

Land at Teversham Road, Fulbourn:
Appendix 2 - Landscape Character Assessment
Extracts

Prepared on behalf of Castlefield International Ltd

January 2017



Statements of Environmental Opportunity

SEO 1: Maintain sustainable but productive agricultural land use, while expanding and connecting the chalkland assemblage of semi-natural grasslands, for example by sensitive management of road verges and extending buffer strips along field margins, to benefit soil and water quality, reduce soil erosion, strengthen landscape character and enhance biodiversity and pollinator networks.

SEO 2: Conserve the regionally important East Anglian chalk groundwater resource, by working in partnership to ensure that an integrated catchment-scale approach is secured for its enhanced long-term management, including the chalk streams, for the benefit of biodiversity, landscape character and recreational experience.

SEO 3: Conserve and promote the landscape character, geodiversity, historic environment and historical assets of the chalklands, including the open views of undulating chalkland, large rectilinear field pattern and linear ditches, strong equine association and the Icknield Way prehistoric route. Improve opportunities to enhance people's enjoyment of the area while protecting levels of tranquillity.

SEO 4: Conserve the settlement character and create or enhance sustainable urban drainage systems and green infrastructure within existing and new developments, particularly in relation to the urban fringe and growth areas such as south-east Cambridge, to provide recreation opportunities, increase soil and water quality and enhance landscape character.



Looking towards Cambridgeshire claylands and modern transport routes from Therfield Heath.

Description

Physical and functional links to other National Character Areas

The East Anglian Chalk of Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Hertfordshire, Suffolk and north-west Essex forms a narrow continuation of the chalk ridge that runs south-west–north-east across southern England, continuing in the Chilterns National Character Area (NCA) and along the eastern edge of The Wash. The northern boundary is clearly defined by the base of the north-west-facing chalk scarp slope, around the southern limit of Cambridge and along the fenland edge. From the higher ground to the south-east there are wide panoramas across the Bedfordshire Claylands NCA and the adjoining Fens NCA. To the north-east, sandy soil is blown over the Chalk, exerting a shared 'breck' character with the neighbouring Brecks NCA, visible in characteristic knarled Scots pine hedgerows. To the south and east it is bounded by the overlying chalky boulder clay of the South Suffolk and North Essex Clayland NCA, which includes Saffron Walden. The Wadlow Wind Farm, north of Balsham in Cambridgeshire, is a prominent feature along the boundary between the two NCAs.

The chalkland landscape is united with the rest of the East Anglian NCAs as a major food producer, with arable farming being the predominant land use. The smooth, rolling chalkland hills are dissected by the two gentle valleys of the rivers Granta and Rhee, which converge flowing westward into the River Cam just south of Cambridge. The Rhee begins at Ashwell Springs in Hertfordshire, running north then east 19 km through the farmland of southern Cambridgeshire. The longer tributary, the Granta, starts in Essex and flows north into the East Anglian Chalk NCA near Saffron Walden. The underlying chalk aquifer provides functional links between these areas and the population of East Anglia, whose water the aquifer supplies.



Gallops, near Newmarket showing rectilinear field pattern, enclosed by tall hedges and currently species-poor grassland.

The East Anglian Chalk NCA is traversed by a major prehistoric routeway, the Icknield Way, which links the Peddars Way and The Ridgeway National Trails. Important strategic railways and road transport links still exist, including the M11, A14, A505 and A10 (Ermine Street).

Key characteristics

- The underlying and solid geology is dominated by Upper Cretaceous Chalk, a narrow continuation of the chalk ridge that runs south-west–north-east across southern England, continuing in the Chilterns and along the eastern edge of The Wash. The chalk bedrock has given the NCA its nutrient-poor and shallow soils.
- Distinctive chalk rivers, the River Rhee and River Granta, flow in gentle river valleys in a diagonally north-west direction across the NCA.
- The chalk aquifer is abstracted for water to supply Cambridge and its surroundings and also supports flows of springs and chalk streams; features associated with a history of modification include watercress beds, culverts and habitat enhancements.
- The rolling downland, mostly in arable production, has sparse tree cover but distinctive beech belts along long, straight roads. Certain high points have small beech copses or 'hanger', which are prominent and characteristic features in the open landscape. In the east there are pine belts.
- Remnant chalk grassland, including road verges, supports chalkland flora and vestigial populations of invertebrates, such as great pignut and the chalkhill blue butterfly.
- Archaeological features include Neolithic long barrows and bronze-age tumuli lining the route of the prehistoric Icknield Way; iron-age hill forts, including that at Wandlebury; impressive Roman burial monuments and cemeteries such as the Bartlow Hills; a distinctive communication network linking the rural Roman landscape to settlements and small towns, such as Great Chesterford; the four parallel Cambridgeshire dykes that cross the Chalk: the Anglo-Saxon linear earthworks of Devil's Dyke, Fleam Dyke, Heydon/Bran Ditch and Brent Ditch; ridge-and-furrow cultivation remains of the open field systems of the earlier medieval period; and large numbers of later moated enclosures, park lands



Wandlebury Hill Fort from the air in 1980. The wooded concentric earth bank can be clearly seen.

- created, sheepwalks, arterial routes and nucleated villages that emphasise the land use change of this period.
- Brick and 'clunch' (building chalk) under thatched roofs were the traditional building materials, with some earlier survival of timber frame. Isolated farmhouses built of grey or yellowish brick have a bleached appearance.
- Settlement is focused in small towns and in villages. There are a number of expanding commuter villages located generally within valleys. Letchworth is a nationally significant designed garden city.
- In and around the wider area of Newmarket, stud farms impose a distinctive geometric, enclosed and manicured pattern to the landscape.
- The NCA is traversed by the Icknield Way, an ancient route that is now a public right of way. Roads and lanes strike across the downs perpendicularly and follow historical tracks that originally brought livestock to their summer grazing. Today major roads and railways are prominent landscape characteristics of the NCA.

SEO 3: Conserve and promote the landscape character, geodiversity, historic environment and historical assets of the chalklands, including the open views of undulating chalkland, large rectilinear field pattern and linear ditches, strong equine association and the Icknield Way prehistoric route. Improve opportunities to enhance people's enjoyment of the area while protecting levels of tranquillity.

For example by:

- Protecting and appropriately managing the historic environment for its contribution to local character and sense of identity and as a framework for habitat restoration and sustainable development, and enhancing biodiversity.
- Managing and conserving the area's heritage assets as an integral part of its distinctive landscape, while recognising the potential for undiscovered remains, including those revealed through agricultural change.
- Minimising and – where possible – eliminating risk to Scheduled Monuments and nationally significant archaeology, including through arable reversion, shallow cultivation or minimum tillage agriculture, and encouraging uptake of agri-environment schemes to fund such work.
- Maintaining, developing and improving the rights of way network and access to sites and areas of interest.
- Raising the profile of the strategic importance of the Icknield Way by promoting it as the link between the existing Peddars Way and The Ridgeway National Trails.
- Engaging with communities and owners of historic features in celebrating and conserving the historic environment, including developing skills in historic environment conservation and traditional building skills and conservation.
- Ensuring that the distinctive elements of the chalk landscape, flowing water and rural scene are conserved and managed to retain and enhance the strong sense of place.
- Encouraging and supporting traffic-calming measures and non-car travel at popular countryside destinations, to improve tranquillity and recreation experiences generally.
- Working with the horse-racing industry and major landowners of historic properties to expand the area of species-rich grassland through appropriate management techniques.
- Encouraging geo-conservation, working with local geology groups and geologists, connecting with the Chalk East initiative and strengthening the link between geodiversity and the character and landscape of the NCA.
- Promoting the use of white and yellow brick and thatch in the north and west and red brick and flints in the east as traditional building materials. Encourage local councils to grant planning permission for small-scale extraction of chalk 'clunch' for repairing historic buildings and building new structures of conservation value.



Icknield Way, prehistoric routeway as seen today.

SEO 4: Conserve the settlement character and create or enhance sustainable urban drainage systems and green infrastructure within existing and new developments, particularly in relation to the urban fringe and growth areas such as south-east Cambridge, to provide recreation opportunities, increase soil and water quality and enhance landscape character.

For example by:

- Avoiding or minimising further erosion of tranquillity by ensuring that development is appropriate to the setting and incorporates suitable measures, such as tree planting or green buffers.
- Supporting, creating and improving links between recreational assets and settlements, particularly where growth is planned.
- Improving green infrastructure within settlements and through new development, particularly in relation to urban fringe and growth areas such as south-east Cambridge, by providing accessible greenspace and potentially creating new biodiverse grasslands.
- Targeting the development of sustainable urban drainage systems and greenspace within urban centres to filter pollutants. This will be increasingly important as building continues to expand the commuter villages and towns.
- Conserving and enhancing historic earthworks and routes that evidence past settlement by scrub removal. This will also provide access to and enhance biodiversity corridors, for example Icknield Way, Worsted Street and Fleam Dyke.
- Encouraging further provision of cycle routes and, exploring the feasibility, in the long term of new rail routes.
- Engaging with communities and owners of heritage features in celebrating and conserving the historic environment, including developing skills in historic environment conservation, historic landscape management and conservation.
- Exploring opportunities to enhance the setting, interpretation and visitor facilities of heritage assets, for example the historic dykes and other earthwork monuments.

Landscape opportunities

- Protect the character and integrity of the rural landscape by conserving its mosaic of cultural heritage and natural assets, semi-natural habitats and historic buildings and archaeological features.
- Identify and conserve views to and from key viewpoints and landmarks by careful design and vegetation management, minimising the visual impact and effects of development, woodland planting and scrub encroachment.
- Conserve and enhance the land use pattern, valued farmland species and productivity of the landscape by securing sustainable forestry and agricultural activity. This includes conservation of small farm woodlands, historic hedgerows, farmland birds and arable weeds.
- Plan and manage private and public spaces for recreation such as golf courses and restored chalk pits, so that their design and their features contribute positively to landscape character. Seek the conservation, restoration and creation of natural and cultural features in these landscapes.
- Secure sustainable development which also reflects traditional local building styles and materials. Where landscape character and features are degraded by development, identify opportunities to redevelop areas and infrastructure. Encourage the widespread use of red brick and other local building materials and styles through the use of design guidance and strict planning control. Create strong visions in the urban fringe as it is developed, as this will contribute positively to the sense of place.
- Seek to reduce threats to natural and historic features by conserving or restoring their setting, addressing the problem of fragmentation particularly associated with chalk grassland. Work at a landscape scale which reflects the ecosystem approach, ecological network approach and historic character.
- Conserve, enhance and create new public access infrastructure, access links and accessible natural and cultural features, especially near settlements, in order to enhance the transitional areas between urban landscape and countryside. For example, develop the Icknield Way as the link between the Peddars Way and The Ridgeway National Trails and improve provision for cycling through this NCA.
- Undertake appropriate visitor management to ensure sustainable visitor pressure at all sites but particularly focus upon 'honey pot' sites and those sites near new development. Identify and promote alternative greenspaces and entry points to reduce visitor pressure.
- Plan for the regeneration and replanting of existing, predominately small, hill-top beech plantations. Make sure that the resilience of woodland to climate change impact is understood and acted upon; particularly the valued beech woodland which is vulnerable. Consider new species compositions and secure woodland across a variety of aspects.

