

A meeting of the **CABINET** will be held in **MEETING ROOMS 0.1A AND 0.1B, GROUND FLOOR, PATHFINDER HOUSE, ST MARY'S STREET, HUNTINGDON, PE29 3TN** on **THURSDAY, 14 OCTOBER 2021** at **7:00 PM** and you are requested to attend for the transaction of the following business:-

AGENDA

APOLOGIES

1. MINUTES (Pages 3 - 6)

To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting held on 16th September 2021.

Contact Officer: H Peacey - (01223) 752548

2. MEMBERS' INTERESTS

To receive from Members declarations as to disclosable pecuniary and other interests in relation to any Agenda item.

Contact Officer: Democratic Services - (01223) 752548

3. LANDSCAPE AND TOWNSCAPE SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT: CONSULTATION DRAFT 2021 (Pages 7 - 578)

To receive a report from the Strategic Growth Manager on the Landscape and Townscape Supplementary Planning Document: Consultation Draft 2021.

Executive Councillor: J Neish.

Contact Officer: N Elworthy - (01480) 388434

4. ENVIRONMENT PRINCIPLES (Pages 579 - 606)

To receive a report seeking the adoption of a set of environmental principles for Huntingdonshire District Council and its activities that align with those developed as part of the Oxfordshire-Cambridgeshire Arc (OxCam arc).

Executive Councillor: R Fuller.

Contact Officer: N Sloper/C Kerr - Neil.Sloper@huntingdonshire.gov.uk / (01480) 388430

5. COMMUNITY TRANSITION STRATEGY 2021/23 (Pages 607 - 632)

To receive a report from the Corporate Director (People) seeking the endorsement of a Community Transition Strategy and the supporting Action Plan.

Executive Councillor: S Bywater.

Contact Officer: O Morley - (01480) 388103

8 day of October 2021



Head of Paid Service

Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and Non-Statutory Disclosable Interests

Further information on [Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and Non - Statutory Disclosable Interests is available in the Council's Constitution](#)

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Arrangements for these activities should operate in accordance with [guidelines](#) agreed by the Council.

Please contact Mrs Habbiba Peacey, Democratic Services Officer, Tel No: (01223) 752548 / e-mail: Habbiba.Peacey@huntingdonshire.gov.uk if you have a general query on any Agenda Item, wish to tender your apologies for absence from the meeting, or would like information on any decision taken by the Cabinet.

Specific enquiries with regard to items on the Agenda should be directed towards the Contact Officer.

Members of the public are welcome to attend this meeting as observers except during consideration of confidential or exempt items of business.

Agenda and enclosures can be viewed on the [District Council's website](#).

Emergency Procedure

In the event of the fire alarm being sounded and on the instruction of the Meeting Administrator, all attendees are requested to vacate the building via the closest emergency exit.

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the CABINET held in MEETING ROOMS 0.1A AND 0.1B, GROUND FLOOR, PATHFINDER HOUSE, ST MARY'S STREET, HUNTINGDON, PE29 3TN on Thursday, 16 September 2021

PRESENT: Councillor R Fuller – Chairman.

Councillors Mrs M L Beuttell, S Bywater, J A Gray, D N Keane and K I Prentice.

APOLOGIES: Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillors J Neish and J M Palmer (Cabinet Assistant).

24 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 15th July 2021 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

25 MEMBERS' INTERESTS

No declarations were received.

26 CREATING A VISION FOR THE OXFORD-CAMBRIDGE ARC - CONSULTATION RESPONSE

A report by the Strategic Growth Manager was submitted (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) providing an outline of the Oxford-Cambridge Arc spatial framework consultation document – “Creating a vision for the Oxford-Cambridge Arc” and summarising the Council’s response to the consultation.

In noting the views of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Performance & Growth), it was

RESOLVED

that delegated authority to submit the Council’s final comments via the Oxford-Cambridge Arc digital engagement platform be given to the Strategic Growth Manager, in consultation with the Executive Councillor for Strategic Planning.

27 CORPORATE PERFORMANCE REPORT 2021/22 (QUARTER 1)

Consideration was given to a report by the Business Intelligence & Performance Manager (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) presenting details of delivery of the Corporate Plan 2018/22 and project delivery.

Following a brief introduction by the Assistant Director (Corporate Services) and in noting the views of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Performance & Growth), the Cabinet

RESOLVED

to note progress made against the Key Actions and Corporate Indicators in the Corporate Plan and current projects, as summarised in Appendix A and detailed in Appendices B and C of the report now submitted.

28 FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE REPORT 2021/22 (QUARTER 1)

With the aid of a report by the Chief Finance Officer (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Cabinet were presented with details of the Council's projected financial performance for 2021/22.

In introducing the report, the Executive Councillor for Strategic Finance reported that there had been an estimated revenue outturn overspend of £0.227, an estimated capital outturn underspend of £17.077m and that the Commercial Investment Strategy was contributing positively towards the budget. The Chief Finance Officer then reported that work had been undertaken to realign some budgets with movements and corrections having been approved. She then delivered an outline of the financial profile for the Future High Streets Fund and drew attention to other aspects of the budget including Council Tax and National Non Domestic Rates and the position with arrears and sundry debts.

In drawing the Cabinet's attention to the overspend relating to Development Management, the Managing Director reported that this was largely attributable to salary costs. The service was currently in stabilisation phase and that recruitment campaigns were being finalised. Assurances were delivered to Members that a plan was in place to address the issues currently being experienced within the service.

The Executive Leader then drew attention to the position with regards to Leisure, Markets and Car Parking and commented that recovery plans for these areas needed to be in place imminently to improve the current financial position. The Chief Finance Officer commented that the Quarter 1 forecast, particularly for One Leisure, had been very pessimistic with improvements due to be reported in the next quarter. The Managing Director and the Executive Councillor for Leisure and Regulatory Services agreed to discuss the position with the One Leisure service outside of the meeting.

The Executive Councillor for Strategic Finance reminded Executive Councillors of the importance of scrutinising the financial aspects of their portfolios with their Officers. The Executive Councillor for Operations and Environment responded to the comments made in respect of car parking and markets and advised that she would query their position with Officers. In respect of the former, the Managing Director reported that preliminary discussions had been held earlier that day reviewing car park usage and patterns with a view to considering strategies to improve the value of the space in the future.

The Executive Leader reminded Cabinet Members that there was a £1.4m budget gap to close. He then drew the Cabinet's attention to the comments of the of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Performance & Growth).

In concluding their discussions, the Cabinet placed on record their thanks to Mrs C Edwards for her hard work, advice, guidance and support during her time as Section 151 Officer and Chief Finance Officer for the Council. Members expressed their best wishes to her for the future and in her new role. Whereupon, it was

RESOLVED

that the Cabinet has:

- (a) considered and commented on the financial performance at the end of June 2021 as detailed in Appendix 1 of the report now submitted;
- (b) considered and approved the proposed budget changes as outlined in paragraph 3.2 to the Revenue Budget to accommodate reclassification of budget and in year activity not included within the Medium-Term Financial Strategy; and
- (c) considered and approved the proposed budget changes outlined in paragraph 3.3 to the Capital Budget to accommodate reclassification of budget and in year activity not included within the Medium-Term Financial Strategy.

Chairman

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Public
Key Decision - Yes

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Title/Subject Matter: Landscape and Townscape Supplementary Planning Document: Consultation Draft 2021

Meeting/Date: Cabinet – 14th October 2021

Executive Portfolio: Executive Councillor for Strategic Planning

Report by: Strategic Growth Manager

Ward(s) affected: All

Executive Summary:

The Landscape and Townscape Supplementary Planning Document (SPD): Consultation Draft 2021 attached as Appendix 1 is an update and expansion of the Landscape and Townscape Assessment SPD adopted in 2007. Such an update was required as since 2007 there have been several changes in national and local policy (including the National Planning Policy Framework, Localism Act and the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036) as well as developments that have changed the Huntingdonshire landscape and townscapes across the district.

SPDs are a material consideration in planning decisions and provide further detail to policies in the Local Plan. This revised SPD will therefore support the delivery of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 by:

1. guiding the preparation and consideration of planning applications to enhance the quality of new development within Huntingdonshire; and
2. providing a methodology for neighbourhood planning groups to produce their own landscape and townscape assessments to support policies within neighbourhood plans.

As well as incorporating changes to the natural and built environment since 2007 and reflecting changes in policy, the underlying theme of the revised SPD is how landscape and townscape issues should be considered as an integral part of the design and development process to support the wildlife, habitat, cultural and historical values of defined character areas and particular environments so that developments respond positively to their landscape and townscape context.

To support neighbourhood planning and local communities, the revised SPD includes a methodology for local communities to assess landscape and townscape character. This is attached as Appendix 2 to this report.

The revised SPD is accompanied by an [interactive map](#). Further details and a user guide for this have been provided in Appendix 3. The interactive map enables neighbourhood plan groups, local residents, agents and planning officers to better navigate and access the information and apply the guidance within the revised SPD.

The next stage in the preparation of the SPD is to publicly consult on the full draft before it can be adopted.

Recommendation(s):

The Cabinet is

RECOMMENDED

To approve the Landscape and Townscape Supplementary Planning Document: Consultation Draft 2021 for public consultation.

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 This report sets out what the Landscape and Townscape Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) is, the rationale for updating it, the areas of change between the existing and revised documents, how it will support the implementation of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 and how it can be used as a tool to empower local communities across the district to undertake such assessments themselves in support of locally specific design, landscape, conservation and heritage policies within neighbourhood plans.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The current Landscape and Townscape Assessment SPD was adopted in 2007 following public consultation. It reports the findings of Landscape Design Associates who were appointed to undertake a Landscape and Townscape Assessment of Huntingdonshire in 2001 to provide a description and analysis of the landscape of the district, the typical building types found throughout Huntingdonshire and the assessment of the townscapes of Huntingdon, St Neots, St Ives, Ramsey and Godmanchester. This assessment drew on information in the Cambridgeshire Landscape Guidelines which were adopted by the Council as supplementary planning guidance in 1991. It was published as a supplementary planning document in June 2007 to give it greater weight in the determination of planning applications.
- 2.2 Since its adoption in 2007, there have been changes in national and local policy including the introduction of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG); neighbourhood planning under the Localism Act (2011); the adoption of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 (May 2019) which sets out policies and a development strategy for the future growth of the district; and the adoption of the Huntingdonshire Design Guide SPD (2017) providing detailed guidance on design matters for the district. Most recently, there is increasing emphasis on development being locally specific as seen in the Government's National Design Guide and Code. These illustrate how well-designed places that are beautiful, healthy, greener, enduring and successful can be achieved in practice. They form part of the Government's collection of planning practice guidance to achieve high quality places and buildings which is a key element of the NPPF.
- 2.3 Furthermore, the landscape and townscape features of areas have altered since 2007 through residential, employment and mixed-use developments, renewable energy proposals such as solar farms and major transport infrastructure projects like the A14 improvement works and further projects involving the A428 and East-West Rail.
- 2.4 Therefore, these factors justified a comprehensive review and update to the guidance provided within the Landscape and Townscape Assessment SPD.

3. PURPOSE OF THE REVISED SPD

3.1 The revised SPD will update and expand existing landscape and townscape guidance incorporating changes to the natural and built environment since 2007 and reflecting changes in policy. This SPD serves two primary purposes:

1. to guide preparation and consideration of planning applications to enhance the quality of new development within Huntingdonshire; and
2. to provide a methodology for neighbourhood planning groups to produce their own landscape and townscape assessments to support policies within neighbourhood plans.

3.2 The revised SPD will support the implementation of the policies within the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 by:

- providing information on the existing landscape character of the district
- providing information on the existing townscape character of the spatial planning areas and key service centre settlements
- helping developers in their submission of planning applications by providing guidance on landscape and townscape issues to be considered as part of any development proposal to guide the location and integration of new development within the existing landscape and townscape
- encouraging comprehensive consideration of landscape and townscape issues and their interrelationship with development
- informing neighbourhood plan preparation

3.3 The application of the guidance in the revised SPD aims to contribute to a variety of benefits:

- the conservation and enhancement of the landscape's distinctive qualities
- promotion of a sense of place and local distinctiveness
- minimisation of the impact of new development on the surrounding area through successful integration
- enhancement of the sustainability of new development
- promotion of opportunities for enhancement, creation or linking of habitats
- provision of the strategic context for preparation of more detailed local assessments of landscape and townscape character in support of neighbourhood plans

Key areas of change between the current and revised SPD

3.4 The current Landscape and Townscape Assessment SPD identifies nine landscape character areas: The Fens, Fen Margin, Central Claylands, Ouse Valley, Grafham Water, South East Claylands, Nene Valley, Southern Wolds and Northern Wolds. These areas and their boundaries have been unchanged in the revised SPD, instead updates to the guidance within each of their assessments have been made to incorporate key changes to these landscapes such as solar farms and transport

infrastructure. Text relating to Green Infrastructure Priority Areas and green infrastructure projects such as the Great Fen have been added so that the revised SPD can assist in the implementation of Local Plan policies and current landscape projects and initiatives.

- 3.5 The current SPD includes townscape assessments for Huntingdon, St Neots, St Ives, Ramsey and Godmanchester. Each assessment identified a series of character areas differentiating the key areas of development based on their physical forms, design, age, historical and cultural significance and land uses. These assessments were weighted towards the historical elements of the townscape with limited assessment on development post the 1950s.
- 3.6 The revised SPD has updated the assessments for Huntingdon, St Neots, St Ives, Ramsey and Godmanchester and also carried out assessments for Brampton, Little Paxton, Buckden, Fenstanton, Kimbolton, Sawtry, Somersham, Warboys and Yaxley. This is to reflect the Spatial Planning Areas and Key Service Centres identified within the Development Strategy of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan. This is where development is primarily focused meaning that there is now detailed guidance available for the majority of planning applications submitted to the Council. Each of the assessments in the revised SPD are more detailed on the individual characteristics and identities of each character area identified. A more balanced approach was also taken between historical and modern development. This is particularly important as post 1950s development makes up a considerable amount of Huntingdonshire's built environment and where many Huntingdonshire residents live. Each character area also has a series of bullet points of what development proposals should seek to do in that area to conserve, enhance and reflect local character.
- 3.7 The current SPD made little connection between the relationship between the natural and built environments within these assessments. This has been a major area of revision with such elements considered together as an integral part of design, development and character of an area. Each of the settlements assessed consider the landscape setting and edges and visual prominence that influence the settlement as well as the townscape character. This is important as some settlements are greatly influenced by natural factors such as the Ouse Valley, Country Parks and Local Nature Reserves. This approach will also assist the Council in shaping sustainable development that has greater opportunities to provide a biodiversity net gain, incorporate green and natural spaces for communities and mitigate the impacts of climate change.
- 3.8 The current SPD identifies several building types which are used throughout the assessments. In the revised SPD, further building types were added as some were very broad so were split into several more specific types and to reflect modern design for residential, commercial, business and retail development.
- 3.9 The revised SPD provides practical guidance and a methodology for neighbourhood plan groups to empower them to undertake their own landscape and townscape assessments utilising their local knowledge and

produce their own evidence base documents without necessarily relying on consultants at their financial expense. Landscape and the built environment are common areas of interest within neighbourhood plans. The proposed methodology will assist neighbourhood planning groups to retain key characteristics through the preparation of design, landscape, conservation and heritage policies. The guidance and methodology can be found in full in Appendix 2 (the methodology can also be found in the Landscape and Townscape Supplementary Planning Document: Consultation Draft 2021).

- 3.10 The Government has reinforced its commitment to neighbourhood planning and view it as an important way to plan for beautiful places that champion neighbourhood design supporting environmental sustainability and enhancing the life of residents. This revised SPD therefore moves the Council further in line with the government's preferred direction.
- 3.11 The revised SPD is also accompanied by an [interactive map](#) which is another step toward the Government's preferred direction of incorporating greater digitalisation into the planning system. Further details and a user guide for this have been provided in Appendix 3. Having this resource means that local residents, agents and planning officers will be able to better navigate and access the information and apply the guidance within the revised SPD much more easily to planning applications and neighbourhood plan preparations. Maps have also been included within the revised SPD for those who may struggle to view the interactive map digitally.

4. COMMENTS OF OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY

- 4.1 The comments of the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Panel will be included in this section prior to its consideration by the Cabinet.

5. KEY IMPACTS / RISKS

- 5.1 The key risk in not endorsing the Landscape and Townscape SPD: Consultation Draft 2021 to proceed to public consultation is that dated guidance and resources will continue to be used with limited effect in positively shaping proposals and neighbourhood plans that are locally specific. This will not best conserve and enhance the character of Huntingdonshire's landscape, towns and villages.

6. WHAT ACTIONS WILL BE TAKEN/TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

- 6.1 This report seeks approval to proceed to public consultation. Subject to the approval from Overview and Scrutiny (Performance and Growth) and Cabinet to proceed to public consultation which will be carried out via the planning policy consultation portal and will start shortly after Cabinet. It will last for 8 weeks in recognition of the length of the revised SPD.
- 6.2 Following the close of the consultation, all responses will be reviewed. Where necessary changes will be made to the revised SPD. Regulations

11 to 16 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 require that before an SPD can be adopted, a consultation statement must be prepared which sets out who were consulted, summaries of the main issues raised and how those issues have been addressed.

- 6.3 Following the production of the consultation statement, an adoption statement will be produced in line with the requirements of the Regulations and all will be taken to the next possible Overview and Scrutiny (Performance and Growth) and Cabinet meetings with a recommendation to adopt the revised SPD. As soon as practicable after the decision of Cabinet, the SPD and adoption statement will be published on the Council's website.

7. LINK TO THE CORPORATE PLAN, STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND/OR CORPORATE OBJECTIVES

- 7.1 The revised Landscape and Townscape SPD will assist in the delivery of several objectives related to the Council's work programme and key actions within the Corporate Plan (2018-2022):

- People – Support people to improve their health and well-being
 - Ensuring new developments have sufficient public green open spaces including play provision
 - Prioritising accessible, high quality, well maintained open space, walking and cycling facilities on new housing developments
 - Meeting the housing and support needs of our population
- People – Develop stronger and more resilient communities to enable people to help themselves
 - Support community planning including working with parishes to complete Neighbourhood Plans
- Place – Accelerate business growth and investment
 - Supporting new and growing businesses and promoting business success
 - Supporting economic growth in market towns and rural areas
- Place – Improve the supply of new and affordable housing, jobs and community facilities to meet current and future need
 - Planning and delivering the provision of decent market and affordable housing for current and future needs
 - Ensuring an adequate supply of housing to meet objectively assessed needs
 - Ensuring there are the right community and leisure facilities to support new housing developments

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 If approved by Overview and Scrutiny (Performance and Growth) and Cabinet to proceed to public consultation, the requirements set out in Regulations 11 to 16 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning)

(England) Regulations 2012 for Supplementary Planning Documents will be adhered to.

9. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 Planning Officers at Huntingdonshire District Council have undertaken and implemented the review of the Landscape and Townscape SPD. The GIS and Spatial Team within 3C Shared Services have also been involved in transferring data into web-based GIS databases to enable it to be viewed by the public as an interactive map.

10. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDED DECISIONS

- 10.1 An updated and revised Landscape and Townscape SPD and accompanying interactive map will aid decision making and the implementation of policies within the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036. This guidance is required to support the wildlife, habitat, cultural and historical values of defined character areas and particular environments so that developments respond positively to their landscape and townscape context. It will also support neighbourhood plan groups who can use the guidance to write assessments for their local area. These contribute towards moving the Council further in the preferred direction of the Government by taking an increasing emphasis on locally specific design and the digitalisation of planning data.
- 10.2 It is recommended that Overview and Scrutiny and Cabinet endorse the Landscape and Townscape SPD: Consultation Draft 2021 attached as Appendix 1 for public consultation.

11. LIST OF APPENDICES INCLUDED

- Appendix 1 – Landscape and Townscape Supplementary Planning Document: Consultation Draft 2021
Appendix 2 - Methodology for local communities to assess landscape and townscape character
Appendix 3 – Interactive map user guidance

12. BACKGROUND PAPERS

[Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape Assessment SPD \(2007\)](#)

[Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 \(2019\)](#)

[Regulations 11 to 16 of the Town and Country Planning \(Local Planning\) \(England\) Regulations 2012](#)

CONTACT OFFICER

Name/Job Title: Natalie Elworthy, Planning Policy Officer
Tel No: 01480 388434
Email: Natalie.elworthy@huntingdonshire.gov.uk

Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape Supplementary Planning Document: Consultation Draft 2021

Huntingdonshire District Council | Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape Supplementary
Planning Document: Consultation Draft 2021

Document Information

Title: Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape Supplementary Planning Document (Consultation Draft 2021).

Status: Draft Supplementary Planning Document - supplementary to Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 (adopted 15 May 2019).

Summary: The document sets out descriptions of the nine landscape character areas throughout Huntingdonshire. It also provides descriptions of the townscape character areas in the spatial planning areas and key service centres identified in Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036. It provides guidance on consideration of landscape and townscape character issues during preparation of a planning application. It is also intended to support the preparation of neighbourhood plans through provision of information on landscape and townscape characteristics and questions to ask that may guide assessment of other villages and their surrounding landscape.

Date of approval for consultation: TBC

Route of approval for consultation: Overview and Scrutiny (Performance and Growth) on 6 October followed by Cabinet on 14 October 2021.

Document availability: The Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape Supplementary Planning Document (Consultation Draft 2021) can be seen on the Council's consultation portal. Copies can be downloaded from the portal and responses to the consultation may be entered directly into the portal. Subject to restrictions resulting from Covid-19 management, a hard copy may be seen at Customer Services Reception, Huntingdonshire District Council, Pathfinder House, St Mary's Street, Huntingdon. This office is normally open from 8:45 to 17:00 Mondays to Thursdays and 8:45 to 16:00 on Fridays, however, an appointment may be necessary depending on access restrictions in place.

Please note: This document may be available in alternative formats on request.

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Consultation Draft 2021

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1 Introduction

Purpose of this SPD

- 1.1** This Supplementary Planning Document is intended to support delivery of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 by:
- providing information on the existing landscape character of the district
 - providing information on the existing townscape character of the settlements in the spatial planning areas and key service centres identified in the Local Plan
 - helping developers in their submission of planning applications by providing guidance on landscape and townscape issues to be considered as part of any development proposal to guide the location and integration of new development within the existing landscape and townscape
 - encouraging comprehensive consideration of landscape and townscape issues and their interrelationship with development
 - informing neighbourhood plan preparation.
- 1.2** Application of the guidance in this SPD aims to contribute to a variety of benefits:
- the conservation and enhancement of the landscape's distinctive qualities
 - promotion of a sense of place and local distinctiveness
 - minimisation of the impact of new development on the surrounding area through successful integration
 - enhancement of the sustainability of new development
 - promotion of opportunities for enhancement, creation or linking of habitats
 - provision of the strategic context for preparation of more detailed local assessments of landscape and townscape character in support of neighbourhood plans.
- 1.3** This SPD serves two primary purposes:
1. to guide preparation and consideration of planning applications to enhance the quality of new development within Huntingdonshire; and
 2. to provide a methodology for neighbourhood planning groups to produce their own landscape and townscape assessments to support policies within neighbourhood plans.
- 1.4** This SPD provides guidance on how landscape and townscape issues should be considered as an integral part of the design and development process. It should be read in conjunction with the following documents to promote high quality development that makes a positive contribution to landscape character and local distinctiveness:
- Huntingdonshire [Design Guide SPD](#) which provides detailed guidance on the design of buildings and spaces
 - Huntingdonshire [Tree Strategy 2020-2030 and 10 year Action Plan](#)
 - any [Conservation Area Character Statements](#) for the area of interest.
- 1.5** Following adoption it will form a material planning consideration in determination of planning applications and appeals. It will guide the consideration of planning applications relating to landscape and townscape providing greater transparency in the decision making process.
- 1.6** This revised Landscape and Townscape SPD is accompanied by an [interactive map](#). This will aid the interpretation and implementation of the guidance throughout the assessment and provide further opportunities to engage with designations and character areas. This can help inform planning applications and neighbourhood plan preparations.

1 Introduction

Huntingdonshire District Council | Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape Supplementary Planning Document: Consultation Draft 2021

Policy Context

- 1.7** In 2001 Landscape Design Associates were appointed to undertake a Landscape and Townscape Assessment of Huntingdonshire to provide a description and analysis of the landscape of the district, the typical building types found throughout Huntingdonshire and the townscape of Huntingdon, St Neots, St Ives, Ramsey and Godmanchester. This assessment drew on information in the Cambridgeshire Landscape Guidelines which were adopted by the Council as supplementary planning guidance in 1991. It was prepared in response to a growing recognition of the value of landscape and townscape assessment as a basis for the effective planning and management of our towns and countryside. The use of such assessments to identify the special character of the natural and built environment of a locality provides a valuable starting point for preparation of development proposals which contribute to conserving and enhancing locally distinctive features. Following consultation the assessment was published as a supplementary planning document in June 2007 to give it greater weight in the determination of planning applications.
- 1.8** The original Landscape and Townscape SPD (2007) was prepared under a significantly different national and local planning policy context. This SPD is shaped by the requirements of the NPPF (2021) and National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG). Following adoption of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 (2019) assessments have been reconsidered and updated where appropriate and additional assessments have been carried out in a manner consistent with the original approach where necessary.
- 1.9** The [development plan for Huntingdonshire](#) as at August 2021 comprises:
- Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036;
 - Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Plan (2021); and
 - All 'Made' Neighbourhood Plans.
- 1.10** The Local Plan to 2036 includes policies which require the specialised guidance of the Landscape and Townscape SPD in order to aid decision making and to implement the policies successfully. This guidance is required to support the wildlife, habitat, cultural and historical values of defined character areas and particular environments so that developments respond positively to their landscape and townscape context. The Local Plan policies of most relevance to this revised SPD are:
- LP3 – Green Infrastructure
 - LP10 – The Countryside
 - LP11 - Design Context
 - LP22 - Local Services and Community Facilities
 - LP30 - Biodiversity and Geodiversity
 - LP34 - Heritage Assets and their settings
 - LP35 - Renewable and Low Carbon Energy
- 1.11** Legislative changes including the passing of the Localism Act 2011 now allows parish and town councils to produce neighbourhood plans which, once 'made', become part of the district's statutory development plan. The intention of this form of plan-making is to give communities more power in the planning system to shape their local area. This revised Landscape and Townscape SPD is aimed at being a useful resource at the neighbourhood plan level. The guidance and defined landscape and townscape areas provide support to those with the intention of protecting important local landscapes and townscape features in their neighbourhood plan policies. Often these features of a community are of high priority to preserve and or enhance in neighbourhood plans. This SPD can thus be used by neighbourhood planning groups to help shape the vision, aims and policies of their neighbourhood plan. If required, it can form the starting point for a further detailed landscape and townscape assessment focusing on the specific neighbourhood area and its immediate surrounding context.
- 1.12** This SPD will supersede the 2007 Landscape and Townscape SPD and form part of the suite of planning guides and SPDs already adopted by the Council to aid planning decisions:

- Huntingdonshire Design Guide SPD (2017)
- Cambridgeshire Flood and Water SPD (2017)
- Wind Energy Development in Huntingdonshire SPD (2014)
- Developer Contributions SPD (2011) (or successor document)
- Developer Contributions: Updated Costs 2019/20

Landscape Character

- 1.13** Landscape character can be defined as the distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements in the landscape that make one area different from another. The approach encompasses physical landscape factors such as geology and ecology, cultural factors such as archaeology and settlement patterns, and perceptual factors such as tranquillity. Landscape character areas reflect a unique combination of these factors in a discrete geographical area; this local distinctiveness contributes to the special character and sense of place of a community or area.
- 1.14** A landscape character area assessment identifies and describes variations in the character of the landscape recognising the combination of factors that make an individual landscape distinctive. Not all areas within a landscape character area exhibit all the characteristics of that area and it is common for some parts to have few distinctive features often due to changes in land use. The proximity of the built environment often affects the condition of the landscape, particularly on the edges of the built environment where pressures are greatest.
- 1.15** The [Cambridgeshire Landscape Guidelines](#) provide advice on the siting and design of new development within the county and describe ways in which richer and more diverse landscapes can be created. They include practical examples of a range of landscape management and improvement proposals and illustrate how people can contribute towards the process of landscape protection and enhancement. All references to this document are taken from the pdf of the document available on [Cambridgeshire County Council's website](#). Nine landscape character areas are identified across the county of which five fall within Huntingdonshire: the Western Claylands, Fenlands, Grafham Water, the Ouse Valley and the Nene Valley. The Guidelines conclude that development should 'reflect local landscape character particularly in the treatment of edges of developments, through the choice of appropriate native species, the pattern of woodland/ copses/ hedgerows, the use of landform and the avoidance of harsh lines and the use of local materials for walls and building'.
- 1.16** The Landscape Character Areas Assessment built upon national and Cambridgeshire level assessments and was completed in accordance with good practice guidance published by the Countryside Agency (now Natural England). Broadly this approach involved:
- a desk study to develop a series of overlay maps indicating areas of landscape with common characteristics
 - field surveys to test and refine the initial conclusions on landscape character and complement them with subjective responses to the landscape
 - bringing the information together to classify the landscape into discrete character areas
 - considering the pressures and changes influencing each character area
- 1.17** A more refined assessment of Huntingdonshire's landscape character sitting under that for the whole county has identified some variations worthy of distinction at the local level. As a result some of the county level character areas have been subdivided resulting in nine district level landscape character areas being identified as:
- The Fens
 - Fen Margin
 - Central Claylands
 - Ouse Valley

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- South East Claylands
- Northern Wolds
- Grafham Water
- Southern Wolds
- Nene Valley

1.18 In some instances the boundaries between individual landscape character areas are clearly defined and easily recognisable on the ground. For example, the boundary between the Fens and the Fen Margin landscape character areas is clearly defined by a marked change in topography and visual enclosure. In other locations, such as the boundaries between the Northern Wolds and the Central Claylands, the change in the landscape is more gradual and the boundaries are less distinct. In these instances the boundaries should be considered as transitional and consideration given to the characteristics of each relevant area. A detailed description of each area is presented in the next chapter.

