNCI). In contrast the woodland surround the shores of Alton Water is more recent and was planted as part of the creation of the reservoir, nevertheless it did incorporate some areas of older woodland. This woodland and the open water of the reservoir itself is also designated a SNCI and particularly valued for its populations of nightingales and common terns.

The northeastern and southern fringes of the Parish are designated as part of the Suffolk Coast & Heaths AONB (as illustrated on Figure 3) and are valued for their natural beauty and special qualities.

Further features of interest include remnant areas of parkland and wood pasture associated with Tattingsstone Place to the east of Tattingsstone Village and occur on both sides of Alton Water. A further area of wood pasture lies to the west on the steep slopes of the Samford Valley tributary and is associated with ancient woodland at Buxton Woods.

Across the Parish there are habitats for Dormice (especially in the north), as well as Stag Beetles and Otters (on Samford River). Evidence of heaths on the sandy soils of the plateau remain only as place names e.g. The Heath west of the A137 and Tattingsstone Heath settlement. Otherwise incidental evidence of heath habitats are now limited to acid loving plants such as bracken and birch which thrive on the sandy soils and can still be found in places along lane verges and the edge of woodland.

Across the Parish there is a strong network of hedgerows and whilst there has been field boundary loss (as indicated in Figure 2) some of the richest and most diverse hedges are those that line the historic lane network (current roads and green ways such as Back Lane).



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Key

-  Parish Boundary
-  Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB
-  Ancient Woodland
-  County Wildlife Site
-  Site of Special Scientific Interest

Tattingsstone Landscape Appraisal

Figure 3: Nature Conservation and Landscape Designations

Landscape Value

The whole of the Parish has previously been designated a Special Landscape Area (Dodnash SLA) which was a local landscape designation identified in the Suffolk County Structure Plan 2001 and defined in more detail by Local Authorities. SLAs were regarded as areas of countryside which exhibited certain qualities including:

“river valleys which still possess traditional grazing meadows with their hedgerows, dykes and associated flora and fauna”; and

“other areas of countryside where topography and natural vegetation, particularly broadleaved woodland, combine to produce an area of special landscape quality and character”.

Although this designation is no longer used in the emerging joint Babergh and Mid Suffolk Local Plan the whole of the Parish nevertheless lies within the Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB Additional Project Area. This area is recognised within the AONB Management Plan and in the relevant local authority Area Plans, and has specific policies attached to it in order to conserve and enhance its special qualities.

The whole of the Parish has been studied in detail in terms of its natural beauty as part of the assessment in relation to the extension of the Suffolk Coast & Heaths AONB, and although the majority of the Parish was not considered suitable for designation as AONB, it has also been reviewed as part of the Project Area and been found to express sufficient qualities to form part of a valued landscape.

The findings of these two studies is summarised below.

NE Landscape Evaluation (2017)

This study divided the Parish into three areas - Samford Valley, Holbrook Valley and Alton Water, and Shotley Peninsula Plateau, reflecting the three landscape character areas.

In the northern tributary valley of the Samford Valley, the patterns of woodland and alder carr, as well as distinct valley topography, were noted as positive qualities. The assessment also noted there were few remaining meadows and the valley was affected by the presence of the main line railway and high voltage power lines and some ongoing minerals extraction.

In terms of Alton Water the assessment noted areas of higher quality in the central section of the Reservoir where there is remnant parkland landscape associated with Tattingstone Place - here the remnant pastures and mature parkland trees, combine with the open water to pleasing effect. Historic built landmarks including St Mary's Church and Tattingstone Place were also noted as contributing to the qualities of the area. The tranquillity of the middle section of the reservoir was considered to be high, and views to the Royal Hospital School tower at Holbrook were noted.

On the open plateau, woodbanks associated with past woodland management in Woodley and Little Birch Woods, along with carpets of bluebells, were noted as positive attributes. Detractors included 20th century development associated with settlements, the busy A137 and the number of telephone wires and low voltage power lines.

Suffolk Coast & Heaths Valued Landscape Assessment (2020)

The majority of the Parish falls within the Alton Water assessment area in this study. The assessment revealed the following:

‘Scenic quality is most evident on the valley sides where variations in topography, scattered vernacular



View southwest towards Tattingstone Place from the edge of Holbrook Park woodland, looking across the vegetation shores of Alton Water which form the mid ground.



Wood stained barns at Old Pond Farm on the southern outskirts of Tattingstone Village.

timber-framed farmhouses with red tiled roofs, and vegetation around the naturally indented shoreline of the reservoir, create attractive and visually appealing compositions. The tower of the nearby Royal Hospital School forms a distinctive landmark which is visible from much of this area.

The ancient woodlands associated with Holbrook Park (within proposed AONB extension) form a distinctive wooded horizon to this landscape while other areas of woodland have scenic qualities at a smaller scale in the form of old woodbanks, coppiced hazel and sweet chestnut stools and carpets of spring flowers revealing evidence of traditional woodland management.

This landscape has a number of curiosities and unique land mark features such as Tattingstone Wonder and Tattingstone workhouse building. The creation of a reservoir within a stream valley draining the plateau, is unique in the context of the wider Suffolk Coast & Heaths AONB, forming the largest area of inland water in Suffolk.

Alton Water is marketed for outdoor recreation including fishing, quiet water sports, cycling and walking and various small parking areas and a visitor centre/facilities. There is a popular 13km circular recreation path around the reservoir and connections to a wider network of public rights of way. The narrow lanes which traverse this landscape also provide opportunities for open air recreation and the South Suffolk cycle route B runs through the area.