- Conserve ancient routeways across the landscape to maintain biodiversity and routeways to restore historic patterns and enhance connectivity. Carry out targeted surveys and possible Local Wildlife Site designation to conserve species-rich hedgerows and identify hedgerow trees of significant landscape and biodiversity value.
- Protect and enhance chalk streams and wetlands in both their rural and urban settings. Manage the flood plain of chalk streams, including historic features such as watercress beds and channels, in order to conserve and create wetland habitat. In the urban environment, seek to restore degraded channels and extend the areas of greenspace surrounding rivers for biodiversity and public access benefits.
- Manage recent change in the landscape by establishing dialogue with growing stakeholder groups, particularly hobby farmers, horse owners and non-farmers owning significant areas of land and valued features. Develop best practice management guidance to disseminate to these growing audiences. Build on existing community interest and activity around chalk streams and common land to secure further improvements.
- Encourage local geo-conservation projects between wildlife trusts and local geological groups; manage local geological sites with the beneficial side-effect of maintaining local biodiversity.



Wadrow wind farm, north of Balsham, is a prominent feature in the landscape.

Photo credits

Front cover: View looking across field with straw bales to ploughed field showing chalky soil. © John Tyler/Natural England (Countryside Agency)

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1

**SHARE
THE
VISION**



2

**ACCEPT
THE
CHALLENGE**





Chalklands: Babraham.

AREA 2: CHALKLANDS

The complex history of settlement and the impact of people on the landscape over the centuries is particularly apparent in this part of the County. Roman roads, Anglo-Saxon earthworks, large fields, modern roads and developments are all interlinked.

The region was mostly too dry for early settlement. However, this dryness and light vegetation meant that it was ideal for communications and it is traversed by a major prehistoric and historic highway, the Ickniel Way. Its importance as a highway also gave it strategic value. In the Iron Age it was controlled by

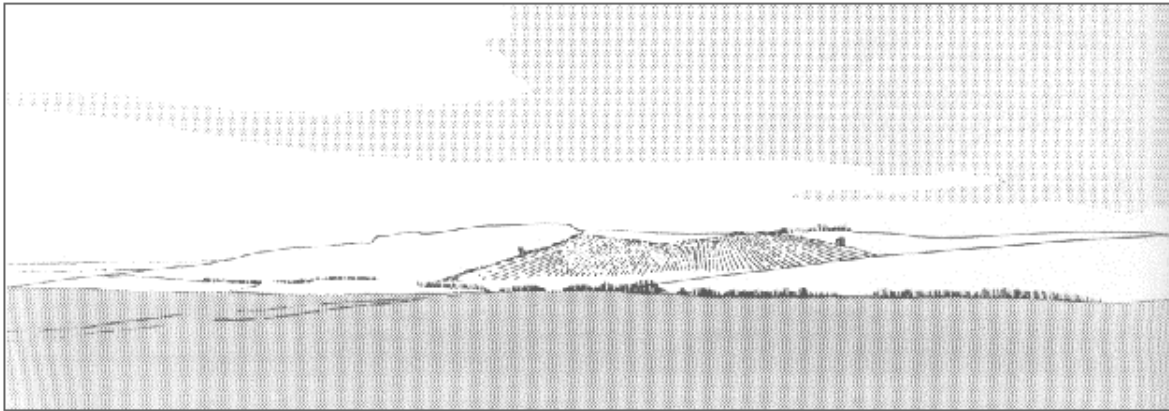
Wandlebury hill fort and in Anglo-Saxon times by the three great linear dykes which span the chalkland from the fen edge east of Cambridge to the wooded edge on the higher claylands (a fourth 'Bran Ditch' near Fowlmere has been almost completely destroyed).

These artificial elements overlie the smooth rolling chalkland hills. The hills are dissected by the two gentle valleys of the Granta and the Rhee, which converge to form the river Cam just south of Cambridge.

The area was used for sheep farming well into the nineteenth century, leading to the creation of botanically rich grasslands which now only survive in well-protected locations.

CHALKLANDS Before

A denuded, intensely arable landscape



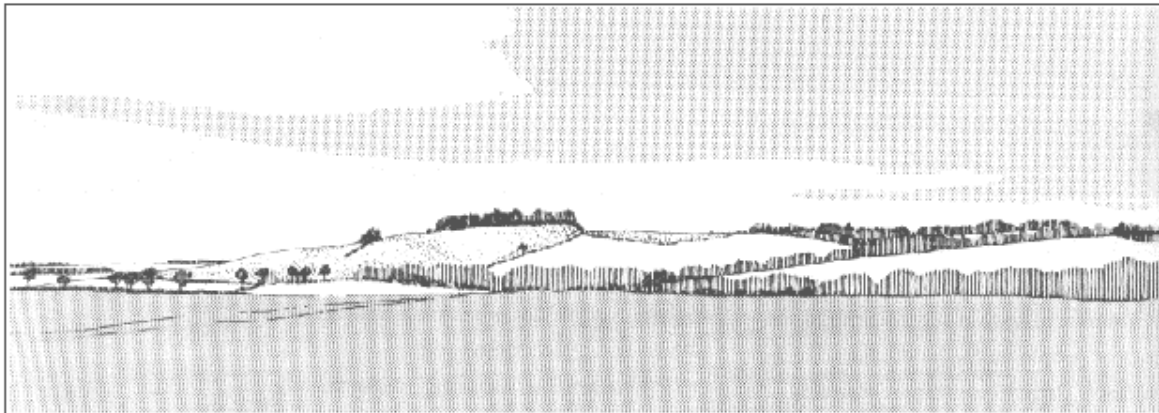
CHALKLANDS After

Smooth, rolling profile to rising ground.

Wooded escarpment emphasises landform.

Beech hanger forms strong focal point on brow of hill.

Good hedgerows and woodlands emphasise rolling landform and give sense of scale.



The majority of the chalkland is devoted to growing cereal crops, despite the frequently poor, thin soils. It is a broad-scale landscape of large fields, low mechanically trimmed hedges and few trees. The eastern part of this area has a number of woodlands and shelter belts which help to break up the long distant views and give some form and character. Certain high points have small beech copses or 'hangers' which are prominent and characteristic features in the open landscape.

The essentially geometrical field pattern resulting from the downland hedge enclosure is further subdivided in an area to the south-west of Newmarket. Here the relatively modern growth and prosperity of the racehorse industry has imposed a distinctive pattern of small, tree-lined paddocks, which imparts a well-wooded character to the area. This has arisen from the need to provide shelter from cold winds and driving rain and also visual enclosure, to avoid external movements frightening the young horses. The stud farms are expanding away from the immediate surroundings of Newmarket, and no doubt their landscape pattern will also follow.



A rich and characterful river corridor; classic lowland landscapes can be recreated with the right design and management skills

PRINCIPLES FOR LANDSCAPE IMPROVEMENT AND MANAGEMENT IN THE CHALKLANDS

The future pattern is for a large-scale landscape defined by rolling hills, large fields, bold shelter belts, sweeping masses of woodland and occasional beech hangers.:

1. Planting new beech hangers: could be placed on suitable, carefully sited knolls, hilltops and scarp-tops; these would form focal points to reinforce the local chalkland landscape character.

2. Management and creation of chalk grasslands: the majority of the grasslands should remain open and uncluttered. The promotion of species-rich grassland on thin chalk soils would provide visual and wildlife value. Road verges should also be managed to promote plant diversity and interest.

3. Management of existing shelter belts: these should be restocked to encourage young tree growth and fill gaps.

4. Planting new mixed woodlands and shelter belts: carefully sited to enclose large tracts of rolling farmland and emphasise landforms (see Farmland Models A4b and A5).

5. Creation of landscape corridors along river valleys: the valleys of the Rivers Granta, Rhee and Cam have a distinct small-scale intimacy which contrasts well with the surrounding chalklands. Small woods and wetland meadows could be supplemented with copses, lines of willows to be pollarded, and areas of marginal and aquatic vegetation (see Farmland Model A6).

6. Hedgerows: selected hedgerows should be reinforced, or managed for particularly significant impact, based upon their visual and wildlife potential. Historically significant hedgerows should be carefully conserved, and new hedges planted to emphasise the existing landscape.

7. Footpath corridor improvements: the Roman Road is an important route across the chalk landscape. Planting small woodlands at selected locations such as hill tops or to frame views, as well as carefully managing the existing rich flora, would enhance the route. A similar approach could be adopted for other footpaths in the area, concentrating on a small number of linked corridors (see Farmland Model A7).

8. Road corridor improvements:

the M11 has had minimal planting to soften its impact on the landscape. The planting of selected embankments and adjacent field margins with native trees and shrubs would provide interest for those using the road as well as helping to integrate the road with the surrounding countryside.

9. Conservation of the linear dykes:

selective removal of scrub growth and re-establishment of sheep grazing, if possible, would enable the massive scale of these historic earthworks to be appreciated and promote chalk grass and flora communities. Some areas of scrub should be retained for habitat and visual diversity. The significance of the dykes in the landscape could be reinforced by managing adjacent strips of agricultural land as grassland or scrub.

10. Newmarket stud farms: new investment in the expansion of stud farms is causing significant change. Shelter belts should be planned on less rigid lines and should respond more to the local landforms, hedges, copses and roads. The shelterbelts should be planted with native tree and shrub species for visual and wildlife benefits.

PLANT SPECIES GUIDELINES FOR THE CHALKLANDS

Beech hangers

Fagus sylvatica (beech)

Plus occasional additions of species from 'mixed woodlands' below.

Mixed Woodlands

Fagus sylvatica (beech)

Dominant mainly on shallow chalk soils where it may form large stands; smaller groups in more diverse woods.

Fraxinus excelsior (ash)

dominant; mixed woods.

Tilia cordata (small-leaved lime)

less common.

Carpinus betulus (hornbeam)

less common.

Prunus avium (wild cherry)

less common.

Taxus baccata (yew)

Small groups.

Corylus avellana (hazel)

dominant shrub, understorey, edges, glades, scrub.

Acer campestre (field maple)

glades, near edges.

Crataegus monogyna (hawthorn)

near edges, mixed thickets.

Sambucus nigra (elder)

occasional, understorey and edges.

Ligustrum vulgare (wild privet)

occasional, edges.

Viburnum lantana (wayfaring tree)

occasional, edges.