Townscape Character

1.19 Townscape is defined by the Landscape Institute as 'the landscape within the built-up area, including the buildings, the relationships between them, the different types of urban open spaces, including green spaces and the relationships between buildings and open spaces'. Townscape character identifies the distinct and recognisable pattern of features that occur consistently in a particular area. Townscape character areas vary significantly in size but each has a distinct and recognisable identity. These provide a basis for promoting the integration of sensitively designed buildings and spaces which reflect the distinctive traits of the surrounding area.

1.20 The Townscape Character Areas Assessment considers the urban structure and urban character of the district's spatial planning areas and key service centres. Broadly this approach involved:

- a desk study to develop an initial understanding of the form and character of the settlements allowing initial mapping of key features and character area boundaries
- field surveys to gather detailed information on building types, street patterns, key buildings, memorable places, vegetation, building materials and colours to test and refine the initial conclusions
- combining this information to describe the urban structure and character through plans, photographs and written descriptions
- identification of the key factors any development proposals should consider within each townscape character area reflecting their planning, conservation and enhancement priorities.

1.21 The previous Landscape and Townscape Assessment SPD only contained townscape assessments for Huntingdon, Godmanchester, St Neots, St Ives and Ramsey. To further support the Local Plan's development strategy assessments have been added for other settlements within the spatial planning areas and for the key service centres. The methodology for undertaking these additional settlements is outlined in the next chapter. Based on this, detailed guidance has been produced for neighbourhood planning groups in Appendix 1.

1.22 Townscape constantly evolves. Consequently townscape character areas change and boundaries may alter over time as development occurs, particularly in areas of major change. Some of the sites allocated in Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 are intended to reinforce this evolution as local priorities change. An example of this is HU5 Edison Bell Way which reflects the evolution of a derelict former industrial area to a mixed use area of residential and retail properties.

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- 2.1** The impact of development on its landscape and townscape setting will vary depending on the location, scale and type of the proposal. Some developments will only have a limited impact, others may be more significant depending on their prominence and the sensitivity of their proposed context. NPPF section 12 focuses entirely on achieving well-designed places that are sympathetic to local character while not preventing appropriate change and recognises good design as a key aspect of sustainable development. NPPF paragraph 130 sets out clear design expectations for new developments. Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 complements these through strategic policy LP 11: Design Context along with others identified previously.
- 2.2** Landscape considerations are a key component of good design. All planning applications should address landscape issues in a proportionate manner according to the location, scale and type of development proposed. It is beyond the scope of this SPD to provide a detailed analysis of landscape and townscape issues throughout the district. Therefore, for proposals where the location of the site and/ or scale of the development are such that landscape issues will be a key consideration detailed assessment of the proposal's context will be required.
- 2.3** Developers should demonstrate how the proposal responds positively to its context and has drawn inspiration from the key characteristics of its surroundings, including natural, historic and built environment, to help create distinctive, high quality and well designed places. This should include consideration of the sensitivity of the affected landscape and townscape to proposed form of development and assessment of the magnitude of change that will occur through construction and operation of the proposed development. Developers should show how this consideration has been reflected in the siting, design and layout of the proposal. Where required a Design and Access Statement should demonstrate how the proposal has been designed with sensitivity to the surrounding landscape and townscape. The requirements and information in this SPD can be used to help inform this.
- 2.4** The following issues may be relevant to guide preparation of assessment of the landscape and/ or townscape impact of a proposed development.

Factors of key importance for landscape are consideration of:

- the existing landscape character within and around the site reflecting landform, soils and geology, land cover, water features and the pattern of built and natural features
- the visual character of the landscape and views to, from and across the site
- opportunities to strengthen visual and physical linkages between the site and its surroundings, including opportunities for linkage of natural habitat.

Factors of key importance for townscape are consideration of:

- the character of key features such as land use, layout, density, plot size, massing and permeability
- the presence of local landmarks, memorable places, cultural assets and vistas
- historic street patterns
- vernacular architectural styles, materials, design and detailing that provide local distinctiveness
- the character of boundary treatments such as walls, hedges and hedgerows
- the character of open spaces and their relationship to built development.

- 2.5** It is helpful to think of townscape as an evolution of the natural landscape; both bring with them cultural influences and perceptions that have shaped how people interact and perceive the natural and built environment. Some of these factors are summarised in Figure 2.1. These are continually changing, some areas at a faster rate than others. Each townscape and its unique interaction with its surrounding landscape brings varying opportunities for development, enhancement and preservation.

2 Understanding Character

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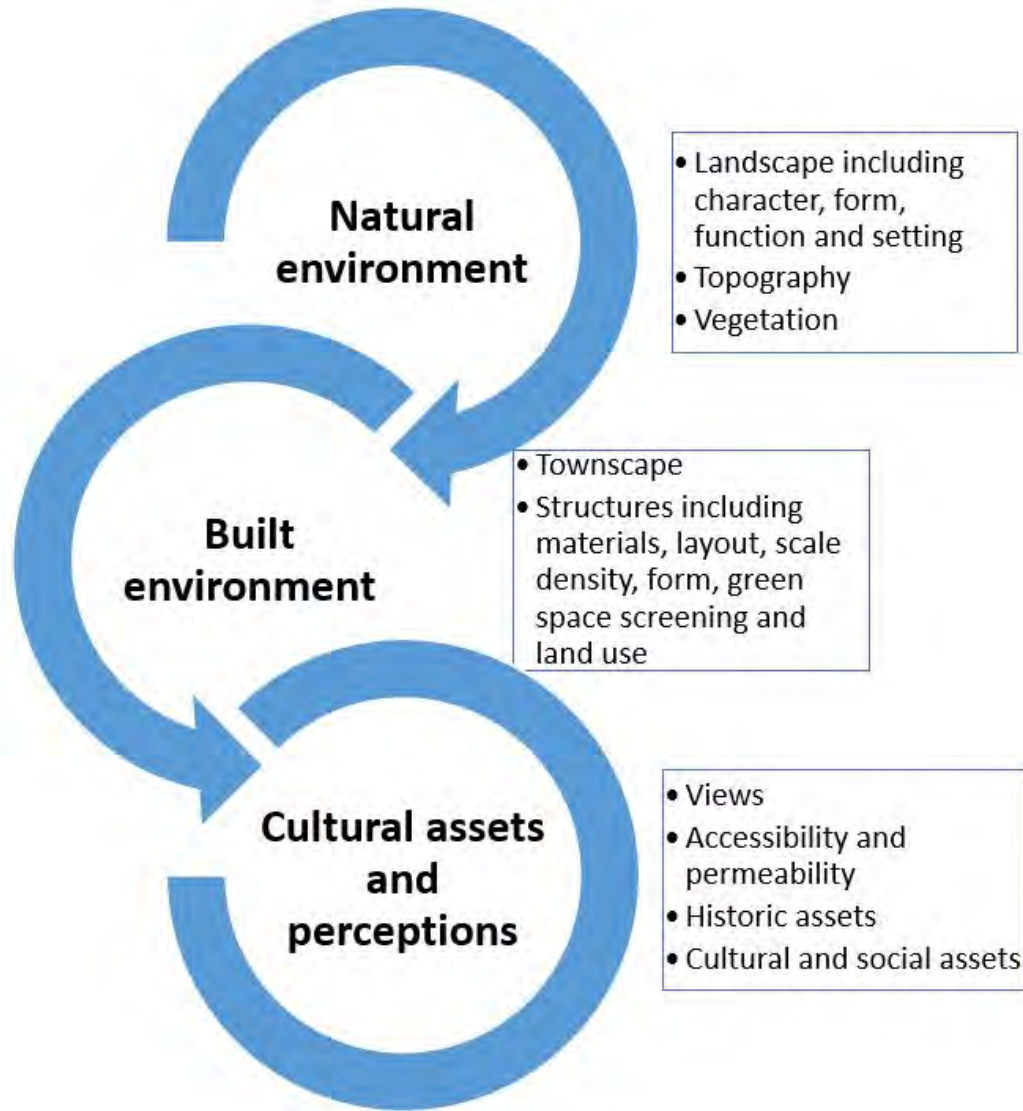


Figure 2.1 Key considerations of landscape and townscape character

National Design Guide and Design Code

2.6 In 2019 the Ministry for Homes, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) published a [Model Design Guide](#) and [National Model Design Code and Guidance Notes for Design Codes](#) illustrating how well-designed places that are beautiful, healthy, greener, enduring and successful can be achieved in practice. Updated in 2021, they form part of the Government's collection of planning practice guidance to achieve high quality places and buildings which is a fundamental aspect of the National Planning Policy Framework.

2.7 The National Design Guide addresses the question of how we recognise well-designed places, by outlining and illustrating the Government's priorities for well-designed places in the form of ten characteristics (see Figure 2.2 also):

1. **Context** – enhances the surroundings
2. **Identity** – attractive and distinctive
3. **Built form** – a coherent pattern of development
4. **Movement** – accessible and easy to move around
5. **Nature** – enhanced and optimised
6. **Public spaces** – safe, social and inclusive
7. **Uses** – mixed and integrated
8. **Homes and buildings** – functional, healthy and sustainable
9. **Resources** – efficient and resilient
10. **Lifespan** – made to last

2.8 This SPD is not a design guide or design code. It should be read in conjunction with the Huntingdonshire Design Guide SPD (2017) or successor documents which provides detailed design advice along with any relevant Conservation Area character statements. However, it will provide the context and baseline understanding to inform further detailed design guides and codes to analyse local character and identity, these may be produced by Town and Parish Councils as part of their neighbourhood plan preparation. They may also be prepared to help shape planning proposals for new development.

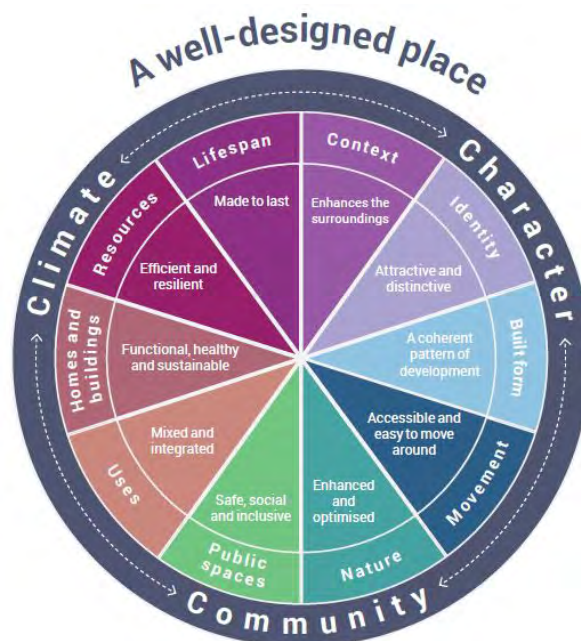


Figure 2.2 Model Design Guide's 10 characteristics of a well-designed place

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Settlement Scale Character Assessment

Methodology for the revised SPD

- 2.9** A review of the existing Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape SPD from 2007 was undertaken in light of the adoption of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 in May 2019. The review assessed what purpose and scope an update would have so that it better relates to the current policy position and developments since its publication. In updating the SPD, it was recognised that making it a more practical document that provides greater guidance in the decision making process and for neighbourhood planning would be beneficial.
- 2.10** A desk study which involved the collection and review of the existing Landscape and Townscape SPD, existing reports, conservation area statements, maps, aerial photography and other published data was undertaken. These covered the four spatial planning areas and seven key service centres as identified in the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036. The Landscape Character Areas already identified in the 2007 SPD were found to still be appropriate so amendments were made to the supporting texts where necessary to take into account any new roads, developments and landscape changes.
- 2.11** Updates to existing character areas and the drafting of new character areas were done for the settlements within the spatial planning areas: Huntingdon, Brampton, Godmanchester, St Neots, Little Paxton, St Ives and Ramsey. A full assessment was carried out for the key service centres of Buckden, Fenstanton, Kimbolton, Sawtry, Somersham, Warboys and Yaxley as these were not included in the 2007 SPD. The data collected at this stage provided an initial understanding of the form and character of the settlements, their landscape edges and wider landscaping setting. Initial text, mapping of key features and character area boundaries was done to be tested in the field survey.
- 2.12** A period of field survey within each settlement during which detailed information on building types, street pattern, key buildings, memorable places, vegetation, building materials and the relationships between townscape and landscape was undertaken. This allowed the initial conclusions on settlement and landscape structure and character from the desk study to be tested and refined. Photographs of key features and characteristics within each identified character area were taken to add visual elements to the SPD and demonstrate clearly what the key features are within each character area.
- 2.13** Following the field surveys, the assessments were refined with the observations made from the field surveys and the visual aids gathered were added. The boundaries of each character area were then refined and mapped. Once a full picture of the character of each area was understood, identifying design principles that can be applied to planning applications and decision making were formulated. These responded to the specific characteristics and features of each character area.

Methodology for local communities

- 2.14** Preparation of a landscape and/ or townscape appraisal at a settlement scale provides an opportunity to undertake finer grain consideration than can be conducted at a district-wide level. This is most likely to be carried out by a neighbourhood planning group to help develop appropriate policies for their plan. A methodology to do this is set out in Appendix 1 with its key steps summarised in Figure 2.3.

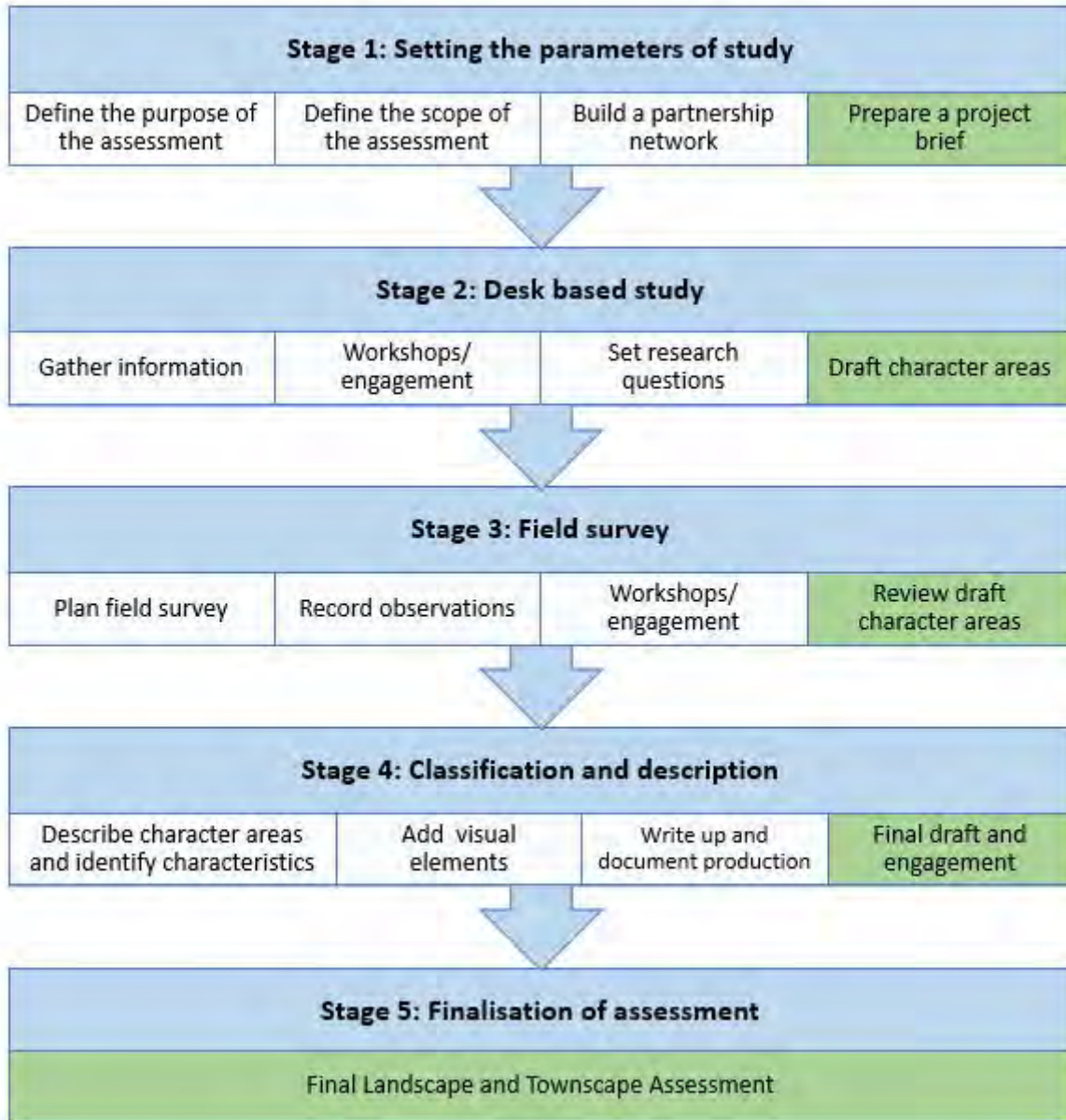


Figure 2.3 Summary of the key stages, steps and outputs of undertaking a landscape and townscape character assessment

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- 2.15** The following questions are designed to provide a starting point to help local residents undertake their own assessments informed by local knowledge of their town or village. These can be used in combination with the methodology in Appendix 1.

Landscape

- How does the area relate to the wider countryside? Has it features in common with the surrounding landscape?
- Is the area part of a larger landscape feature such as a ridge or field pattern that is characteristic of the wider area?
- What is the current use of the area?
- What function does the area serve in the wider landscape? For example, is it part of the countryside setting of a built-up area, or does it bring views of the countryside landscape into a settlement?

Topography

- Is the area situated within a distinct topographical feature such as a river valley or hill?
- Is the area flat, sloping or undulating?
- Are there any permanent or seasonal watercourses or ponds within or on the boundaries of the area?
- How does the topography affect the area's sense of enclosure or openness?
- Can the whole area be seen as one entity or are there parts of it hidden behind higher land or built structures?

Vegetation

- Are there individual trees within the area which make a significant contribution to the appearance of the locality?
- Are there indications of historic planting such as historic hedgerows, specimen trees or formal planting?
- Does existing vegetation include locally characteristic, native species?
- What natural habitats are provided by existing vegetation?

Townscape function

- Is it contained within well-defined boundaries?
- What is the current use of the area?
- Are there important buildings, structures or boundary treatments?
- What function does the area serve in the wider townscape? For example, is it part of an area of similar developments or does it provide a contrast?

Structures

- If the screening includes walls or fencing, is it typical of the landscape and/ or townscape character area? is it important to the area's historic character?
- What examples of green space or public space are there? How do they sit within the townscape?
- Are there any individual structures which stand out as significantly contributing or detracting from the character of the area?
- What contribution do these make to the landscape or townscape? Do they enhance or detract from its quality and character?
- How do the height, materials, style and uses of nearby buildings relate to the area?
- Do nearby buildings and structures display features that are typical of the townscape character area?
- Is there a clear pattern or structure to the surrounding buildings and streets?

Views and vistas

- Does the area provide an interesting or significant skyline?
- Do the views to/ from the area include historic assets whose setting needs to be safeguarded?
- Does the area terminate a view or vista within the townscape?

Accessibility and permeability

- What physical access links the area to existing facilities and communities? Are there any obstacles which hinder access?
- What level of physical connectivity does the landscape and/or townscape character area benefit from?
- What physical access connections does the site or area currently have?

Historical, cultural and social assets

- Do vehicles, moving or parked, have an impact on the ambience of the area?
- What are the activity levels like in the area? Is the area busy? Are there clusters of particular activities?
- Is the area associated with particular cultural uses? For example, does it contain a museum or cemetery?
- Are there features which may provoke memories? For example, does the area include an old school or hospital?
- Are there any known associations with famous people or events?
- Is the area of high archaeological potential?
- Are there known designated or undesignated historic assets within the area? How do these contribute to the character of the area?

Light and noise

- What are the existing levels of artificial illumination in the area?

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Site Specific Character Assessment

- 2.16** Understanding the character of a proposed development site and its relationship to its setting are essential for successful integration of a development scheme into the surrounding landscape and/ or townscape. The first step is to establish which landscape and/ or townscape character areas are relevant. Developers should consider the key characteristics of the landscape and/ or townscape character area to assess the relationship between the site and its locally distinctive features.
- 2.17** The following questions are provided to help in the consideration of landscape and townscape character when assessing the potential impacts of proposed change. Key factors to be considered when proposing development within a particular landscape or townscape character area are identified in the following chapters in boxes headed 'Development proposals should'.

Landscape

- How does the site relate to the wider countryside? Has it features in common with the surrounding landscape?
- Is the site part of a larger landscape feature such as a ridge or field pattern that is characteristic of the wider area?
- What is the current use of the site?
- What function does the site serve in the wider landscape? For example, is it part of the countryside setting of a built-up area, or does it bring views of the countryside landscape into a settlement?

Topography

- How does the topography affect the site's sense of enclosure or openness?
- How does the topography affect views into, out of and across the site?
- Are there any permanent or seasonal watercourses or ponds within or on the boundaries of the site?
- Is the site flat, sloping or undulating?

Vegetation

- Do the boundaries of the site comprise vegetation rather than walls and fences?
- Are there indications of historic planting such as historic hedgerows, specimen trees or formal planting?
- What natural habitats are provided by existing vegetation and how should they be protected?
- Does existing vegetation include locally characteristic, native species?
- Are there individual or groups of trees within or adjoining the site which make a significant contribution to its appearance?

Townscape function

- Is the site contained within well-defined boundaries?
- What is the current use of the site?
- What function does the site serve in the wider townscape? For example, is it part of an area of similar developments or does it provide a contrast?

Structures

- If the screening includes walls or fencing, is it typical of the landscape and/ or townscape character? Does it enhance or detract from the site's character?
- What examples of green space or public space are there? How can green space and public space in the site contribute to the townscape?
- Are there any individual structures which stand out as significantly contributing or detracting from the character of the site?

- What contribution do these make to the landscape or townscape? Do they enhance or detract from its quality and character?
- How do the height, materials, style and uses of nearby buildings relate to the site?
- Is there a clear pattern or structure to the surrounding buildings and streets?

Views and vistas

- Does the site provide an interesting or significant skyline?
- Do the views to/ from the site include historic assets whose setting needs to be safeguarded?
- Does the site terminate a view or vista within the townscape?

Accessibility and permeability

- What physical access links the area to existing facilities and communities? Are there any obstacles which hinder access?
- What level of physical connectivity does the site have to the surrounding landscape and/or townscape character area?
- What physical access connections does the site currently have?

Historic, cultural and social assets

- Are there high activity levels in the site? How can the site contribute to improving or increasing activity in the surrounding area?
- Is the site associated with particular cultural uses? For example, does it contain a museum or cemetery?
- Are there features which may provoke memories? For example, does the site include an old school or hospital?
- Are there any known associations with famous people or events?
- Is the site of high archaeological potential?
- Are there known designated or undesignated historic assets within the site or adjacent to it? How do these contribute to its character?

Light and noise

- What are the existing levels of artificial illumination in the site and its immediate surroundings? Will development increase this?

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Heritage Assets

- 2.18** Heritage assets are relevant to both landscape and townscape and are integral to creating the distinctive character and individual sense of place of Huntingdonshire's towns, villages and countryside. Consideration of designated and undesignated heritage assets is a crucial element of landscape and townscape assessment. The distribution of Huntingdonshire's conservation areas, listed buildings, historic parks and gardens and scheduled monuments are shown in Figure 2.4 at the end of this section and can also be viewed on the [interactive map](#).
- 2.19** The term heritage assets embraces a wide range of historic features including buildings, parks and gardens, monuments, sites and landscapes. The features can be of historic, archaeological, architectural or cultural interest that have a degree of 'significance', whether designated or not. The significance of a heritage asset is the value of the asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest; that interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting. Designated heritage assets within Huntingdonshire include listed buildings, conservation areas, historic parks and gardens and scheduled monuments. Undesignated assets also form a material consideration in determining planning applications as identified in the NPPF.

Conservation Areas

- 2.20** Huntingdonshire has 61 designated Conservation Areas. These are defined in the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation) Act 1990 as areas of 'special architectural or historic interest the character and appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance'. The areas vary significantly in character and size from a relatively small group of buildings to a substantial part of an individual town. Character assessment statements have been prepared for many of these and can be found on the Council's website as [Conservation Area Documents](#).
- 2.21** The character of a conservation area results from the nature of the buildings within it, coupled with the pattern of streets, open spaces, trees and other vegetation. Conservation areas contribute positively to quality of life and provide a sense of continuity. The local distinctiveness they demonstrate should inform well designed new development that enhances the character of the area in which it is situated.

The Historic England Advice Note Conservation Area Appraisal, Designation and Management (February 2019)

The Historic England Advice Note [Conservation Area Appraisal, Designation and Management](#) identifies the following list of factors to help judge whether a building contributes positively to the character of a conservation area which development proposals within a conservation area should consider:

- Is it the work of a particular architect or designer of regional or local note?
- Does it have landmark quality?
- Does it reflect a substantial number of other elements in the conservation area in age, style, materials, form or other characteristics?
- Does it relate to adjacent designated heritage assets in age, materials or in any other historically significant way?
- Does it contribute positively to the setting or adjacent designated heritage assets?
- Does it contribute to the quality of recognisable spaces including exteriors or open spaces within a complex of public buildings?
- Is it associated with a designed landscape, eg a significant wall, terracing or a garden building?
- Does it individually, or as part of a group, illustrate the development of the settlement in which it stands?
- Does it have significant historic associations with features such as the historic road layout, burgage plots, a town park or a landscape feature?

- Does it have historic associations with local people or past events?
- Does it reflect the traditional functional character or former uses in the area?
- Does it contribute to the character or appearance of the area?

The Advice Note provides further guidance on aspects of setting and views which may be significant contributors to character and likewise should be taken into consideration;

- Views of rivers and surrounding hills and glimpses of landscape from urban streets
- Open spaces, church towers/ spires and prominent public buildings that provide landmarks in views
- Views that illustrate a particular element of the area's historic development
- Groups of buildings benefiting from a conscious design or of fortuitous beauty and the consequent visual harmony they present
- Townscape attributes such as enclosure, definition of streets and spaces, lighting, trees, verges, boundary treatments or street surfaces
- Uniform building height that contributes to the character of views
- Distant views of the settlement and those in the approach to it
- Adjacent or nearby heritage assets that gain or contribute significance through views to or from the area

Listed Buildings, Historic Parks and Gardens and Scheduled Monuments

2.22 Listing marks and celebrates a building's special architectural and historic interest, and also brings it under the consideration of the planning system, so that it can be protected for future generations. Listed Buildings are graded into one of three categories:

- Grade I buildings which are of exceptional interest with only 2.5% of listed buildings at this grade
- Grade II* buildings are particularly important buildings of more than special interest accounting for 5.8% of listed buildings
- Grade II buildings are of special interest accounting for 91.7% of all listed buildings and it is the most likely grade of listing for a home owner.

