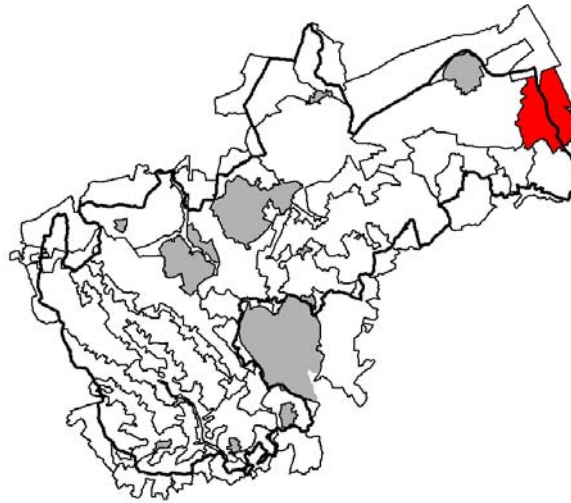


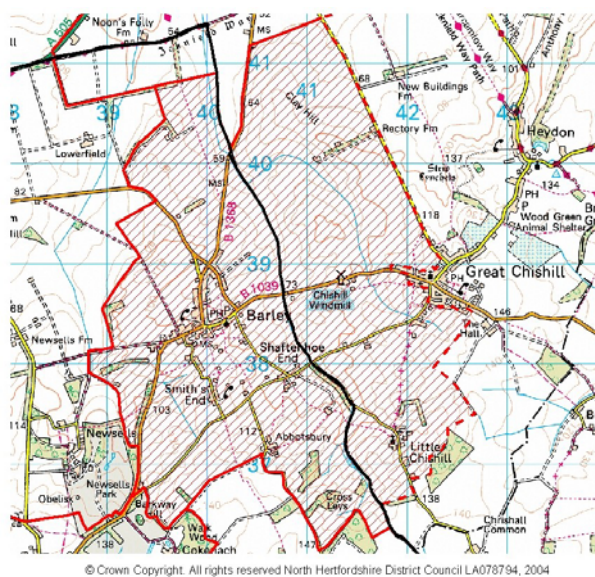
LOCATION



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LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA

The settlement of Barley sits within the chalk scarp slope south east of Royston. The Character Area, which is broadly rectangular shaped comes to a point just south of the confluence of Wardington Bottom Drain and Cumberton Bottom Drain. Along the southern boundary it extends to the boundaries of Newsells Park (see LCA 228) in the southwest corner and Little Chishill Road in the southeast. The character area extends northeastwards beyond the District boundary.



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LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

Chalk scarp slope incised by water erosion. Barley stands on sloping ground squeezed between Wardington Bottom to the west and Cumberton Bottom to the east forming a broad promontory of chalk which falls away on three sides. Land use is predominantly arable. This is an area of transition with a complex pattern of field sizes and boundaries. To the north and west, the field pattern is typical of the adjacent areas of large geometric rectilinear fields. Around the settlement and in particular to the south of the village centre the pattern changes to one of small to medium sized rectilinear fields often with curving boundaries, set within an earlier organic pattern of lanes and primary boundaries. To the southeast of Shaftenhoe End the pattern becomes more irregular, one of a more organic framework associated with the irregular network of winding lanes. The area is well wooded to the south but more open to the north. There are long distance views to the north from vantage points on the scarp.

KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- Incised chalk scarp slope
- Complex pattern of field sizes and fields
- Open arable areas to the north
- Extensive woodland cover to the south. Linear shelter belts to the north

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES

- Historically important architectural features

ASSESSMENT**PHYSICAL INFLUENCES****Geology & soils**

Chalk with patchy overlay of Boulder Clay. Shallow rendzina or calcareous loam soils.

Topography

Sloping landform falls from chalk plateau.

Degree of slope

Typically 1:10 on the upper slopes but falls slacken off at the point of transition where the scarp meets the lowlands to the north.

Altitude range

65m to 145m.

Hydrology

Local network of drainage ditches draining north feed into peripheral water courses. Network of ponds and drains at Newsells Park.

Land cover and land use

Predominantly arable.

Vegetation and wildlife

This Character Area contains limited ecologically valuable ancient woodland. Pondbottom Wood is an ancient woodland site dominated by oak, ash and maple. Wigney Wood has a similar character, but also contains elements of pedunculate oak and hornbeam woodland.