Note: beech should be planted in single species groups of at least 500 sq. m. when used in woodland block; do not use in random mixes.

Hedgerows, woodland edges and scrub

Crataegus monogyna (hawthorn)

Corylus avellana (hazel)

Prunus spinosa (blackthorn)

Acer campestre (field maple)

Rosa canina (dog rose)

Ligustrum vulgare (wild privet)

occasional.

Viburnum lantana (wayfaring tree)

occasional.

Trees in hedgerows/avenues

Fraxinus excelsior (ash)

dominant, hedgerows.

Fagus sylvatica (beech)

mostly avenues; some hedgerows.

Acer campestre (field maple)









sub-dominant, hedgerows.

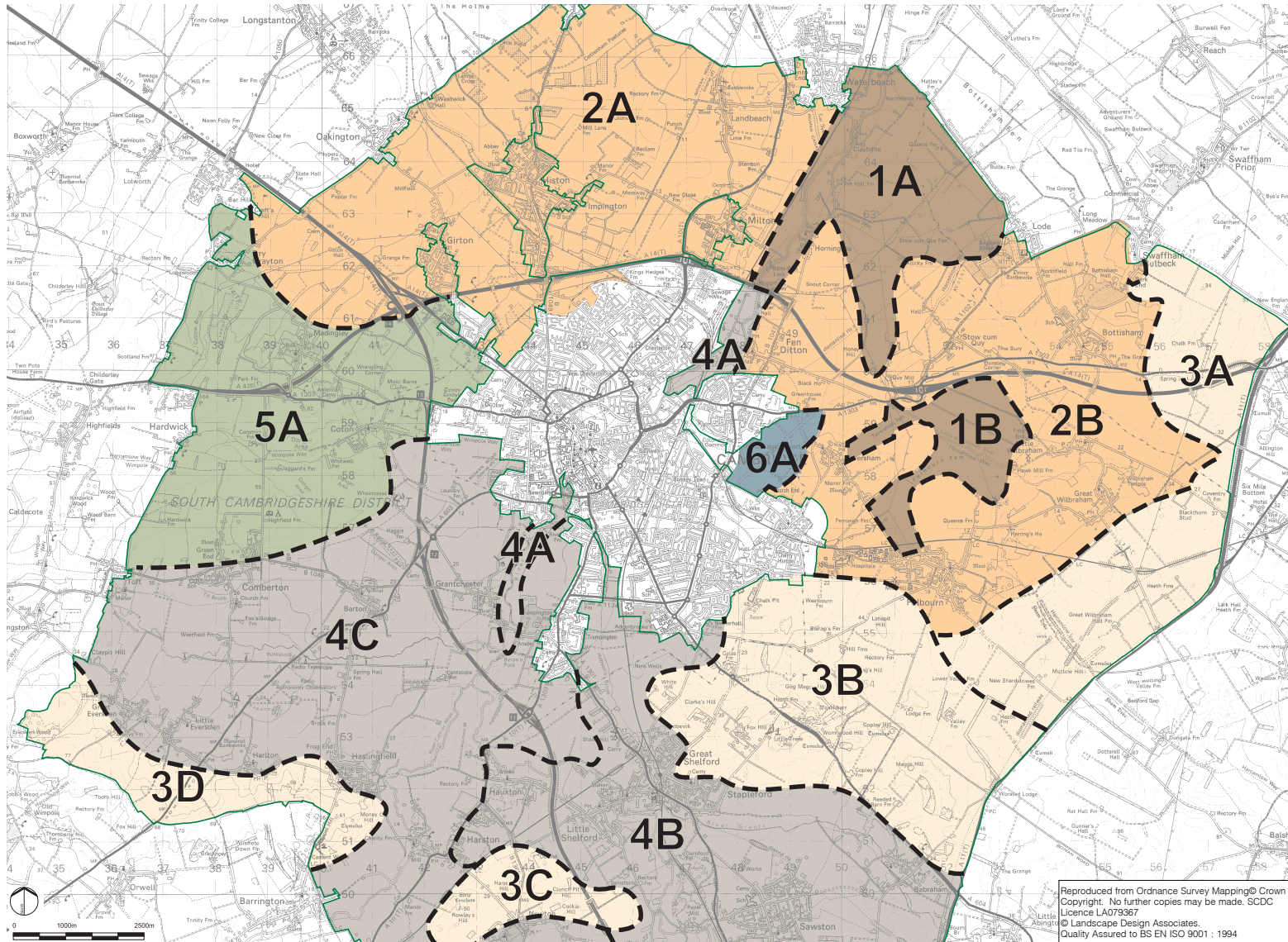
Avenues – all as single species, not mixed.

Hedgerows – mixed.

Cambridge Green Belt Study

Landscape Character

Landscape Type	Landscape Character Area
 1. Fen	1A. Waterbeach - Lode Fen 1A. Little Wilbraham Fen
 2. Fen Edge	2A. Western Fen Edge 2B. Eastern Fen Edge
 3. Chalk Hills	3A. North East Chalk Hills 3B. Gog Magog Chalk Hills 3C. Newton Chalk Hills 3B. Wimpole Ridge Chalk Hills
 4. River Valleys	4A. River Cam Corridor 4B. Granta Valley 4C. Rhee and Bourn Valleys
 5. Claylands	5A. Western Claylands
 6. Airport	6A. Cambridge Airport
 1A	Landscape Character Areas
	Green Belt Boundary (inner and outer edges)



South Cambridgeshire District Council
South Cambridgeshire Hall
9-11 Hills Road
Cambridge
CB2 1PB

**CAMBRIDGE GREEN BELT STUDY
A Vision of the Future for Cambridge
in its Green Belt Setting**

FINAL REPORT

Landscape Design Associates
17 Minster Precincts
Peterborough
PE1 1XX

Tel: 01733 310471
Fax: 01733 553661
Email: info@lda-peterborough.co.uk

September 2002

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8.0 CONCLUSIONS

Cover: The background illustration is from the Cambridgeshire Collection, Cambridge City Library. The top illustration is the prospect of Cambridge from the east and the bottom illustration is the prospect from the west in 1688.

4.6 Landscape Character

4.6.1 Introduction

The characterisation approach adopted for the built area of Cambridge has been extended into the landscape. Understanding landscape character is fundamental to understanding what gives a landscape its distinctive identity. Where a landscape forms the setting for a settlement, landscape character assessment enables the settlement to be studied within its context, and the relationship between the settlement and its surroundings to be properly understood.

The methodology used for this landscape character assessment of Cambridge is based on the most recent guidelines, laid down in "*Landscape Character Assessment: Guidance for England and Scotland*", published by the Countryside Agency in 2002. The undertaking of the landscape character assessment is a two-stage process. Firstly, desk studies were undertaken, investigating factors such as geology, landform, settlement pattern and communication routes. This information was analysed to define areas of common character (landscape types and landscape character areas) that would be tested and validated in the field. Secondly, fieldwork was undertaken, involving the visual analysis of the landscape, recording findings on Landscape Assessment record sheets. The draft landscape types and character areas identified during the desk study were appraised and refined.

The results of this landscape character assessment are shown on drawing 1641LP/05 and described below. Two categories of information are recorded: Landscape Character Types and Landscape Character Areas. Landscape Character Types are generic types of landscape, which may repeat throughout the country. They contain broadly similar combinations of geology, topography, drainage patterns, land use and vegetation. In contrast, Landscape Character Areas are geographically distinct parts of a particular landscape type. Each Landscape Character Area has its own character and identity because of its views, location and subtle variations, even though it shares the same generic characteristics as other places of the same landscape type. For example, within the Cambridge Green Belt, there are two Landscape Character Areas within the Fen Landscape Type: the Waterbeach-Lode Fen and Fulbourn Fen.

It should be noted that there is rarely an abrupt change between adjacent landscape types or character areas. For example, although a geology map may show a distinct line between underlying chalk and clay, this change may be less apparent on the ground, and form a gradual transition rather than a sudden change. For this reason, the lines showing landscape character area boundaries on drawing 1641LP/05 should be read as indicative only.

There are six landscape types described in section 4.6.2, and within these there are a total of 13 landscape character areas described in section 4.6.3.

4.6.2 Landscape Types

1. Fen

The Fen landscape type is situated to the north east and east of Cambridge. It is the southern tip of a landscape type, which extends northwards up to the Wash. The Fen landscape is low-lying and flat. (A high proportion of the Fens are below sea level, although in the vicinity of Cambridge they are just above sea level.) Dark peaty soils are clearly visible, and the vast majority of the land is in arable production. Much of the land was reclaimed through pumping of surface water, and there are numerous straight drainage ditches, which divide the regular fields. The landscape often has an artificial appearance, due to the recent and systematic draining of the land. Settlement is dispersed, and is restricted to scattered farms strung out on the higher land alongside roads. Most buildings are of brick construction and date from the draining of the land in the 18th and 19th centuries.

The Fen landscape type is found in two areas:

- 1A. Waterbeach-Lode Fen Edge
- 1B. Little Wilbraham Fen

2. Fen Edge

This is a transitional landscape type, situated between the Fens and the higher land beyond. It is relatively low lying, but not as low as the fens. It still appears generally flat, and contains a variety of land uses, including arable and pastoral agriculture, roads and settlement. The Fen Edge has traditionally been an important location for settlement, as it is above the Fen floodplain, and has easy access to both the wetland resources of the Fens and the higher land which is suitable for agriculture. The land to the north-west, north and east of Cambridge can be described as Fen Edge, although the building of the A14 has severed the link between the city and the Fen Edge landscape to the north. The Fen edge villages were traditionally wealthy and contain several fine medieval churches. Building materials traditionally used in the fen edge villages include gault brick, render, and thatch. Only the wealthiest buildings were constructed of stone.

The Fen Edge landscape type is found in two areas:

- 2A. Western Fen Edge
- 2B. Eastern Fen Edge

3. Chalk Hills

The ridge of chalk hills which form an arc around Cambridge from the east to the south west are part of a much longer ridge of chalk. Their landform is gently undulating, with smooth slopes up to relatively high, rounded hills. The chalk ridge is adjacent to Cambridge to the south east of the city, where it forms the Gog Magog Hills. These contain the highest point in the vicinity of Cambridge. The predominant land use is arable agriculture on the chalky soils. There is relatively little settlement due to the shortage of water. Traditional building materials include flint, clunch and pale brick.

The Chalk Hills landscape type is found in four areas:

- 3A. North East Chalk Hills
- 3B. Gog Magog Chalk Hills
- 3C. Newton Chalk Hills
- 3D. Wimpole Ridge Chalk Hills

4. River Valleys

Cambridge is surrounded by river valley landscapes on its south west and southern edges. These valleys have been formed by rivers eroding the chalk or clay bedrock to create broad valleys, with a very gently undulating landform. There are numerous streams and tributaries. The alluvial sediment makes the land relatively fertile, allowing arable agriculture in higher areas, and pasture/ meadows in flood plains closer to watercourses. Numerous villages have developed in river valleys due to the proximity of fresh water. Many established at the crossing-points of watercourses and grew to become major settlements. Other villages have expanded in a linear form along the roads which follow the river valleys. Traditional building materials include render, stone, thatch, brick and tile. The relative ease of river transport made it relatively easy to import building materials from the surrounding areas.