2.23 English Heritage recognises that the total number of listed buildings is not known, as one single entry on the National Heritage List for England (NHLE) can sometimes cover a number of individual units, such as a row of terraced houses. However, it is estimated that there are around 500,000 listed buildings on the NHLE. As well as buildings, other forms of heritage assets can be listed. Scheduled Monuments is the oldest form of designation and relates to nationally important archaeological sites. Parks and Gardens include gardens, grounds and other planned open spaces, such as town squares. They are protected due to their significance as a 'designed' landscape.

2.24 Huntingdonshire has a rich history and this is reflected in the large number of historic buildings found within the district, many of which are protected as listed buildings, along with 5 designated Parks and Gardens and 84 designated Scheduled Monuments. There are some 2,218 designations, their grading closely following the proportion identified by Historic England above:

- 62 grade I designations (2.8%)
- 130 grade II* designations (5.9%)
- 2,026 grade II designated (91.3%)

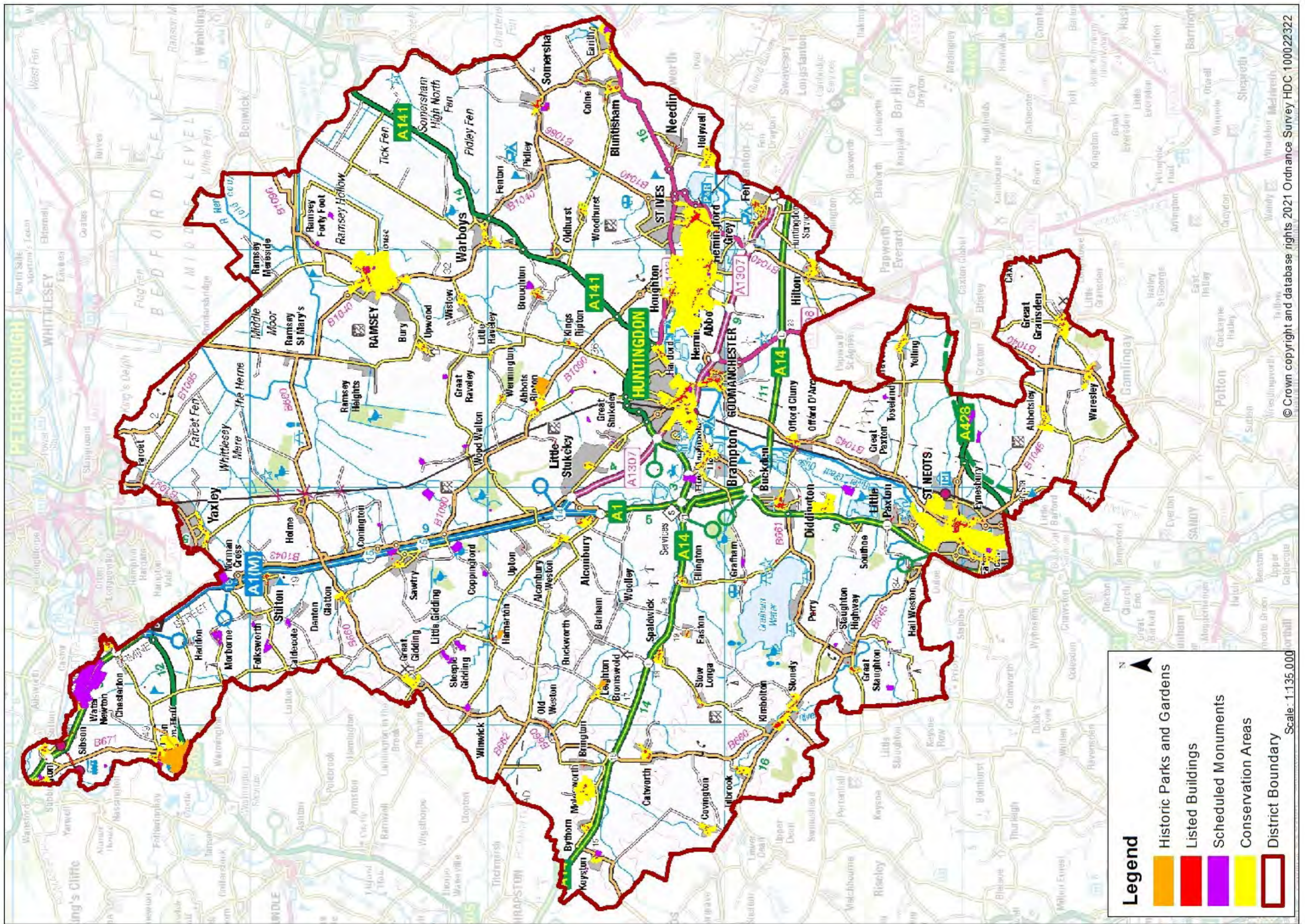


Figure 2.4 Heritage designations across Huntingdonshire

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Building Types

2.25 To understand the character of Huntingdonshire's settlements buildings have been grouped into typical categories labelled as building types which have helped to inform the assessments of townscape character areas. The building types illustrate the variations in style, architectural detail, materials and colours setting out the key characteristics that help to define them. Below is a table listing all building types, for comparison the previous building types in the 2007 SPD have been included for reference against those in this revised SPD.

2007 SPD Building Types	Revised SPD Building Types
Type T1A - High Status Medieval Timber Framed House	Type 1A - High Status Medieval Timber Framed Building
Type T1B - Vernacular Cottages	Type 1B - Vernacular Cottages
Type T2 - 18th-19th Century Town House	Type 2D - 18th - early 20th Century Town House
Type T3 - 18th-19th Century Terraced House	Type 2A - 18th - early 20th Century Terraced House
Type T4 - 18th-19th Century Villas and Semis	Type 2B - 18th - early 20th Century Villas and Semis
Type T5 - 19th Century Picturesque	Type 2C - 19th Century Picturesque
Type T6 - 18th-19th Century Grand House	Type 2E - 18th - early 20th Century Grand House
Type T7A - Arts and Craft Influenced Housing	Type 3A - Arts and Craft Influenced Housing
Type T7B - 1920s and Inter-war Suburbia	Type 3B - 1920s and Inter-war Suburbia
Type T7C - The 'Radburn' Estates	Type 3C - The 'Radburn' Estates
Type T7D - Modern Housing Estates	Type 3D - Mid 20th Century Housing
	Type 3E - Late 20th Century Housing
	Type 3F - 21st Century Housing
Type T8 - Agricultural Buildings	Type 4 - Agricultural Buildings
Type T9A - Pre-20th Century Industrial Buildings	Type 5A - Pre-20th Century Industrial Buildings
Type T9B - 20th Century Industrial Estates and Retail Parks	Type 5B - 20th and 21st Century Industrial Estates
	Type 5C - 20th and 21st Century Business Parks and Offices
	Type 5D - Shopping Facilities and Retail Parks
Type T10A - Parish Churches	Type 6A - Parish Churches
Type T10B - Non-Conformist Chapels	Type 6B - Non-Conformist Chapels
Type T11A - Victorian and Edwardian Civic Buildings	Type 7A - Victorian and Edwardian Civic Buildings
	Type 7B - Early and mid 20th Century Civic Buildings
Type T11B - Late 20th Century Civic Buildings	Type 7C - Late 20th and 21st Century Civic Buildings
Type T12 - Military Airfields	Type 8 - Military Airfields and Bases

Type 1: Vernacular Cottage/ House

Type 1A: High Status Medieval Timber Framed Building

- 2.26** Large medieval timber framed houses are found mainly in the centre and south of the district and generally date from the mid to late 16th century. The type is frequently rendered or faced in brickwork and re-fenestrated in later periods often disguising medieval origins. Some fine examples are found in Godmanchester as illustrated by Tudor Farm.



Tudor Farm, Godmanchester

Key Characteristics

- Oak framing (often reused) infilled with wattle and daub and covered with lime plaster or render
- Two storeys, some with later dormer windows added to create attic rooms
- Picturesque roofs with steep pitches, numerous gables and large, sometimes ornate, red brick chimneystacks; roof coverings depend on location, but the predominant types include plain gault-clay tiles and thatch
- Overhanging eaves
- Frequently built with L and H plan forms, with additive ranges of outbuildings
- Jettying at ground and first floors, with bay-windows to some grander examples
- Originally windows (mullioned, with leaded lights) were set within the framing, but these were generally replaced by timber sliding sashes or casements in later periods
- Medium to low density housing, depending on plot size
- Varied form and scale, but usually detached, built within settlement boundaries. Commonly associated with burgage plots, and frequently set at back of pavement creating a well defined street pattern.

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Type 1B: Vernacular Cottages

2.27 The underlying geology, gault clays and limestone in the north west, together with reeds and straw from the nearby Fens and local farms, has generated the palette of traditional building materials for vernacular buildings. This, together with building techniques developed by the local population over many centuries, has created the vernacular cottages of the district. Vernacular cottages from late 16th century to the late 18th century occur throughout the area, but show distinct local variations.



Bridge Road, Broughton

Key Characteristics

- Long, low double-fronted single, 1.5 or 2 storey cottages
- Simple flat-fronted building form, generally eaves to the road
- Buff or rosy-buff brick or stone built, depending on location; rendered and painted timber framing is also common throughout the district
- Shallow plan depth with a simple steeply pitched roof and outbuildings
- Clay plain or pantiles, thatch or Collyweston-slate roof coverings, depending on location
- Eaves and gables are generally clipped close to the building, except for the deep overhangs found on thatched roofs
- Originally built with small, horizontally proportioned window openings with casement or horizontally sliding sash windows; flat or segmental brick lintels
- Dormer windows are a common feature, with pitched, cat slide or eyebrow roofs, depending on material and location
- Panelled or ledged and braced doors, with some later simple timber porches or canopies
- Large brick chimneystacks were positioned first centrally and later at the gable ends
- Within settlements, cottages are generally terraced and set at the back of the pavement, creating well-defined streets and space

Local Variations

Area

Local Characteristics

The Fens and Fen Margins

The Fens contain few pre 19th century buildings, but cottages on the margins are predominately buff brick often painted, or rendered and painted white. Roofs are mainly covered with clay plain tiles and pantiles although there is also some thatch present. 1.5 storey cottages with catslide dormer windows and outshoots are a common feature



142 Main Street, Yaxley

Central Claylands and Ouse Valley

Long low houses built of rosy buff and dark buff brickwork depending on the settlement. Roofs are typically thatch or Cambridgeshire mix plain-tiles, with pantiles frequently found on outbuildings



Honey Hill cottages in Fenstanton

South East Claylands

Rendered and painted timber-framed cottages are common, with projecting weather-boards a distinctive feature. Cottages are frequently 1.5 storeys, with many later examples built of a characteristic dark warm-red brick. Cambridgeshire peg tiles and thatched roofs are common.



19 High Street, Abbotsley

Nene Valley

Cottages are built from the locally occurring limestone, laid as coursed rubble with dressed stone cills, window and door surrounds on larger properties. Roofs are Collyweston slate.



Elton Road, Wansford

2 Understanding Character

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Type 2: 18 to early 20th Century Housing

Type 2A: 18 to early 20th Century Terraced House

- 2.28** The agricultural and industrial revolutions precipitated major growth of towns in the 18th and 19th centuries. Streets of small terraced houses were built on the edges of the historic towns throughout the district. The type is ubiquitous throughout the country. Although influenced by local materials the advent of the railways improved transportation and encouraged the use of non-local materials, especially mass-produced bricks and Welsh slate for roofs.
- 2.29** The majority of terraced houses in the district are built at the back of pavement, however there are examples of larger versions of this type with small front gardens, which creates a wider, greener and more relaxed streetscape.



East Street, St Ives



Cambridge Street, Godmanchester

Key Characteristics

- Small, generally flat fronted houses; bay windows are a feature on larger examples
- Brick built, occasionally with contrasting brick detailing, such as string courses and door and window surrounds
- Vertically proportioned window openings, with flat and segmental brick arches, and stone cills
- Vertical sliding sash windows and timber panelled doors, typically with glazed fanlights over
- Eaves and gables are generally undecorated and generally clipped close to the building
- Chimney stacks are usually positioned on the party wall
- Simple pitched roofs with slate roof covering
- High density terraced form, often laid out along straight streets, creating a distinctive urban character
- Parking on street

Type 2B: 18th to early 20th Century Villas and Semi-detached Houses

- 2.30** This building type is found in the larger villages and towns of the district, where it forms the wealthier fringes to the historic centres. The classic simple architecture of the Georgian period became increasingly eclectic and decorative during the Victorian and Edwardian eras. Although influenced by local building materials, improved transportation brought non-local materials, especially mass-produced bricks and Welsh slate.
- 2.31** The villa form complemented the narrow streets of small terraced homes built during the Victorian and Edwardian periods, providing larger properties for wealthier residents. The semi-detached form, creating the illusion of detached villas, is also found in some locations. Ramsey and Warboys have particularly good examples of this building type.



Victorian villa, High Street, Warboys



Victorian semi-detached villas, Needingworth Road, St Ives

Key Characteristics

- Medium to large brick-built, detached or semi-detached houses
- Decorative, contrasting brickwork stringcourses, eaves courses, lintels and window reveals
- Canted and square bay windows are a feature, often with stone mullions, now frequently painted white
- Decorative stone detailing, including mullions, copings, padstones and plaques
- Vertical window openings with stone cills, flat and segmental brick lintels, and vertical sliding sash windows
- Fairly low-pitched slate covered roofs, some with Italianate hipped roofs. Prominent brick stacks and chimneys
- Large houses are set in spacious grounds.
- Town based properties often have small front gardens that create a greener street character
- Parking can be on street or using driveways and garaging added since the original construction

2 Understanding Character

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Type 2C: 19th Century Picturesque

- 2.32** During the Victorian era it became fashionable for wealthy and philanthropic landowners to build housing and other facilities for their tenants, and the local community. The predominant style was based on a gothicised version of the idealised 'English' cottage, often creating picturesque groups or even whole villages. Generally, materials were of local origin, excepting more decorative elements such as cast iron windows and ornate rainwater goods.
- 2.33** The type is found in small numbers throughout the district; Abbey Green, Ramsey has several fine examples along its northern side.



Church Green, Ramsey

Key Characteristics

- Generally symmetrical but with intricate plan forms, layouts and elevations
- Architectural detailing used for decorative effect, such as buttresses, dentil courses, mouldings, bargeboards and string courses
- Picturesque rooflines, with tall decorated chimney stacks, numerous gables, finials and decorated ridge tiles
- Steep roof pitches, with slate or gault clay plain-tile roof coverings. Dormer windows are a feature on cottages
- Strongly mullioned windows often with decorative lattice-work glazing patterns
- Generally set back from the road with small front gardens and low walls to the front boundaries. Alms-houses often for courtyards defined by railings
- Originally built for a range of uses, including schools, estate offices, village halls, alms-houses and estate workers cottages. The majority are now in residential use
- Medium to low density depending on use and plot size
- Parking is generally on street

Type 2D: 18th to early 20th Century Town House

- 2.34** The town house building type is found throughout the district; its adaptability to a wide range of scales, materials and uses creates the variety, and strong architectural cohesion of the historic centres of the towns and larger villages. This classically inspired style creates well-defined and elegant streets and public spaces.
- 2.35** During the 18th century it was fashionable to modernise earlier vernacular houses, and it is common to find medieval buildings re-elevated behind town house facades.



Late 18th Century gault brick town house at 79 Ermine Street, Huntingdon

Key Characteristics

- Predominately terraced form, 2 to 3.5 storeys, generally double stacked with central gutter
- Flat fronted and symmetrical, 2-4 bays wide, vertically proportioned facades
- Roofscape minimised by the use of parapets, shallow and double pitched roofs with the eaves to road. Cambridgeshire peg tiles and slate are the most common roof coverings.
- Stone detailing, often painted, including cills, string-courses, architraves etc.
- Drive-through archways, gaining access to the rear are a common feature, especially in former coaching towns
- 6 and 4 panelled doors, with door-surrounds and glazed fanlights or door canopies
- The terraced form, often built at back of pavement creates a well-defined street frontage of urban character
- High-medium density, depending on the numbers of storeys, bays, and plot width. Generally built with additive ranges of outbuildings
- Originally built as dwellings, some with shops on the ground floor; many are now in commercial and office use.

2 Understanding Character

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Local Variations

Area

Local Characteristics

Central Claylands and Ouse Valley

Built of warm soft red, dark buff and pale buff brick depending on age, and the settlement. Huntingdon, Buckden and the Offords have some fine examples of the warm-red brickwork. Roofs are typically gault-clay plain tiles, although slate is found on later properties.



Whitwell House, High Street, Huntingdon

South East Claylands

St Neots has some fine examples of townhouses. They are generally built of buff coloured brickwork with Cambridgeshire peg tile roof coverings.



Market Square, St Neots

Type 2E: 18th to early 20th Century Grand House

- 2.36** The agricultural and industrial revolutions brought new wealth to the district, and many of the landed gentry built themselves grand houses, based on the classically inspired stately homes of the aristocracy. Later Victorian examples are influenced by non-classical traditions, and are often less symmetrical displaying stylistic motifs such as gothic arches, round towers, tile hanging and decorative bargeboards. Designed to be seen, and to impress, they are often found on settlement edges throughout the district.



Bluntisham House is a grade II* listed yellow brick early 18th century rectory

Key Characteristics

- Large, detached houses with symmetrical, wide-fronted facades, usually on expansive plots
- Georgian examples are wide-fronted, with tall floor to ceiling heights, creating an imposing scale
- Vertically proportioned window openings vertically aligned, frequently graduating in height up the façade, with flat-arch stone or 'red-rubber' brick lintels
- Timber vertical-sliding sash windows. Georgian examples generally follow 9, 12 and 16 pane patterns. Victorian sliding sash windows incorporate larger pane sizes
- Roofscape views are minimised through the use of parapets and shallow double pitched roofs, with the eaves to road. Mansard roofs are found on some examples.
- Decorative dentil eaves courses or painted timber cornice eaves detail
- Brick or stone detailing, often painted, including cills, string courses, keystones and quoins
- 6 and 4 panelled doors, with decorative-glazed fanlights or door canopies
- The grand detached forms, usually set back from the road behind railings or walls, create a restful, stately and less urban character
- Frequently set in gardens, with dark evergreen planting, with a backdrop of mature trees

2 Understanding Character

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Local Variations

The form, detailing and proportions remain fairly constant throughout the district, but the materials vary with location.

Area	Local Characteristics
The Fens and Fen Margins	Buff/Gault coloured brick with Cambridgeshire peg tiles are the most common regional materials.
Central Claylands and Ouse Valley	Built of warm soft red, dark buff and pale buff brickwork depending on the settlement. Roofs are typically gault-clay plain tiles, although slate is found on later properties.
The Nene Valley, Northern Wolds and western Fen Margins	Grand houses form the focus to the larger villages. Built of ashlar stone with stone details, roofs are typically Colleyweston stone slates.



York House, Colne



Cambridge Road, Godmanchester



North Street, Stilton

Type 3: 20th and 21st Century Housing

Type 3A: Arts and Crafts influenced Housing

2.37 The Arts and Craft Movement in the late 19th century, and the Garden Cities of the early 20th century exerted considerable influence on housing until the 1950s. This applied especially to social housing throughout the district, where estates of this housing type are found on the peripheries of the larger towns. The Garden City cottage aesthetic, and the aspirations for healthy, green environments were affected through increased densities and mass production, but the architectural style and geometrical layouts still retain vestiges of the original influences.

2.38 The type is found throughout the country, and does not generally show regional variations.



Westfield Road, Ramsey



Ferrars Avenue, Eynesbury, St Neots

Key Characteristics

- Geometric, regular layouts with crescents, cul de sacs, and orthogonal junctions
- Semi detached and short terraces of simple flat fronted properties
- Clipped privet hedge front boundaries, often with timber gates, and small front gardens
- Shallow pitched, double-hipped roofs, with slate or plain tiled roof coverings. Simple chimneys on ridgeline
- Originally, multi-paned painted timber casement windows, with soldier-course brick lintels.
- Timber front doors with small canopies
- Built of red mass-produced brickwork, frequently roughcast-rendered, and painted cream or pastel colours
- Simple string-courses of soldier brickwork or render
- Semi detached form, hedges and grass verges to some streets, create a suburban character
- Parking generally on street

2 Understanding Character

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Type 3B: 1920s and Inter-War Suburbia

- 2.39** Growing wealth and mobility resulted in the massive growth of suburbia in the 1920 and 30s with Huntingdonshire's towns and larger villages being affected to a limited extent. A few properties in the district retain influences of the Art Deco styling of the 1920s. The Arts and Crafts movement also heavily influenced the architectural style of the period, using motifs such as timber framing, tile hanging, leaded lights and stained glass to invoke the idyll of the 'English Cottage'.
- 2.40** This building type is found in small numbers throughout the district. They are especially noticeable in the Fens and the periphery of Ramsey.



Large semi-detached houses built in 1924, Blenheim Road, Ramsey

Key Characteristics

- Simple rectangular semi-detached plan form
- Fairly rectilinear street pattern
- Shallow pitched, double-hipped roofs, with slate or plain tiled roof coverings. Chimneys generally on the ridgeline
- Originally painted metal, and later timber casement windows, some with latticed-lights or stained glass panels
- Mass-produced red brickwork and painted roughcast render
- Decorative gables with timber-framing effect, frequently painted black and white
- Double height bay windows, with rendered or tile-hung panel, are a defining characteristic of the type
- Recessed porches with tiled floors, and glazed front doors, often with stained glass panels
- Medium-low density, hedges and grass verges to some streets, create the archetypal 'suburban' character
- Parking off street, generally between properties

Type 3C: The Radburn Estates

- 2.41** The original Radburn estate, a satellite town of New York, was conceived in 1928 as an American garden city. The word is now generally used to describe housing layouts in which vehicles and pedestrians are segregated by keeping one side of the house (usually the front) free from vehicles, and the rear access as a cul de sac for servicing. The Radburn estates in the district follow the principles of vehicular/pedestrian segregation, densities are relatively low and the estates have many small areas of landscaping scattered between homes. However, the service cul de sacs tend to be cluttered by parking and bin storage.
- 2.42** The largest Radburn estate is the Oxmoor Estate in Huntingdon.



Kent Road, Huntingdon

Key Characteristics

- Rectilinear layout, with long straight vehicular routes, numerous culs de sac, wedges of open space interspersed with large school complexes, and local centre
- Pedestrian/vehicular segregation with rear vehicular access via paved culs de sac, with tall-timber gated entrances
- 'Front' elevations facing deserted, grass communal spaces, with occasional small trees
- Generally built of pale red brick, with white painted timber boarding fascias and facades
- Generally 2 storeys, with occasional 3 storey town houses, and local facilities
- Low-pitched roofs, with brown concrete interlocking tile covering
- Medium to high density of a highly distinctive urban character
- Parking is to the rear in-curtilage or in groups

2 Understanding Character

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Type 3D: Mid 20th Century Housing

2.43 The post-war building boom saw large numbers of new homes built in Huntingdonshire in the 1950s and 1960s with similar house types continuing to be built through much of the 1970s. Semi detached and short terraced forms were common with more detached homes provided through the late 1960s and 1970s. A high proportion of the district's bungalows fall into this category. Extensive housing estates were often developed with local schools, shops and services provided as an integral part of the development to help boost standards of living. Most layouts tend to involve relatively regular street patterns with later developments having increasing numbers of culs-de-sac with varying levels of pedestrian connectivity. Grass verges and areas of amenity greenspace with mature trees are commonly found in concentrations of these homes.



Acacia Grove, St Neots



Chalet style home, Chestnut Close, St Ives

Key Characteristics

- Relatively simple forms, often rectangular or L-shaped
- Fairly rectilinear street pattern
- Semi-detached or short terraces of homes dominant in housing estates, increasing proportion of detached homes later in the period
- Some experimental properties with bold shapes and an emphasis on light interiors
- Wide windows with large open panes
- Wide variety of brick colours, with hanging tiles and weatherboarding frequently used as decorative cladding
- Low pitched roofs, with brown concrete interlocking tile covering
- Garages became more common, often grouped in separate blocks, or to the side of semi-detached homes
- Medium density layouts predominate with reasonable plot sizes including both front and rear gardens as standard

Type 3E: Late 20th Century Housing

2.44 This building type is found in profusion throughout the district in every major settlement. It forms the major expansion of house building from the early 1980s to the end of the 20th century, and is an evolution of the mid 20th century housing. Layouts often include an estate spine road leading to smaller roads and large numbers of culs-de-sac giving significantly different layouts than the mid-20th century areas. A high proportion of detached houses are typical of this category although it also included a growing emphasis on incorporating a mix of homes within large schemes to promote diversity and social inclusion with terraces of 2 and 3 bedroom properties and some bungalows included. Generally, the architectural style and materials are uninfluenced by local materials and building traditions, and the use of standard house types has led to the type being widespread across England.



Mock Tudor styling with leaded light windows, Richmond Close, St Neots



Neo-Georgian house, Suffolk Close, St Ives

Key Characteristics

- Curvilinear, tree-like road hierarchy, terminating in numerous culs de sac often generating disorientating layouts
- Units laid-out in an arbitrary winding street pattern create visually fragmented building and rooflines, and poor street enclosure
- Prominent elements include close-boarded fencing around boundaries and harshly engineered road geometry
- Homes generally set back from the street with significant variation in front garden depths creating poorly defined street patterns
- Strong emphasis on traditional styling with two widespread variants:
 - Mock Tudor beams with pastel coloured cladding panels or decorative brickwork, and a wide range of architectural features, including porches, gablets, and complicated set-backs, often with brown framed leaded light windows
 - Neo-Georgian styling with plainer brickwork accompanied by white panelled windows and frequent use of box-bay windows
- Mass produced red and buff brickwork with brown and red interlocking roof-tiles create a relatively strong colour palette
- Parking is often to the side or forms an integral part of detached and semi-detached homes or in separate parking courts to the rear of properties

2 Understanding Character

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Type 3F: 21st Century Housing

- 2.45** Higher density housing is more prevalent in this type in response to the recognition of the need to protect undeveloped land and to maximise reuse of previously developed land within existing towns and villages. There has been an increasing emphasis on creating liveable places rather than just building homes with recognition of the importance of incorporating community facilities and green landscaping within large schemes along with promoting cycle and pedestrian access to local services and facilities.
- 2.46** The growing influence of modern minimalism can be seen through frequent use of simple styling. Greater efforts to incorporate diversity and distinctiveness in design and housing mix can be found, although standard house types are still widespread. Two and a half and three storey homes, along with terraced and apartments forms have become more common with bungalows being rare.



Large detached home with decorative cladding in Shackleton Way, Yaxley



Flatted development on previously developed land, Drovers Place, Huntingdon



Mixed forms, Knights Way, St Ives



Linton Close, St Neots

Key Characteristics

- More rectilinear layouts return with an increasing use of terraced housing forms giving stronger building lines and street enclosure
- The number of storeys vary with up to 3 being common, some being 2.5
- Higher density layouts are increasingly frequent with shallow front gardens to maximise private garden space to the rear
- Greater variation of types and sizes of homes within individual developments giving increased variety and a higher proportion of apartment and townhouse designs as well as coach house designs
- Simple decoration and plainer fronts more frequently found with cladding and wood panelling as key design features
- Large windows and/or glass walls introduced into some properties reflecting the increased emphasis on light open plan interiors
- Flats over garages or flats over access routes to rear parking courts are usually found sporadically throughout
- Street designs sometimes incorporate shared surfaces and mews

2 Understanding Character

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Type 4: Agricultural Buildings

2.47 This building type is found dispersed throughout the rural areas of the district, but also within some of the older villages, and coalesced into the fringes of the larger settlements. The majority date from the time of the 17-19th Century Enclosure Acts, with some remaining examples from the medieval period. Many of the older agricultural buildings have been converted into residential use as post-war intensification of farming practices have necessitated large-scaled, industrial type barns, stores and silos. These large scale steel-framed buildings have come to dominate many traditional farmsteads and often their landscape setting.