The open water of the reservoir and bird life it attracts makes a significant contribution to tranquillity. There are no major roads around Alton Water and away from the A137 to the northwest and B1080 to the south, the area has a quiet backwater quality.

Whilst the margins of the reservoir have a natural character the presence of more engineered features such as the reservoir dam and Lemons Bridge appear intrusive in the otherwise rural context.'

The area was described as having the following special qualities:

- Notable areas of ancient woodland form skyline features, revealing evidence of former traditional management including hazel and sweet chestnut coppice stools and woodbanks.
- Alton Water is valued for its birds offering breeding bird habitat for species such as Common Tern in summer and as a refuge/roost for wildfowl during winter months.
- Strong recreation focus around Alton Water popular for fishing, cycling, quiet water sports, walking and visitor facilities.
- Important habitats for stag beetle to the west of Holbrook.
- Rural back-water and tranquillity away from main roads.
- Notable landmarks and historic buildings coupled with rural lanes, veteran trees and historic enclosure pattern, gives rise to tangible time depth.

The western fringes of the area and valley sides of Alton Water around Tattingstone were found to express these qualities particularly well.

The assessment concluded that:

'The special qualities of the Shotley Peninsula landscape lie not in dramatic scenery or arresting views but rather in its remoteness and backwater qualities and its position in relation to the estuary landscapes which surround it. the Shotley Peninsula performs an important function as an immediate setting to the Orwell and Stour estuaries. Whilst much of it is farmed intensively, the relatively simple patterns of field enclosures, woodland and elevation, coupled with its 'coastal' location, gives rise to dramatic skies and quality of light. Settlement has congregated along the main routes into and out of the peninsula and at the interface between the higher farmland and estuary slopes. Each settlement has its own distinctive identity although the introduction of modern housing estates has undermined local identity to some degree.

The Shotley Peninsula has always been important for arable cultivation forming some of the most fertile soils in Suffolk. Trends in agriculture have resulted in a loss of biodiversity and landscape character as a result of field boundary removal and introduction of patches of plantation woodland. Nevertheless, this landscape retains important remnants of ancient woodland and rural sinuous lanes and is uniquely placed geographically to deliver enhanced biodiversity networks which connect these habitats with those within the Orwell and Stour Estuaries - improving landscape structure and resilience to climate change.'



View across open farmland north of Coxhall Lane

The Walk, a Grade II listed 16th century farmhouse on School Road between Tattingstone White Horse and Tattingstone Village



View across the open expanse of Alton Water looking north from Lemons Hill Bridge



Tattingstone Wonder painting by W J Steggles and used by Shell as part of its poster campaign advertising Britain's landmarks



Barn sketch by contemporary artist Chris Turland 2022 reflecting the old barns at Cragpit Farm (reproduced with kind permission of Chris Turland)

Cultural Associations

The historic buildings within the Parish have a particular draw for artists both historically and in the present day. Cultural associations with Tattingstone Village include John Constable who sketched St Mary's Church from the southwest, and John Warren Fenton who painted the same church with the village recreation area forming the foreground in 1958. In the 20th century the Tattingstone Wonder was the subject of one of Shell's poster campaigns advertising the landmarks of Britain and even contemporary artists such as Bruce Le Dain have been drawn to paint it.

It is not just the key landmark buildings that attract attention but also the more agricultural vernacular buildings such as the old barns at Cragpit Farm which were painted by Chris Turland in 2022. These images capture the special qualities of the buildings and the landscape in which they sit.

The design of the Tattingstone Village sign captures the key elements of Parish which give it a sense of place, namely the church, workhouse and Alton Water, while with Tattingstone White Horse, the carved public house sign is emblematic of the village itself.



Tattingstone village sign



White Horse public house sign



Tattingstone Place from Church Road

Detailed Analysis

The following section considers the character, context and setting of the settlement clusters within the Parish namely Tattingstone Village, Tattingstone White Horse and The Heath.

Tattingstone Village

Tattingstone Village has previously been studied in relation to a Valued Landscape Assessment undertaken on behalf of the Suffolk Coast & Heaths AONB (2020). The description and analysis below draws on this earlier work.

Topography and setting

Figure 4 illustrates how the village of Tattingstone sits at the junction between the valley landscape associated with Alton Water and the flatter agricultural plateau to the west. Buildings which act as local landmarks are generally of greater height and are located on the higher land or break in slope e.g. the workhouse clock tower, church tower and Tattingstone Place. Buildings which extend down the valley slopes towards the reservoir are most visible from the opposite valley sides e.g. The Close. The farmland to the south of the village is noted as forming previously small scale enclosures and the route of Back Lane is of particular antiquity.

Approach and gateways

There are three main approaches to the village. The first is from the north across Lemons Hill bridge and Alton Water. From here there are views towards the water tower of the former workhouse and beyond the church tower. The road climbs the hill from the reservoir and is pinched by woodland on both sides of the road. Beyond this woodland the dominance of the former workhouse which comprises a brick wall and imposing building along the western side of the road, signifies the point of arrival. Views towards the church tower and the opening up of space beyond the workhouse give rise to strong sense of arrival.