The River Valleys landscape type is found in three areas:

- 4A. River Cam Corridor
- 4B. Granta Valley
- 4C. Rhee and Bourn Valleys

5. Claylands

The section of Claylands to the west of Cambridge is the tip of a landscape type which covers most of East Anglia. Clayland landscapes are typified by a topography of gentle ridges and valleys. They are often well wooded (particularly on hill tops) and the main land use is arable agriculture. There are fairly evenly scattered villages, often containing timber framed, rendered and thatched cottages, although in many rural areas the population of the clayland areas is less dense now than it was in Medieval times. The historic importance of the area is often reflected in landscape features such as green lanes, trackways, moats, churches and deserted villages.

The Clayland landscape type is found on one area:

- 5A. Western Claylands

6. Airport

Small airports can form landscapes which are neither urban nor rural. Their combination of extensive flat grassy areas, runways, lights and associated large-scale modern buildings create a distinctive landscape type which is instantly recognisable.

The Airport landscape type is found in one area:

- 6A. Cambridge Airport

4.6.3 Landscape Character Areas

1A. Waterbeach- Lode Fen

The key characteristics of the Waterbeach-Lode Fen stem from the flatness of the landscape. These are the senses of space and openness, and the importance of the horizon and skylines in the panoramic distant views. It is a very regular landscape, with straight roads, ditches, shelter belts and field boundaries. The peaty soils are dark brown in colour, and support intensive arable agriculture. Lines of willows and poplars mark the course of the river Cam. Settlement is dispersed, and is restricted to scattered farms strung out on the higher land alongside roads. Most buildings are of brick construction and date from the draining of the land in the 18th and 19th centuries.

Views to Cambridge are restricted to the southern edge of the character area, where they are dominated by the hangars of the airport. Links with the city are through an extension to the Cam Corridor, which is a green finger into the city, and contains a long distance footpath and a railway line.

1B. Little Wilbraham Fen

Little Wilbraham Fen is a small pocket of low-lying fen within the Eastern Fen Edge. A regimented pattern of flat arable fields and areas of wetland vegetation is divided by a network of straight droveways and drainage ditches, and the more sinuous path of Quy Water and Little Wilbraham River. Watercourses are often lined with hawthorn scrub or large willow trees. The willow trees are prominent features on the skyline. The Fen is generally quite open, with some enclosure provided by the tree and scrub vegetation, and the sloping landform outside the character area. In addition to Little Wilbraham Fen it includes two other named fens – Teversham Fen and Fulbourn Fen. It contains one SSSI (Wilbraham Fens), which is made up of a large area of fen and neutral grassland with associated scrub and open water communities, with dense stands of common reed *Phragmites australis*. Settlement within Little Wilbraham Fen is limited to isolated farms. There are no surfaced roads within the area.

The Harcamlow Way long distance footpath passes through the Little Wilbraham Fen.

2A. Western Fen Edge

The Western Fen Edge landscape character area extends to the north and north

west of Cambridge. It is a relatively low-lying landscape, and undulates very gently between 5 and 20m above sea level. It is slightly higher than the Fen proper. It is a flat and expansive landscape, where sky and horizons are dominant features. Arable agriculture is the principal land use, and the land is divided into medium-sized regular fields. Hedges and shelterbelts between fields, plus several orchards, add a distinctive pattern of vegetation into the landscape.

Views to Cambridge are restricted by the low-lying topography and the A14. Therefore the only key views to Cambridge from the western fen edge are from the A14 itself. The A14 also acts as an artificial edge to the city, and undermines the gentle transition between the city and the fen edge.

There are several villages within the western fen edge, the majority of which developed on “islands” of higher ground to reduce the risk of flooding. They display a variety of historic forms: Some, such as Landbeach developed along routeways and are linear in form, whilst others such as Histon are nucleated around a village green. The villages closest to Cambridge (Girton, Histon and Milton) have all expanded considerably in the 20th century, and are now often perilously close to being linked to Cambridge by suburban routes. However, each has retained its individual village character. The Fen edge villages were traditionally wealthy and contain several fine medieval churches. Building materials traditionally used in the fen edge villages include gault brick, render, and thatch. Only the wealthiest buildings were constructed of stone.

2B. Eastern Fen Edge

The Eastern Fen Edge is a transitional landscape between the Fenlands and the Chalklands. One of the key characteristics of this landscape character area is the pockets of Fen and Chalk landscapes around and within it, which contribute to the transition and bring different influences.

The Eastern Fen Edge is open in character, and is generally arable farmland, divided by hawthorn hedges. Views are generally long, and often include the surrounding landscape character areas. In the northern part of the area, variety in the landscape is achieved through designed landscapes at Anglesey Abbey and Bottisham Hall.

There is a gradual transition between the farmland of the Eastern Fen Edge and the chalk hills to the east and south. From this higher land there are distant views to Cambridge, with the city set in a green landscape. There are immediate views to the edge of Cambridge from the western part of the landscape character area. The airport dominates many of these views.

Settlement in the Eastern Fen Edge includes scattered farms and a number of small villages separated by farmland. The villages are located on relatively high ground and their church towers are prominent in the landscape. Of these villages, only Fulbourn has expanded with significant areas of modern housing.

3A. North East Chalk Hills

This landscape character area consists of rolling chalk farmland on the eastern edge of the Green Belt. These chalk hills are lower and less wooded than the Gog Magog Hills, and do not have their recreational function. The transition between the

North East Chalk Hills and the Eastern Fen Edge is very subtle and gradual, the main difference between the two landscapes being their elevation and topography.

The North East Chalk Hills are relatively inaccessible. The A14, A1303 and two minor roads pass through the area, but public access is limited to a few byways and footpaths.

The area contains distant views to Cambridge from the junctions between the A11 and Balsham Road, Mill Road and Little Wilbraham Road. There is also a key panoramic view of Cambridge within its rural setting from the A14 as it descends from Nine Mile Hill. Settlements are limited to a few scattered farms.

3B. Gog Magog Chalk Hills

The Gog Magog Hills are a distinctive chalk ridge, which form an area of high ground to the south east of Cambridge. They are a series of rounded hills, capped with beech, lime and sycamore woodland on their summits. It is an open, elevated landscape with a strong sense of time-depth due to the Iron-Age hill fort at Wandlebury and the Roman road to Cambridge, which runs along the ridge. The majority of land is used for wheat production, but recreation also contributes to the character of the area, which contains a Country Park, Nature Reserve, picnic site and a golf course.

There are several elevated views to Cambridge, which give this landscape character area a strong sense of place. The green edge to Cambridge is strongly apparent in these views, and the Western Claylands also contribute to the green landscape surrounding the city. The summit of Wandlebury is a memorable feature which contributes to the character of the landscape and enriches the setting of Cambridge. Settlement on the Gog Magogs is limited to scattered farms, because of the shortage of water on the chalk.

3C. Newton Chalk Hills

This landscape character area is formed by a small outcrop of chalk between the valleys of the Granta and the Rhee. It is a typical chalk landscape, containing a series of gently rolling hills used for arable agriculture. Public access to the hills is limited, but there are good views of the Granta Valley landscape character area from the obelisk on St Margaret's Mount. The landscape is open and vegetation is limited to shelterbelts and blocks of woodland. The predominant species is beech. Settlement consists of a few houses and farms alongside roads, particularly between Harston and Newton.

3D. Wimpole Ridge Chalk Hills

The south west tip of the Cambridge Green Belt takes in a small part of the Wimpole Ridge Chalk Hills landscape character area. This is a chalk ridge, whose character is strongly influenced by the parkland of Wimpole Hall. This area is characterised by its elevated and rolling topography. On the northern face of the ridge (within the Green Belt), the parkland influence is less pronounced, and the slopes appear as open expanses of fields. However, the summit of the ridge is covered in dense deciduous woodland, including beech, oak, ash and lime.

There are distant views of Cambridge from the ridge, with the most famous from

Chapel Hill (a view referred to in Rupert Brooke's poem "*The Old Vicarage, Grantchester*"). In these views, Cambridge is visible as a compact "island" of green, due to the mature vegetation within the city and its green edge. The historic landmarks of Cambridge are visible on the skyline, and the city can be seen set in a green landscape, with river valleys, chalk hills and clay ridges all contributing to the impression of the city.

Settlement of this character area within the Green Belt is restricted to a few scattered farms.

4A. River Cam Corridor

The River Cam Corridor Landscape Character Area runs through Cambridge, on a roughly south west to north east course. It is distinctive from other river valley landscapes because of its key views to the landmark towers and spires of Cambridge, and because of its rural and pastoral character, even close to the city centre. It forms distinctive approaches to Cambridge from the south west and the north east along green fingers into the city via footpaths alongside the river. To the north, a long distance footpath provides a link between Cambridge and the open countryside, and a railway line also runs within the valley. The Cam Valley further enriches the setting of Cambridge through the historic association between the city and its river, and through the works of Rupert Brooke, Byron, and other poets who described the Cam valley around Grantchester. Grantchester contains a very attractive historic core containing timber-framed and rendered buildings.

4B. Granta Valley

The Granta Valley is situated to the south of Cambridge. It has the low-lying, gentle topography of the River Valley landscape type, but its character is distinguished by its wooded appearance and by the relatively built-up and suburban character of its villages. The woodland within the landscape gives it a relatively enclosed character, increases the "greenness" of the landscape setting, and screens views. This restricts views to the villages, as well as more distant views to Cambridge.

Settlement comprises a relatively large proportion of the land area. Many villages have developed along key routes into Cambridge, including the A10 and the A1301. The majority of these villages (which include Sawston, Shelford and Harston) have expanded through cluster or ribbon development, and this has led to a more suburban feel on the approaches to the city through this area.

4C. Rhee and Bourn Valleys

These valleys form the landscape to the south west of Cambridge. The landscape is comprised of a repeating pattern of subtle ridges and dips which reflect the drainage pattern. However, their overall appearance is relatively flat. Views are long, and framed by the wooded ridges of the western claylands to north and the Wimplote Chalk ridge to the south. The Rhee and Bourn Brook valleys have an open and tranquil character. The low density of settlement and the relatively quiet roads give them a strongly rural feel, although the lines of radio telescopes are highly distinctive features which contribute positively to the character of the landscape. The majority of land is in arable production, although pastures are common alongside streams. Stream corridors are often visible within the landscape as lines of willow trees.