Gault and red brick barns adjoining a timber framed farmhouse, The Gables, Godmanchester

Key Characteristics

- Large farmhouses are generally set close to the road, with long, low additive ranges of farm buildings set to the side and rear
- Traditional buildings are small-scale, built of stone, buff and red brick or timber-framed clad with timber weatherboarding, depending on location
- Roofs are generally simple pitched construction, covered with thatch, clay plain or pantiles, and picturesque in appearance
- Modern buildings are large-scale steel-framed single span structures, usually clad in profiled steel sheet, often coloured grey

Local Variations

Area

Local Characteristics

South East Claylands

Timber weather boarded barns are a feature in this area, many of which now have corrugated iron roofs, which suggests that they were once thatched. Materials in later examples include red brick with slate roof coverings.



Fitz Farm barn, Offord Cluny

The Fens and Fen Margin

A few Fen farmsteads date from the late 19th century, but the majority of the agricultural buildings in the Fens are of recent construction. The agricultural heritage of the Fen Margins is far older. A few medieval timber-framed and weather boarded barns remain; later examples are generally gault-clay brickwork with Cambridgeshire peg tile and pantile roof coverings.



Old Tithe Barn and Low Barn, Somersham

Central Claylands

Groups of gault-brickwork barns and outhouses, often laid out in additive ranges. Plain and pantile roof coverings.



Outbuildings along Main Street, Hartford

Northern Wolds and Nene Valley

Traditional farmsteads are frequently built of coursed rubble stonework with thatched or Collyweston slate roof coverings.



Converted agricultural buildings, manor Farm Court, Haddon

2 Understanding Character

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Type 5: Industrial Buildings, Business and Retail Parks

Type 5A: Pre-20th Century Industrial Buildings

- 2.48** The district has a rich heritage of pre-20th century industrial buildings, especially in the Nene and Ouse Valleys, where historically the rivers provided both good transport routes, and a means of power to mill corn and oil seed grown on the surrounding farms. Other mills in the Ouse Valley were associated with papermaking and textiles.
- 2.49** Windmills were formerly found throughout the district, especially on higher ground. In the Fens however, windmills pumped ground-water into the drains and lodes thereby creating the Fen landscape. Wind-powered mills were replaced by steam-pumps in the 1850's, and later by diesel and electric powered pumps; pump-houses remain a distinctive feature of the Fens today.

Key Characteristics

Ouse Valley Mills

- Large scale, visually prominent, discreet and free-standing mill and granary buildings
- Positioned in the river floodplain, often surrounded by willows
- 3-6 storeys tall. Generally built of buff brick, with slate covered or plain tiled roofs.
- Projecting timber weather boarded loading-bays, and pulley houses
- Simple, robust symmetrical elevations with segmental-arched window openings, and loading bays positioned vertically one above another
- Rudimentary neo-classical detailing, such as pilasters and Italianate porticos are a feature on later examples. 'Gothic' detailed examples are also found
- Originally built as mills and warehouses, the majority are now converted for residential use



Riverside Mill, St Ives

Nene Valley Mills

- Small to medium scale, long low ranges of mill and granary buildings, associated timber water-wheels and races; often in a secluded riverside setting
- 2-3 storeys tall. Generally built of coursed rubble masonry, with dressed stone quoins and openings. Collyweston slate, or gault- clay pantile roof coverings, and some small dormer windows.
- Early examples are simple vernacular buildings, often formalised in the Georgian era
- Originally built as water-mills, the majority are now converted for residential use



Water Newton Mill

Windmills

- Brick tower mills are predominant, although a few timber Post and Smock mills remain. Draining engines, as mills in The Fens were known, were generally smock mills with brick bases
- Domed, lead covered, clay-tiled, or slate pitched roofs
- Small windows with a single door opening at the base
- Mills were originally fitted with four canvas sails, although later examples had up to twelve. In the 19th century mills were fitted with self-regulating sails.
- Originally built as pumping, flour and seed mills, the majority are now derelict or converted for housing or recreational use



Great Gidding Tower Mill, now converted to a house

2 Understanding Character

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Type 5B: 20th and 21st Century Industrial Estates

- 2.50** Industrial estates occur both within and on the peripheries of all the main towns, and some larger villages. Many were started in the mid-20th century and often expanded or partially redeveloped from the late-20th century onward. Styles are common throughout the district with no distinct regional variations. Whilst many units are wholly focused on manufacturing or warehousing some include trade counters which have been an increasing trend particularly amongst older estates in closer proximity to large numbers of potential customers.
- 2.51** Both Huntingdon and St Neots saw large industrial estate developments accompanying the Greater London overspill housing programmes, particularly at St Peter's Road and Cromwell Road respectively. Mid-20th century industrial estates typically comprise a mixture of smaller, often brick built units and larger factory premises. These are frequently located in close proximity to housing built concurrently providing opportunities for homes and jobs in close proximity. Later 20th century and 21st century examples are usually metal framed with cladding in a wide variety of colours. Some still include clusters of smaller units although large free standing units are common. Large scale warehouses are included within this category which are typically located on the outskirts of settlements with good connections to the strategic road network.



Burrell Road, St Ives



Cardinal Park, Godmanchester

Key Characteristics

- Large scale, wide span shed-type buildings. Generally steel framed construction, clad with buff or red brickwork, or plastic coated profiled sheet. Recent supermarket buildings tend to be of a more pleasing and distinctive visual appearance
- Roofs are low pitched and expansive, although parapets on in-town supermarkets generally mask their appearance
- Colours tend to be grey or brown, with garish or bright coloured fascias, trims and signage
- Large expanses of tarmac road surface and car/lorry parking. Supermarket car parks may incorporate some tree and shrub planting, which softens the effect
- Industrial estates frequently have heavily engineered road layouts with mown grass verges, and large expanses of steel security boundary fencing, creating a harsh exposed effect
- Tall lighting columns and large signage often creates an impersonal scale
- Industrial estates are heavily trafficked by cars and heavy goods vehicles, but generally few pedestrians
- Supermarkets and retail parks are fairly well trafficked, with bustling pedestrian movement at busy periods

Type 5C: 20th and 21st Century Business Parks

2.52 Purpose built business parks are usually located on the edges of towns and larger villages providing distinct concentrations of employment uses. They can also be found within existing business locations where they have been introduced to rejuvenate an area or meet changing business needs. Predominantly focused on provision of offices, units are often arranged within business courtyards with large central car parking areas. Business parks usually have greater architectural detailing than industrial estates and particularly 21st century ones provide greater amounts of cycle storage and renewable energy generation.



Ramsay Court, Hinchingsbrooke Business Park, Huntingdon



Eaton Court, St Neots

Key Characteristics

- Open parking courts with soft landscaping features, delineation measures such as varying colours of bricks are sometimes used to mark out the parking bays
- Principle elevations within business courtyards usually face inwards
- More industrial units are large scale steel frame construction clad with buff or red brickwork, or plastic coated profiled sheeting
- Buildings used for offices are usually constructed from brickwork with some buildings utilising contrasting colour panels and detailing to elevations to add diversity and points of interest
- Roof pitches are usually flat or very shallow
- Large expanses of tarmac road surface and car/lorry parking
- Tall lighting columns and large signage with a list of business currently operating from the site are common, usually at the entrance of the site or where secondary roads diverge
- Covered areas for bicycle parking and storage are common encouraging active modes of transport
- Some renewable energy features such as solar panels are integrated into the design

2 Understanding Character

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Type 5D: Shopping Facilities and Retail Parks

- 2.53** The styling of traditional High Street style shops is normally that of 18th - 19th century town houses or terraced houses addressed in types 2A and 2D with the ground floor originally used for retail and upper floors for residential accommodation and more recently for retail storage or office use.
- 2.54** Purpose built retail units, often in the form of short parades of shops are widely found amongst larger estates of mid-20th century housing development to provide local services and facilities in walking distance. These again commonly incorporate first floor residential uses and are very similar in styling to type 3D. Establishment of large scale free standing retail units were a strong trend from the early 1980s onwards reflecting increased personal mobility amongst shoppers, demand for wider choice and ease of access to bulky goods.
- 2.55** Food stores are often freestanding and closely linked to residential areas. Retail parks with clusters of large retail units are generally found on the outskirts of settlements or as redeveloped or reused industrial areas. Building styles are often large warehouse style units sometimes with brick finishing but commonly coloured panel cladding. Larger 21st century residential led developments often incorporate smaller retail units, replicating the short parades of the mid-20th century and reflecting an increased focus on provision of local services within walking distances to support new communities.

Key Characteristics

Mid-20th century shopping parades

- Small retail units often in clusters of 3 to 6
- Two storey units replicating the architectural styling of residential type 3D
- Brick built in colours to match surrounding housing
- Very limited customer parking provision



Queen's Gardens, St Neots

Large scale freestanding retail units

- Foodstores are often stand-alone units
- Other goods often clustered into retail parks
- Extensive surface level car parking with integrated landscaping
- Segregated rear servicing yards
- Large scale units, mostly in coloured cladding
- Directional road frontage and internal signage, often internally lit
- Some dedicated bicycle parking



Morrisons, St Ives

21st century integrated retail units

- Smaller units with designs tailored to blend with the surrounding homes
- Local car parking provision
- Dedicated bicycle parking, usually covered
- Often clustered near a primary school to provide a single local centre



Integrated shop units, Brampton Park

2 Understanding Character

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Type 6: Ecclesiastical Buildings

Type 6A: Parish Churches

2.56 This type is found throughout the district, the earliest surviving example, dating from around 1000 AD, is the Anglo-Saxon church at Great Paxton. However, ecclesiastical buildings survive from every century and architectural style - unique monuments to the districts' history and culture. Buildings range from Norman and Medieval parish churches to the inter neo-gothic of the Victorian era.



St John the Baptist Church, Somersham



All Saints Church, Buckworth

Key Characteristics

- Large scale buildings for Christian worship and former monastic complexes, including surviving gate-houses and hospitium, typically built and altered over a long periods of time
- Set in a churchyard, often with mature trees, especially yews. Generally, parish churches are located centrally in the town or village, while monastic houses were usually situated on the periphery
- Although many are older, the majority appear externally to be Gothic in style, with large, pointed arched and traceried windows, and stained glass. Moulded stringcourses and hood mouldings, buttresses, castellated parapets and other structural and decorative architectural devices evolved and incorporated over time
- Simple, pitched roofs, generally with plain gault-clay roof coverings
- Building materials range from corstone and cobbles to coursed limestone-rubble, and fine ashlar limestone in the north
- Fine, tall spires are a landmark feature of the district although many churches have a simple square tower
- Lancet windows (small pointed window openings) are characteristic of spires in the Northern Wolds. Towers became increasingly common in the 15-16th centuries and were often added to earlier buildings in the 15-16th centuries.
- Lych gates are characteristic of church in the area and are defining features of many churchyards. Construction varies from oak with clay tiles to stone structures.

Type 6B: Non-Conformist Chapels

2.57 The district's Non-Conformist chapels predominantly date from the 18-19th centuries and are mostly affiliated to Baptist or Methodist groups. St Ives Free church is a particularly elaborate example and forms a major landmark in the town centre. Typically buildings are more modest. Some have been converted to residential use such as that at Great Gidding below.



Salem Chapel, Ramsey



The Old Chapel, Great Gidding

Key Characteristics

- Simple, generally unadorned facades, consciously avoiding the gothic architectural references of the established church
- Diverse stylistic influences, typically neo-classical
- Simple rectangular plan form, frequently gabled to the road
- Round headed windows, typically cast-iron frames, with clear or pastel-coloured glass
- Generally built of buff brick, with slate roof covering
- Cast iron railings and small paved forecourts are typical

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Type 7: Civic Buildings

Type 7A: Victorian and Edwardian Civic Buildings

- 2.58** This diverse type is found throughout the towns and larger villages of the district. It forms the focal point for community, civic and working life, and includes places of assembly, police and fire stations, schools, banks, hospitals and libraries.
- 2.59** The Commemoration Hall in Huntingdon with its grand painted stuccoed and pilastered neo-classical façade was first opened in 1842 and forms a rare example of an early purpose-designed non-religious civic building. Most of those found in the district are from the mid to late Victorian and Edwardian period and built to support aspirations to social improvement and increased literacy. Civic buildings were frequently designed to impress with significant detailing and high quality materials and construction being used to ensure the longevity of buildings.



Brampton Institute, Brampton



Old School Hall, Sawtry

Key Characteristics

- Individually designed buildings reflecting status and function
- Medium to large-scale buildings usually set in their own plot
- Bank buildings often sited at landmark positions within the streetscape to reinforce their status
- Variety of architectural styles, including Gothic and Neo-classical designs
- Diverse good quality materials, including buff and red brick with ashlar masonry and painted render. Dressed stone stringcourses; ornamental pilasters, cornices and copings are common embellishments
- Pitched, slate covered roofs are typical
- Frequently single storey but of very grand proportions
- Window styles vary with function; school buildings frequently have large vertically proportioned openings, positioned high in the wall

Type 7B: Mid-20th Century Civic Buildings

- 2.60** Alongside large scale residential developments in the district during the mid-20th century came provision of associated civic buildings providing education, recreation, fire and rescue and other community services. These are commonly found amongst the developments they were intended to serve or towards the outskirts of towns where extensive areas of land were required, for example for school playing fields.
- 2.61** This type is found throughout the towns and villages of the district with purpose built village and church halls often being the only building of this type in smaller villages.



One Leisure, St Ives



Little Paxton Village Hall

Key Characteristics

- Large to medium scale buildings, generally with large areas of associated car parking or hardstanding
- Varying number of storeys depending on function, varying from single storey schools and village halls to multi-storey medical and office buildings
- Amenity shrub planting, small ornamental trees and mown grass typify landscaped areas
- Generally avoid the use of decorative architectural devices with emphasis on function rather than form
- Mass produced buff and red brick are the most common facing materials, with large areas of glazing also a feature
- Other materials include metal trims and copings, cedar boarding, coloured powder-coated metal window frames and large areas of toughened glass
- Flat roofs were a feature of 1960-70s civic buildings, and low-pitched roofs on later examples; brown or grey concrete roof tiles are typical roof coverings
- Relatively flat facades are common with minimum set backs for doors and windows

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Type 7C: Late 20th and 21st Century Civic Buildings

- 2.62** The late 20th and 21st centuries have experienced substantial growth in population, changes in building technology and working practices. Additional services such as schools have been needed. This is particularly noticed from the increased need arising from urban extensions and major redevelopment opportunities within or adjoining settlements provide the opportunity to design civic buildings that respond to the context of the development and the wider area. In such examples, these usually reflect the context of the wider design code/ guide for the site to create a harmonious built environment.
- 2.63** Large school complexes in residential estates with additional community facilities such as community centres and villages halls have used contemporary styles and materials, while others reflect aspects of the regional vernacular. They are frequently supported by walking and cycling routes and surrounding landscaping. Some examples of 20th and 21st century civic buildings can be landmark buildings adding to the interest of the area.



Ramsey High Lode Community Centre



Coneygear Centre, Huntingdon

Key Characteristics

- Large to medium scale buildings, generally with large areas of associated car parking or hardstanding, increasingly common in more recent examples having electric vehicle charging points or solar panels incorporated
- Varying number of storeys depending on function
- Generally modern design with some incorporating different shapes, lines and coloured panels within rooflines and elevations adding to the distinctiveness of the building
- Amenity shrub planting, small ornamental trees and mown grass typify landscaped areas
- Varying materials present from mass produced buff and red brick, large areas of glazing also a feature and metal trims and copings, cedar boarding, coloured powder-coated metal window frames and large areas of toughened glass

Type 8: Military Airfields and Bases

2.64 Military airfields and bases were prevalent across Huntingdonshire following significant expansion during World War II. Several remain within military use, many have long since been decommissioned and redeveloped for a variety of uses including residential, employment or a mix of uses. Due to the large areas of land that they occupy, and the scale of some of the buildings, airbases can have a considerable impact on the landscape. They typically form the largest reserve of previously developed land within the district. Airbases often act as valuable habitats for flora and fauna, due to the low use of herbicides, and general lack of human disturbance.

2.65 The buildings and structures found within most military airfields are varied but generally do not reflect local character. They can be a source of rich and unique heritage tied to key moments in time. Such heritage may have existed before the military use of the site or is solely influenced by its military use. For example, Brampton Park House was a pre-existing grand house which was utilised by the military when they were given use of the land. Whereas on Alconbury Airfield (now being redeveloped as Alconbury Weald), the heritage is solely military related and is of exceptional significance due to its combination of World War II and Cold War listed structures including a watch office, Avionics building and Hardened Aircraft Shelters.



Wyton Airfield



Manchester Road, former RAF Brampton. An example of lower density housing common to military sites.



Little Staughton airfield nissan hut



Former watch office/tower from Alconbury Airfield, recently refurbished as part of the redevelopment of the airfield

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Key Characteristics

- Assemblies of diverse building types including hangars, office buildings, recreational buildings, timber-boarded huts, barracks and married-quarters
- Very diverse scale of buildings from single storey huts, 2 storey domestic houses (see Types 3A, 3C and 3D), 2-4 storey civic and office buildings (see Type 7B) to very large aircraft hangars (similar to Type 5B)
- Housing is usually lower density with lots of amenity and play space.
- High chain link fences often backed by vegetation to some bases create strongly defined boundaries, but usually with a degree of visual penetration. Other bases e.g. RAF Wyton, are highly visible from local roads and the surrounding landscape
- Wide variety of building materials, with little reference to the surrounding character of nearby settlements.
- Materials include painted corrugated iron, red brick, buff brick, and colour-coated metal cladding
- Large areas of tarmac hard standing and runways
- Areas of close mown grass, clipped hedges and tree planting

3 Landscape Character Area Assessments

- 3.1** Landscapes comprise many elements formed over millions of years and are constantly evolving. They are shaped by a combination of natural processes and human influences and exhibit features from different stages in their history and development. The particular combination of features provides each landscape with its unique identity. The foundation of any landscape is the underlying geology. The majority of Huntingdonshire lies on Jurassic clay with glacial till covering the higher land in the northern and western parts of the district. The distinctive low lying, flat landscape of the Fens was formed by the post-glacial accumulation and subsequent drainage of peat. Alluvial material has been deposited along the floodplains of the Rivers Nene and Great Ouse giving fertile flood meadows with extensive gravel deposits in the Ouse valley. A small area to the north-west of the district is underlain by Oolitic limestone extensively used in the traditional buildings of the Nene valley.
- 3.2** Huntingdonshire has nine identified landscape character areas which are shown in Figure 3.1 and can be viewed on the [interactive map](#), these are:
- The Fens
 - Fen Margin
 - Central Claylands
 - Ouse Valley
 - South East Claylands
 - Northern Wolds
 - Grafham Water
 - Southern Wolds
 - Nene Valley
- 3.3** These landscape character areas can be broadly divided into the:
- low-lying fens
 - undulating claylands
 - upland areas (the Wolds)
 - main river valleys
- 3.4** The fens are flat and at or below sea level. Former wetlands they were drained to allow agriculture on the rich, fertile soils. The landscape is dominated by straight, artificial watercourses with deep field ditches and a network of drainage channels. Inland of the fens the land rises steeply into the claylands which gently undulate between 10 and 50m AOD. Streams in this area are typically narrow, and flow generally west to east but they are not a strong visual feature in the landscape. The Alconbury Brook has, however, a significant catchment area before flowing into the River Great Ouse.
- 3.5** The highest land in the district, rising to 70m AOD, lies across the western and southern parts with the eastern parts being typically no more than 30m AOD. The district is incised by the wide valley of the River Great Ouse as well as the steeper, narrower valleys of its tributaries, especially the River Kym, Ellington Brook and Alconbury Brook. Their meandering courses are often lined with trees and vegetation making them visible in the landscape and of high ecological value. The valley of the River Great Ouse flows south to north before turning east to west at Huntingdon. It comprises a broad, shallow sided valley with a wide floodplain which has been extensively worked for gravel extraction shaping the landscape through the resultant large bodies of water. Only a small section of the Nene valley lies within Huntingdonshire at the north-west tip. This also has a broad floodplain dominated by meadows and wetland vegetation.

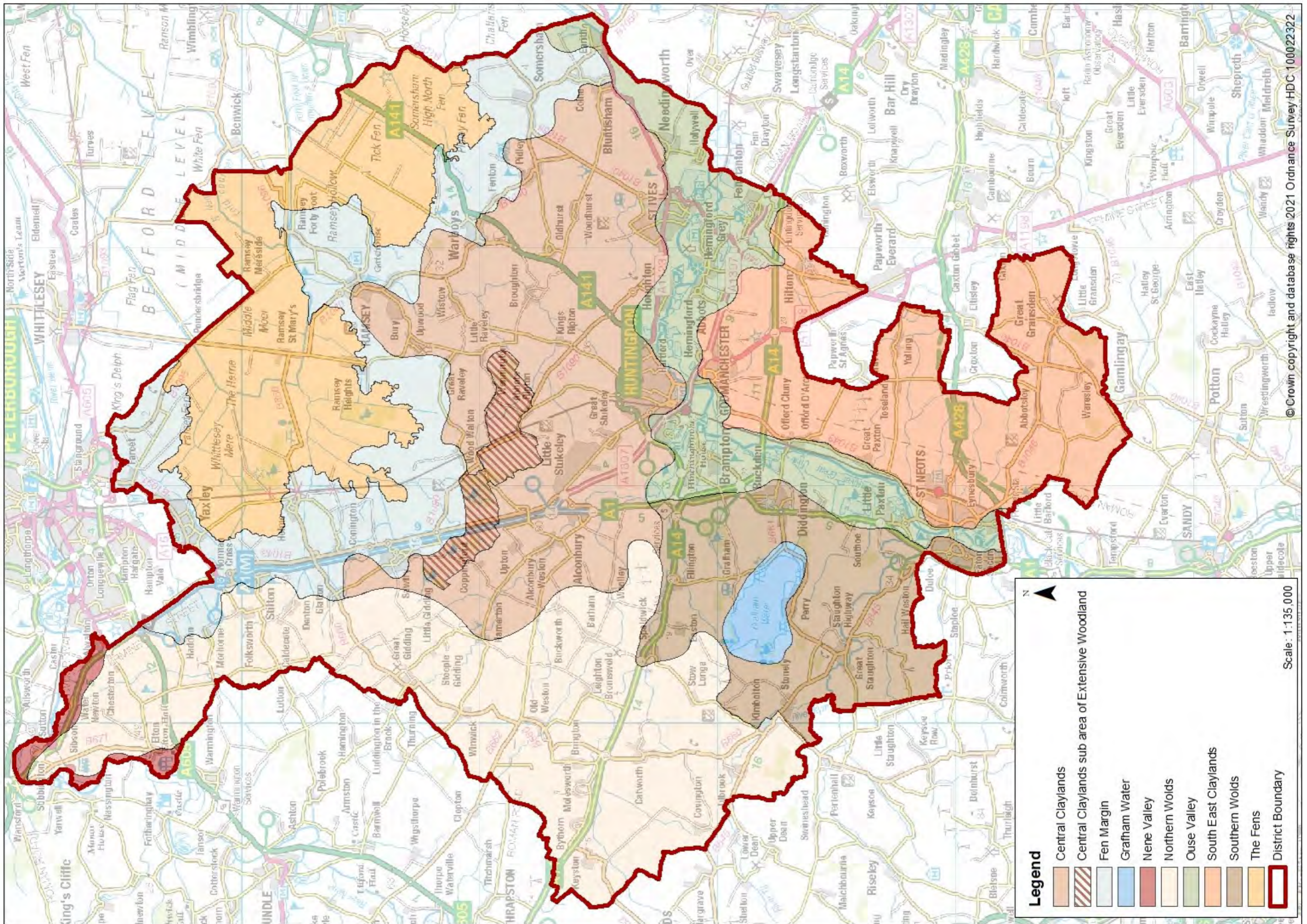


Figure 3.1 Landscape Character Areas

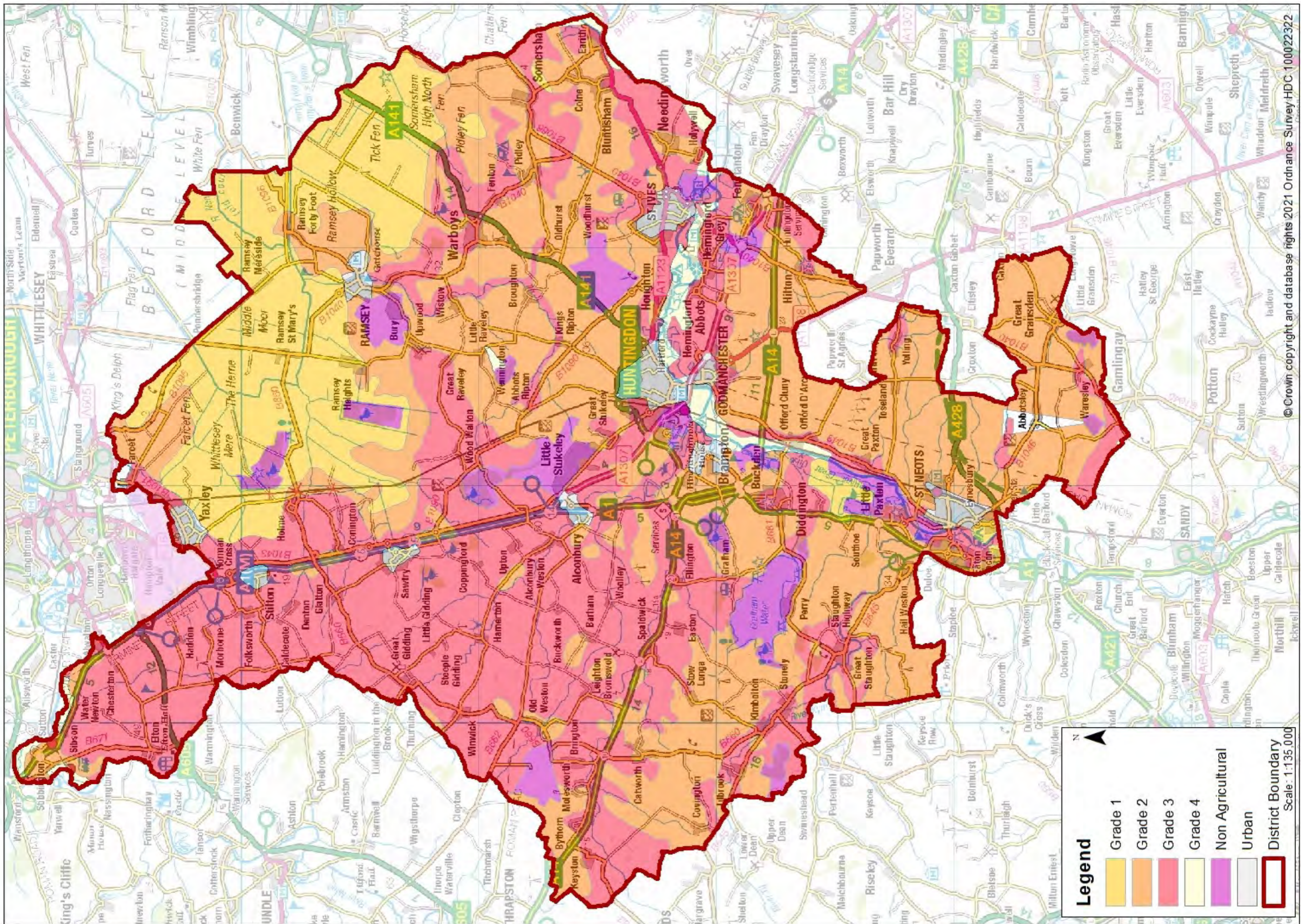


Figure 3.2 Agricultural land classes across Huntingdonshire

3 Landscape Character Area Assessments

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Agriculture and human interaction with the landscape

- 3.6** The clay soils which cover the majority of the district have traditionally been used for arable agriculture mixed with some pastoral elements. The fens are exceptionally productive and support arable farming and horticulture along with limited amounts of livestock. Along the main river valleys the traditional land uses comprise flood meadows used for hay and grazing livestock along with other unimproved grassland. Agriculture remains the dominant land use in the district. Changing agricultural practices have influenced recent evolution of the landscape affecting field sizes, hedgerows, ponds and wetlands. Modern management techniques are seeking to redress some of these impacts through reintroducing landscape features such as hedgerows, woodlands and wetlands to boost biodiversity.
- 3.7** Agricultural land is a valuable asset in itself as it contributes to the local and national economy and assists with food security. Huntingdonshire's agricultural land is almost entirely of good quality: 98% is classed as grades 1, 2 or 3. 15% is grade 1 (excellent quality) which is concentrated in the north east of the district, mainly in the Fens with a few pockets along the Ouse Valley. The land north of Huntingdon and land south of the A14 is predominantly grade 2. From the Nene Valley in the north of Huntingdonshire south to the A14 corridor and extending from the district's western boundary to the A1 the land is classed almost entirely as grade 3. Figure 3.2 shows this.
- 3.8** Archaeological evidence of human habitation in Huntingdonshire indicates prehistoric activity was focused on the higher land in the north of the district around the Nene valley along with higher pockets within the Fens and Fen margins. The majority of Huntingdonshire's Scheduled Monuments are located within these areas. The Romans constructed roads through the landscape including Ermine Street the route of which is still reflected in the A1198 and A1. Towns developed at Godmanchester by the river crossing and near Water Newton.
- 3.9** The rivers became major trading routes influencing how settlements have dispersed across the landscape with Huntingdon, St Neots, St Ives and Godmanchester all developing by the river Great Ouse. The landscape was extensively forested in Saxon times with Woodhurst being one of the finest examples nationally of a ring village constructed in a forest clearing. By Norman times nearly all the current villages in the district had been established. Many medieval features remain within the landscape including deserted villages, abbeys, moats, bridges and ridge and furrow field patterns. These are distributed across Huntingdonshire but with a particular concentration in the clayland areas closest to the Fens.
- 3.10** The post medieval period saw transformational changes in the local landscape with the comprehensive draining of the Fens creating a rich agricultural area from the former wetlands supported by introduction of pumped drainage channels. The enclosures of the 17th-early 19th centuries also had a significant impact on parts of the district creating larger more regular fields surrounded by hawthorn hedgerows. Establishment of parklands for country estates had a localised impact particularly around Kimbolton and Elton. Built infrastructure and housing development have contributed major changes to the Huntingdonshire landscape since the early 19th century including introduction of the railways, major roads, establishment of airfields and the creation of Grafham Water in the 1960s.
- 3.11** The largest settlements in the district include St Neots, Huntingdon, St Ives and Godmanchester which all have origins as crossing points of the River Great Ouse. Of the towns, only Ramsey is not on this route being focused on the medieval abbey built on higher land within the Fens. The district contains a large number of villages ranging from large settlements like Yaxley and Sawtry to much smaller ones such as Broughton and Wistow. Hamlets are rare but isolated farms are scattered throughout the district. All settlements contain examples of vernacular architecture. Thatch and render construction is most commonly seen in medieval houses in the claylands. Red and buff brick used from the 18th century onwards with red being commonly used in Fen buildings and buff predominating in the Ouse valley. Limestone is the traditional building material in the Nene valley and is used for churches and bridges throughout the district.