Exposed calcareous areas can produce diverse flora, such as that along Bogmoor Road verge, to the south of Barley.

Spring fed ponds at Smith's End, Broadmoor Pond and Newhill Pond are locally important.

Old barns support colonies of Natterer's bat and the open fields are historically important for stone curlew and in winter for golden plover flocks, grey partridge and birds of prey.

HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL INFLUENCES

Barley a medieval settlement contains the 12th century parish church of St Margaret, where there is also an Iron Age farmstead and two Romano-British cemeteries. Earthworks, which may have formed part of a medieval manorial site lies at Abbotsbury to the south.

Field Pattern

The historic agricultural landscape pattern consists largely of 18th century and later enclosure to the north with a mixture of prairie fields – post 1950s boundary loss, pre 18th century 'irregular' enclosure, post 1950s enclosure and ancient woodland to the south. There are pockets of 19th-20th century plantation and a 20th century stud farm lies to the east.

Transport Pattern

Irregular network of winding lanes.

Settlements and Built Form

The historic settlement pattern is characterised by farms and villages. Traditional buildings date from the 17th century and are represented by examples from Barley. Barley Lock Up is timber framed and dates to the 17th century. Early Tudor Town House with original timber roof is now a village hall and was restored in 1969-72. Margaret House incorporates later additions by Salvin (1831-3) to an earlier building in a gaunt Jacobean style.

EVALUATION

VISUAL AND SENSORY PERCEPTION

Barley stands on a local chalk promontory facilitating long distance views over the scarp to the north. To the south smaller more intimate field patterns and greater sense of enclosure.

Rarity & distinctiveness

The chalk scarp landscape is comparatively common within the District.

VISUAL IMPACT

The scale of visual impact is related to local development and infrastructure.

ACCESSIBILITY

Area to the north is less well served by rights of way compared to the complex network of winding lanes to the south of Barley.

COMMUNITY VIEWS

Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) have undertaken Tier B (Community of Place) consultations. Views of the local community have been sought and contributor's responses to each of the Character Areas will be analysed and a summary of the responses provided by HCC.

LANDSCAPE RELATED DESIGNATIONS

| | |
|-----------|-----------------------------|
| LC2 | Landscape Conservation Area |
| SAM HT 80 | Barley Lock Up: Barley |

EVALUATION

CONDITION

Land cover change: Localised
 Age structure of tree cover: Mixed
 Extent of semi-natural habitat survival: Scattered
 Management of semi-natural habitat: Not obvious
 Survival of cultural pattern: Interrupted
 Impact of built development: Low
 Impact of land-use change: Low

Matrix Score: **Moderate**

ROBUSTNESS

Impact of landform: Prominent
 Impact of land cover: Prominent
 Impact of historic pattern: Apparent
 Visibility from outside: Widely visible
 Sense of enclosure: Open
 Visual unity: Unified
 Distinctiveness/rarity: Frequent

Matrix Score: **Strong**

| | | | | |
|------------------|-----------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|---|
| CONDITION | GOOD | Strengthen and reinforce | Conserve and strengthen | Safeguard and manage |
| | MODERATE | Improve and reinforce | Improve and conserve | Conserve and restore |
| | POOR | Reconstruct | Improve and restore | Restore condition to maintain character |
| | | WEAK | MODERATE | STRONG |
| | | ROBUSTNESS | | |

GUIDELINES**STRATEGY AND GUIDELINES FOR MANAGING CHANGE:****Conserve and Restore**

- Promote management of ancient woodland to encourage a diverse woodland flora
- Promote the creation of buffer zones between intensive arable production and areas of semi-natural habitat and the creation of links between habitat areas
- Promote hedgerow restoration along the lines of historic field boundaries and for the creation of visual links between existing woodland areas
- Promote the use of traditional field hedges in place of post and wire enclosures to new grazing areas
- Protect and preserve the pattern of narrow winding lanes and associated hedge banks, sunken lanes, verges and hedges
- Promote the diversity of hedgerow species and the planting of standard hedgerow trees
- Maintain and extend the rights of way network
- Maintain the open character and the long distance views from the northern fringe
- Encourage the diversity of oak, ash and maple ancient woodland
- Encourage development of chalk grassland habitats on exposed calcareous areas