LOCATION
A rectangle bounded by the A1(M) to the west, Oaklands and the Datchworth plateau to the north, the B1000 to the south and Bramfield to the east. It is divided into three sub-areas: Lockley estate farmland, Dawley Wood farmland and Tewin village.

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER
This area is a south-facing, strongly undulating rural slope consisting of mixed arable farmland and woodland, readily distinguishable from the surrounding urban and suburban settlements associated with Welwyn. The Lockley estate farmland and Dawley Wood farmland share the settlement of Digswell as a boundary, while Dawley Wood and Tewin share the Mimram valley parkland boundary. Although each sub-area has distinguishing characteristics, they are unified by their over-riding shared physiographic characteristics.

Lockleys has a strong pattern of arable farmland and woodland blocks, with some parkland features around the farm on its summit and many mature oaks. Dawley Wood farmland is less unified by management and has south-facing views over the Mimram to the Haldens part of Welwyn Garden City, so that it is less remote than Lockleys. Tewin village’s views to the south are filtered by vegetation along the river and around the edge of the Panshanger part of Welwyn Garden City. The village is a strong feature within the arable farmland around it, contained by woodland on three sides.

KEY CHARACTERISTICS
• strong pattern of woodland and arable farmland on a strongly undulating canvas
• three enclosed, discrete areas on a south-facing slope
• extensively wooded
• well managed farmland partly fringed by urban development
• retains some tranquillity, especially to the east, despite constant motorway and frequent railway noise

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES
• Digswell Viaduct
• mature parkland oaks within Lockleys

View of Lockleys Farm from Lockleys Wood (P. Shears)
PHYSICAL INFLUENCES

Geology and soils. The eastern part of this area, around Tewin, consists of deep fine loamy soils over clay, with slowly permeable subsoils over plateau drift (Hornbeam 2 series). The Lockleys estate and farmland east of Digswell lie on soils of the Marlow series, being well-drained loams and clays over plateau and river-terrace drift. Chalk is evident on the surface at Dawley Warren, with gravel present on the minor ridges.

Topography. South-facing undulating slope; a series of minor parallel dry valleys into the Mimram.

Degree of slope. 1 in 20 (Lockley and Dawley); 1 in 35 (Tewin).

Altitude range. 65m to 122m (Lockley and Dawley); 55m to 115m (Tewin).

Hydrology. The River Mimram (with the A1000) forms the southern boundary of this area. There appears to be little drainage into it from these slopes.

Land cover and land use. This area is a mix of arable farmland and woodland, with some mixed farmland in the Dawley sub-area, with pasture around the farmhouses. Lockleys has a unified estate character and limited parkland around the house. Tewin village shares some characteristics with the plateau settlements above.

Vegetation and wildlife. Extensive broadleaf woodland cover on the gravel interfluvies, consisting of hornbeam coppice with occasional sweet chestnut standard, holly, silver birch, ash and oak, with bluebells and dog’s mercury in the understorey, as well as chalk flora in some places. There are some conifers within Dawley Plantation and an orchard/nature reserve at Tewin. The whole area generally lacks hedges and verges, although there are some wet ditches and individual relic hedgerow oaks (mature). At Lockleys there are also mature parkland oaks, avenues of mature oaks and some grassland. Dawley Warren, now within Dawley Wood, was formerly a firing range where surface chalk was used to form firing platforms. It is now rough ground with chalk flora.

HISTORIC AND CULTURAL INFLUENCES

This is a distinctive planned landscape which bears the traces of man’s influence over many centuries. On the south-western edge of Lockleys the remains of a Roman bath house has been preserved beneath the A1(M), and a Roman villa have been excavated nearby. Both are now Scheduled Ancient Monuments. The earliest record of a deer park at Lockleys is 1766 and it was a warren (for breeding rabbits) until the early 19th century. It lost some coherence from later enclosure. The village of Tewin is ancient but strongly influenced by the Cowper family, who owned the Panshanger estate and much of this farmland from 1720 to 1953. The Cowper estates in Tewin and Digswell were sold in 1919 to pay death duties and were subsequently developed as settlements. Tewin also has a Grade II listed house by Cecil Kemp, built in 1936.

Field pattern. Within the farmland the field pattern is regular and medium to large in scale, while the woodlands provide a consistent geometric pattern.

Transport pattern. Although the area is bounded by a strong road and railway transport network (the A1(M) and the A1000), within it there are few roads, all of them linking Tewin to other areas. The main access within this area is via footpaths.

Settlements and built form.