Nature Sites

- 3.12** Within the identified landscape character areas are internationally, nationally and locally important wildlife sites which supports a rich and varied ecology with an extensive network of important nature conservation sites (Figure 3.3). These include internationally important nature sites such as Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Special Protection Areas (SPAs), and Ramsar sites and nationally important sites such as Sites of Special Scientific Importance (SSSIs) and National Nature Reserves (NNRs), which benefit from statutory protection. The district also includes locally designated sites such as county wildlife sites (CWSs) and local geological sites (LGSs), which are not statutorily defined but provide important habitats to sustain a wealth of biodiversity. Policy LP30 Biodiversity and Geodiversity sets out the Council's approach to development proposals in relation to biodiversity and geodiversity including identified sites.
- 3.13** Within the relevant landscape character area assessment further details on their special qualities and contribution to the landscape character area are explored. Their location is shown in Figure 3.3 and listed below (they can also be viewed on the [interactive map](#)):
- Portholme SAC
 - The Ouse Washes SAC/SPA
 - Woodwalton Fen (Ramsar site) that is part of the Fenland SAC
 - Holme Fen NNR
 - Monks Wood NNR
 - Upwood Meadows NNR
 - Grafham Water SSSI is the largest of the 27 SSSIs within Huntingdonshire
 - 131 County Wildlife Sites including Little Paxton Pits and Somersham Local Nature Reserve
- 3.14** Many locally and nationally important habitats and species are found in the district including meadows, hedgerows, ponds, grazing marsh, woodland, orchards, parkland, fen, wetlands, reedbeds and lakes. Many of these habitats comprise important features in the landscape strongly influencing their character. Woodland habitats are concentrated towards the centre of the district including blocks of deciduous woodland dominated by oak and ash with an understorey of hazel, elder, hawthorn and wild cherry. Some areas are designated as ancient woodland and many are protected and managed as nature reserves or county wildlife sites. Huntingdonshire has five historic parks and gardens supporting an extensive range of mature trees including lime, sycamore, cedar of Lebanon and giant redwood adding to the ecological richness of the landscape.
- 3.15** Wetlands are particularly important habitats within Huntingdonshire. For centuries the fens were extensive wetlands but since drainage only a few pockets of wet fen remained at Holme and Woodwalton fens. The Great Fen project is transforming the landscape in their vicinity adding 3,700 ha around the existing reserves and recreating a range of wetland features, providing enhanced flood storage and contributing to climate change mitigation and adaptation by creating large areas for wildlife.
- 3.16** Huntingdonshire also contains large expanses of open water which have significant impacts on the character of their local landscapes. The largest is Grafham Water reservoir part of which is designated as a site of special scientific interest. Others have been created through extensive quarry restoration schemes along the Ouse valley with many now supporting fisheries or nature reserves.

3 Landscape Character Area Assessments

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The Great Fen and other Strategic Green Infrastructure Projects

3.17 As well as designated wildlife sites, the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 supports the provision of green infrastructure. Policy LP3 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan o 2036 sets out the Council's approach to protecting and enhancing Huntingdonshire's green infrastructure for the benefit of biodiversity, recreation and leisure. The policy identifies three Green Infrastructure Priority Areas: the Ouse Valley, Nene Valley and Grafham Water (all shown in Figure 3.4 and can be viewed on the [interactive map](#)). Each of these priority areas are explored in greater detail in their respective landscape character areas assessments. The Ouse Valley and Grafham Water each form their own distinct landscape character areas. In contrast, the Great Fen is a strategically important wetland project which overlaps with three landscape character areas: the Fens, the Fen Margin and the Central Claylands. Policy LP3 also sets out the Council's approach to the Great Fen its Landscape and Visual Setting. The extent of the project is shown in Figure 3.3.

3.18 The Great Fen combines landscape-scale habitat restoration with promotion of public access to the natural environment and conservation. The vision is to develop a sense of fenland wilderness, whilst still allowing significant levels of controlled public access and a diversity of land management, including traditional farming. The range of habitats includes open water, reed beds, wet grazing meadows, active bog systems and drier grasslands and woods.



Open water at Holme Fen

3.19 The [Great Fen Master Plan \(2010\)](#) has been endorsed as planning guidance and is a material consideration for development management purposes by the Council. The Master Plan contains detailed advice on preferred proposals within the area that balance tourism and nature conservation requirements. Along with the core area of the Great Fen itself, a wider landscape and visual setting area has been defined which is closely visually connected to the core project area. The primary aim of the Landscape and Visual Setting is to protect the tranquillity of the Great Fen itself, particularly from visual intrusion (including obtrusive light) and noise intrusion from major structures such as wind turbines, telecommunications masts and any other development located in the immediate setting. Beyond this boundary major structures, although potentially visible from the Great Fen area, are less likely to impact on the setting of the Great Fen. The Great Fen is part of a wider Fens for the Future project; its vision is to promote connectivity in the Fens between sites, for example between the Great Fen and Wicken Fen along the Rothschild Way. The [Fens for the Future Strategic Plan 2012](#) will help to deliver these aspirations.

3.20 There are a number of other important green infrastructure projects within or near the district that should be supported where possible. Notably the West Cambridgeshire Hundreds is a strategic project focused on ancient woodlands mainly within South Cambridgeshire but including woodland in the southeast of the district, near Great Gransden. The scheme aims to enhance the unique biodiversity found in these woodlands through better management, maintaining or reinstating traditional coppicing, widening rides and providing better conditions for butterflies and other insects.



Speckled butterfly in woodland

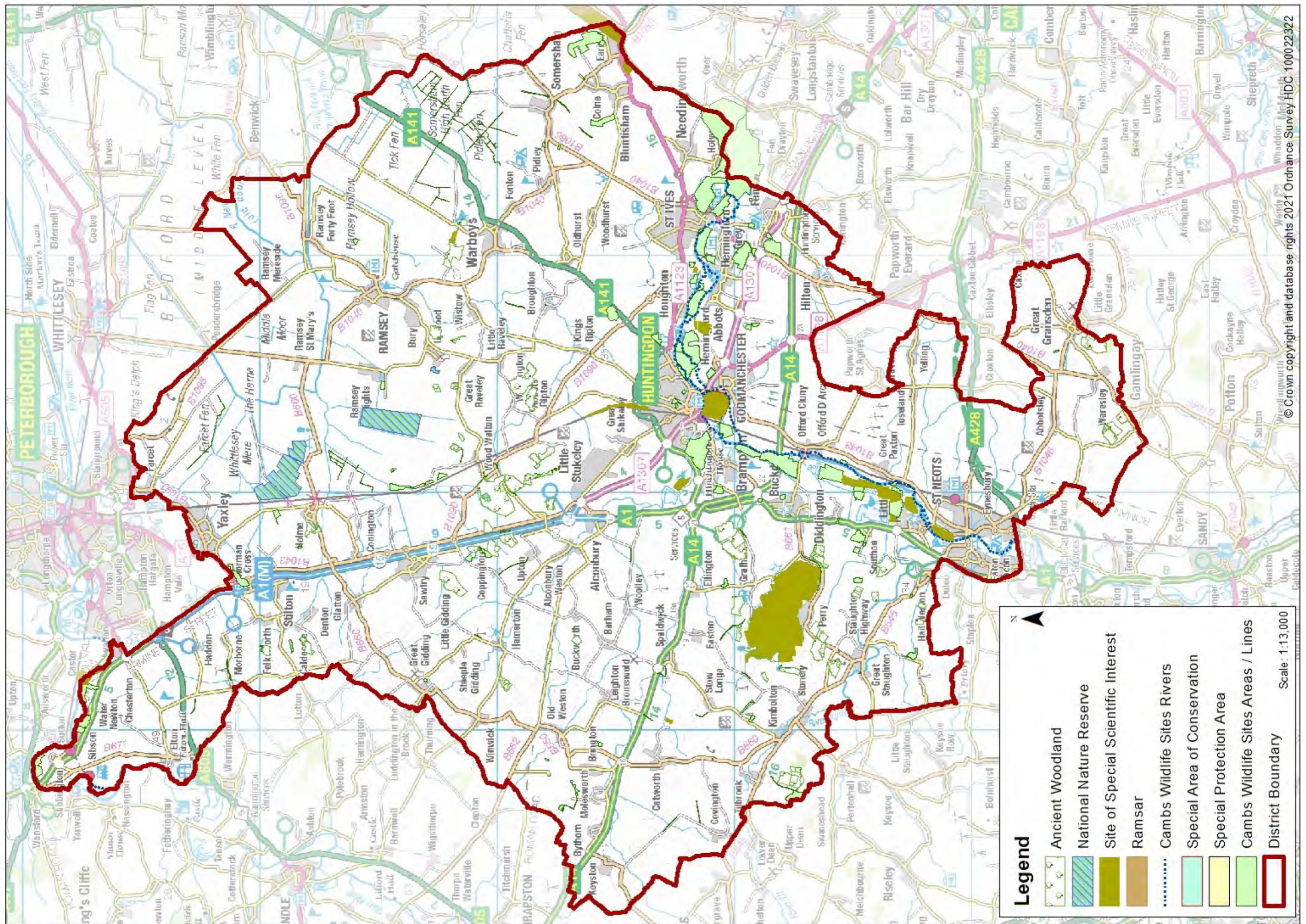


Figure 3.3 Internationally, nationally and locally important nature sites and Green Infrastructure projects across Huntingdonshire

3 Landscape Character Area Assessments

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The Fens

- 3.21** The Fens landscape character area lies in the north east of Huntingdonshire and is distinctive for its low-lying, flat, regular open character arising from its man-made network of drainage channels and waterways. The Fens extend north and east into surrounding districts. The southern and western boundaries follow the 0m contour (sea level) and abut the Fen Margin landscape character area.
- 3.22** For much of their history, the Fens have been flooded by the sea or rivers, creating areas of marshy swamp. Their distinctive peaty soil is the result of the decomposition and accumulation of organic matter from the forests and swamps over many thousands of years. Remnants of wet fen and associated carr woodland (wetland woodland, with alder and willow as the dominant species) are rare, but remain at Holme and Woodwalton Fens. These wetland and woodland habitats support a wide variety of animals and plants.
- 3.23** Attempts to drain the Fens were made in Roman and Medieval periods, but it was not until the 17th Century that the area was comprehensively drained to enable the area to be used for agriculture, by initiatives including the Ramsey Forty Foot drain, and the re-channelling of the River Nene. The surrounding land was then drained into the channels by a regular series of straight field ditches, initially pumped from the land using wind pumps but later with steam, diesel and electric pumps.
- 3.24** This long history of habitation and the build-up of peat means that the Fens landscape can hold significant archaeological finds. Peat shrinkage is exposing new archaeological sites, and therefore up-to-date information is always needed before development or planting schemes are planned. Survey work carried out by [English Heritage's Fenland Project](#) provides invaluable information for individual sites.
- 3.25** There are very few settlements located within or partially within this character area, the only ones are very small and are most closely associated with Ramsey; they are Ramsey Mereside and Ramsey St Mary's as well as Pondersbridge which mostly falls within the neighbouring authority of Fenland. Other very small clusters and isolated properties are found throughout the landscape such as Ramsey Hollow.
- 3.26** While there are few settlements within the Fens, several parish boundaries fall within it and their landscape character are therefore influenced by the Fens. These parishes are:
- Bury
 - Conington
 - Denton and Caldecote
 - Farcet
 - Holme
 - Pidley-cum-Fenton
 - Ramsey
 - Sawtry
 - Somersham
 - Stilton
 - Upwood and the Raveleys
 - Warboys
 - Wistow
 - Wood Walton
 - Yaxley





Aerial view of typical Fens LCA countryside

Key Characteristics

- An expansive landscape of flat land below sea level, with long views to distant horizons with the sky playing a dominant role.
- Predominantly used for arable agriculture on the dark peaty soil.
- Water management (drainage) is fundamental to the appearance and maintenance of the landscape: ditches, dykes and rivers (often artificially straightened and raised above the surrounding land level) are prominent in views.
- Roads, ditches, field boundaries and crops are laid out on regular grids, which gives rise to a geometric landscape.
- The flat and horizontal nature of the landscape can give vertical features an unusual prominence.
- Settlement is limited to isolated farms, with a few linear villages along main roads.
- Sparse woodland cover. Isolated field trees and shelterbelts are visually significant.
- In the western part of the area, the nature reserves at Holme and Woodwalton illustrate the wet and wooded character of the Fens before they were cleared and drained.

3.27 The essential character of the Fens derives from the combination of flat land and sky with long views to distant horizons. Water management is fundamental to the appearance and maintenance of the landscape through a grid pattern of ditches, dykes and rivers. These are often straightened and raised above the surrounding land level making them prominent in views. Arable agriculture using the dark, peaty soil dominates use of the Fens.

3.28 The horizontal rhythms of regular straight roads and drains are typical with the skyline punctuated by vertical features such as buildings, trees and wind turbines. Its long views and horizontal emphasis mean that the introduction of large, vertical structures can have a significant effect on the character of the landscape. The openness of the landscape gives rise to a strong sense of isolation in more remote parts of the area.

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The expansive peat fields and scattered farmsteads by Ramsey Hollow are typical of this area



The Fens LCA supports a significant number of wind turbines on edges of villages and in more exposed locations

3.29 Peat shrinkage is a major issue affecting the character of the area. As water is pumped from the land and channelled out through the drainage system to the sea the water level is lowered and the peat dries out. Wind erosion has reduced the depth of peat in some parts of the Fens exposing the underlying clay. The deepest areas of peat remain around Holme Fen. The Fens are vulnerable to the impacts of climate change through potential heating enhancing the drying processes but also from increased variability in water levels ranging from impacts of flash floods and potential sea level rises. The Fens landscape character area is part of a larger area responsible for around a third of England's vegetable production; changing agricultural practices are a key determinant of the area's future character.



Due to peat shrinkage many fields are significantly lower than the roads from which they are accessed



The River Nene Old Course flowing east under Bodsey Toll Road is one of the larger managed watercourses in the Fens within Huntingdonshire

3.30 Villages are linear in form, sometimes stretching for several miles along roads. Buildings are usually simple in shape and design, constructed from red or buff brick with little ornamentation and slate or pantile roofs. Farm buildings are usually situated on isolated islands of slightly higher ground. Lines of poplar trees forming shelter belts around buildings are a distinctive feature. Large, modern farm buildings can be visible for long distances. Remnants of wet fen and associated carr woodland with alder and willow as the dominant species remain at Holme and Woodwalton Fens.

- 3.31** Wind turbines have been introduced into the landscape such as that at Tick Fen which can often be apparent in long distances views



Linear development, Herne Road, Ramsey St Mary's



Tick Fen hosts one of the larger windfarms in the LCA being relatively isolated from any settlement but highly visible from the A141

- 3.32** The character of the Fens is predominantly a result of the artificial drainage regime which supports its agricultural role. Broad landscape management and improvement principles for the more extensive Fenland landscape area area included within the [Cambridgeshire Landscape Guidelines](#) on pages 61 to 67.

Great Fen Green Infrastructure Priority Area

- 3.33** The Great Fen project area primarily falls within the Fens landscape character area and encompasses Holme Fen and Woodwalton Fen which are both National Nature Reserves. This strategic landscape scale project aims to transform over 3,000ha of mainly arable land into a highly biodiverse fenland landscape. Originally the Great Fen was part of a large natural fenland landscape much of which was below sea level. Whittlesey Mere, a large shallow area of open water was the last of the great meres to be drained around 1850 turning Whittlesey Mere and Holme Fen into farmland. This dominates the northern part of the Great Fen area. A mixture of fens, bogs and wet woodland dominates the southern part. Whilst the project will not return the land entirely to its natural condition, water level management and introduction of pasture in place of arable fields will help to establish a far more biodiverse landscape.

- 3.34** The project will protect remaining fragments of the ancient fenland landscape, create large areas for wildlife and prevent further loss of the peat soils. It will also provide enhanced flood storage and landscape scale opportunities for climate change mitigation and adaptation. A Great Fen Masterplan was published in 2010 which seeks to increase connectivity around the area and encourages people to enjoy the natural landscape through quiet recreational pursuits such as bird watching and walking and more active landscape management volunteering. Wide open spaces and long views will dominate the Great Fen replicating the natural characteristics of the wider Fens area with some parts including woodland and reed beds providing a more enclosed feel. The Great Fen landscape and visual setting area defined in the Local Plan to 2036 is intended to provide a buffer around this sensitive area to prevent development in its immediate surroundings from having a detrimental visual impact on the project area.



Yellow iris at Woodwalton Fen

3 Landscape Character Area Assessments

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Peat soil colours the water's edge at Holme Fen



Waterway at Woodwalton Fen

Looking Forward

- 3.35** The Fens have a strong character and sense of place but the landscape is vulnerable to change. In the short term its long views mean that introduction of large buildings can have a significant impact, often being visible from long distances. Additionally, development can be intrusive particularly where it deepens the village form from its traditional linear character.
- 3.36** In the medium to longer term the impacts of climate change may be particularly severe for the Fenland landscape due to increased variability in water levels and higher temperatures affecting the peat. Drying out of the peat may worsen this further by releasing carbon emissions itself and through suffering greater wind erosion causing more depletion of the peat soils.
- 3.37** Reducing peat depth is already an issue in the area; in some places the peat has gone completely exposing the underlying clay which is far less fertile and gives rise to the need for different agricultural practices further altering the appearance of the landscape. The Fens contain valuable environments which are rare at a national level, particularly the open fen, reedbeds and carr woodland. The Great Fen project is already making significant contributions to enhanced landscape management and restoration of wetland habitats and this is expected to continue to extend and improve over the coming decades. Key issues for the Fenland landscape character area looking forward are:
- Retaining the large scale vistas and key long distance views
 - Maintaining the linear form and distinctive architecture of the villages
 - Management of water and drainage systems to ensure groundwater quality and minimise drying out of the peat
 - Management of dykes, ditches and verges to improve biodiversity
 - Protection of open fen, carr woodland and reedbeds
 - Successful development of the Great Fen project to recreate wetland areas, manage and effectively connect Holme and Woodwalton Fens
 - Careful consideration of the siting of tree planting to provide shelter belts without detracting from the fundamental open expansive scale of the Fen landscape
 - Planting of trees and hedges around agricultural buildings, farmsteads and village edges to soften the harsh outlines of buildings in the flat landscape

Development proposals should:

- Contribute to management of water and drainage systems to minimise detrimental impacts on the peat, maintain groundwater quality and improve their ecological value.
- Retain the large scale, open vistas and long distance views across open countryside.
- Maintain the linear form and distinctive architecture of the Fen villages.
- Undertake appropriate archaeological surveys where necessary to add to the historical environmental record of the Fens.
- Locate additional tree planting in a sensitive manner that does not detract from the open, expansive nature of the Fens landscape.
- Protect, enhance and where appropriate extend wetland habitats within the Great Fen project area in accordance with the aspirations of the area's masterplan.
- Enhance existing and support additional trails and public rights of way in accordance with the Great Fen project aspirations and the area's masterplan.

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Fen Margin

3.38 The Fen Margin landscape character area comprises a narrow arc of land forming a transition between the Fens to the north and east and the Central Claylands and Northern Wolds landscape character areas to the south and west. The north and eastern boundaries are defined by the 0m contour (sea level) with the southern and western boundaries marked by the start of rising land. The land is low lying and slopes gently eastwards.

3.39 Many of the Fen Margin settlements are ancient in origin. The Fen Margin was an ideal location for settlement, as it had access to the resources both of the wetland fen (including waterfowl, fish, reed, wood) and of the higher land for growing crops. Consequently, several Scheduled Monuments and archaeological assets can be found throughout the character area.

3.40 Trackways would have originally crossed the Fen Margin between the fens and the higher ground, and some of these are still visible in the road and footpath network, often lined with hedge banks.

3.41 Many parish boundaries fall within or partially within the Fen Margin landscape character area. Their landscape character is therefore influenced by or in part influenced by the Fen Margin character, these are:

- Alwalton
- Colne
- Earith
- Glatton
- Morborne
- Sawtry
- Upwood and the Raveleys
- Wood Walton
- Bluntisham
- Conington
- Farcet
- Haddon
- Pidley-cum-Fenton
- Somersham
- Warboys
- Yaxley
- Bury
- Denton and Caldecote
- Folksworth and Washingley
- Holme
- Ramsey
- Stilton
- Wistow





The Fen Margins contain diverse uses within a predominantly flat landscape

Key Characteristics

- A low-lying area, which slopes gently eastwards towards the Fens.
- Generally well vegetated, with deciduous woodland, hedgerow trees and orchards, particularly around the village of Colne.
- A matrix of land uses, comprising arable farmland, pasture, airfield, orchards, deciduous woodland and settlements.
- Settlements situated on the higher land, otherwise a sparsely populated landscape.
- Considerable recent housing development on the edges of most settlements.
- Rich in archaeology with numerous Scheduled Ancient Monuments, mostly from the Medieval period, including several moats, an abbey and a motte & bailey castle.

- 3.42** The landscape character of the Fen Margin is strongly influenced by the adjoining areas but also has a distinct character of its own comprising a mosaic of landscape types united by their flat topography, vegetation (particularly woodlands and treed hedgerows) and extensive skies.

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Rising land south east from Bury



View of the Fen Margin landscape looking eastwards from Fenton Road toward Pidley Fen

3.43 Land uses include arable and pastoral farmland, deciduous woodland, the market town of Ramsey, Conington Airfield and the remaining traditional orchards around Colne and Bluntisham. The field pattern is very different to that of the adjoining Fens typically comprising small irregular fields divided by tall hedges with trees with hedge-banks common along the older lanes. The small size of the fields along with the hedges, trees and woodlands create a sense of enclosure to the landscape although this is partially offset by the expansive views of the sky.



Conington Airfield



Hedgerow with occasional trees east of Stilton

3.44 The settlements are diverse in character, typically situated on pockets of slightly higher ground, but overall giving a relatively sparsely populated landscape. The western part of the area contains former coaching villages such as Stilton influenced by the A1 (Great North Road). Whilst the majority of the area is rural in character, a narrow linear belt comprising the A1 (M) and East Coast Mainline railway traverses the western part giving a noisier character. Towards the east of the area villages such as Somersham are strongly linked to their agricultural heritage. Many villages have substantial 19th century developments around their historic cores with building materials including red and buff brick, render, pantile, plain tile and slate. The western part of the area contains some historic limestone buildings typical of those in villages further west and north. Modern developments on the outskirts of some villages can be visually intrusive in the landscape, particularly when viewed from the Fens. Many former agricultural buildings have been converted to homes with limited impact on the surrounding landscape.



The Bell Inn, Stilton constructed in limestone brings a soft warmth to the streetscape



Manor Farm Court , Great Haddon is an example of successful barn conversions

- 3.45** The area has extensive archaeological assets with medieval scheduled monuments including a motte and bailey castle north of Wood Walton, moats and the remains of Ramsey Abbey. Many of the archaeological features are relatively obscured by woodland although where they are within grassland areas outlines such as moats can be more clearly seen.



Castle Grove east of Sawtry is covered by trees



More recent history is commemorated at Glatton Air Base

- 3.46** The southern part of the Great Fen project area and its visual and landscape impact area extends into the south western part of the Fen Margin landscape character area round Wood Walton. Much of this part is focused on dry grassland reflecting the slightly higher topography of the Fen Margins. The Fen Margin is very much a transitional landscape influenced by the landscape character areas which adjoin it. Its character remains largely intact but parts have experienced the amalgamation of fields as pastoral use has given way to arable farming. Broad landscape management and improvement principles for the more extensive Fenland landscape area included within the [Cambridgeshire Landscape Guidelines](#) on pages 63 to 67.

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Looking Forward

3.47 Overall the character of the Fen Margin remains relatively intact. Changing farming practices have led to some loss of quality such as abandoned orchards around Colne. Village edges can be intrusive in the landscape when viewed from the Fens in part due to the rising ground on which they are situated. Developments within the Great Fen and its landscape and visual setting area should avoid impacts on the aspirations to protect this as an area of tranquil countryside. Broad landscape management and improvement principles for the more extensive Fenland landscape are included within the Cambridgeshire Landscape Guidelines (pages 72 to 77). Key issues for the Fen Margin landscape character area looking forward include:

- Effective integration of built edges of settlements with the surrounding landscape to minimise their visual impact
- Maintenance of existing hedgerows, hedgerow trees and woodlands to retain their contribution to the landscape
- Protection of apple and plum orchards and support for the introduction or reinstatement of further orchards
- Protection of the network of hedge banks associated with rural lanes
- Retention of existing archaeological features
- Careful location of further renewable energy generation plant avoiding the Great Fen landscape and visual setting

Development proposals should:

- Maintain existing hedgerows, hedgerow trees and woodlands.
- Protect the character of historic lanes with hedge-banks.
- Create soft edges to built developments which have a visual relationship with the surrounding landscape.
- Protect and conserve the archaeological heritage dispersed throughout the landscape.
- Support the establishment or reinstatement of orchards, particularly in the eastern part of the area.

Central Claylands

3.48 The Central Claylands comprise a large character area in the centre of Huntingdonshire. It includes Huntingdon, Alconbury Weald and St Ives. In the northern part of the character area there is a small sub area of extensive woodland located between Aversley Wood and Wennington Woods. These consist of ancient woodland.