When approaching from the south the character of the village is very different. A sense of arrival is first felt where the park railings of Tattingstone Place start along with the mature woodland belts. These elements give rise to a perception of entering an estate village. The agricultural buildings associated with Pond Hall Farm, and the small green and mature oak at the junction with Back Lane, reinforce a sense of rural character and this followed by the loose arrangement of dwellings and distinct 90 degree turns in the road mean that a true sense of arrival is only reached where more modern housing (which sits open to the road) is reached.

From the west a sense of arrival is reached where housing start along Church Road and where there are views to the housing on the western edge of the village.

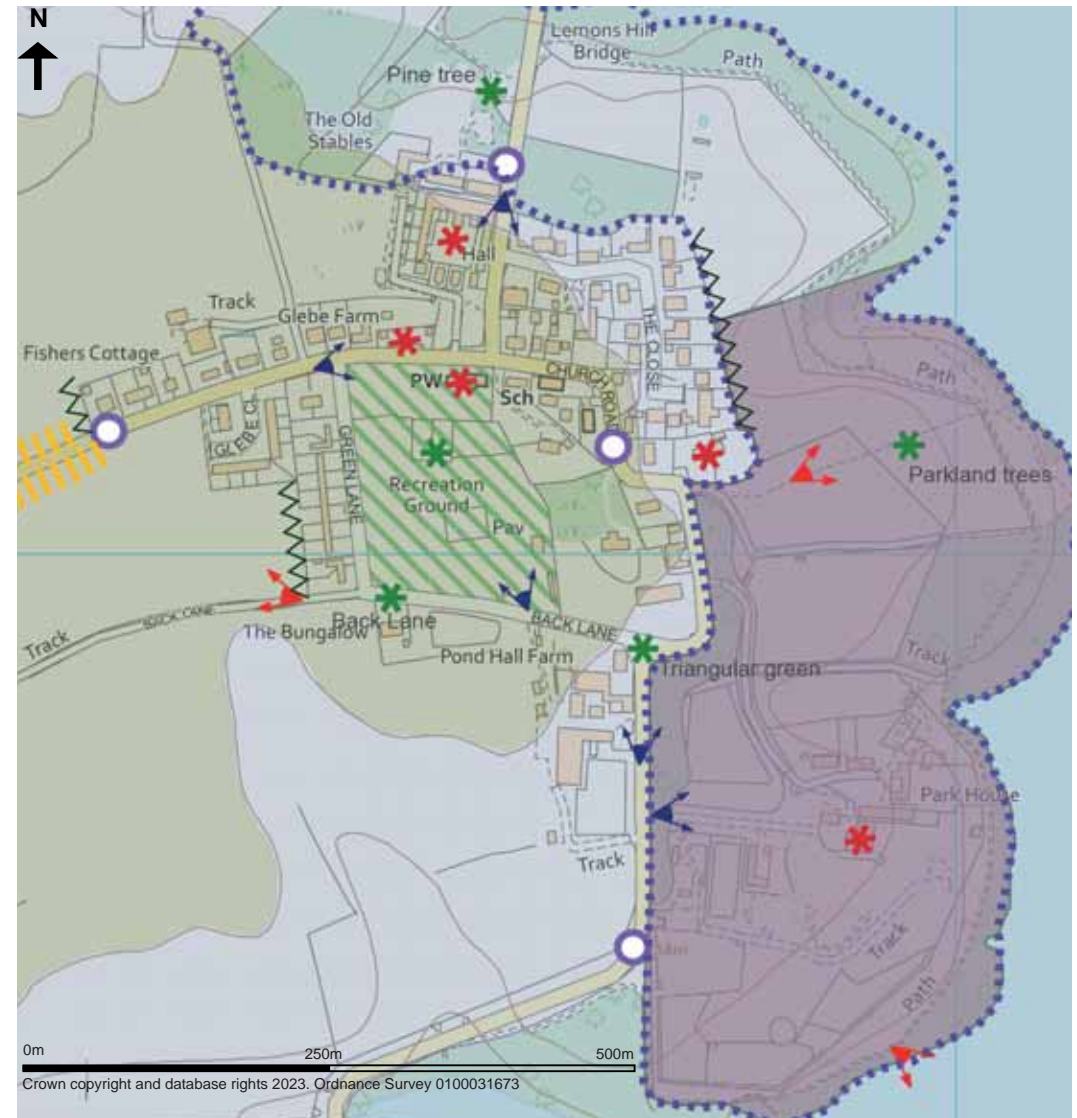
Streetscape and buildings

The character and form of the village has altered little, with only small-scale housing estates added in the 20th century. Nevertheless, this development and infill development has resulted in an eclectic mix of housing styles and an organic feel to the village. The central 'square' of lanes which surround the church, is still evident, and the open space/recreation ground to the south of the Church is a valued asset. The right-angled bends in the lanes afford views to key buildings and vistas to the surrounding countryside. There are a number of key buildings within the village that make a significant contribution to the character of the settlement including the workhouse, church, Tattingstone Place, Lodge Cottages at the corner of Church Road, and the Rectory.

Streets are especially effected by overhead wires and telegraph poles which create visual clutter and obscure views to key buildings.

Open spaces and gaps

The key open space within the village is the recreational ground to the south of the church and the cemetery to the west of the church which collectively create an central space within the village and a setting to the



church. However, these are not the only areas of landscape which have a particularly significance and value within the village. The woodland to the north of the village which was the site of a former graveyard associated with the workhouse and hospital and the land to the east of Tattingstone Place comprising former parkland. The former is important in terms of the gateway to the settlement from the north, while the latter is an area of higher scenic quality and forms an important setting to the village and physically connects it to Alton Water.