Villages are generally small, and separated by extensive tracts of countryside. There are small areas of modern housing on the edges of some villages, but generally the villages have retained their small scale and historic character, and are key features within the landscape. There is a distinctive line of villages (including Haslingfield and Harlton), which follow the line of the Icknield Way (an ancient trackway) along the base of the chalk ridge at the south-western edge of the landscape character area. They have developed where the Icknield Way crossed streams or springs.

The key views to Cambridge within this character area are seen from the M11. The landmarks of the historic core are clearly visible and form skyline elements. Low lying countryside forms the foreground to these views, and the high quality green edge of the city means that the city appears to merge gradually with the countryside.

5A. Western Claylands

To the west of Cambridge is the Western Claylands landscape character area. This area is characterised by a combination of open arable fields and mature vegetation. This vegetation includes deciduous woodland on ridge tops, and hedgerows along routes and field boundaries.

The overall impression is of a mature, peaceful rural landscape which enhances the topography of east-west ridges. There are some distant views of Cambridge from high points, but the majority of these views are screened by vegetation in the summer months. An important approach into Cambridge from Bedford passes through the western claylands. Adjacent to the road is the American Cemetery, a memorable feature within the setting of the city. Just beyond the American Cemetery is a key elevated view of Cambridge.

This is an area that has seen population decline since the medieval period and today it contains only scattered villages and farmsteads. Madingley is a particularly attractive village, with its hall and estate cottages.

6A. Cambridge Airport

Cambridge Airport is situated on the eastern edge of the city. It is essentially a large, flat grassy field, with associated hangar buildings to the north west. The airport separates the city from the countryside beyond. It feels very open, with long views and a homogenous character, all traces of the historic landscape pattern having been removed. Visually, it functions as an open green space on the edge of the city, but it does not provide a public access link between the city and the open countryside.

4.6.4 Conclusion

There are a variety of landscapes within the Cambridge Green Belt. The diversity of landscapes within the setting of Cambridge is one of the city's defining characteristics.

7.2.6 Landscape Character

Landscape character of the Green Belt has been described at a broad scale in section 4.6. This section now assesses the character of the landscape east of Cambridge in finer detail, where appropriate breaking the larger character areas into smaller, local areas of distinctive character. It uses similar methods described in section 4.6, applying them at a more detailed scale. At this scale boundaries of local character areas often follow visible elements in the landscape such as watercourses or field boundaries.

The character of the villages within these character areas is also described. These are Fen Ditton, Teversham, Fulbourn, Great Wilbraham and Little Wilbraham.

Drawing number 1641LP/12 shows the local landscape character areas described for the land east of Cambridge. The drawing also shows townscape types which have already been described at a fine level of detail in section 4.5 and are therefore not discussed further in this section.

There are six local landscape character areas described below. Two of these, Little Wilbraham Fen and Cambridge Airport, correspond to character areas defined at the broader scale of assessment, as there was no justification in sub-dividing them. The Eastern Fen Edge described in section 4.6 has been sub-divided into Fen Ditton Eastern Fen Edge, Teversham Eastern Fen Edge, Fulbourn Eastern Fen Edge and Fulbourn Hospital. One new character area, Cherry Hinton Works, has been identified.

Fen Ditton Eastern Fen Edge

Fen Ditton Eastern Fen Edge forms part of a more extensive area of Fen Edge landscape, which is a transitional landscape between the Fenlands and the Chalklands.

Fen Ditton Eastern Fen Edge is an area of flat or gently rolling arable farmland. The land gradually falls from a height of 15 metres AOD where it borders Cambridge and surrounds the Village of Fen Ditton to the south west, to 5 metres AOD where it flattens out and meets the fens to the north and east. As well as bordering the city and fens it meets the River Cam corridor to the west, and further Fen Edge landscape to the south. The underlying geology is mainly chalk with a small area of terrace deposits to the south west.

The open landscape provides a rural setting for the small, linear village of Fen Ditton, and part of the eastern edge of the city. The busy A14 Trunk road cuts through the character area bringing visual and noise intrusion into the countryside, and creating a physical barrier between the south and north parts of Fen Ditton Eastern Fen Edge.

Fields are relatively small and enclosed to the south of the area, becoming larger and more open to the north. A range of elements, including open drains, hedges, plantations or scrub vegetation along a dismantled railway line, defines field boundaries. From a distance, some field boundaries appear to only be marked by a change in crop. There are a number of smaller fields around the edge of Fen Ditton, with more trees, providing a soft green edge to the some sides of the village, particularly on the west side closest to the River Cam. South of High Ditch Road, young plantations break up the open landscape, providing further enclosure

to land. To the north of High Ditch Road the land becomes more open with generally larger fields and less enclosing vegetation.

Fen Ditton lies on the B1047 close to the north eastern edge of Cambridge, about four kilometres from the city centre. The village is on the eastern bank of the River Cam with attractive water meadows lying between it and the river. It is a long, thin village with farmland penetrating into the built up area, with the rural character very much in evidence. It is an attractive village spreading from the older core by the River Cam, along High Ditch Road (Fleam Dyke) to the east.

The parish church is largely enclosed by mature trees and dates from the 13th century. There are some old houses, including Fen Ditton Hall originating from the 15th century, set away from the road, and 15th and 16th farm houses, and 19th century cottages and cottage rows lining the village streets. Earliest buildings are mostly timber framed and plastered with plain tile or thatched roofs. Later (until the early 19th century) red and gault stock brick were commonly used. The village also contains some modern housing including bungalows.

Fen Ditton and the countryside between it and the River Cam, are covered by an extensive Conservation Area (see drawing number 1641LP/11), six grade II* and 23 grade II listed buildings (South Cambridgeshire District Council February 1999).

The village is separated from Cambridge by a narrow width of countryside north of a dismantled railway line to the south, and by the River Cam corridor to the west.

Teversham Eastern Fen Edge

Teversham Eastern Fen Edge is an area of flat or gently rolling arable farmland mostly lying between 10 and 15 metres AOD. Underlying geology is mainly chalk, with a small area of terrace deposits to the north.

Teversham Eastern Fen Edge is situated on the edge of Cambridge and Cambridge Airport to the west, higher chalk hills to the south, Little Wilbraham Fen to the east, and Fen Ditton Fen Edge to the north. The open landscape provides a rural setting for the small, densely treed village of Teversham, and the abrupt eastern and northern edges of the city at Cherry Hinton.

Fields are generally large with boundaries defined by open drains or gappy and often overgrown hawthorn hedges with few trees. There are a number of smaller fields around the edge of Teversham, with more trees, providing a soft green edge to the some sides of the village.

The land west of Teversham is strongly influenced by the proximity of the open airport site and the large dominating hangar buildings on the edge of the city. There are clear views of Cambridge from this land, with the tops of buildings and structures, including Addenbrooke's Hospital, Carter Bridge, and the Roman Catholic Church, rising above the densely treed city.

Teversham is a small village with a small and fragmented historic core, and areas of post war suburban housing. It is situated about 4.5 kilometres from the city centre, and 0.6 kilometres from the edge of the city at Cherry Hinton. The flint and stone church dates from the 13th century. It is set amongst mature trees, on the main road through the village on its west side, and within a rural setting on its south east side (see Photograph 7, Appendix A). The church and a village green lying south east of the church provide a visual focus to the village. Other early buildings

date from the 17th century and are timber framed and plastered with plain tile or thatched roofs. Gault brick was used to construct some buildings in the 19th century.

Older houses are focussed around the church, but are also scattered amongst 20th century houses along Church Road and High Street. Post war housing developments have enlarged the village to the south east. These comprise a mixture of styles and materials that are not characteristic of the historical building style, including small developments of orange brick bungalows, grey rendered semi-detached houses with brown concrete roof tiles, and white painted brick council houses.

Individual large older houses and farms lie outside the main built up area of the village.

The village contains a Conservation Area (see drawing number 1641LP/11), one grade II* and six grade II listed buildings (South Cambridgeshire District Council February 1999).

Fulbourn Eastern Fen Edge

Fulbourn Eastern Fen Edge is an area of flat or gently rolling arable farmland mostly lying between 10 and 20 metres AOD. Chalk is the bedrock around the villages of Fulbourn, Great Wilbraham and Little Wilbraham, with a substantial area of terrace deposits and smaller areas of peat on lower ground between these villages.

Fulbourn Eastern Fen Edge is situated between higher chalk hills to the south, Little Wilbraham Fen to the north west and further Fen Edge landscape to the north east. Landform is gently rolling with some low-lying flat areas. The landscape provides a rural setting for the small, densely treed villages of Great Wilbraham and Little Wilbraham, and the east side of the larger village of Fulbourn. These villages are set on rolling and slightly elevated ground.

This area contains a larger coverage of trees and woods than other Fen Edge landscapes described above, mostly associated with the grounds of old halls. Some of these include specimen trees in parkland settings. These provide a high degree of enclosure close to villages, with the landscape becoming more open towards Little Wilbraham Fen and the chalk hills. Localised enclosure is also provided by hedges and scrub, and buildings associated with villages.

Fields are variable in size, being smaller closer to villages and woodlands, and larger towards Little Wilbraham Fen and the chalk hills.

Little Wilbraham is a small linear village, separated into two halves by an area of open fields, with a strong rural character. It is situated at approximately 15 metres AOD above Little Wilbraham Fen. It contains a church, a rectory and farmhouses and cottages. The few remaining early cottages are timber framed and plastered with plain tiled or thatched roofs. A common (mainly 19th century) building material is gault brick with plain tiles. There are also a number of more modern buildings including some small post-war housing estates, bungalows, and semi-detached and detached houses. There are views from the village out into open countryside. A Conservation Area covers most old properties. There are one grade II* and 13 grade II buildings (South Cambridgeshire District Council February 1999).

Great Wilbraham is larger than Little Wilbraham, but is still a small village. It is a pleasant village with similar traditional housing styles to Little Wilbraham, including timber framed and plastered with plain tiled or thatched roofs, and gault brick. The church dates from the 12th century and is made of flint bounded by flint walls. Old houses are intermixed with some new dwellings, including small post-war estates, bungalows and semi-detached houses. Great Wilbraham has a large village green bounded by old houses. There are views from close to the edge of the village out into open countryside. Part of Great Wilbraham is covered by a Conservation Area and the village contains three grade II* and 34 grade II listed buildings (South Cambridgeshire District Council February 1999).