3.49 The area predominately consists of gently undulating farmland situated between the Fen Margin (to the north and east), the Ouse Valley to the south and the Northern Wolds to the west. The land undulates between 10-50m AOD. As well as woodland and arable farmland, other uses within the Central Claylands are urban areas of varying sizes and airfields at Alconbury, Upwood, Warboys and Wyton (some have been reused or are in the process of mixed-use residential led redevelopment).

3.50 Due to its central location and the large area it covers, many parishes fall within or partially within the Central Claylands landscape character area. Their landscape character is therefore influenced by it to some lesser or greater extent, these parishes are:



- Abbots Ripton
- Barham and Woolley
- Broughton
- Colne
- Glatton
- Holywell cum Needingworth
- Kings Ripton
- Ramsey
- St Ives
- Upwood and the Raveleys
- Wood Walton
- Alconbury
- Bluntisham
- Buckworth
- Conington
- Godmanchester
- Houghton and Wyton
- Old Hurst
- Sawtry
- The Stukeleys
- Warboys
- Woodhurst
- Alconbury Weston
- Brampton
- Bury
- Ellington
- Hamerton and Steeple Gidding
- Huntingdon
- Pidley cum Fenton
- Somersham
- Upton and Coppingford
- Wistow
- Wyton on the Hill

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Typical view of the interaction between the edge of a settlement and the countryside within the Central Claylands

Key Characteristics

- Gently undulating arable farmland.
- Large scale field pattern with few hedgerows or hedgerow trees, giving rise to a predominantly open landscape.
- Relatively large scale developments, including airfields at Alconbury and Wyton, the major transport corridor of the A1/ A14, and significant northern extensions to the towns of Huntingdon and St Ives.
- Extensive cover of ancient woodland in the north west.
- Regularly spaced traditional villages, often clustered around village greens.
- Numerous Medieval moats visible as earthworks in the landscape.

3.51 The vast majority of the area is arable farmland, other land uses include woodland, urban areas and airfields. A strong topographic feature is the plateau to the north west of Huntingdon formerly occupied by Alconbury Airfield and now being redeveloped as Alconbury Weald. Large field sizes create a strong sense of openness which is enhanced by the lack of trees and hedgerows across much of the area. Away from the main settlements the landscape is tranquil and there is a sense of remoteness within much of the open arable farmland.



Wistow Wood nature reserve typifies the many small woodlands in the Central Claylands



New homes, employment uses and community facilities are creating Alconbury Weald on the plateau formerly used for RAF Alconbury

3.52 The distinctiveness of the Central Claylands is partly achieved by the regular distribution of historic villages. Visible earthworks in the landscape indicate remains of medieval moats and other former developments. Several villages are located at crossing points of streams with some such as Alconbury Weston retaining their fords. Woodhurst is a fine example of a 'Ring Village' with a road layout unchanged since its establishment in dense woodland around 1,300 years ago. Village greens are common and vernacular building materials include brick, render, thatch, tile and timber. Extensive apple and plum orchards formerly dominated much of the eastern part of the area around Somersham and Bluntisham.



Extensive clay field such as this north of Broughton Lane are typical of this LCA and support substantial arable farming



Alconbury Brook runs between High Street and Hamerton Road effectively splitting Alconbury Weston into two with the traditional ford and footbridge providing a connection

3.53 The north western part of the area is distinguished by its extensive woodland cover, much of it ancient. Predominantly oak, the ancient woodland has significant conservation value with a concentration of nature reserves, SSSIs and county wildlife sites in the area such as Monks Wood, Wistow Wood and Aversley Wood. The area also contains some conifer plantations established by the Forestry Commission. The tranquillity is greatest in this part of the area where the woodland provides a strong sense of enclosure and forms a backdrop to views.

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industrial unit at Alconbury Hill



Monks Wood provides habitats for butterflies and bluebells

3.54 Along the main road corridors of the A1, A14 and A141 the landscape character is dominated by large scale developments including former airfields, large industrial units, extensive housing areas and the road infrastructure itself. The harsh edges often arising can be particularly intrusive in views of the surrounding countryside. Four solar farms have been introduced into the landscape along with individual and small groups of wind turbines which have localised impacts on the visual appearance of the landscape.



Solar farm near Broughton sits within the agricultural landscape



RAF Wyton - the plateau landscape was suitable for establishing military airfields

3.55 A small portion of the Central Claylands area falls within the Great Fen landscape and visual setting area near Wood Walton, Great Raveley, Upwood and Bury. Developments within this area should avoid impacts on the aspirations to protect this as an area of tranquil countryside. The Central Claylands are a sub-division of the much larger Western Claylands identified within the [Cambridgeshire Landscape Guidelines](#) and broad landscape management and improvement principles are included within pages 45 to 48.

Looking Forward

3.56 Containing Huntingdon, Alconbury Weald and St Ives, the Central Claylands will continue to face development pressure, particularly in the southern part of the area. The limited hedgerow and tree coverage facilitate long distance views in many places with some large structures highly visible in the landscape. Key issues for the Central Claylands landscape character area looking forward include:

- Protection and management of ancient woodland and hedgerows
- Provision of new woodland areas to give additional structure to the landscape and aid with screening intrusive buildings
- Protection of distinctive nucleated villages
- Minimisation of impacts on distance views from the effective use of the previously developed land at redundant airfields
- Revitalisation and reinstatement of orchards
- Protection of village greens
- Careful location of further renewable energy generation plant avoiding the Great Fen landscape and visual setting

Development proposals should:

- Protect and manage areas of ancient woodland and existing hedgerows.
- Plant new blocks of native woodland and hedgerows to provide a stronger sense of structure to the landscape.
- Protect the remaining orchards and where appropriate extend them or establish new orchards.
- Protect village greens and their immediate surrounding character.
- Retain the built form of distinctive nucleated villages.
- Sensitively redevelop redundant airfields reflecting their prominence in local and long distance views.

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Ouse Valley

- 3.57** The broad, shallow valley of the River Great Ouse flows roughly south to north between St Neots and Huntingdon then turns to flow west to east via St Ives and exits Huntingdonshire near Earith.
- 3.58** The meandering river channel is approximately 10m wide although it sometimes splits into multiple smaller channels. The fertile alluvial soils of the valley floor have strongly influenced the establishment of extensive hay meadows and grazing land along the river valley. Extraction of gravel deposits has led to extensive open water areas creating fisheries, nature reserves and leisure opportunities.
- 3.59** The River Great Ouse was used as a transport corridor from earliest times. The town of Godmanchester developed where the Roman road of Ermine Street crossed the river, and other settlements prospered at bridging points, including Huntingdon, St Ives, Offord Cluny and St Neots. Medieval bridges remain at Huntingdon, St Ives and Little Paxton. From the 18th Century until recent times, the river had an important industrial function, and several mill buildings from this period still line the river banks. In the 19th Century, railway lines were constructed along the valley.
- 3.60** The 20th Century has seen considerable development within the Ouse Valley. Gravel extraction has led to many flooded workings, which have regenerated and/or been restored to provide a range of uses, including fisheries, nature reserves and landfill sites. Other modern developments include marinas, industrial estates and residential areas. Where the river passes through larger settlements, such as Godmanchester and St Neots, the valley is sometimes managed as an urban park, providing public access and recreation.
- 3.61** Due to extensive nature of the Ouse Valley landscape character area, many parishes have boundaries that fall within it. Their landscape character is therefore influenced by or in part influenced by the Ouse Valley character, these are:
- Abbotsley
 - Alconbury
 - Bluntisham
 - Brampton
 - Buckden
 - Colne
 - Diddington
 - Earith
 - Fenstanton
 - Godmanchester
 - Great Paxton
 - Hemingford Abbots
 - Hemingford Grey
 - Hilton
 - Holywell-cum-Needingworth
 - Houghton and Wyton
 - Huntingdon
 - Little Paxton
 - Offord Cluny and Offord D'Arcy
 - Southoe and Midloe
 - St Ives
 - St Neots
 - The Stukeleys





Water dominates the Ouse Valley landscape character area

Key Characteristics

- A mosaic of land uses, united by their topography and relationship to the river.
- The constant feature in the landscape is the River Great Ouse. Its meandering channel is approximately 10m wide, although it sometimes splits into smaller channels.
- Several significant towns and large villages contain attractive buildings and have a strong relationship with the river.
- Urbanising influences occur at road crossings and where the valley passes through towns. Otherwise, the valley floor feels tranquil and isolated.
- Wetlands, flood meadows and unimproved grassland are of high ecological value.
- Willow and poplar trees flourish in the valley, and increase its sense of identity and enclosure.
- Existing gravel workings, and former workings which have been flooded to create significant areas of open water.
- Traditional structures of bridges and mill/industrial buildings are characteristic man-made elements.
- Many recreational activities, including the Ouse Valley Way, boating, fishing and camping.

3.62 The variety of land uses and influences in the Ouse Valley have resulted in a complex mosaic of landscape types including hay meadows, pasture, arable farmland, gravel extraction and marinas with elements running through several towns and settlements. Each creates a different atmosphere but generally the area has a tranquil feel. Vegetation in the Ouse Valley is distinctive, consisting of wetland species such as willow, poplar and alder trees which increase the sense of enclosure. These are complemented by reeds, rushes and sedges. Unimproved flood meadows with traditional management regimes contain a wide variety of grass species and flowering plants. The ecological value of numerous sites is recognised through their designation as Sites of Special Scientific Interest or County Wildlife Sites including Portholme Meadow the largest surviving traditionally-managed meadow in the UK, with an area of 104ha. In 2013, an application was submitted to Natural England by a local interest group to designate an area of the Great Ouse valley and Ouse Washes as an Area of Outstanding Beauty (AONB).

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The Ouse Valley LCA introduces a wealth of wildlife into the towns and villages along the river corridor



Barges with waterfowl and reeds, rushes and sedges

3.63 The River Great Ouse is a long established transport corridor with four of the district's five towns being established on its banks. Godmanchester developed where the Roman road of Ermine Street crossed the river. Huntingdon, St Ives and St Neots all developed at bridging points with medieval bridges contributing to the area's character at Huntingdon/ Godmanchester, St Ives and Little Paxton. Settlements occur throughout the Ouse Valley ranging in size from small villages to the historic cores of market towns. They contain a wide variety of building materials including buff and red brick, render, timber framing, pan and plain tile, thatch and slate with architecture surviving from the medieval period onward. 18th and 19th century mill buildings still line the river banks in many settlements. Much of the area outside the towns has a peaceful character complemented by the high quality vernacular architecture creating an attractive location.



The view west from St Ives bridge shows the relationship between the town, river and floodplain meadows



Riverside Mill, a converted Hosiery Mill is located on the banks of the River Ouse next to the historic gateway Town Bridge between Godmanchester and Huntingdon

3.64 The Ouse Valley landscape character is valued for its recreational opportunities too with a long distance footpath extending the whole length of the area. The numerous lakes, linked by the river provide boating and canoeing opportunities along with fishing, walking and wildlife viewing. Sensitive restoration of many gravel workings has enabled them to blend successfully into the landscape as nature reserves and fishing lakes becoming points of high landscape quality in their own right.



Paxton Pits provides both nature and recreation benefits from former gravel workings



Huntingdon Boat Club located along the River Ouse within Riverside Park supports recreational activities on the river and is an important social centre for users with a café

- 3.65** The A14 upgrade works have provided additional lakes and high quality landscaping features to the west of the landscape character area. The removal of the former A14 viaduct will greatly improve the landscape views from Huntingdon into the Ouse Valley.



The A1/ A14 upgrade works created additional lakes on the western edge of the area



View of the A1 and A14 from overpass looking southwards

- 3.66** The Ouse Valley landscape is under pressure from recreational uses and increased development on land within and immediately adjoining the corridor. The floodplains are particularly sensitive environments. The Ouse Valley is identified within the [Cambridgeshire Landscape Guidelines](#) and broad landscape management and improvement principles are included within pages 49 to 51.

Ouse Valley Green Infrastructure Priority Area

- 3.67** The Ouse Valley Green Infrastructure Priority Area includes a series of significant nature reserves comprising former gravel pits, wetland meadows and wet woodland habitats. Little Paxton Pits nature reserve has an agreed proposal for an extension to take the site to 285ha with additional lakes, islands and wildflower rich grassland. Portholme meadow is designated as a special area of conservation retaining its original character as a lowland haymeadow. Further downstream around St Ives a series of wildlife sites are found such as Holt Island. To the east of St Ives the Ouse Valley area contains a large series of

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lakes occupying former sand and gravel pits. These include Fen Drayton Lakes which is a 391ha nature reserve managed by the RSPB since 2007, situated mainly to the south of the river just into south Cambridgeshire district. North-east of this is situated the Ouse Fen nature reserve also managed by the RSPB. Ultimately the Ouse Valley culminates in the Ouse Washes the nature conservation value of which is recognised in its designations as a Ramsar site, special area of conservation and SSSI. Frequent and prolonged flooding, including summer flooding, is a challenge for the nature conservation value of this area which would benefit from alleviation.

Looking Forward

3.68 The Ouse Valley landscape has undergone many changes over the last 70 years, including a reduction in traditional grazing and haymaking on its water meadows. Floodplains are particularly sensitive environments, and susceptible to increased flood risk from the potential impacts of climate change. The area has experienced a variety of development, for example, Buckden Marina, the original A14 flyover at Huntingdon and the 2020 realigned route, housing and industrial developments, and areas of gravel extraction. All have had an effect on the character of the Ouse Valley, reducing its tranquillity. Increased use of former gravel extract pits for nature reserves at Little Paxton, Godmanchester and Needingworth have all complemented the area's visual and biodiversity value. Key issues for the Ouse Valley landscape area looking forward include:

- Effective management of the river channel and its associated floodplain and ditches to ensure its water-holding capacity is maintained
- Maximising resilience to anticipated impacts of climate change and minimising its impact on the character of the area
- Management of recreational activities to minimise environmental impacts and to protect nature conservation interests along the river
- Protection and enhancement of a 'Green corridor' along the river to promote both its landscape and biodiversity benefits, including the use of native wetland trees to maintain the traditional vegetation of the area
- Protection of the setting of historic structures such as bridges and mill buildings which contribute to the valley character.
- High quality management of historic flood meadows, particularly Portholme, to protect and enhance nature conservation assets
- Management of the extent of future gravel extraction and opportunities for landscape enhancement through sensitive restoration projects

Development proposals should:

- Maintain or enhance water quality and quantity and not lead to any adverse impact on flood risk or flood defences.
- Protect and enhance the strategic green corridor formed by the river valley, particularly where it passes through settlements.
- Minimise the environmental impacts of recreational activities.
- Protect and enhance the biodiversity of the river, its margins and the valley floor.
- Protect the setting of historic structure such as bridges and mill buildings.

South East Claylands

3.69 The South East Claylands character area is situated in the south eastern corner of Huntingdonshire stretching up to the Ouse Valley in the north and west.

3.70 Much of the topography has been shaped by water with the River Great Ouse creating a wide shallow valley to the north and west of the area. Tributary streams flow from higher land to the south west to the Great Ouse forming a gently undulating landscape in the central part of the character area.

3.71 The South East Claylands include large areas of high quality landscape with a varied and typically gently undulating landform, established hedgerows and woodland and the historic settlement patterns which are reflected through the route of the Roman Ermine Street, medieval green lanes and abandoned settlements and field patterns arising from 18th and 19th century enclosures.

3.72 The parishes that fall within or partially within the South East Claylands landscape character area are:

- Abbotsley
- Great Gransden
- Hemingford Grey
- St Neots
- Yelling
- Fenstanton
- Great Paxton
- Hilton
- Toseland
- Godmanchester
- Hemingford Abbots
- Offord Cluny and Offord D'Arcy
- Waresley-cum-Tetworth



The South East Claylands supports extensive arable farming with distinctive hedgerow trees

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Key Characteristics

- Subtle variations in topography, including valley sides, gently undulating landform and plateaux.
- Tall hedgerows with frequent hedgerow trees are a distinctive feature in the central part of the area. Woodland cover increases towards the south.
- Sparsely settled with few villages.
- Village forms may be nucleated around village greens or linear. Buildings reflect the traditional vernacular.
- Evidence of its past Medieval settlement includes green lanes, moated sites and deserted villages, indicating that the landscape was once more densely populated.
- Heavy clay soils support cereal crops and arable production.

3.73 The South East Claylands contain relatively few villages but most of them have conservation areas. Some such as Hilton are clustered around village greens while others like Yelling and the Offords are more linear in form. Farms are generally within villages or hamlets rather than being free-standing in the open countryside and examples of traditional weatherboarded farm building remain widespread. In addition to the villages the South East Claylands contains parts of the towns of St Neots and Godmanchester which have expanded from the Ouse Valley up the surrounding valley sides.



Homes in village centres are often traditional vernacular as found in High Street Abbotsley



The Green at Hilton provides a large open space with mature trees

3.74 The shallow gently sloped landscape abutting the Ouse Valley is the least wooded part of the area although there are some plantations of non-native species which form distinct features in the local landscape. Hedgerows are typically trimmed to relatively low levels and long distance views are impacted on by urban development. The landscape of the South East Claylands is under pressure from urban development, especially close to the Ouse Valley, and from major transport infrastructure schemes.



The A14 southern bypass cuts through the area adding extensive planting to soften the impact over time



Open farmland south east of Godmanchester has little woodland

3.75 The central part of the area includes extensive deciduous woodland, particularly on the tops of the hills, enhancing the undulated nature of the landscape. This is complemented by abundant hedgerows and hedgerow trees including oak, ash and hawthorn. Trees and farm buildings are prominent on the horizon in many places. Wind turbines are scattered through the northern and central parts of the area and are visible in long distance views in some places in addition to the impact on their immediate locality. Many verges are wide and contain a good variety of wild flowers and grasses.



Wind turbines at Cotton Farm east of Great Paxton



Cereal crops flourish on the clay soils near Toseland

3.76 Towards the south of the area woodland cover increases. Heavy clay soils predominate in the area supporting cereal crops and arable farming. Where villages are sparse the connecting network of lanes are often narrow. Higher hedges with numerous trees are wider found, particularly in the southern part of the area. The relative lack of settlement in the area combined with the mature vegetation creates an intimate and tranquil feel to the landscape. In those parts more affected by agricultural change and amalgamated fields the scale of the landscape becomes larger and this sense is lost.

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Woodland is frequently found on higher land as here north of Waresley



High hedges enclose one side of the narrow Croxton Road south of Toseland

3.77 The South East Claylands are a sub-division of the much larger Western Claylands identified within the [Cambridgeshire Landscape Guidelines](#) and broad landscape management and improvement principles are included within pages 45 to 48.

Looking Forward

3.78 Many parts of the South East Claylands are strongly rural and largely unspoilt and their landscape character remains largely intact. In other areas, the loss of landscape features at a local level, combined with the visual impacts of distant development have resulted in some loss of character. Whilst some changes are small-scale at individual level their cumulative impact on the landscape character can be more substantial. The effects of urban development at St Neots and Godmanchester have had a more significant impact on the South East Claylands landscape, with large scale industrial buildings and residential estates dominating views in places. Key issues for the South East Claylands landscape character area looking forward include:

- Provision of substantial landscape buffers to accompany major development on the edges of towns to ensure successful integration into the landscape setting
- Conservation of historic villages, through maintenance of attractive their historic cores and the avoidance of ribbon development
- Planting of tree and woodland belts along major roads to screen visually intrusive development and promote biodiversity, subject to the needs of highway safety and maintenance
- Effective management of native woodlands and hedgerows and appropriate planting with native species suitable to meet the predicted impacts of climate change
- Careful consideration of the landscape impacts of the conversion of agricultural land to recreational or other non-agricultural uses
- Preservation of medieval and other ancient features remaining within the landscape and enhanced interpretation and public access where appropriate
- Protection of tall hedgerows with hedgerow trees which are a distinctive feature of the central area

Development proposals should:

- Promote increased planting and soft landscaping around the edges of the towns to screen visually intrusive development; particularly through planting of tree and woodland belts.
- Avoid ribbon development to conserve the form of historic villages.
- Ensure preservation and interpretation of historic features remaining within the landscape.
- Carefully consider the siting and scale of new farm buildings to minimise their impact on the countryside.
- Protect tall hedgerows and hedgerow trees as these are a distinctive feature of the central area.

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Northern Wolds

3.79 The Northern Wolds landscape character area forms a broad north-south strip on the western edge of Huntingdonshire, extending from the Nene Valley in the north to the Southern Wolds to the south east with the Central Claylands to the east.

3.80 Two processes have been particularly important in the shaping of the Northern Wolds: landform and medieval settlement. The area contains the highest land in Huntingdonshire with a distinctive ridged topography formed by streams flowing down from this higher land towards the Fens and Central Claylands. The streams have eroded pronounced valleys which are very different in character from the intervening higher land. Medieval influence is still strongly visible in the landscape of the Northern Wolds, and is reflected in the high number of Scheduled Ancient Monuments and ecclesiastical architecture.

3.81 Due to extensive nature of the Northern Wolds landscape character area, many parishes fall within or partially within it. Their landscape character is therefore influenced by or in part influenced by the Northern Wolds character, these are:



- Alconbury
- Alwalton
- Barham and Woolley
- Brington and Molesworth
- Buckworth
- Bythorn and Keyston
- Catworth
- Chesterton
- Conington
- Covington
- Denton and Caldecote
- Easton
- Ellington
- Elton
- Folksworth and Washingley
- Glatton
- Great Gidding
- Haddon
- Hamerton and Steeple Gidding
- Kimbolton
- Leighton
- Little Gidding
- Morborne
- Old Weston
- Sawtry
- Sibson-cum-Stibbington
- Spaldwick
- Stilton
- Stow Longa
- Tilbrook
- Water Newton
- Winwick



Northern Wolds landscape character area includes a series of ridges and well vegetated valleys with dispersed historic villages

Key Characteristics

- A strong topography of ridges bisected by pronounced valleys.
- Valleys are well vegetated and intimate in scale, while ridges/ plateaux feel more open.
- An historic landscape, containing many medieval features.
- Dispersed pattern of historic villages, with little modern development.
- Distinctive square church towers topped with spires form characteristic landmarks.

3.82 The landscape character of the Northern Wolds is achieved through the distinctive and repeated pattern of ridges, valleys and regularly spaced settlements. The ridges are generally used for arable farming and have a relatively open feel with long views and few hedgerow trees. In contrast, the valleys have a higher proportion of land in pastoral use and typically feel more enclosed due to smaller field sizes and less views out. The valleys are more densely vegetated with large mixed hedgerows containing a significant number of oak trees. The streams tend to be narrow with their routes identifiable by a line of trees along the banks.

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The course of Alconbury Brook can be seen in the landscape by the trees growing along it



Pastoral fields and countryside view south from Steeple Gidding Church

3.83 Villages are generally regularly spaced, linked by fairly straight roads and closely associated with the field pattern. Medieval settlement patterns still predominate in this area with some villages clustered around village greens and others being more linear in form. Most villages are situated near the tops of valley sides.



The view north to Winwick from the B660 shows how the distinctive church tower stands out on the horizon from its position at the top of a ridge. This typifies the pattern of villages located on higher land



The trees on Main Street, Winwick are typical of villages in the Northern Wolds

3.84 A notable influence on the landscape is the distinctive church towers with spires on square bases which frequently stand out on the horizon. Villages generally contain many trees and have a wooded appearance in distant views. Vernacular building styles and materials are much in evidence including timber framing, thatch and render with some limestone buildings in the north west of the area.



All Saints Church in Buckworth with a tower with spire on a square base



Westward Farm in Winwick, an example of a pastel rendered and thatched vernacular cottage

3.85 Medieval influences are still visible in the landscape, reflected in the high number of scheduled monuments including the earthworks remaining from abandoned settlements such as Washingley. The landscape contains numerous archaeological sites of manors, fishponds and ridge and furrow field patterns. Where the landscape is interrupted by the A14 tranquillity is reduced locally but the visual impact is limited due to the east-west pattern of the ridged topography.



Washingley medieval motte site



The view west along the A14 shows how it sits within the valley reducing the road's visual impact on the landscape although noise pollution has a detrimental impact on the locality

3.86 The Northern Wolds are an attractive and relatively unspoilt part of the district with a strong historical character. Both villages and countryside are vulnerable to unsympathetic development. The Northern Wolds are a sub-division of the much larger Western Claylands identified within the [Cambridgeshire Landscape Guidelines](#) and broad landscape management and improvement principles are included within pages 45 to 48.

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Looking Forward

3.87 The Northern Wolds are an attractive and relatively unspoilt area of countryside with a strong historical character. They are a sub division of the much larger Western Claylands identified within the Cambridgeshire Landscape Guidelines, and broad landscape management and improvement principles are included within pages 54 to 57 of the Guidelines. The historic nature of many of the landscape features in this area, for example roads, hedgerows and villages, means that their removal or alteration not only has a visual impact on the landscape, but also erodes its fabric, and therefore its intrinsic character. Non-scheduled archaeological features are at risk of being lost through ploughing, and many earthwork features, such as those of Washingley Castle are hidden by overgrowth. Key issues for the Northern Wolds landscape character area looking forward include:

- Protection and enhancement of the distinctive characters of the valley and plateau landscapes through retention of the established pattern of smaller fields and meadows in the valleys, and the maintenance of long views from the upland areas
- Protection of key views towards the distinctive skyline of ridge tops, church towers and woodland
- Preservation of archaeological features, with improved public access and enhanced interpretation where appropriate
- Retention of historic settlement character through maintenance of village greens and other distinctive features and good siting and design of new buildings
- Protection of the parkland setting to Kimbolton village and School
- Protection of the existing watercourses in the area and enhancement of their biodiversity value
- Protection of ancient hedgerows and oak trees within the valleys

Development proposals should:

- Protect key views towards the distinctive skyline of ridge tops, church towers and woodland.
- Protect and enhance historic settlement character through careful siting and design of new buildings.
- Improve the nature conservation value of the streams and immediate valley sides.
- Preserve both designated and undesignated historic assets with improved public access and interpretation where appropriate.
- Protect and conserve the archaeological heritage dispersed throughout the landscape.
- Protect and enhance the distinctive characters of the valley and plateau landscapes through maintenance of field patterns and long distance views from the upland areas and protection of ancient hedgerows and oak trees within the valleys.
- Protect the parkland setting to Kimbolton village and School.

Grafham Water

3.88 The Grafham Water landscape character are is defined and dominated by the reservoir and its immediate landscape setting. The area is completed surrounded by woodland and fields leading into the Southern Wolds landscape character area.

3.89 Grafham Water was constructed in the 1960s as a pumped storage reservoir to provide drinking water with a large dam at the eastern end of the reservoir. Grafham Water is managed by Anglian Water. It has a strong sense of identity and is unique within Huntingdonshire being predominantly open water and is the third largest reservoir in England by area. Prior to flooding, the key land uses in the area were arable land and woodland, and these land uses continue on the land surrounding the reservoir.

3.90 It is the largest Site of Special Scientific Interest in Huntingdonshire at 806ha and has been designated for over 30 years. The Grafham Water area hosts one of the most important clusters of ancient woodlands in Cambridgeshire, along with reed beds and regionally important populations of several wildfowl and amphibian species. Around 170 species of bird are recorded each year.

3.91 The character area does not include any settlements within it but is most closely related to the settlements of Grafham and Perry. Several parish boundaries fall within the landscape character area, these are:

- Buckden
- Diddington
- Easton
- Grafham
- Great Staughton
- Kimbolton
- Perry
- Southoe and Midloe



Grafham Water landscape character area is typified by a blend of woodland, arable farmland and the reservoir itself

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Key Characteristics

- Landscape dominated by the open water of Grafham Water reservoir which is designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) for its large and varied bird populations.
- Woodlands and fields give the landscape around the reservoir a rural quality.
- Basin topography creates an inward looking landscape. The open expanse of the reservoir is not visible from the surrounding landscape.
- Recreation is a key activity, with facilities for sailing, fishing, walking and cycling.
- Contains buildings associated with the reservoir, e.g. water treatment works, pumping stations.

3.92 Grafham Water is a landscape with a strong 'sense of place'. It is a unique landscape within Huntingdonshire, dominated by open water. It has an elevated position, at 50m AOD, high above the surrounding land level. The shallow ridge which surrounds the lake is high enough to enclose views of the water. There is are nine miles of track running around the reservoir for visitors to explore and enjoy the wildlife and access recreational opportunities with several parking areas and visitor centres.