Edge character and Setting

Woodland associated with the former parkland and woodland which has established to the north and east of the former Workhouse means that much of Tattingstone Village is screened from view and has a soft edge. However where more modern housing has occurred, and where housing slopes down towards Alton Water, it is more visually prominent from the surrounding landscape. For example, housing on the eastern side of The Close creates an abrupt edge which has a mixed quality compromising a range of different

curtilage treatments and in places shows signs of some encroachment. To the west the housing along Green lane also has an abrupt edge with mixed curtilage treatment abutting arable fields. In the area of Glebe Close, the effects of housing backing onto open fields is less striking in part due to increased vegetation but also because dwellings are single storey.

In the west, the open gap between the edge of the village and The Gables is especially important to retain in order to maintain the sense of individual identity of the village with Tattingstone Heath. This has already been undermined by the growth and visibility of new development on the western fringes.

Opportunities

- Soften urban edges at The Close and Green Lane with appropriate hedgerow and tree planting
- Underground overhead wires along streets reducing visual clutter
- Retain the open setting to the village to the north and east and ensure the rural setting of Alton Water is not encroached by inappropriate development



View north along Lemons Hill which is flanked by the brick wall and imposing building of the former Workhouse



Mature trees on the upper slopes Alton Water reflecting former parkland associated with Tattingstone Place



View west towards housing on the edge of The Close



View east towards housing on the edge of Green Lane

Tattingstone White Horse

Topography and Setting

Tattingstone White House is located on the interface between the Shotley Peninsula Plateau and the valley slopes of Alton Water. The historic part of the village extends from The White Horse public house westwards along White Horse Hill, which descends down the valley slopes to what was once a road crossing over the Tattingstone Brook, prior to the creation of the reservoir. More recently development has extended onto the plateau above the 35m contour, eastwards along White Horse Hill and to the south along School Road.

Approach and gateways

There are two gateways into the settlement: one from the east and one from the south. The previous western gateway has become severed by the creation of the reservoir and the bottom of White Horse Hill is now a dead end. The gateway to the east is reached at the start of development on the southern side of the road, where there are views along the built frontage as the road curves round to the right. The first houses are set back from the road but have domestic curtilages comprising brick and flint walling and laurel hedging. Just before the junction with School Road, there is a row of cottages which sit close to the road. This, along with the road junction and open space (pub car park and pasture field), signifies arrival within the heart of the village. There is no pavement along the approach road and the northern side of the road comprises a soft verge and hedgerow. This results in an open streetscape and reinforces the rural character of the settlement.

From the south, the gateway is reached where development occurs on both sides of the road, pavement starts on the western side of the road and a vista opens up towards the road junction and telephone box/ bus stop. Dwellings are set back predominately behind hedging, although there are some brick walls and fencing with multiple driveway accesses.

Neither gateway is especially strong or distinctive, in part due to the eclectic nature of built development and the relatively weak junction of routes at the centre of the village, with few built landmarks or clearly defined open spaces.