• Tewin is a scattered village of 16th to 20th-century houses around a pleasant elongated green. Its church is partly 11th century and it has a yellow brick school dating from 1823. Visual continuity is derived from the unified style and colour of the 19th-century estate cottages within and beyond the settlement. Yellow brick estate dwellings and red brick farmhouses often bear the Cowper family crest and their date of construction.

• Lockleys is a fine brick house of 1717, now part of Sherrardswood School. It is described thus in The Mystery of George Edward Dering: ‘a beautiful house in a beautiful setting, and it still looks like “an enchanted castle” as you come upon it through the trees’. (Hertfordshire Countryside, Vol. 22, No. 102, October 1967). The plan of an important Roman villa in its grounds is marked out in turf and brick.

• Digswell Viaduct is an austere structure of 49 brick arches, designed by Lewis Cubitt 1848-50 and used bricks dug and fired on site.

OTHER SOURCES OF AREA-SPECIFIC INFORMATION

VISUAL AND SENSORY PERCEPTION
From outside, this area is concealed by development and transport and enclosed by vegetation. Access is difficult, with few roads within the area, and it appears to be a very contained landscape. Within the area there are extensive southerly views, generally limited to east, west and north by woodland. It is of a medium scale, with a match between the scale of the woodlands and the field pattern which contributes to its visual unity. Dawley Wood is somewhat smaller in scale than the other sub-areas. Its apparent remoteness is belied by the lack of tranquillity due to the ever-present road traffic noise and occasional train over the viaduct. This impact diminishes further east within the area, but is never entirely absent.

Rarity and distinctiveness. The evident historic continuity of this area is quite unusual. The Roman villa at Lockleys is currently unique.

VISUAL IMPACT
There is a widespread visual impact within the area from built development and the transport corridor in the west. Although the A1(M) is not visible, there is a permanent noise impact. There are extensive views southwards over Welwyn and Digswell, although Oaklands and the plateau villages are well screened. It is likely that there has been some loss of parkland around Lockleys to arable cultivation, but the relic hedgerow oaks remain.

ACCESSIBILITY
There are local footpaths through the arable areas and the woodland. They tend to be narrow and unsurfaced.

COMMUNITY VIEWS
The landscape around Tewin is regarded as distinctive and within the village Tewin Orchard is one particular place that is highlighted (C). Some aspects of the Dawley landscape are valued for their distinctiveness (D). The Lockleys landscape includes some valued and distinctive aspects (D).

LANDSCAPE RELATED DESIGNATIONS
Landscape Conservation Area.

CONDITION
| Land cover change: | insignificant |
| Age structure of tree cover: | mixed |
| Extent of semi-natural habitat survival: | fragmented |
| Management of semi-natural habitat: | good |
| Survival of cultural pattern: | interrupted |
| Impact of built development: | high |
| Impact of land-use change: | low |

STRENGTH OF CHARACTER
| Impact of landform: | prominent |
| Impact of land cover: | prominent |
| Impact of historic pattern: | continuous |
| Visibility from outside: | widely visible |
| Sense of enclosure: | partial |
| Visual unity: | unified |
| Distinctiveness/rarity: | unusual |

CONSERVATION STRATEGIES

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<td>CONSERVE AND RESTORE</td>
<td>RESTORE CONDITION TO MAINTAIN CHARACTER</td>
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STRENGTH OF CHARACTER
STRATEGY AND GUIDELINES FOR MANAGING CHANGE: CONSERVE AND STRENGTHEN

- encourage landowners to conserve veteran trees and to replant as necessary. Ensure that information on grant aid and advice is readily available
- encourage the retention of mixed farming around farm buildings, particularly where this cannot be linked to eg ESA payments
- ensure that further development of the surrounding settlements is adequately screened by vegetation so as not to diminish the local distinctiveness of this area
- ensure that any development within the Tewin envelope respects the existing settlement pattern and form and is adequately screened from within the area
- consider the implications for views from this area when assessing development proposals on the northern edge of Welwyn
- encourage landowners to safeguard existing hedges, increase hedged field boundaries, create permanent grass strips around field margins and prevent spray drift, using financial incentives as available
- disseminate information on the importance of chalk grassland, to encourage its retention in this area
- encourage natural regeneration or the planting of native trees of local provenance when plantations are being replanted
- protect ancient woodland by planting buffer zones of native species around them, where possible respecting historic woodland boundaries and linking discrete woods to provide ecological corridors
- build on existing local knowledge of ancient hedgerows to encourage their retention and new planting where appropriate, especially around settlements