Fulbourn is located four miles to the east of Cambridge. It is a large village with a linear, largely intact historic core focussed on High Street, Manor Walk and Home End. The village contains some attractive historic buildings including Fulbourn Manor and the 13th century St Vigor's Church faced with flint. Along the original street there are three village greens at street junctions and a number of 14th century medieval farmhouses and other cottages and farmhouses of the 16th and 17th century interspersed with newer properties. These are timber framed, plastered, with thatched or plain tiled roofs. Linear development comprising detached and semi-detached housing continued during the 19th and early part of the 20th century along the approach roads, resulting in a broad range of building forms and age. The area between Cambridge Road and Cow Lane has been infilled with post war housing estates of a variety of building types including system built concrete flats, terraces and red brick detached and semi-detached housing. Newer low density housing estates (1980's – 1990's) are found on the edge of the village. Fulbourn School is an old Cambridge red brick building. Some areas of Fulbourn are quite well treed with grass verges and rural in character. The Local Plan records that Fulbourn contains two grade II* and 53 grade II buildings but that this number is not finite (South Cambridgeshire District Council February 1999).

The windmill on Cambridge Road just outside Fulbourn and Fulbourn Hospital, a good example of Victorian hospital architecture in a parkland setting, are landmarks. The church tower is not high enough to be seen from the surrounding landscape.

There is some small scale industrial and storage development on the northern side of the village close to the railway line. This, and especially the Fielding Industrial Estate by the approach route from Great Wilbraham, is a significant detracting feature at the gateway to the village.

Little Wilbraham Fen

The local landscape character area Little Wilbraham Fen covers the same area of land as Little Wilbraham Fen described in the broader scale assessment of the whole Green Belt in section 4.6. The description is expanded below.

Little Wilbraham Fen is a small pocket of low-lying fen (mostly between 5 and 10 metres AOD) within the Eastern Fen Edge. Substantial areas of peat and terrace deposits cover much of this land, with areas of chalk towards the perimeter of the area. A regimented pattern of flat arable fields and areas of wetland vegetation are divided by a network of straight droveways and drainage ditches, and the more sinuous path of Quy Water and Little Wilbraham River. Watercourses are often open, or sometimes lined with vegetation including hawthorn scrub or large willow trees. The willow trees are prominent features on the skyline. The Fen is generally quite open, with some enclosure provided by the tree and scrub vegetation, and

the sloping landform outside the character area.

In addition to Little Wilbraham Fen the character area includes two other named fens – Teversham Fen and Fulbourn Fen. It contains one SSSI (Wilbraham Fens), which is made up of a large area of fen and neutral grassland with associated scrub and open water communities, with dense stands of common reed *Phragmites australis*. Settlement within Little Wilbraham Fen is limited to isolated farms.

The Harcamlow Way long distance footpath passes through the Little Wilbraham Fen. Other footpaths and a bridleway provide further access to this area. There are no surfaced roads within the area.

Cambridge Airport

The local landscape character area Cambridge Airport covers the same area of land as Cambridge Airport described in the broader scale assessment of the whole Green Belt in section 4.6. It includes the open land of the Airport but not the main buildings, which lie within townscape character area 5C (section 4.5.3). The description is expanded below.

Cambridge Airport is situated on the eastern edge of the city. It lies at approximately 10 metres AOD and is essentially a large, flat grassy field, with associated hangar buildings outside the character area to the north west. The underlying geology is chalk with a small area of terrace deposits to the north west. The airport separates the city from the countryside beyond. It feels very open, with long views and a homogenous character, all traces of the historic landscape pattern and rural character having been removed. Visually, it functions as an open green space on the edge of the city, but it does not provide a public access link between the city and the open countryside, or a rural setting to the city.

A small post-war estate of red brick, semi-detached houses and a small nature reserve border the south west corner of Cambridge Airport north of Coldham's Lane. A tall Leylandii hedge planted at the ends of gardens to the houses provides a screen to views of the runway, but creates an unattractive and suburban edge to this built up area of the city.

Cherry Hinton Works

The landscape character area Cherry Hinton Works is a small area of green space enclosed by the city on three sides, and Coldham's Lane and Cambridge Airport to the north. The bedrock is chalk. Much of the area has been altered by mineral extraction for use in the now closed cement works, leaving open pits, which have either been filled and reclaimed, are being developed for retail use, or are areas of open water. The reclaimed land is now slightly higher than the surrounding topography, and is becoming vegetated with grassland and scrub.

The railway line to Ipswich crosses this area, dividing it into two halves.

The south boundary of this area is marked by Cherry Hinton Brook, which forms a pleasant edge to the urban area. On the east side, north of the railway line, a modern estate of red brick houses and flats borders the visually untidy reclaimed land, providing an unattractive and uncharacteristic edge to the historic city.

Fulbourn Hospital

Fulbourn Hospital landscape character area is a small area of land covered by Fulbourn Hospital, Kent House, the Ida Darwin Hospital and Tesco Superstore. It is situated on the base slope of the Gog Magog Hills, lying between approximately 10 and 20 metres AOD. The underlying geology is chalk.

The fine Victorian building of Fulbourn Hospital is set within parkland grounds. It provides a prominent landmark, and can be seen rising above the densely treed grounds from the surrounding landscape. The hospital and grounds are designated as a Conservation Area. The Ida Darwin Hospital site, nearer Fulbourn, consists mainly of a series of low density, one storey, brick, flat topped buildings set in landscaped grounds.

These developments have been built between Cambridge (Cherry Hinton) and the village of Fulbourn. The low density of the buildings, combined with the green landscaped grounds, means that the area provides a limited degree of “green” separation between the built up settlements of Fulbourn and Cambridge. However, this area is not strongly rural in character.

7.2.7 Visual Assessment

Key views to the city from the landscape east of Cambridge are shown on drawing number 1641LP/06 in section 4.7 and selected views are illustrated in Appendix A.

The nature of views that people experience of East Cambridge and its setting are determined by a number of factors. These include topography, which provides the platform that determines the elevation and extent of possible views, vegetation and topography, which screen certain potential views, and roads and other public rights of way and accessible land, which provide vantage points.

Elevated vantage points, providing panoramic views of the landscape on the east side of Cambridge, and of the city and its wider landscape setting, are located on higher ground on the chalk hills close to the south east side of the city (see Photograph 1 in Appendix A) and east (up to 11 kilometres from the city). The low lying land covered by the detailed study area provides more limited, low level views of Cambridge and its edges. There are views of historic landmark buildings from this low lying land dominated by a foreground of peripheral city development, including the large dominant buildings and structures at Addenbrooke’s Hospital and Cambridge Airport on the city edge. (See Photographs 1, 3 and 5.) The distance between the historic landmark buildings and the city edge is considerable on the east side of the city, so the buildings are often hard to distinguish, or screened by foreground suburbs and industry within the city.

Top tasks

- Adopted Proposals Map

Local Development Framework

- Fen Drayton Former LSA SPD
- Orchard Park Design Guide SPD
- Health Impact Assessment SPD
- Landscape in New Developments SPD
- District Design Guide SPD
- Affordable Housing SPD
- Listed Buildings SPD
- Biodiversity SPD
- Trees and Development Sites SPD
- Public Art SPD
- Open Space in New Developments SPD
- Development Affecting Conservation Areas SPD
- Cottenham Village Design Statement
- Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs)

District Design Guide SPD

District Design Guide SPD - adopted March 2010: [Contents & Chapter 1](#) | [Chapters 2-3](#) | [Chapters 4-6](#) | [Chapters 7-12](#) | [Appendices](#)

What are SPDs?

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) are intended to expand upon policy or provide further detail to policies in adopted Development Plan Documents (DPDs). When adopted, SPDs form part of the Local Development Framework but do not have development plan status and are not subject to independent examination.

What is the District Design Guide SPD?

The District Design Guide SPD expands on district-wide policies included in the Development Control Policies Development Plan Document (DPD) and policies in individual Area Action Plans for major developments that may vary from the district-wide policies. These policies seek to ensure that design is an integral part of the development process.

The District Design Guide SPD also builds on national policy: Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development and its supplement: Planning and Climate Change. These promote sustainable, well-designed development to achieve a high quality built and natural environment.

Achieving good design and sustainable development are the core principals underlying planning. At the heart of sustainable development is the simple idea of ensuring a better quality of life for everyone, now and for future generations. The aim of the District Design Guide SPD is to provide additional guidance on how developments can ensure they are sustainable and achieve a high quality of design in a way that respects the local context.

The revised District Design Guide SPD supersedes the existing District Design Guide adopted as Council Policy in November 2005.

- » Food Store Provision in North West Cambridge
- » Gypsy and Traveller DPD
- » Annual Monitoring Report
- » Statement of Community Involvement
- » Site Specific Policies DPD
- » North West Cambridge Area Action Plan
- » Cambridge Southern Fringe Area Action Plan
- » Cambridge East Area Action Plan
- » Northstowe Area Action Plan
- » Development Control Policies DPD
- » Core Strategy DPD
- » Local Development Framework

More like this

- » Orchard Park Design Guide SPD
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- » Open Space in New Developments SPD
- » Public Art SPD

Latest News on the District Design Guide SPD

The Council adopted the District Design Guide SPD on **2 March 2010**.

The adopted SPD takes account of any representations received during the six-week period of public consultation undertaken in October-December 2009. To see a summary of each representation received and the Council's response to each representation, visit: [Planning and New Communities Portfolio Holders Meeting - 2 March 2010](#).

Adoption Documents

- [District Design Guide SPD: **Contents & Chapter 1** | **Chapters 2-3** | **Chapters 4-6** | **Chapters 7-12** | **Appendices**](#)
- [Adoption Statement](#)
- [Statement of Consultation](#)
- [Sustainability Appraisal Statement](#)
- [Sustainability Appraisal Adoption Statement](#)
- [Habitats Regulations Assessment Statement](#)
- [Equality Impact Assessment](#)

Historic Documents

- [Interactive draft District Design Guide SPD](#) - A link to the online consultation website where representations made on the draft SPD can be viewed.

If you would like a further explanation of this SPD, or any other matter relating to the Local Development Framework, please either e-mail the Planning Policy section on Idf@scambs.gov.uk, or phone (01954) 713183.

Service:
[Local Development Framework](#)

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CHAPTER 3

VILLAGE LANDSCAPE AND SETTLEMENT ANALYSIS

INTRODUCTION

3.1 This section outlines the importance of character and the crucial contribution good design can make to its conservation and enhancement. It aims to ensure that very careful consideration is given to the way new development relates to its surroundings. An overview of the landscape settlement character of South Cambridgeshire is provided. This is followed by the identification of five distinctive landscape character areas:

- A – South East Claylands,
- B – Chalklands,
- C – Western Claylands,
- D – Western Greensand, and
- E – Fen Edge (see Figure 3.1).

3.2 The parishes that occur within each area are listed (note some parishes straddle the boundaries and are therefore listed under both areas). For each defined area, a brief descriptive analysis explains in simple terms the essential design relationship between:

- i. **Landscape Character** - the patterns of the landscape, its geology and overall form, slope and climate, vegetation and the setting of buildings and villages within it.
- ii. **Settlement Character** – the shape of settlements, their built forms and their relationship with the wider countryside.
- iii. **Building Materials** – the nature of the buildings, their massing, materials, scale, colour, texture and characteristic detailing.
- iv. **Trees and Hedgerows** – plant species common to the area.