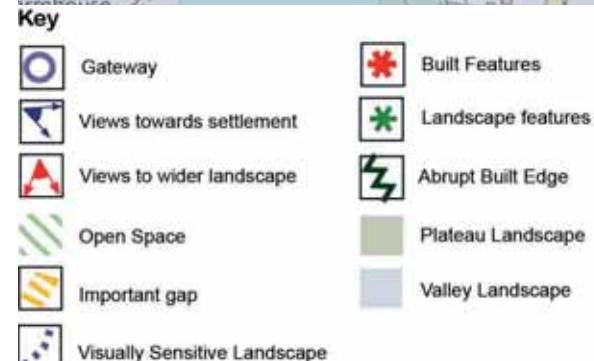
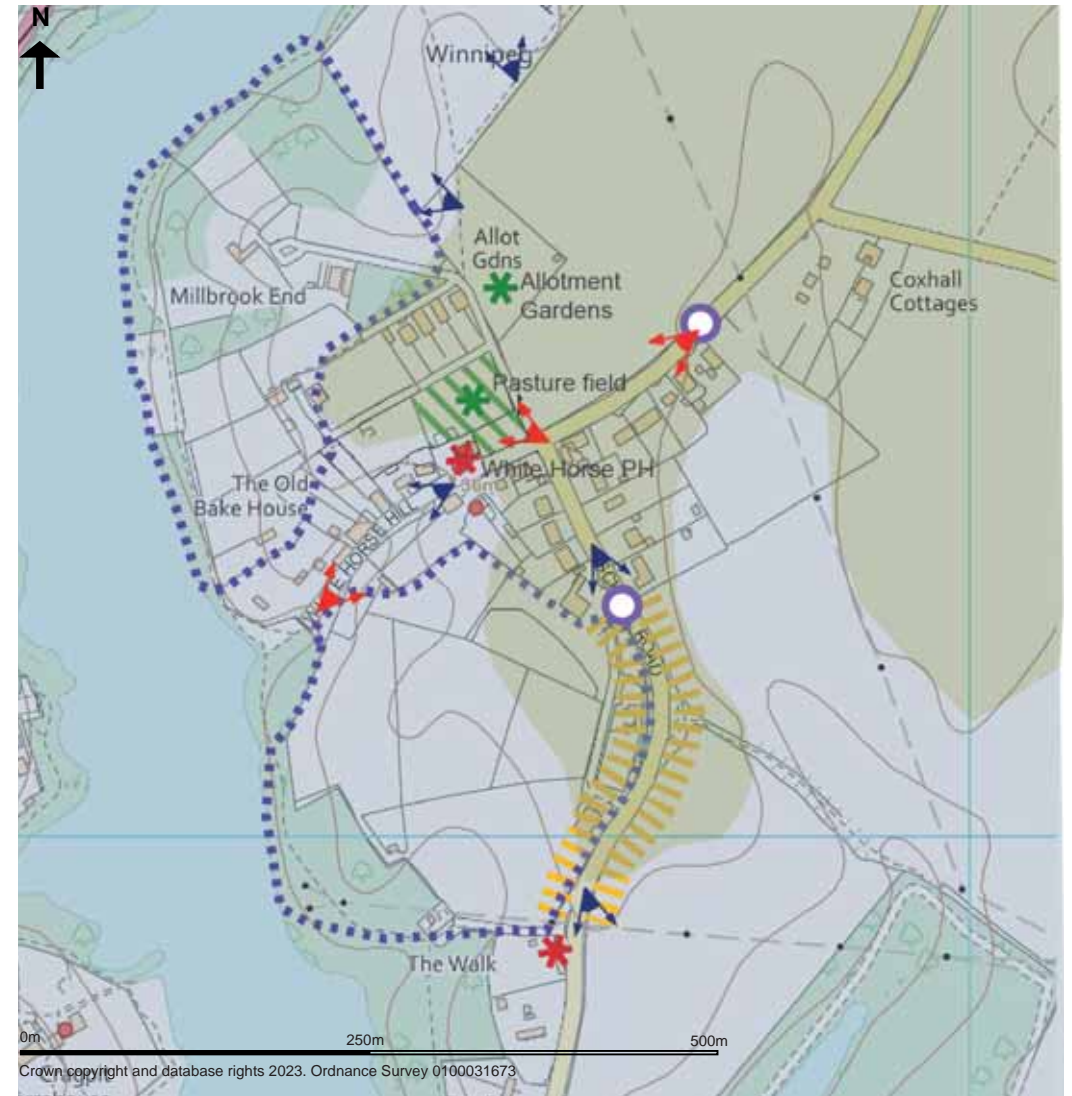
Streetscape and buildings

In addition to the streetscapes described above, the character of White Horse Hill west of the junction has a different character. The White Horse public house sits in a prominent position at the break in slope with open space surrounding it to the north, east and west. Beyond this the road slopes down towards the reservoir flanked to the south by a vegetated bank and to the north by cottages which cascade down the slope. These cottages are rendered in soft creams and pinks and the oldest buildings have clay pantile roofs. The combination of their scale, arrangement on the slopes and materials, increases perceptions of an historic street.

The profusion of telegraph poles and overhead wires along all of the streets within this hamlet creates visual clutter and increases urbanisation.

Open Spaces and gaps

The key open space within the village is the car park to the east of The White Horse and the pasture field beyond which is used for camping in summer months. Other open spaces which contribute to the character of the village include the allotments and also the wooded shores of the reservoir which provide a western vegetated edge to the village. In terms of gaps there is an important gap between the dwellings at the junction with Coxhall Road and the western gateway of the settlement. Infilling of this gap with development will result in a perceived linear expansion of the village, where new and existing development may combine to give rise to cumulative effects. Similarly to the south there is an important gap beyond the gateway and 16th century farmhouse of The Walk and the 1960s housing beyond. Filling in of this gap will again result in cumulative effects and a perceived linear expansion of the settlement.



Tattingstone Landscape Appraisal
Figure 5 : Tattingstone White Horse

Edge character and boundary treatment

The vegetated slopes of the reservoir mean that the western and northern side of the hamlet are well screened from the wider landscape. The northern edge is partially screened by the hedgerow along White Horse Hill and by vegetation along the allotments and bridleway, while to the east and south the edge of the hamlet is screened by mature hedgerows along lanes and property boundary vegetation. Built form which sits on or around the 35m contour is most visible from the opposite upper valley slopes of the reservoir, especially on the south side of the hamlet. On the south side of the village equestrian use has the potential to alter perceptions of the village form and gateway.

Opportunities

- Enhance the open space at the road junction at the centre of the hamlet, creating a strong sense of arrival and enhancing the visual and physical prominence of The White Horse, as the key building within the hamlet.



View looking north from public right of way across the undulating valley slopes and wooded fringes of Alton Water with higher land beyond.



Looking northeast along White Horse Hill

- Underground overhead cables along streets reducing visual clutter.
- Conserve the open pastoral slopes to the southwest and northwest of the hamlet, which are visually sensitive from the wide valley landscape.
- Retain perceived gaps between development along lanes to avoid perceptions of settlement expansion.



View looking up White Horse Hill with distinctive stepped arrangement of cottages.



Looking north along School Road

Tattingstone Heath

Topography and Setting

Unlike the other two settlement clusters within Tattingstone Parish, Tattingstone Heath sits solely within the plateau landscape. The upper reaches of the Samford Valley to the southwest and of the Tattingstone Brook/Alton Water valley to the east create subtle undulations but otherwise the landscape is perceived as flat and relatively intensively farmed in medium scale fields which show a degree of field boundary loss.