Watersports are a common sight at Grafham Water with dinghies, windsurfers and fishing all providing quiet recreational opportunities maximising the benefit of the reservoir to communities



The extensive car parks are many people's first experience of Grafham Water; the maturing tree planting, extensive grassland areas and bunding help to reduce their visual impact on the landscape in longer distance views

3.93 The basin topography creates an inward looking landscape although the ridge surrounding the lake is only shallow to match the scale of the water body. From any viewpoint on the reservoir or the shore the dominant element is the open water. Built structures are associated with water management and recreational uses and include the reservoir dam and towers, water treatment works, visitor centre, sailing club and watersports centre. The visitor centres contain extensive parking and amenity grassland facilities to support recreational uses.



Bluebells in Littless Wood



The shoreline at Mander Park provides easy access to the water and a landing stage

3.94 Tree planting on most of the accessible shorelines attempts to blend the water into the surrounding landscape with ancient woodland persisting in places. Some of the shoreline contains scrubland to provide nesting and feeding sites for many bird species but parts remain unvegetated giving an abrupt edge between water and land. Grafham Water is designated as a site of special scientific interest for its large and varied bird populations; at the western end it includes an 80ha nature reserve including bird watching hides, an 18ha bird sanctuary and a wildlife lagoon with several nesting islands.



Gaynes Cove at Plummer Park provides a well treed environment for the bird populations benefiting from shading of the water reducing summer temperatures for fish and birds



Mander Park bird watching hide provides an opportunity for people to interact with nature without causing disturbance; the wooden building blends well into the surrounding trees and shrubs minimising its impact on wider views

3.95 Anglian Water have installed solar panels and several wind turbines within the site. The solar panels will meet over a quarter of the site's energy demand (enough to power the equivalent of around 3,000 homes). This enables the site to supply clean, green renewable energy and help power equipment and reduce the site's carbon footprint.

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Grafham Water sailing club's buildings, storage yards and the watersports centre offer significant recreational opportunities



Solar panels south of Marlow Park

- 3.96** Grafham Water is a highly distinctive character area which provides a focus for quiet recreation and nature conservation alongside its practical purposes of water storage, treatment and provision. Grafham Water is identified within the [Cambridgeshire Landscape Guidelines](#) and broad landscape management and improvement principles are included within pages 52 to 54.

Grafham Water Green Infrastructure Priority Area

- 3.97** The Grafham Water Green Infrastructure Priority Area offers opportunities to improve links between Grafham Water and areas of woodland such as Brampton Wood. Improved wildlife corridors would offer potential for biodiversity benefits and improved public access routes would aid recreation and health. It would be important though to ensure that improvements to public access do not give rise to adverse impacts on areas of ancient woodland.

Looking Forward

- 3.98** Although the Grafham Water landscape is an artificial one, it is important that efforts continue to integrate the area effectively into its surroundings. Opportunities exist to create added interest and a more 'natural' appearance to the reservoir edge through strategic planting and management, and to improve its conservation value. It is a highly distinctive character area which provides a focus for countryside recreation. The landscape offers significant opportunities for enhancement and broad landscape management and improvement principles are included within the Cambridgeshire Landscape Guidelines (pages 61 to 63). Key issues for the Grafham Water landscape character area looking forward include:

- Changing water supply and water demand levels in response to alterations in weather patterns arising from climate change and their potential impact on reservoir levels
- Improving the reservoir edge through planting to soften the edges, both visually and physically. This could be achieved through earthmoving and large-scale planting to create variation in the line of the water's edge.
- Aiding the conservation value of the shoreline and reducing erosion of the banks through planting of aquatic and marginal plants
- Planting of additional woodland to emphasise the landform, enclose views and create a series of smaller scale places around the reservoir coupled with provision of additional wildlife habitats
- Improvements to the landscape around the car parks and visitor centres to add local distinctiveness through further planting
- Protection and enhancement of the reservoir margins to reinforce the buffer between the water and surrounding agricultural land

- Enhancement of the stream corridors flowing into the reservoir to improve their biodiversity value and emphasise their visual significance in the landscape
- Effective management of existing footpaths, cycleways and bridleways in the vicinity of Grafham Water and establishment of appropriate additional routes to support active recreation and further link Grafham Water with the surrounding area

Development proposals should:

- Enhance the landscaping of the car parks and visitor centres to improve views to the water and create smaller scale spaces to provide a sense of enclosure in places around the reservoir.
- Enhance the conservation value of the reservoir through protection, extension and improvements to wildlife habitats.
- Ensure careful siting and design of built development to minimise the impact on long distance views across the area.
- Incorporate renewable energy where visually appropriate.

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Southern Wolds

3.99 The Southern Wolds landscape character area incorporates the lower valleys of the River Kym and Ellington Brook. It completely encircles the Grafham Water landscape character area. The Southern Wolds forms a transition area between the Northern Wolds which lie to the north west and the Ouse Valley which is to the east. the Central Claylands is also situated to the north of part of this area.

3.100 The topography of the Southern Wolds is similar to that of the Northern Wolds in comprising ridges and valleys but given the greater scale of the rivers here it consists of just two broad valleys with very gently undulating ground divided by the steep ridge that contains Grafham Water. Settlements are more scattered in this area and parishes larger suggesting a more dispersed pattern of historic development. However, there are several ancient monuments including medieval moats and sites of Roman buildings.

3.101 Several parishes fall within partially within the Southern Wolds landscape character area, these are:

- Alconbury
- Diddington
- Grafham
- Kimbolton
- Southoe and Midloe
- Stow Longa
- Brampton
- Easton
- Great Staughton
- Little Paxton
- Spaldwick
- Buckden
- Ellington
- Hail Weston
- Perry
- St Neots



The tree lined course of the River Kym meanders broadly west to east through the Southern Wolds

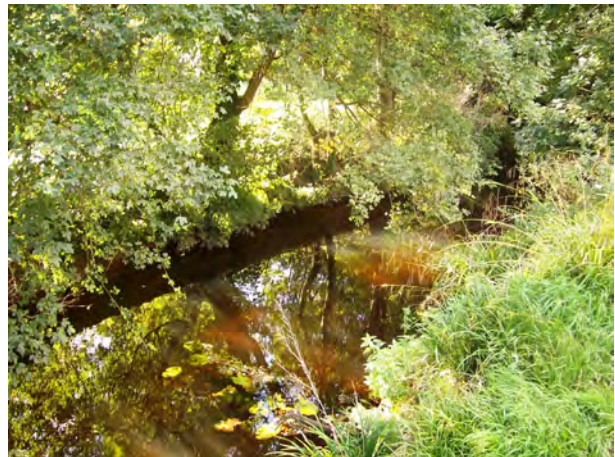
Key Characteristics

- Relatively gentle topography, including the broad valleys of the river Kym and the Ellington Brook.
- A well-wooded landscape, with hedged fields, and some more recent plantations.
- Scattered villages and few isolated farms.
- Significant modern influences on the landscape, including conifer plantations, power lines, housing estates, industrial areas, airfield, prison and the Anglian Water buildings around Grafham Water.

3.102 For most of the area the River Kym meanders through a broad, shallow valley but around Kimbolton the valley sides become steeper creating a bowl around the village. Large fields of arable crops are interspersed with woodland and copses and separated by substantial hedgerows. This part of the Southern Wolds has a very rural character and benefits from long views over the surrounding countryside.



Northern - Southern Wolds boundary view north eastwards over Ellington brook valley



The broad valley of the River Kym shapes the southern part of this landscape character area

3.103 The strongest visual characteristic of the Southern Wolds is the extent of woodland cover, particularly on the central ridge which divides the Kym and Ellington valleys. There are a number of woodland types within the area, including ancient woodland for instance at Brampton Wood, conifer plantations and substantial hedgerows and hedgerow trees. These promote a sense of enclosure contributing to the tranquillity of the area. The valley associated with Ellington Brook is dominated by the A14 which runs along its centre. The brook itself is narrow and meanders tightly within a wide floodplain; it is visible in the landscape as a line of trees and vegetation. The valley floor is drained by a network of ditches draining into Ellington Brook. Woodlands are small in this part and contain both coniferous and deciduous trees.

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West Perry Wood is typical of the larger woodlands which give a distinctive identity to the central ridge of this character area



Woodland covers an ancient monument with arable land below.

3.104 There are several villages in the area with differing characters. Spaldwick and Ellington have much in common with the villages of the Northern Wolds, including their distinctive church spires while the eastern village of Buckden has more in common with the settlements in the Ouse Valley. The most frequent building materials are red and buff brick. The largest settlement is in the south east area where the villages of Eaton Ford and Eaton Socon grew up the valley side of the Great Ouse and amalgamated to become the western part of St Neots. As well as several settlements, agricultural buildings and farms are found throughout the area.



The George at Spaldwick is a timber framed and plastered property dating from the 16th and 17th centuries



Many former agricultural buildings have been converted to homes providing a wide range of character properties

3.105 A key difference between the settlements in the Southern and Northern Wolds is the extent of modern development; most villages in the Southern Wolds contain at least one substantial area of development built since the 1950s. The quality of integration of this with the more historic parts of villages varies; where non-local materials predominate and screening on the settlement edge is limited these areas can give rise to significant intrusions into the landscape. One of the most obvious examples of this is the Newtown area north of the historic part of Kimbolton which has seen substantial development since the 1970s. Another more recent example is Lucks Lane in Buckden.

- 3.106** The landscape has also been significantly influenced by the introduction of WWII airfields. Kimbolton airfield is now partially redeveloped as industrial estates and Little Staughton largely used now as a solar farm.



Lucks Lane development in Buckden is the most significant addition to the village providing a mixture of house types and sizes with 21st century design principles while reflecting the local vernacular of buildings



Some original military buildings remain at Little Staughton Airfield but most is now used as a solar farm

- 3.107** The Southern Wolds are a sub-division of the much larger Western Claylands identified within the [Cambridgeshire Landscape Guidelines](#) and broad landscape management and improvement principles are included within pages 45 to 48.

Looking Forward

- 3.108** Settlements in the Southern Wolds, particularly those close to major transport routes, are under pressure from development. A particular concern is the harsh edges of many new developments, which are often poorly integrated into the surrounding landscape. It is important that this is addressed in any future developments, and also that improvements are made where possible to improve the quality and reduce the adverse visual impact of existing developments. The gradual loss of traditional features of the agricultural landscape are also affecting the landscape character of the Southern Wolds. Key issues for the Southern Wolds landscape character area looking forward include:

- Preservation and management of existing deciduous woodlands to maintain and enhance biodiversity
- Promotion of opportunities to integrate soft edges to existing developments and reduce the landscape impact of visually harsh or intrusive settlement edges
- Management of streams and rivers and their associated valley floors to maximise their ecological value
- Protection and restoration of riverside meadows
- Protection of the rural character of long distance view from the Kym Valley

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Development proposals should:

- Ensure high quality landscaping to soften the impact of any new building on the edges of settlements to improve integration with the surrounding countryside.
- Enrich the area by reinforcing its special qualities and acknowledging its local character.
- Protect the rural character of long distance views of and from the Kym Valley.
- Promote opportunities for conservation and wildlife initiatives to support the area's contribution to biodiversity.
- Improve the nature conservation value of the rivers and their immediate valley sides.

Nene Valley

3.109 The Nene Valley landscape character area covers land associated with the River Nene just in the north west tip of Huntingdonshire, although the Nene valley stretches beyond the district boundaries into Northamptonshire.

3.110 A number of influences have contributed to the form and character of the Nene Valley. The earliest is the process of erosion and deposition by the river, which created a flat floodplain with gravel terraces on the valley sides.

3.111 The river has been used as a transport corridor for thousands of years - both as a waterway and also as a good route for roads. The Roman road of Ermine Street (now the route of the A1) followed the valley with an important bridging point at Wansford. The current bridge at Wansford dates back to 1577. A section of the railway line between Peterborough and Oundle followed the valley, and part is still in use as the Nene Valley Steam Railway.

3.112 Large estates have influenced the landscape and architecture of the valley, including the extensive parkland around Elton Hall and the estate cottages in Wansford. The local availability of limestone has had a strong influence on the vernacular architecture of the area. The parish boundaries that fall within this landscape character area are:

- Alwalton
- Chesterton
- Elton
- Sibson-cum-Stibbington
- Water Newton



The river valley meanders through the landscape

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Key Characteristics

- Valley floor of River Nene.
- Arable and pastoral land use (some traditional water meadows remain).
- Distinctive limestone villages reflecting local geology.
- A1 is a predominant feature in the area.
- Nene Valley steam railway provides a recreational function, and distinctive landscape feature.
- Archaeology includes Dubroviae Roman town.
- Parkland around Elton Hall.

3.113 The valley contains a flat floodplain with gravel terraces on the valley sides. It contains a distinctive combination of vegetation, agricultural land, flat topography and limestone villages. The valley floor is well-vegetated with the River Nene visible from long distances due to the trees which line its banks. Adjacent to the river trees include poplar, willow and alder with oak, ash and horse chestnut predominating in hedgerows and copses on the drier ground. Views northwards across the Nene Valley have the backdrop of the wooded hills of the Oolitic limestone belt.

3.114 The river itself varies between 5-10m in width and meanders within the floodplain with reeds and rushes in some stretches. The watermeadows and unimproved grassland meadows along the valley support a rich variety of flora and provide valuable wildlife habitats. The majority of fields are small in size giving an intimate feel to the landscape. Much of the valley floor is in pastoral use. Land is also used for grain and vegetable crops.



Watermeadows at Duck Street, Elton



Old Mill House in Elton typifies the use of limestone and Collyweston slates of older buildings in the area

3.115 The Nene Valley contains several attractive villages including Elton, Wansford, Stibbington and Water Newton. They are distinctive from other villages in Huntingdonshire in that the older buildings use the yellow Oolitic limestone for walls and split limestone known as Collyweston slates for roofing. Walls, bridges, churches and water mills are all built from limestone too with use of other building materials being rare. Some villages such as Elton have a village green and most have retained their historic form. Villages in the Nene Valley contain a high proportion of listed buildings such as the grade II* Haycock Inn at Wansford.



Historic parkland at Elton Hall



Haycock Hotel at Wansford is built of limestone

3.116 Large estates with distinctive patches of parkland vegetation with scattered or small groups of trees isolated in grassland have influenced the landscape and architecture of the valley. The largest of these is the extensive parkland around Elton Hall where the mature vegetation screens views out of the valley and gives it a strong sense of enclosure.



Trees lining the River Nene help its route show up in wider landscape views



The former mill at Water Newton has been converted to apartments

3.117 The Nene Valley landscape character area contains a distinctive combination of vegetation, agricultural land, flat topography and limestone villages. The Valley floor is well vegetated, with the River Nene visible from long distances by the trees which line its banks. Adjacent to the river, trees include poplar, willow and alder, whilst oak, ash and horse chestnut predominate in hedgerows and copses on the drier ground. Views northward across the Nene Valley have the backdrop of the wooded hills of the Oolitic limestone belt.

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The Nene Valley Railway crosses the landscape character



River Nene under the bridge at Wansford

- 3.118** Close to the A1 the character of the landscape is dominated by the road and its associated infrastructure. Additional development associated with this would further alter the character of the area and reduce its tranquility. A section of the railway line from Oundle to Peterborough still follows the valley; it is used as a recreational line by the Nene Valley steam railway which provides a distinct landscape feature in itself.
- 3.119** The topography and tree cover make the Nene Valley area an attractive and intimate landscape enhanced by the distinctive limestone building materials which distinguish this area from any other in the district. The Nene Valley is identified within the [Cambridgeshire Landscape Guidelines](#) and broad landscape management and improvement principles are included within pages 55 to 57.

Nene Valley Green Infrastructure Priority Area

- 3.120** The Nene Valley corridor is a key wildlife corridor connecting Northamptonshire through the northernmost tip of Huntingdonshire and into Peterborough. It offers significant opportunities for biodiversity and landscape enhancement along with promoting greater public access to nature. Within Huntingdonshire projects mostly focus on creating a biodiversity rich landscape. More recreational focused projects are concentrated within Peterborough.

Looking Forward

- 3.121** The Nene Valley has remained relatively undisturbed by recent development, but both the landscape and ecology are vulnerable to changes in management and land use. For example the ploughing of watermeadows and abandonment of drainage dykes will lead to a loss of habitats and visual quality, as well as the loss of distinctive landscape character. The Nene Valley villages have retained their distinctive character through the use of limestone as the main building material. Future development should reflect these existing materials so that the distinctive character of the villages is not undermined.
- 3.122** The character of the Nene Valley is also threatened by one of its oldest features, the A1. Alterations to the road and the introduction of service stations, bridges etc. and adjoining developments would alter the character of the valley and reduce its tranquillity through increased noise and visual intrusion.

3.123 The combination of the topography and vegetation of the Nene Valley create an attractive and intimate landscape, which is enhanced by the distinctive architecture of the limestone villages. Key issues for the Nene Valley landscape character area looking forward include:

- Preservation and high quality management of the remaining watermeadows, unimproved grassland and drainage systems
- Management of river banks to improve their ecological value, enhancement and creation of wetlands and ponds and re-establishment of aquatic plants to support native river bank animal species
- Management of established woodland and parkland to maximise ecological value and retain their landscape character
- Careful design and screening of any developments associated with the A1
- Selective promotion of recreational access to the River Nene and its immediate environs to support public access to the natural environment

Development proposals should:

- Enrich the area by reinforcing its special qualities and acknowledging its distinct local character.
- Use appropriate building materials to retain the distinctive local character of villages.
- Protect and enhance woodland, parkland and the river banks to maximise ecological value.
- Maintain, and where possible improve, views to the River Nene and protect the existing vegetation as a green backdrop.
- Promote opportunities for wildlife and conservation initiatives to support and enhance the area's biodiversity.
- Ensure any additional services or improvements along or to the A1 are carefully designed and screened to minimise their impact on the tranquil landscape character.
- Encourage public access along the Nene Way through improvements to the landscape and nature conservation of the valley.

4 Settlement based Landscape and Townscape Character Area Analysis

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4 Settlement based Landscape and Townscape Character Area Analysis

- 4.1 The growth and development of most settlements results from the interactions of natural and human influences over centuries. Huntingdonshire's market towns and key service centres all have historic cores established centuries ago, coupled with 18th and 19th century developments along with extensive 20th century growth and some modern developments. This supplementary planning document identifies the different qualities that make each town and village special or distinctive from somewhere else. Significant variations in character exist within the settlements themselves, reflecting their differing evolution and contributing to each town and village's unique sense of place. A better understanding of townscape is essential to prevent the erosion of the distinctive characteristics which create that sense of place and identity.
- 4.2 Figure 4.1 shows the Key Diagram found on page 51 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan. It identifies in a conceptual way the location of settlements classed as spatial planning areas and key service centres in relation to one another and the key transport routes within the District. Their broad townscape and settlement nature are provided below with detailed assessments provided in the subsequent chapters.



Figure 4.1 Key Diagram from the Huntingdonshire Local Plan

Huntingdon SPA

- 4.3** Huntingdon Spatial Planning Area is defined on page 55 of [Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036](#). It incorporates the whole parish of Huntingdon, and parts of the parishes of Brampton and Godmanchester including the settlements and the intervening land connecting them to Huntingdon. It also covers small parts of Alconbury, Kings Ripton, Wyton on the Hill and Houghton and Wyton parishes where they closely relate to the built-up area of Huntingdon. The Spatial Planning Area includes a substantial part of The Stukeleys parish covered by the strategic expansion location of Alconbury Weald, but specifically excludes the villages of Great and Little Stukeley. Huntingdon is the primary settlement within this Spatial Planning Area.
- 4.4** Huntingdon is the administrative centre and is located toward the centre of the District on the northern valley slopes of the River Great Ouse. It is accessible from the A14, which passes around the southern perimeter of the town. The eastern edge of the town has a strong historic association with the river. Parts of the town centre are undergoing redevelopment and regeneration. Much of the historic core based on the Market Hill and High Street remains largely intact. Huntingdon is a major housing and employment centre with a high jobs to employment ratio. It is well connected with the strategic road network and the east coast mainline railway. It has a relatively strong retail sector and functions as the primary shopping centre for the District.
- 4.5** Brampton and Godmanchester to the southwest and southeast respectively have a closer relationship with the services in Huntingdon. Huntingdon benefits from a larger supporting population than just the town itself and the residents of Brampton and Godmanchester benefit from the wide range of services and facilities available in Huntingdon. Brampton is a visually contained village located within the Ouse Valley and has experienced extensive residential development, one being the redevelopment of a former RAF base providing a range of new homes and community facilities. Godmanchester is heavily influenced by its riverside location and the views out across the Ouse Valley landscape at Portholme Meadow in particular. There has been significant residential expansion to the southern and eastern sides of the centre of the settlement including Romans Edge which has seen the edge of the settlement continually evolve.

St Neots SPA

- 4.6** St Neots Spatial Planning Area is defined on page 55 of [Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036](#). It incorporates the whole parish of St Neots and the part of Little Paxton parish lying east of the A1. St Neots is the primary settlement within this Spatial Planning Area.
- 4.7** St Neots is, in population terms, the largest settlement in the District. It is a market town established on the eastern banks of the River Great Ouse. This settlement has expanded significantly over recent years and the smaller and previously independent settlements of Eaton Socon, Eaton Ford and Eynesbury to the south and west have been largely assimilated into the urban fabric of St Neots, although their historic and separate character is still recognisable within the town. Significant housing development has taken place to the east of the railway and north of Cambridge Road, further strategic expansion of this area is underway. St Neots has its own railway station, on the east coast mainline, located in the northeastern quarter of the town, and has direct access on to the A1. It is connected to Cambridge via the A428. Attracting retail, leisure and employment development to St Neots is challenging due to competition from Bedford and Cambridge.
- 4.8** Little Paxton lies approximately 1km north of St Neots east of the A1. It is a modest sized village which has retained its own separate identity to the town due to significant open river floodplains acting as a landscape gap. Here significant riverside development provides the river gateway with an attractive setting which relates to the historic riverside milling and industrial works commonly located within settlements of the Ouse Valley. It is located within an area of high landscape and ecological value with Paxton Pits Nature Reserve to the north of the village.

4 Settlement based Landscape and Townscape Character Area Analysis

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St Ives SPA

- 4.9** St Ives Spatial Planning Area is defined on page 55 of [Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036](#). It incorporates the parish of St Ives except for the land north of Marley Gap Brook. It also includes parts of the parishes of Hemingford Grey, Houghton and Wyton, Fenstanton, and Holywell-cum-Needingworth where the built-up area of St Ives extends into them and/ or development is allocated in this plan. The main built-up areas of the villages associated with these parishes do not form part of the Spatial Planning Area. St Ives is the primary settlement within this Spatial Planning Area.
- 4.10** St Ives is an historic market town situated on the northern bank of the River Great Ouse. The town centre contains many original buildings and retains its distinctive medieval street pattern. The town has grown asymmetrically to the north of the river; the extensive floodplain to the south being retained as open land. The historic core of the town developed around the bridge over the River Great Ouse, and along the northern bank of the river. St Ives has developed an extensive base of small specialist shops which have enabled it to successfully compete with other market towns in the area. Expansion of retail and recreational opportunities in the town have taken place with the opening of the Abbey Retail Park by the junction of the A1123 and A1096. St Ives is a picturesque town and is a popular destination for tourists and visitors.

Ramsey SPA

- 4.11** Ramsey Spatial Planning Area is defined on page 56 of [Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036](#). As Ramsey parish is so extensive the Ramsey Spatial Planning Area is focused on the town of Ramsey and the built-up parts of Bury parish and the former RAF Upwood airfield that adjoin it. It excludes the villages of Ramsey Forty Foot, Ramsey Heights, Ramsey Mereside, Ramsey St Marys and Upwood. Ramsey is the primary settlement within this Spatial Planning Area.
- 4.12** Ramsey is located on the edge of the fenland landscape. The original settlement focused around Ramsey Abbey has extended south now forming a continuous built-up area with much of the village of Bury, although part of Bury around Holy Cross church remains separate. The buildings of former RAF Upwood also form part of the continuous built-up area. Ramsey has a wide variety of urban character. The 'historic core' is centred on High Street and Great Whyte and the 'Abbey Greens' associated with the former Abbey to the east of the town. Ramsey is relatively remote as it lies off the main road network and this restricts the opportunities for future development. Ramsey continues to be the focus of a number of regeneration initiatives and is developing its heritage assets.

Buckden KSC

- 4.13** Buckden is a village approximately 4 miles south of Huntingdon, located immediately to the west of the A1. The village has a rich historic environment concentrated along the High Street, formerly the Great North Road resulting in it being a key stop on the coaching route. The combination of Buckden Towers and St Mary's Church creates a distinctive sense of place in the centre of the village. The village expanded rapidly during the middle of the 20th century with large residential estates forming to the north, east and south of the historic centre. To the east of the main village lies Buckden Marina and gravel pits with habitats rich with biodiversity and high valued landscapes associated with the Ouse Valley.

Fenstanton KSC

- 4.14** Fenstanton is a village approximately 6 miles east of Huntingdon and 2 miles south of St Ives. It has a slightly elevated position and a strong southern edge due to the location of the A1307. Fenstanton has an unusual form with a series of village greens and is mostly defined by the historic routes of the High Street and Chequer Street which have contrasting characters. The High Street has higher density development including many of the village's shops and services, whereas Chequer Street has a much more village like nature with lower density development and village greens. Modern developments have expanded the village considerably eastwards from the historic core which has more than doubled the size of the original village.

Kimbolton KSC

4.15 Kimbolton is a village approximately 3 miles west of Grafham Water and 7 miles north-west of St Neots. It consists of two distinct parts to the north and south of the River Kym which flows through the centre of the village within a green corridor and acts as a green wedge between its old and new parts. Kimbolton Castle and its parkland dominate the south eastern townscape and landscape of the village. It has a wide High Street which is that of a planned mediaeval settlement and has been dated to the early 13 century. The village experienced significant residential growth during the 20th century, most notably within Newtown with additional local services such as a medical centre and primary school. Two green links across the river connect the area to the village centre to the south east which provides a strong sense of place.

Sawtry KSC

4.16 Sawtry is a village midway between Peterborough and Huntingdon. Within its historic core, Sawtry retains a strong village character, created by the arrangement of terraced brick houses along the High Street and surrounding the Green. Large modern residential estates dominate the southern approaches to the village and development to the west has now extended as far as Sawtry Brook to the north west, along Gidding Road and to the rising landform of High Holborn Hill to the south west. School playing fields form large green spaces in the centre of the village. The village centre is, however, heavily influenced by traffic, crossings and signage. Several roads, particularly to the east of the village have retained their distinctive rural character. The village has two employment locations, one to the north and the other on eastern side of the A1(M).

Somersham KSC

4.17 Somersham is a village approximately 4 miles north east of St Ives at the edge of the Fens. The village has a distinctive historic environment formed of two principal streets, High Street and Church Street which form a cross at the centre of the village. The site of the Bishops Palace, is located to the southern edge of the village and the church of St John the Baptist provides a notable landmark. The village expanded rapidly during the middle of the 20th century with large residential estates to the north of the High Street. To the east of the village is Somersham Local Nature Reserve (which includes a disused railway line) which provides the village with a transitional point to the surrounding countryside as well as recreational and leisure opportunities for residents.

Warboys KSC

4.18 Warboys is a village approximately five miles south east of Ramsey served by the A141 connecting the village to Huntingdon and Chatteris. The village has a clearly definable historic centre which has retained many aspects of its original Victorian townscape features. At one end is the Weir, a central amenity area which provides an attractive area for wildlife, habitats and enjoyment which in combination with the Clocktower at the other end create a strong sense of place. It also remains the commercial centre for the village with shops and services, while industry is concentrated well outside the village at the Warboys Airfield Industrial Estate. Extensive post war housing estates now dominate the northern edge of the village and smaller, more recent residential development has occurred to the southern and south eastern edges of the village.

Yaxley KSC

4.19 Yaxley is located in the north of Huntingdonshire immediately south of recent development at the Hamptons in Peterborough and some three miles from the city centre. Yaxley has seen considerable growth and change over recent years through post war residential and industrial development. The central areas of the village are strongly suburban in character with the linear arrangement of historic buildings along Main Street and Church Street creating a strong sense of place which is more intimate in scale than the post war residential estates to the north. St Peter's Church provides a notable landmark. The area to the east of the railway is industrial in character with the Eagle Business Park forming a key expansion of Yaxley's employment offer.