3.3 Based upon an analysis of the relationship between these elements, the design implications for new buildings are highlighted in the form of a 'bullet point' list of design principles that can be used to guide the form and appearances of new development in the countryside and in the villages.

THE IMPORTANCE OF CHARACTER AND GOOD DESIGN

3.4 Character can be described as a distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements that make each place different and distinctive. It is influenced by visual, ecological, historical, settlement and building elements, together with less intangible aspects such as tranquillity and

sense of place. The distinctive character of our surroundings has a fundamental impact on our quality of life and therefore identifying, protecting and enhancing those elements that contribute to character is a key aspect of our sustainability.

- 3.5 The Council is concerned that poorly designed new development will erode the established character of the landscape and settlements through lack of respect for local diversity and distinctiveness. Common use of standardised building designs and layouts, and the suburbanisation of rural settlements through poorly designed village extensions will have particularly significant effects on character.

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER OVERVIEW

- 3.6 The South Cambridgeshire landscape as a whole has several distinctive and readily identified characters. Medium to large-scale arable farmland landscapes dominate. Woodland and small copses tend to be widely dispersed or absent, and the density of hedgerows is relatively low. As a result it is predominantly open, allowing long views. Contrasting patterns of hedgerowed pastures and parkland create variety, and a greater degree of enclosure in some parts, for instance associated with settlements. Early enclosures of 'ancient countryside' give a distinctive character to some villages which are surrounded by small fields with hedgerows.
- 3.7 The landform reflects the broad variations in the underlying geology and continuity of settlement in the area. The geology ranges from the 'upland' undulating chalklands and clay hills in the south, to the low lying flat Fen Edge with its scattered fen 'islands' north of Cambridge. Rivers and streams cut through the higher land creating gentle shallow valleys, whilst straight dykes and ditches are a feature of the drained fen edge. Both winding and straight narrow roads link the settlements. Surviving features from different eras are part of the rich historic character of the landscape, including visible archaeological features such as the Fleam Dyke and the Bartlow Hills, ancient field boundaries and medieval narrow strip fields, as well as many moated sites, windmills, historic parklands, farmsteads, and groups of cottages.

SETTLEMENT CHARACTER OVERVIEW

- 3.8 Villages are particularly distinctive in the landscape. Small, medium and large villages occupy a variety of positions, hilltops, valley-sides and along spring lines. They often exhibit a complex mix of patterns, including linear, dispersed, nucleated, agglomerated and planned. A surprising number have been formed from amalgamation of initially separate and ancient hamlets. Villages that grow up along important communication links are often linear, with an area of green in front of buildings, as at Comberton, or at each end, as at Harston. While there are no complete planned medieval

villages in South Cambridgeshire, there are planned elements that survive in villages such as Swavesey. Development was also affected by phases in population growth or decline, visible at Bassingbourn where there are whole areas of house plots under grass. Finally, village pattern is often affected by the location and extent of open space, particularly greens and common land with settlements. Typically the villages have developed from historic cores that exhibit a varied mix of vernacular building materials, including brick, rendered plaster, weatherboarding, plain tiles, pantiles, and thatch. Some villages, particularly those closer to Cambridge, have experienced significant growth with modern estates visible at their edges. Nonetheless, most villages make a very positive contribution to local landscape character. Features such as attractive groupings of historic buildings, village greens, common land, mature trees and church towers are all important to this.

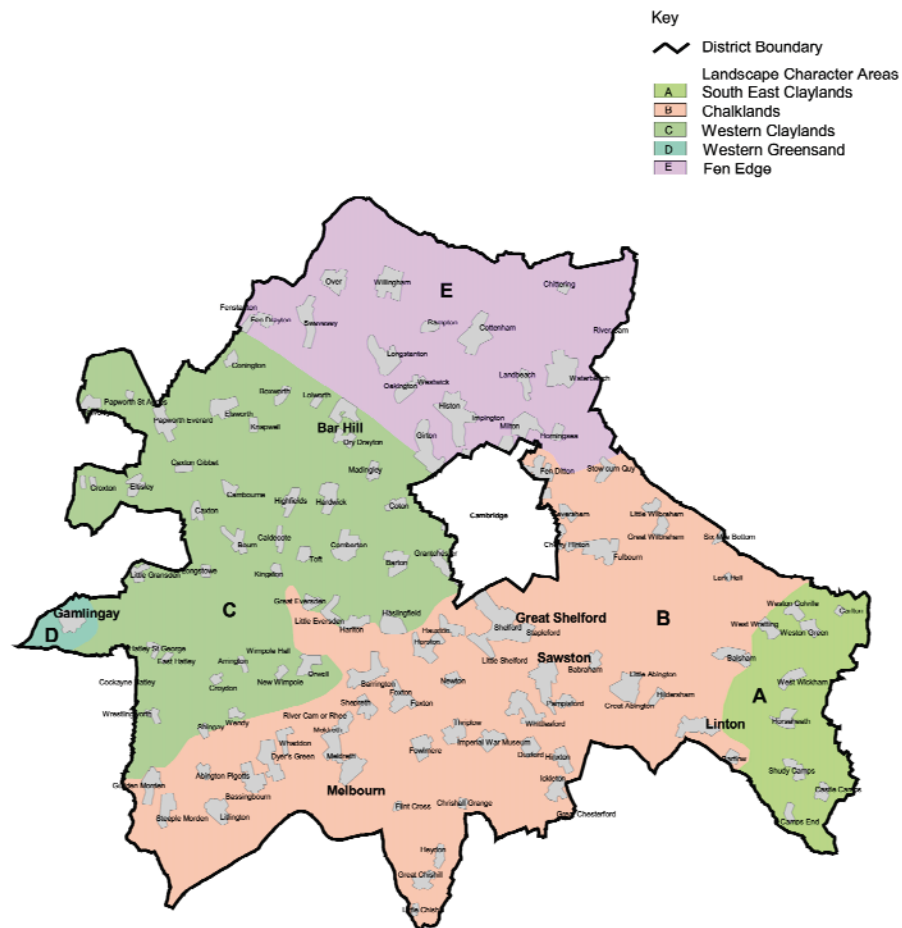


Figure 3.1 Map of South Cambridgeshire indicating broad landscape character assessment as set out in the Countryside Agency's Countryside Character for East of England

Note: the landscape character assessment (Figure 3.1) follows the Countryside Commission's assessment which was used in the 2005 Draft Design Guide. Natural England has subsequently identified new Joint

Character Areas (see the Landscape in New Developments SPD), but the Countryside Commission areas have been retained here as they better reflect settlement character, particularly that of Fen Edge villages.

A. The South-East Claylands

Parishes – Balsham (eastern sector), Carlton (western sector), Castle Camps, Horseheath, Linton (north-east sector), Shudy Camps, West Wickham, West Wrating (eastern sector), Weston Colville (eastern sector).



Landscape Character

- 3.9 This is an undulating area reaching 100 – 120 meters in height on the hilltops. A scattering of farmsteads and small settlements interspersed with farm woodlands, contribute to landscape character. The field sizes are mostly large, but are united by the gently rolling landform and woodland. Smaller fields, landscape and woodlands closer to edges of settlements give a more intimate scale. An historic irregular field pattern remains; Earthbanks are a distinctive feature along with some roadsides, reflecting ancient hedge and bank field boundaries; a few still retain their hedges. Long open views extend to wooded skylines, and sometimes village rooftops and church towers. The area has a surprisingly remote, rural character.

3.10 The key characteristics are:

- An undulating boulder clay landform, dissected by small stream valleys.
- Predominantly arable farmland with a wooded appearance.
- Trees and woodlands appear to join together to create a wooded skyline, with some bare ridgelines.

Settlement Character

3.11 Villages and small hamlets in this area typically have strong linear forms, often with a wooded setting and mature hedgerows and trees that contribute to rural character. Small paddocks and long back gardens also help to soften village edges. Generally they include a mix of more substantial farmhouses arranged in a loose knit pattern, interspersed with open frontages. The slightly larger village of West Wratting includes some continuous frontages that historically provided enclosure to the streets. Any areas of modern infill are generally limited. Small village greens of irregular shape, including narrow 'strip' greens, are a feature in a few villages such as West Wratting and West Wickham.

3.12 The key characteristics are:

- Mostly small villages and hamlets (locally known as 'Ends') are sited on valleysides or on ridgetops, often having a linear form.
- Buildings are arranged in a low density, loose knit pattern along narrow winding or gently curving lanes.
- Mature trees and hedgerow are important features, mainly in private curtilages, giving a strongly rural character to settlements.
- Village edges are often softened by woodlands, copses, small fields, paddocks and long back gardens.
- A few isolated farmsteads are located along lanes or at track ends.

Woodlands and small hedgerowed paddocks contribute to setting



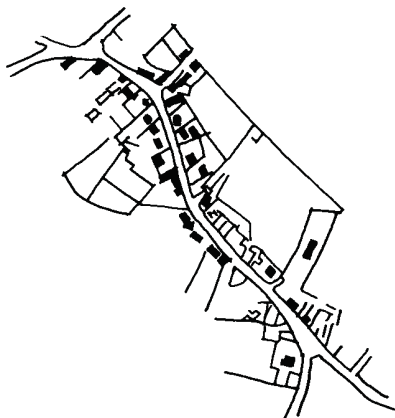
Medium to large arable field

Mature trees are a feature of the main village street

Typical settlement landscape setting

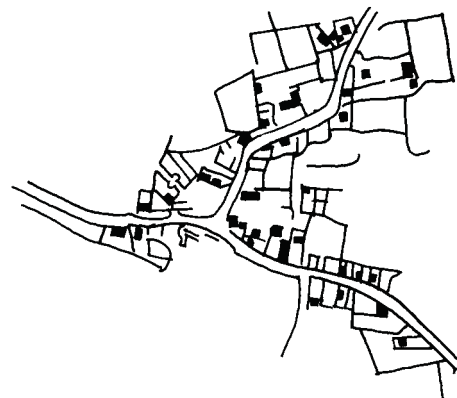
West Wratting

- mostly small cottages and houses with front gardens



Horseheath

*- narrow winding lane
- loose knit settlement pattern*



Street pattern arrangement of buildings

3.13 Building and Materials:

- Buildings are generally one and a half or two storeys, and predominantly detached or semi-detached, with spans of between four and six metres.
- The vernacular detailing of walls is mainly of plastered timber frame construction, often with distinctive decorative pargetting in a variety of

patterns. A few flint and weatherboarded buildings occur. Gault brick occurs in some later buildings.

- Roofs are typically of longstraw thatch and plain clay tiles.
- Details of timber-framed buildings include steep roof pitches, four or five planked doors, casement and sash windows, and chimneys located laterally on the roof ridge, or at gable ends.