Approach and gateways

There are clear views to linear development along Church Road when approaching the hamlet from the north along the A137. This is due to a lack of hedgerow along the eastern side of the A137. However the gateway into the settlement is not reached until development starts on both sides of the road, south of the junction with Station Road and Church Road. When approaching from the south along the A137 the gateway is similarly reached when development starts on both sides of the road (including the relatively recent housing development of four dwellings to the west). A nursery and bungalow development (Hanjakai) occur to the south of this gateway, and although set back from the edge of the road, the curtilage treatment, car park and signage undermines the southern gateway.

Because there is a lack of development at the junction between the A137, Station Road to the west and Church Road, housing along Church Road feels physical separate from that along the A137. A point of arrival is reached on the western side of the village at the Wheatsheaf Public House. At the eastern end of the village the gateway is reached at Laburnum Cottage which faces onto the edge of the road and where views extend along the curve in the street.

Streetscape and buildings

The streetscape along the A137 comprises development both sides of the road. On the western side are older properties comprising semi-detached pairs or short terraced cottages which are located at the back of the pavement, and help define the street. To the north and south of these dwellings are more recent properties which are set back behind hedgerows, and in the gaps between dwellings there are occasional views to the wider landscape.

On the eastern side of the road the properties are more recent, including a number of bungalows. Properties are again set back from the road and there are notable garden spaces between them and in the north a couple of paddocks. This means that the eastern side of the village feels less intensively developed.

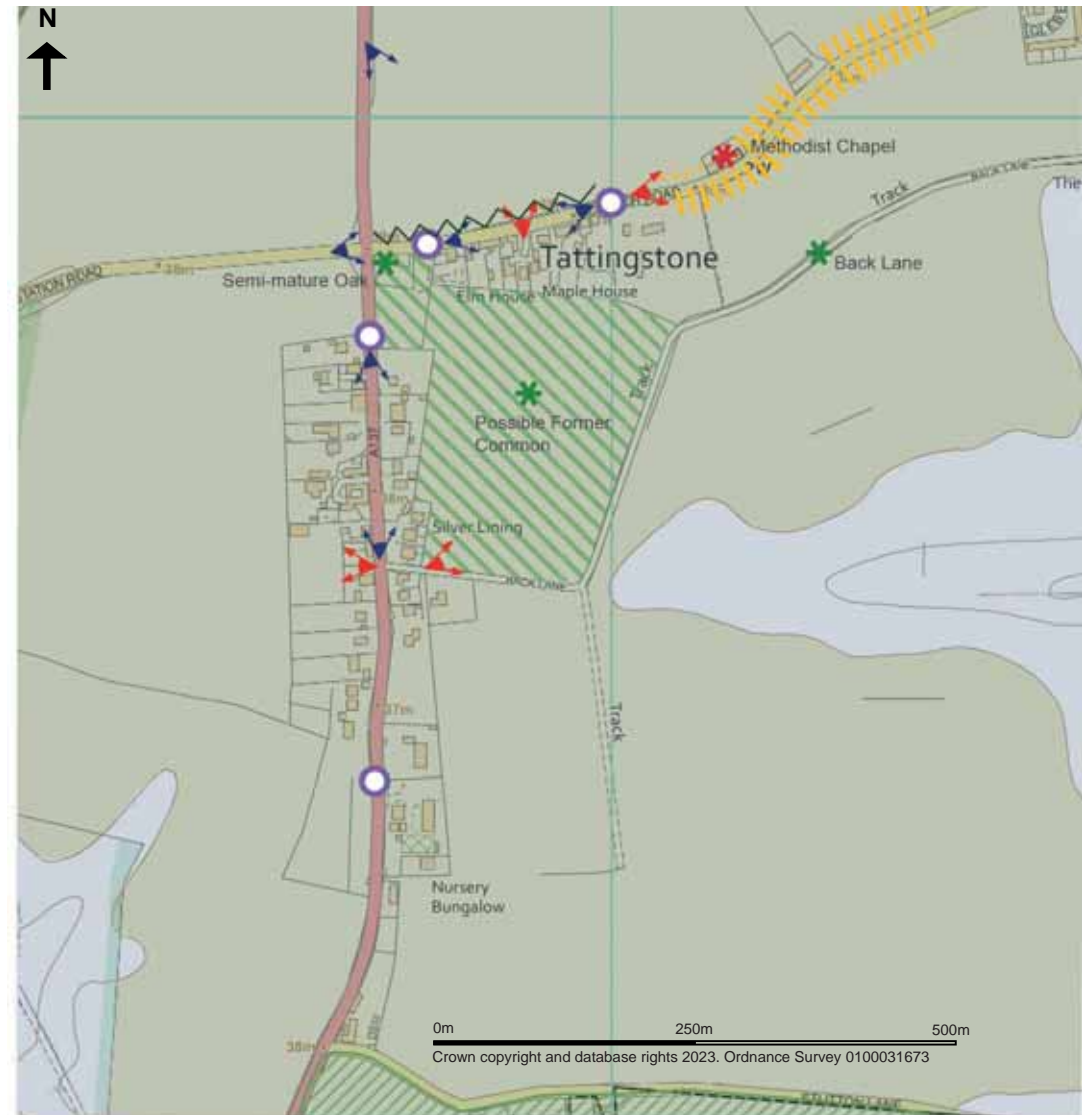
The streetscape along Church Road has development on the southern side of the road only, with the northern side being undefined and open to agricultural fields. Dwellings comprise short terraced cottages which are set close to the road with small front gardens defined by low walls or fencing. Many of the buildings are red brick or are rendered in soft pink and yellow/cream colours which give character and unity.

Both parts of The Heath settlement are linear in form with minor back land development at Fredericks Close and The Limes. Whilst there are telegraph wires along the streets they are not as intrusive as those in Tattingstone Village and Tattingstone White Horse.

Open Spaces and gaps

The main open space within the village is associated with the junction between the A137 and Church Road and comprises a couple of pasture fields/smallholding/allotments and the car park to the Wheatsheaf Public House. This area of open space is also associated with a fine semi-mature oak tree which provides a focal point and feature at the junction. The rectangular enclosure to the south and east of the village, which is flanked to the south and east by Back Lane, does not feature strongly in the character of the streets, nevertheless it is likely to be of some historic significance and may have influenced the form of the village.

There is a notable gap between the eastern gateway along Church Road and the Methodist and former school which sits in an isolated position further east. However it is the gap between the Methodist Church and The Gables which is the most critical to retain so as to avoid undermining the individual identity of



Key

	Gateway		Suffolk Coast & Heaths AONB
	Views towards settlement		Built Features
	Views to wider landscape		Landscape features
	Open Space		Abrupt Built Edge
	Important gap		Plateau Landscape
			Valley Landscape

Tattingstone Landscape Appraisal

Figure 6 : Tattingstone Heath

Tattingstone Village and Tattingstone Heath. This gap is visible in views east along Church Road and also looking west from Back Lane.

Edge character and Setting

The rear of properties and therefore the edge of the settlement is generally well vegetated throughout the village. This coupled with mature vegetation along Back Lane to the south and east of the village, and generally low building height, helps to filter views of the settlement edge from the wider landscape and lanes.

Opportunities

- Conserve and enhance the open space at the junction between the A137 and Church Road as a community asset and in a way which reinforces the two separate parts of the village and strengthens sense of arrival



View east across the A137 and down Church Road. The semi-mature oak forms a focal with allotments behind.

at the gateway.

- Avoid the use of close board fencing to define property boundaries along streets and encourage the use of native hedgerow plants or the use of low picket fencing. Avoid the use of brick and metal railing which can have an urbanising effect.
- Seek opportunities to underground overhead wires to reduce visual clutter.



Church Road looking west along terraces of cottages



View east along Church Road towards the Methodist Church and the Gables to the left. In the gap between these buildings the edge of Tattingstone Village is visible, as is the rear of housing along Green Lane, Tattingstone village.

Summary of Findings

Special Qualities to Conserve and Enhance

The above analysis has demonstrated that Tattingstone is a Parish with an unusual history which has been shaped by its early origins as a manor and use of local landscape resources such as heathland and Tattingstone Brook, as well as the significant changes which resulted from the creation of Alton Water. The physical clues of its history remain tangible and the open stretches of water provide it with a unique landscape setting. Its three settlements, each with their own character, make a particular contribution to the distinctiveness of the Parish. Whilst only the outer fringes of the Parish fall within the Suffolk Coast & Heaths AONB, the whole of the Parish is regarded as forming a valued landscape within the AONB Special Project Area.

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

- Contrasting landscapes of open plateau and marked valley slopes.
- Secluded stretches of open water and wooded fringes of Alton Water which add to scenic quality, tranquillity and nature conservation interest.
- Distinctive and individual settlements of Tattingstone village, White Horse and Heath.
- Notable historic landscape including remnant parkland and Back Lane.
- Veteran trees which act as local landmarks and add time depth.
- Eclectic character of housing.

Future Change within the Villages

Tattingstone Parish has evolved gradually with some of the most significant change occurring in the last century as a result of limited infill development. The analysis has also highlighted the different and distinctive character of three settlements within the Parish and the importance of retaining the gaps between them. In terms of accommodating new development it is clear that not all areas surrounding the villages are of equal sensitivity. In particular, the open valley slopes which face onto Alton water are considered to have the greatest sensitivity to new development due to their high visibility from surrounding areas and due to their value as a distinctive setting to the settlements which reinforces sense of place.