*(left) Typical plastered house with clay tile roofing
(right) Typical gault brick and flint cottage*

3.14 Trees and Hedgerows:

- Mixed Woodland
Oak, ash, wild cherry. Glades and near edges: field maple.
- Hedgerows, Woodland Edges and Scrub
Hawthorn, hazel, blackthorn, dog rose, crab apple, field maple and, occasional, dogwood.
- Trees in Hedgerows
Oak, ash, field maple.
- Avenues
Oak, lime, horse chestnut.
- Stream Sides
Alder, white willow, crack willow, goat willow. Occasional: Guelder rose, dogwood. Occasional where not waterlogged: hazel, ash, oak.



Rural street scene

Design Principles

- 3.15 Based on the above analysis of landscape settlement and built character, the following key design principles are set out:
- Maintain the distinctive, dispersed settlement pattern of small villages and hamlets and isolated farmsteads, within the context of their wooded landscape setting.
 - Ensure any small extensions to villages on hilltops are located along ridgelines, and extensions to villages on valley sides are located parallel to the contours of the hillside.
 - Maintain the strong linear form of villages and hamlets by limiting backland and cul-de-sac developments.
 - Ensure density and pattern of new developments reflect that of existing villages and hamlets. Houses should normally be set back from the street with front gardens, except where enclosure of the street frontage is important to the historic character.
 - Use a framework boundary of native woodland, tree and thick hedge planting that reflect the local mixes, to integrate new developments.
 - Ensure new developments reflect the form, scale and proportions of the existing vernacular buildings of the area and pick up on the traditional building styles, materials, colours and textures of the locality.

- Enclose boundaries facing roads by hedgerow or, in appropriate locations, low flint and brick walls.
- Avoid unnecessary widening or straightening of narrow hedge banked lanes.
- Ensure large barns are sited and designed to minimise their bulk and impact on the wider landscape, normally relating them to existing groupings of farm buildings. Prominent ridgeline sites should be avoided.
- Avoid the use of standardised and intrusive urban materials, street furniture, lighting and signage as part of traffic calming measures wherever appropriate.

B. The Chalklands

Parishes – Abington Piggotts, Balsham (western sector), Babraham, Barrington, Bartlow, Bassingbourn cum Kneesworth, Carlton (eastern sector), Duxford, Fen Ditton, Fowlmere, Foxton, Fulbourn, Great Abington, Great and Little Chishill, Great Shelford, Great Wilbraham, Guilden Morden, Harston, Hauxton, Heydon, Hildersham, Hinxton, Ickleton, Linton (west and south-east sectors), Litlington, Little Abington, Little Shelford, Little Wilbraham, Melbourn, Meldreth, Newton, Pampisford, Sawston, Shepreth, Stapleford, Steeple Morden, Stow cum Quy, Teversham, Thriplow, West Wrating (western sector), Weston Colville (western sector), Whaddon, Whittlesford.



Landscape Character

- 3.16 This character area is a broad scale landscape of large fields, low trimmed hedgerows and few trees. Certain high points have small beech copses which form strong focal points, and there are occasional shelterbelts around settlements. By way of contrast, the eastern part of the area is cut through by the valleys of the rivers Granta and Rhee, which have an intimate

character of small grazing meadow and wet woodlands, with lines of willows along the rivers. Some historic parkland within these valleys also adds to their distinctive character.

3.17 The key characteristics are:

- A distinctive landform of smooth rolling chalk hills and gently undulating chalk plateau.
- A mostly large-scale arable landscape of arable fields, low hedges and few trees, giving it an open, spacious quality.
- Remnant of chalk grassland occurs on road verges and along tracks.
- Small beech copses on the brows of hills, and occasional shelterbelts, are important features.
- A wealth of historic and archaeological features, including; ancient trackways, earthworks, small chalk pits and pre-nineteenth century enclosures.
- Shallow valleys of the River Ganta and River Rhee have a rich mosaic of grazing meadows and parkland.
- Lanes are often straight, occasionally 'dog-legging'.
- Mostly strong rural character, though this is disrupted immediately adjacent to major roads such as the A505 and the M11.

Avenue tree approach

Village edge enclosed by mature trees



*Large arable fields with occasional shelterbelts
Typical settlement landscape setting*

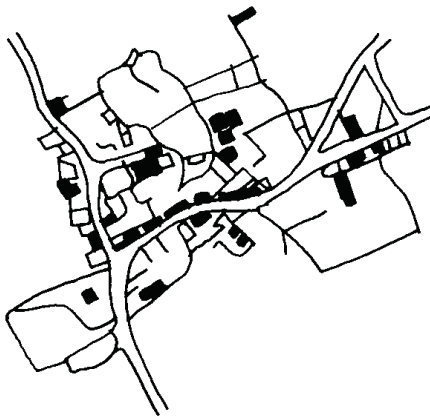
Rough grassland & hedgerow trees provide soft edge

Settlement Character

- 3.18 Both small and large villages generally have a strong historic, linear form, though extensive modern estate developments have occurred in some villages close to Cambridge. Others, such as Bassingbourn, are the result of amalgamation of older hamlets. These linear villages widen out in places to include village greens, such as the large, oval green at Barrington and the smaller, triangular one at Heydon. A few villages, such as Little Shelford, have a rectangular form of looser structure with a number of important open spaces included. The village edges are varied, typically abutted by a mix of open fields, woodland, or smaller fields. Long back gardens also help to form a transition to the surrounding countryside.

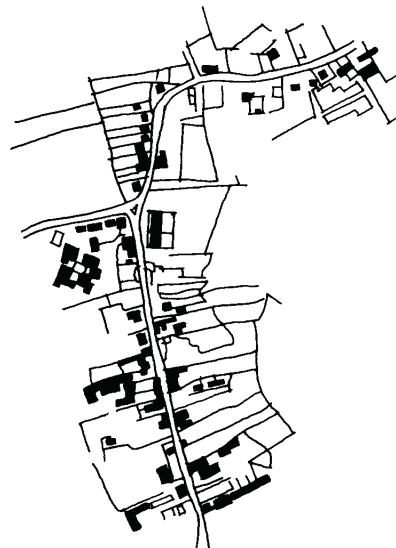
Fowlmere

- Some continuous frontages
- Gently curving lane
- Properties located close to back edge of the street



Meldreth

- Straight lanes
- Deep plots



Street pattern arrangement of buildings

- 3.19 The key characteristics are:
- Small villages, such as Thriplow and Litlington, are located on gentle slopes along spring lines, or on hilltops, such as Great Chishill.
 - Other villages, such as Hildersham and Little Shelford, are located within the river valleys on lower valley-side slopes, sometimes related to crossing points and fords.
 - Mostly a well treed character to villages, which are often not visible in the wider landscape, despite adjoining open arable fields. Avenue

trees on wide road verges are characteristic of some approaches, such as Fowlmere.

- Enclosed meadows and parkland are important features of village setting in the river valleys.
- Village greens are frequent, both small and large.
- Mostly linear form to the settlements.
- Buildings are either arranged as continuous frontages facing streets, or have a much looser pattern with open land interspersed.
- Deep, narrow rear gardens.
- Many mature trees, both in front gardens and on the grass verges, together with streams and ponds, add to the rural character.
- A few isolated farm buildings are sited at track ends, often hidden by groups of mature trees or shelterbelts.



Typical street scene

3.20 Building and Materials:

- Buildings are traditionally two storey, simple and small in scale. A few, large, two and a half, or three storey eighteenth and nineteenth century houses occur in some villages.
- A wide variety of materials are used in walls, including; plastered timber-frame constructions (weatherboarded or rough-cast render on

laths) clunch, clay bat, knapped flint, plain gault brick, red and yellow gault brick. Farm buildings are typically black-tarred weatherboarding. Colours of buildings are generally light and warm, often pale cream, but some are painted pale pink or yellow and, occasionally, earthy red.

- Roofs of vernacular buildings are typically of longstraw, thatch and plain clay tiles and pan-tiles, with some more recent use of Welsh slate and reed thatch.
- Plastered timber-framed building details include; high-pitched roofs, drip-boards set in the gable ends and over windows, four or six panelled or planked doors, and with chimneys set laterally on the ridge to roofs.
- Eighteenth and nineteenth century house details include; low-pitched roofs, vertical sliding sash windows set in deep reveals over shallow stone sills, with gauged or segmental brick arched lintels and chimneystacks incorporated within the building at the gables.



(left) Use of plaster and thatch

(right) Nineteenth century houses with slate, brick and render

- Both low and high flint boundary walls are common, some with red brick detailing. Clipped hedges and simple picket fences also provide boundary features. Occasionally simple iron railings are associated with larger houses.
- Many of the twentieth century estates do not respond to the local vernacular.



Flint and brick walls

3.21 Trees and Hedgerows:

- Beech Hangers
Beech, with occasional additional species from 'Mixed Woodland' below.
- Mixed Woodland
Beech, ash. Less common: small-leaved lime, hornbeam, wild cherry, yew. Glades and near edges: field maple.
- Hedgerows, Woodland Edges and Scrub
Hawthorn, hazel, blackthorn, field maple, dog rose, and, occasional, wild privet and wayfaring tree.
- Trees in Hedgerows
Ash, beech, field maple.
- Avenues
Predominately Beech or ash.

Design Principles

3.22 Based on the above analysis of landscape settlement and built character, the following key design principles are set out:

- Maintain the distinctive, settlement pattern of the area and its local context.
- Ensure any extensions to springline villages are located along the bottom of steeper slopes and along lanes.

- Ensure any extensions to river valley villages are located along the line of the river, or at right angles to it, depending on the direction of the main transport route.
- Maintain the linear, or rectilinear form of the settlements.
- Ensure density and pattern of new developments reflect that of existing villages and hamlets. Avoid backland and cul-de-sac developments where possible.
- Ensure buildings are arranged in continuous frontages within village cores and are arranged in loose knit patterns facing the street on more peripheral sites.
- Ensure new developments are integrated with sufficient space for garden and street tree planting where applicable.
- Enhance village gateways and, where appropriate, consider provision of avenue planting on village approaches.
- Take opportunities to create new village greens and/or wildlife areas within new developments.
- Ensure new developments reflect the form, scale and proportions of the existing vernacular buildings of the area and pick up on the traditional building styles, materials, colours and textures of the locality.
- Enclose boundaries facing the street in village cores by low, or high, flint walls with brick detailing, simple decorative railings, picket fencing or hedging.
- Retain hedges along roads.
- Enclose boundaries facing the street on village peripheries with hedge and tree planting.
- Avoid the use of standardised and intrusive urban materials, street furniture, lighting and signage as part of traffic calming measures wherever appropriate.
- Ensure new agricultural buildings, such as large storage sheds, are sited and designed to reduce their apparent mass, minimising their impact on the wider landscape by the appropriate use of texture, colour and planting.