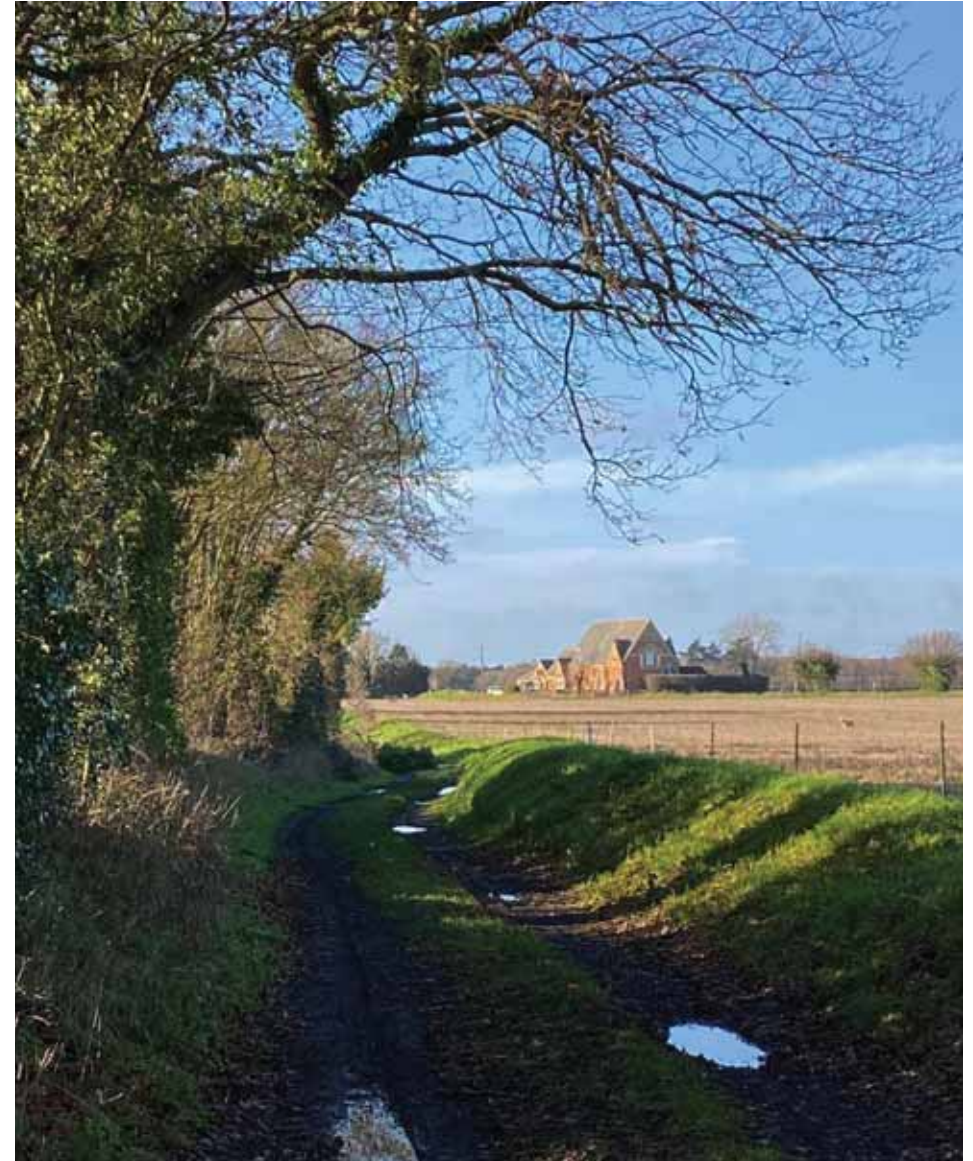
Development on the plateau, where it can be integrated more effectively with the use of structural planting offers some of the greater opportunities for new development, whilst avoiding cumulative impacts with other dwellings along lanes or compromising important gaps between settlements. Furthermore, both Tattingstone White Horse and Tattingstone Heath have relatively weak road junctions where opportunities may exist to strengthen open space and streetscape in order to bolster the existing key buildings and qualities of the village or create more distinctive gateways respectively. These enhancements may be possible to deliver in association with limited and sensitivity designed development.

Based on this analysis contained in this report, the following changes should be avoided in future:

- Creation of abrupt edges to development where housing backs onto arable farmland and there is little vegetation or smaller scale pastures and where curtilage treatment is variable.
- 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 urbanising curtilage treatment such as fencing
- Large scale vertical features which interrupt the unfettered skylines especially as seen from Alton Water and the Samford Valley
- Ad hoc incremental development along rural lanes between settlements



View west along Back Lane towards the Methodist Chapel

Future Initiatives

The landscape management and development guidelines relevant to the Parish are contained in the Suffolk Landscape Typology, Shotley Peninsula and Hinterland LCA and the Babergh and Mid Suffolk Landscape Guidelines. These guidelines aim to safeguard the character of the countryside and settlements of the area 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 which seek to safeguard the special qualities of the Parish. These initiatives are set out below.

- **Recognise landscape** which is visually sensitive and which forms a setting to settlements and to Alton Water as defined on Figures 3-6.
- **Recognise areas of open space** which make a contribution to the settlement character including the triangle of grassland at the junction between Back Lane and Church Road, open space surrounding Tattingstone White Horse and open space west of Wheatsheaf, Tattingstone Heath.
- **Improve parking and access** to Alton Water and seek arrangements which discourage damage to rural lane verges.
- Encourage the **use of native hedgerow species for property cutilages** and avoid urban fencing or railings which can appear out of character and may create visual clutter along lanes or the settlement edge.
- **Identify veteran trees** within the Parish and **consider TPO status** where trees make a particular contribution to the village character e.g. Scots pine in car park west of Tattingstone Village, oak at the junction between Church Road and Back Lane, Oak at the junction between the A137 and Church Road, and former parkland trees either side of Alton Water (previously associated with Tattingstone Place). 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 Tattingstone church and Tattingstone Wonder from the wider landscape, including restoration of the inter-visibility between Tattingstone Wonder and Tattingstone Place.
- **Remove overhead wires** from streetscapes especially in Tattingstone Village and Tattingstone White Horse.
- **Retain the open gap** between the settlements and avoid development which undermines perceptions of individual identity of settlements. Incremental development which substantially reduces identified gaps, intensifies urban character in these locations, or blocks important views to the surrounding landscape, should be avoided.
- Within the wider arable farmland seek opportunities to reinstate lost hedgerows, manage and restore gappy hedgerows and seek opportunities to improve field margins, **creating a strong ecological network** connecting Alton Water to the Samford Valley.



Mature pine located in car park to Alton Water