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- 5.1 For the purposes of this SPD no townscape assessment is attempted of the strategic expansion location of Alconbury Weald due to its evolving nature from a military airbase to a modern mixed use development containing housing, employment, community facilities, open space and other supporting uses. Further information on the anticipated future appearance of the site can be found at [Alconbury Weald's dedicated website](#).

Huntingdon

- 5.2 Huntingdon is the administrative centre of Huntingdonshire and located towards the centre of the district.

Landscape Setting

- 5.3 Huntingdon is predominantly located within the elevated landscape of the Central Claylands Landscape Character Area with its southern edge and part of its historic centre falling within the Ouse Valley Landscape Character Area. Whilst other historic centres such as St Ives, St Neots and Godmanchester have retained their relationship with the Ouse Valley landscape, the historic centre of Huntingdon is cut off from the river by the ring road (B1514) which forms a visual and physical barrier to this landscape.
- 5.4 To the south east, the valley sides of the River Great Ouse are one of the few areas where the river valley remains largely undeveloped, providing a distinctive setting to the town when approached from the south east via Godmanchester and north east via Houghton. To the south west, the landscape is influenced by the tributary valley of Alconbury Brook and planting and areas of water at Hinchingsbrooke Country Park. This area also forms an important part of the landscape gap separating Huntingdon from Brampton.
- 5.5 The landform rises beyond the northern fringes of the town and is more heavily influenced by the roads, industrial estates and retail park which dominate this part of the town. Further east, the A141 provides a strong edge to the town and the agricultural landscape beyond the road which falls to the east. This area is perceived as a transitional landscape linking the Ouse Valley to the Central Claylands and provides part of the rural setting to the town.

Edges and Visual Prominence

- 5.6 Huntingdon is located on the south facing slopes of the Ouse Valley and the existing urban edge is not widely visible when approaching the town from the north east. With the exception of some recent development which has crept up the valley sides, the majority of the town sits below the skyline and the settlement edge is defined by the vegetated margins of the A141. In contrast the town is much more visible from the north west where recent housing and employment development north of Hinchingsbrooke, is particularly prominent from the main approaches to the town. The existing northern edge of the town is likely to change in the coming years with a potential bypass to the A141.
- 5.7 The town is not widely visible from the south (except from elevated viewpoints along the A1307 heading north west) due to the presence of significant areas of vegetation within the valley floor. From the south west the urban edge is visually defused and well wooded as a result of the established vegetation around Hinchingsbrooke House and the associated country park. As part of the A14 upgrade works, the viaduct which runs over the railway is being removed opening up the townscape to the surrounding landscape.
- 5.8 The Great Ouse with its extensive water meadows is a key feature of the southern gateway to the town from Godmanchester, which is entered across a notable 14th century bridge (Town Bridge). Buildings along the river are mainly historic industrial buildings with a former mill building on the bank of the river converted to flats with attractive views out onto the surrounding landscape and large detached houses backing onto the river. Castle Hills, Riverside Park and playing fields and rowing club benefit from long views across the Westside Common and Port Holme water meadows. The area provides a peaceful setting away from the ring road and the town centre and is an important ecological and recreational asset.

Townscape Character

- 5.9** The town lies to the north of the River Great Ouse but is separated from the valley landscape by Hartford Road. It has an asymmetrical settlement pattern imposed by its riverside location and instead developed along the Roman road Ermine Street. Within the southern part of the town, the Historic Centre remains as a distinctive and memorable area and the High Street intact leading to the southern area of the town where there is a strong association with the river. There is a wide variety in building types and ages with characteristic building materials including buff/cream brick and plain tile, red brick, slate and white painted render with black window frames. The historic settlement of Hartford (which is now amalgamated into urban structure of the town) to the north east provides a memorable area on the approach to the town from the east and has a strong connection within the landscape of the Ouse Valley.
- 5.10** Extensive areas of housing are located to the north and west of the town centre. These are punctuated by significant areas of open space. The main industrial area is located east of Spittals Way on land either side of the railway. The town is heavily influenced by several heavily trafficked roads. These include the ring road which encircles the town centre segregating it from the remainder of the settlement, the A1307 to the south west, Spittals Way and the A141 which defines the urban residential edge to the north east. More recently as part of the regeneration of central Huntingdon, a link road (Edison Bell Way) was constructed reducing the need for some journeys to go round the ring road and supporting residential and commercial development along it. This has made the redevelopment of former factory and warehousing sites possible providing a much improved gateway into the town being enhanced as of 2021 by removal of the A14 flyover across Brampton Road and the East coast mainline railway.
- 5.11** The town hosts a variety of urban character; hence 21 individual character areas have been identified (Figure 5.1 and can be viewed on the [interactive map](#)). The character of Huntingdon to the south is dominated by the ring road and the modern commercial and high density flatted development situated around the town centre periphery. The extensive residential areas vary in character and the older density development at the Oxmoor is clearly recognisable from other residential estates built towards the end of the 20th century at Hinchingbrooke, Stukeley Meadows, Modern Hartford, Birds Estate and St Peter's Road areas. The town has several industrial estates and retail parks which dominate the north and north western periphery of the town.

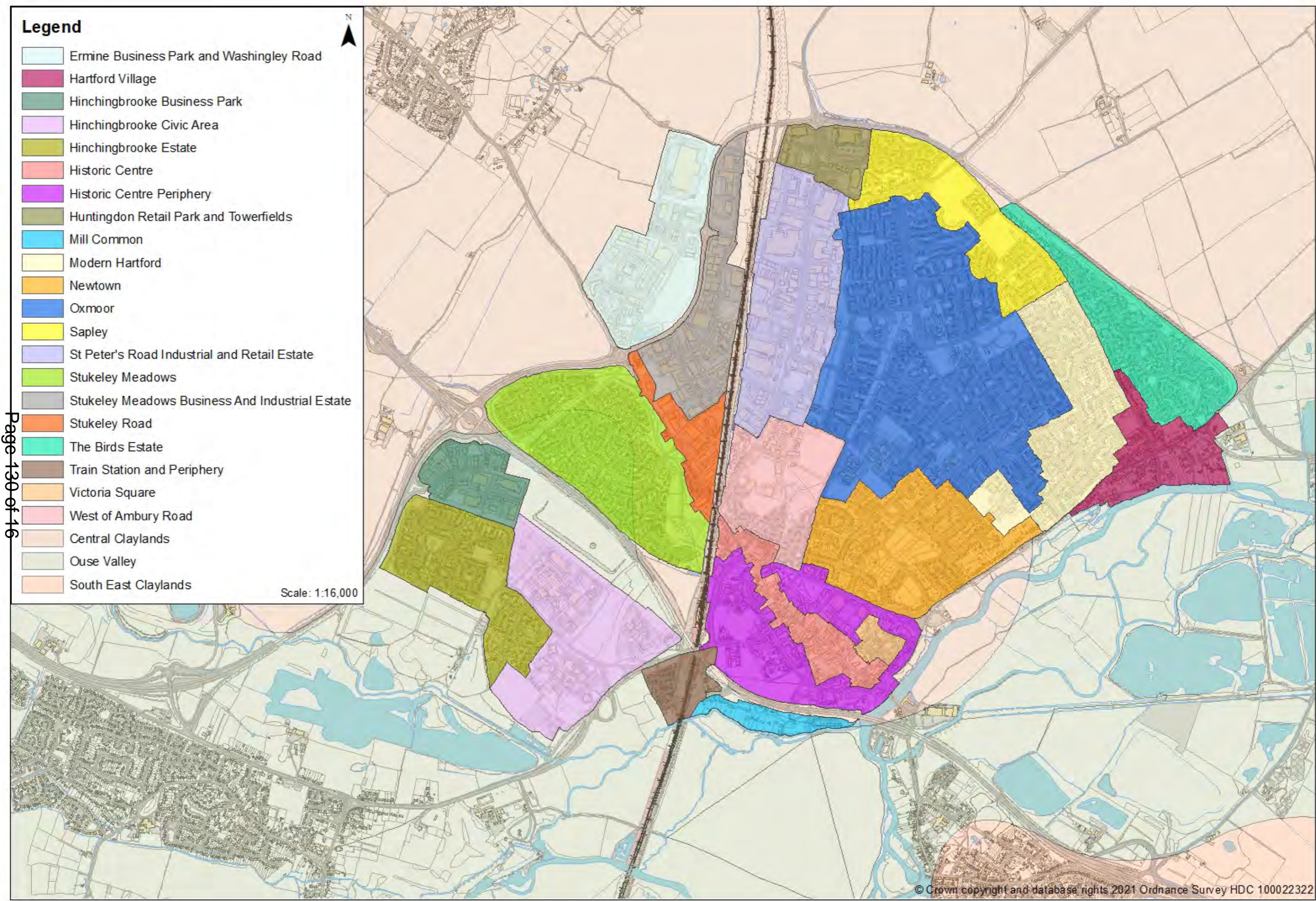


Figure 5.1 Huntingdon Character Areas

5 Huntingdon Spatial Planning Area

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Key Features

Historic route	Ermine Street and High Street
Historic gateway	Southern gateway over Town Bridge, Eastern gateway via Hartford Road
Landmarks	All Saints Church and Market Square, All Saints Church Hartford and Hinchingsbrooke House
Memorable areas	High Street, Town Bridge, Victoria Square, Riverside Park, Castle Hills and Hartford village
Key views	From Town Bridge, Riverside Park and All Saints Church in Hartford looking out over the river and Ouse Valley



Huntingdon Market Square is dominated by the red brick pavours but surrounded by a wide variety of building types



Huntingdon has grown significantly around its historic centre firstly in the Oxmoor and since the 1980s in large housing estates on the edges of the town such as Stukeley Meadows, Hinchingsbrooke and the Birds Estate in Hartford



Riverside Park provides significant opportunities for leisure and recreation, it is located on the eastern edge of Huntingdon and ties the settlement strongly to the Ouse Valley landscape



Hotel Chocolat located within the St Peter's Industrial Area it is one example of industrial units within Huntingdon. Huntingdon has several industrial areas located on the edge of the town and are key sources of local employment.

Huntingdon Character Area 1: Historic Centre



Market Square with a central war memorial enclosed by the Town Hall, All Saints Church and other listed buildings



Ring road to Ermine Street junction with no. 77,78 and 79 Ermine Street in the background and 81 High Street to the left. This demonstrates the influence of traffic infrastructure on the setting of historic routes and how this relationships changes over time

5.12 This area represents the medieval core centred along the High Street within the main town centre and heading north along Ermine Street. Ermine Street heads north past the ring road which surrounds the town centre. There is a broad range of uses and facilities including shops, offices, residential, civic and community facilities, hotels, public houses, places of worship and churchyards. Huntingdon's importance as a coaching stop, not a river port, meant that the town developed along the High Street rather than the riverbank. Unlike other Ouse Valley towns, Huntingdon has a limited historic river front and the historic centre is less connected to the river setting.



Royal Oak Passage

5.13 The pedestrianised High Street has an intimate scale, with many back of pavement buildings of various ages, styles and materials which give a richness and variety to the architectural detailing like Royal Oak Passage. These are interspersed with grand town houses. The often continuous building frontage creates a strong sense of enclosure with views down the many narrow alleyways and back courtyards which are a strong feature of the area.

5.14 There is significant historic character highlighted by medieval churches (All Saints' Church and St Mary's Church), burgage plots and buildings ranging from Medieval, Georgian, Victorian and Edwardian periods. Most buildings are 2-3 storey, of mixed styles and ages, reflecting the evolution of the historic centre over time (building types include 1A, 2A, 2E, 6A and 7A). Many of these buildings have ground floor retail or offices with flats above. As well as being within a conservation area, many of Huntingdon's listed buildings are located within this character area. For example, the High Street has the Cromwell Museum, several former coaching inns (for instance the George with its medieval courtyard and gallery where Shakespearean performances are still held), churches, the Commemoration Hall and the grade II* listed Castle Hill House formerly used by the Pathfinder Squadron during the Second World War but now used as offices. Also Cowper House at the southern end of the High Street is an early 18th century red brick former house now used as offices. Above the modern shopfronts lie many clues to the historic origin of buildings along the High Street such as number 66 which has a frieze incised 'Implement Depot' and number 111, formerly the Fountain Inn, whose Venetian style window lit the Assembly Rooms.



Commemoration Hall

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5.15 The Market Square forms the focal point of the character area and contains a significant cluster of high quality listed buildings with the square itself hosting a war memorial 'The Thinking Soldier'. The southern side of the square is enclosed by the grade II* listed Town Hall which is of eighteenth-century design in soft red brick with a portico facing the square and a Tuscan style loggia on the eastern front added in 1817 for the meat market. The western side of the Market Square comprises a range of listed buildings ranging in origin from the 16th to early 19th centuries which include a former coaching inn and the grade II* late 17th century Walden House built of soft red brick with distinctive stone dressings. On the north side of the square stands the grade I listed Church of All Saints within a small church yard.

5.16 The quieter, northern end of the High Street and Ermine Street has a further cluster of listed properties reinforcing the historic character and high quality of the historic centre. Of particular historic value is Cromwell House, largely rebuilt around 1830 this is a substantial white rendered property with a plaque and coat of arms commemorating the birth of Oliver Cromwell there in 1599.



Cromwell House

5.17 The busyness of the historic centre increases again when at the ring road with Ermine Street forming a key road to the town centre, onwards to the Stukeleys and to industrial and retail opportunities accessed via St Peter's Road. North of the ring road sits a cluster of listed buildings including 77, 78 and 79 Ermine Street, a series of 18th century houses with bay windows, cast iron rails and steps which indicate the wealthy status of the town during that period and provide high quality character for the setting of modern development. Further north along Ermine Street are several residential streets (Great Northern Street, Merritt Street and Sayer Street) consisting of former workers cottages, small town houses and one or two larger properties as well as some modern infill and a doctor's surgery and pharmacy as well as a takeaway. Typically in this locality plots are small and narrow with buildings placed either up against the pavement or set back a little. The variety of building types is given an architectural unity through the almost universal use of gault brick and slate and by good use of scale. This is an interesting and complex area structured around Ermine Street and is predominantly nineteenth century (despite Ermine Street itself being part of the medieval core, only very little evidence of this survives visually to the present day).

5.18 The protection and enhancement of the historic centre should be a key conservation objective.

Development proposals should:

- Enrich the character of the area by reinforcing and acknowledging its historic character.
- Reflect the existing materials and colour palette of predominately buff and red brick with white and pastel painted brick work and render and plain clay tiles and slate on 19th Century properties.
- Conserve and reflect the intimate scale of the compact historic centre through the control of shopfront design and building renovations.
- Promote high standards of design and architectural detailing to enhance the historic character of the area and conservation area.
- Seek to improve the main historic gateway across the river and protect the 14th century bridge.
- Promote increased activity in the Market Square.
- Explore the provision of additional public art at key locations to interpret the historical significance of the area.
- Explore and support opportunities for tourism particularly relating to heritage.
- Support initiatives for the retention of existing or creation of additional services and community facilities.
- Seek improved pedestrian and cycling facilities to and within the area to promote accessibility and activity within the town's historic centre.

Huntingdon Character Area 2: Victoria Square



There is an intimate relationship between the terraced housing and the square. The former public house can be seen in background.



Terraced housing fronting onto Victoria Square contains a variety of detailing adding interest to the townscape

5.19 This is a distinctive patch of residential development within the conservation area located between the historic centre and the town centre periphery between Hartford Road, Montagu Road, Temple Place and Ingram Street. The area contains Victorian and Edwardian properties arranged in a very close grained development set within a grid pattern (building type 2A). The area extends to the Montagu Club and bowling green located along Hartford Road, this was built in 1897 and demonstrates building type 7A with a prominent front gable, buff and red alternate brickwork and symmetrical chimneys located on either end of the roof.

5.20 Properties are typically accessed directly from the footpath with very few having any front garden space (there are some along Hartford Road with some boundary markers). Properties are generally uniform with some variations in the brickwork though use of contrasting coloured bricks over windows and doors complemented by a variety of painted bay window frames. Additionally, some larger properties have recessed entrances examples can be found along Hartford Road. It is visually well contained with restricted views out with rear gardens concealed from the street frontage. The scale of this development fits well into this part of the town. It is connected to the town centre by the incorporation of Hartford Street and its relationship to St Mary's Church and graveyard creates a natural urban progression in relation to the High Street.



Hartford Road terrace

5.21 The attractive green space at Victoria Square with its seating and tree planting has an informal shape giving it the quality of an urban village. It is also enclosed by housing and the former Victoria public house which provides a focal point (recently converted to five flats). The character area is dominated by Edwardian and Victorian terraces, many with bay windows to the front elevation (building type 2A). There has been some loss of original architectural features including changes to sash windows, doors and boundary walls; however, a well-defined streetscape with few gaps has been maintained.

5.22 Modern infill development along Temple Place to the northern edge of the character area is sympathetic to its surroundings as it reflects architectural features such as bay windows and has a similar urban form. These reflect building type 3F but exemplify how modern additions can be heavily inspired by their surroundings to positively reinforce the character of the area. The higher density flats that were built as part of this redevelopment which look out over the Riverside Park and face onto Riverside Road are not included in this character area as these are somewhat removed and share a more characteristics with other higher density flatted development found within the town centre periphery.

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5.23 This is a sensitive and well defined residential area within which change should be carefully controlled.

Development proposals should:

- Protect and conserve the original terraces and promote the continued retention of original architectural features within buildings.
- Reflect the intimate nature of the area created by its back of pavement layout.
- Retain and reflect the existing materials and colour palette of local gault brick with red brick trim to windows and doors, slate roofs, tarmac paving to roads and paths and stone paving to Ouse Walk.
- Conserve the 'village green' character of Victoria Square's green space and consider the long term replacement of the existing trees.
- Support initiatives that enhance the pedestrian routes to the town centre.

Huntingdon Character Area 3: Historic Centre Periphery



Hawkin's Court, Walden Road - high density town centre apartments utilising undercroft car parking to reduce the impact of parking on the streetscene



Multi-storey car park - blending modern design into the conservation area

5.24 The historic centre periphery character area has and is continuing to undergo considerable change. It consists of the town's service area surrounding the historic centre which is largely contained within the ring road or just outside of it. The area hosts a variety of uses and facilities including car parking, a bus station, offices and commercial buildings, a fire station, library, garages, Bloomfield Park, public houses and residential buildings. Building types in the character area are varied with some historic elements mixed with major modern developments. Building types include 2A, 2B, 2C, 2D, 3E, 3F, 5D, 7A, 7B and 7C.

5.25 Due to its location around the Historic Centre, there are historic routes and gateways to the town. For example via Town Bridge, a 14th century bridge over the River Great Ouse connecting Huntingdon to Godmanchester. The bridge is grade I listed and designated as a scheduled monument. To the north of Town Bridge is the Old Bridge Hotel, an 18th century building which forms a key landmark on the ring road around the historic centre.



St Johns Almshouses

5.26 Other heritage assets found along key routes to the High Street are several listed buildings and older properties including a terrace of Almshouses along St George's Street which have been refurbished; The Walks North opposite the bus station comprises a series of early 19th century red brick properties varying between 2 and 3 storeys. Infill developments over time have developed these routes further. A recent change has been the refurbishment of the grade II listed former Post Office into a Wetherspoons. Buildings are typically large with residential buildings predominantly being high density apartment developments such as Hawkin's Court on Walden Road which utilises undercroft car parking to reduce the impact of car parking on the street scene. Tree planting within residential development and along the town centre ring road provides a sense of greenness to the area. Other large buildings are used as offices such as Godwin House and Scott House (offices for the County Council).

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- 5.27** Bloomfield Park is located to the north of the historic centre along Brookside (B1514). It has a bandstand and Barrack's Brook runs along its northern perimeter. To the east is Parkside, a rectangular 1960s/1970s building of red brick and concrete materials with distinctive regularly spaced windows and Anglian House. Anglian House was purpose built as offices for Anglian Water in the 1980s before it was converted in 2017 to flats. It has an unusual built form similar to a cross shape with light brown bricks and dark grey cladding and a large amount of car parking. Some of the car park facing onto Ambury Road South has planning permission as of 2021 for further new homes. Although Bloomfield Park is located within the ring road near the main town centre and is adjoined by several apartment blocks, it is a peaceful part of the town with areas to sit and lots of tree planting. Opposite Bloomfield Park is Park View, a 3 storey apartment and extra care facility development with enclosed gates and communal open space. This is higher density than the adjoining Newtown and its location along the ring road (B1514) justifies including the site within this character area as it character is more closely linked with other high density development within the historic centre periphery character area.



Bloomfield Park

- 5.28** Immediately to the north of the High Street, completion of the town centre regeneration project at Chequers Court has brought a multi-story car park and modern commercial facilities with large retail units, further diversifying retail and services opportunities in Huntingdon. This character area still has potential for further change and regeneration including St Benedict's Court immediately to the south of the historic centre which connects it to the bus station and library.

- 5.29** The demolition of industrial and factory buildings along St John's Street and George Street for mixed-use regeneration and the addition of the Edison Bell Way link Road (B1044) have transformed and extended the historic centre periphery character area by offering an improved gateway into the town centre. Significant developments have already taken place here with a care home facility, a supermarket and mixed residential development of flats and houses at Moorhouse Lodge and Drovers Place already built alongside improved pedestrian and cycle access to the town centre. All residential uses fall within building type 3F. Further residential development has been permitted on the remaining site adjacent to the east coast mainline railway. Along with the removal of the former A14 viaduct which serves as a physical barrier between the townscape and wider landscape this should complete this area's transformation.



Drovers Place

- 5.30** Outside of the ring road, the character area extends to Mill Common which has a strong influence on the character of the southern and western aspects of the town centre. A footpath leads to the train station to the west and Castle Hill to the east with properties from the mid 20th century looking over the Common with the large retirement complexes of the Views (built in 2000 comprising of 39 units), Millfield Court and Millfield House (consisting of approximately 86 units built in 1987) prominent in the landscape. To the east is Castle Hill, the site of a former motte and bailey castle providing evidence of the town's early Norman history. This site is also a scheduled monument. Along Castle Hill and Mill Common dense tree covering screens the traffic of the A1307. A small footpath links Castle Hill to several two storey detached and semi-detached houses and bungalows some dating to the middle of the 20th century reflecting characteristics of building type 3A and 3B. There is also a car park and areas of vacant hard standing which offer the opportunity for redevelopment and infill development. The opening of the Mill Common Link Road as part of the wider enhancement of the A14 has significantly altered the road layout in the Historic Centre periphery around the bus station.



Moorhouse Lodge

- 5.31** The historic centre periphery is an area dominated by large scale development and highways that is capable of accommodating further change.

Development proposals should:

- Ensure that new development responds positively to the specific opportunities available within the area.
- Maintain and enhance physical and visual connections to key buildings and open spaces and support permeability of the area.
- Improve the appearance of the key gateways into the town centre.
- Improve pedestrian links across the ring road to support interaction between this area and the historic centre.
- Support regeneration opportunities for St Benedict's Court and the bus station area.
- Reduce the visual dominance of cars through increased planting and improved boundary treatments to existing car parks.
- Conserve and enhance the open space and heritage value of Castle Hills and Bloomfield Park and promote opportunities for improving accessibility, recreation and nature conservation.
- Reflect the existing materials and colour palette within the immediate vicinity of the character area.
- Support proposals where they encourage active modes of transport.
- Support initiatives for the retention and creation of services and community facilities in accessible locations.
- Provide a low emissions and air quality assessment for major development.
- Assess any potential of land contamination and provide appropriate mitigation.

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Huntingdon Character Area 4: Mill Common



Watersmeet homes and flats



Large detached homes overlooking Portholme Meadow

- 5.32** Properties within Mill Common and Watersmeet are located south of Castle Hill and the A1307 and have a much stronger connection to the Ouse Valley landscape than the rest of the historic centre periphery. The area is sensitively located immediately north of Portholme which is a large watermeadow designated as a Special Area of Conservation/ Site of Special Scientific Interest and Alconbury Brook Cambridgeshire Wildlife Site which are high value biodiversity assets. The area is at risk of flooding as Alconbury Brook runs along the southern boundary of the character area where properties look out over Portholme. Public rights of way allow walking across the meadow connecting Huntingdon to neighbouring Godmanchester via this attractive and scenic route.
- 5.33** The character area is currently visually separated from the main town centre by the A1307 and the tree belt that runs along the road. Some housing along Mill Common in the west of the character area dates from the early part of the 20th century with modern infill and includes large detached properties with generous front and rear gardens that are well screened from each other by dense tree planting. An example is Holme Hill House, built in 1935 in the style of a Georgian manor house with substantial grounds. Building types in this part of the character area reflect characteristics of types 3A, 3D and 3E.
- 5.34** Watersmeet on the eastern half of the character area is a mixed residential development of houses and flats of building type 3F built during the early 2000s. There are several large detached properties along Alconbury Brook whose external materials include dark cladding with balconies and large windows facing Portholme. The flats are arranged within two blocks with brown brick, dark detailing to windows and pitched roofs and balconies facing onto Portholme.
- 5.35** There is further changed planned in this part of the character area as site allocation HU6 in the [Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036](#) allocates the former gas depot site for redevelopment. The site was granted planning permission in January 2018 for 11 dwellings looking out over Portholme to the south.
- 5.36** This is a tranquil area in close proximity to the town centre where countryside and flooding impacts are key considerations in any development.

Development proposals should:

- Enhance the conservation area and reflects the sensitive landscape setting of the area as well improving the appearance of the key gateway from the town centre.
- Consider the impact of potential flooding from Alconbury Brook on new development and how careful design can mitigate this.
- Retention of planting (including trees and shrubs) to minimise the impact of development as well as increase resident amenity from traffic sight and noise.
- Assess the ecological impacts of development and provide natural landscaping to protect and enhance biodiversity.
- Provide appropriate and safe vehicular access which does not adversely affect the wider transport network.
- Enhance and provide additional pedestrian access to existing public footpaths and to the wider countryside.
- Provide a low emissions and air quality assessment for major development.
- Assess any potential of land contamination and provide appropriate mitigation.
- Reflect the existing materials and colour palette within the immediate vicinity of the character area.
- Ensure extensions and alterations to existing properties are of an appropriate size and scale to the original dwelling and do not detract from the surrounding area.

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Huntingdon Character Area 5: Train Station and Periphery



Property within Scholars Avenue looking toward the open space and Brampton Road. The generous set back and gradient of the road provides mitigation from its location in the transport network



Huntingdon train station

- 5.37** This is an irregular shaped character area located on the south side of Brampton Road (B1514) where the gradient of the land drops significantly. It is a mixed use area including a small housing estate focused around Scholars Avenue, Huntingdon train station and several properties located to the east of the station towards Mill Common known as Station Cottages. The character of the area is derived from the relationship of these to the road network and train station.
- 5.38** Accessed directly off Brampton Road is Scholars Avenue. The road slopes downwards towards the housing estate with a large green space providing a generous set back from the road. A metal fence and trees provide additional physical separators. The estate was built in the mid to late 1990s and forms a very cohesive group of homes built in buff brick with strong red brick detailing and distinctive windows with clear lower panels and Georgian style upper panels. They are predominantly detached with some semi-detached homes mainly on the eastern side. The building type here is 3E. Scholars Avenue is the principal road with Lodge Close and Headlands diverging from it. To the west are large playing fields, the physical impact of properties is obscured from the Ouse Valley landscape by dense tree planting.
- 5.39** Burrows Drive is accessed from Brampton Road and runs along the eastern edge of properties within Scholars Avenue, it leads to several properties which face onto the train station car park. There is a tree belt running along this edge protected by the Conservation Area designation that extends this far. These help to screen the nearby train station uses and mitigate resident amenity issues.
- 5.40** Huntingdon train station is a key station, its track serves the East Coast Mainline Railway with services to London and Peterborough. It has a ticket office on its eastern side with passenger access on both sides with an walkway overhead connecting the two sides. The main station building is grade II listed. The station was opened in 1849 and modernised in 1960/61. The main block is a single storey with a two storey station master's house at the north end which is of gault brick with render and a slate roof. The station has substantial amounts of car parking on either side of the railway lines and a temporary car park north of Brampton Road totaling approximately 800 spaces. These areas provide a more open feel but are dominated by hard standing and signage. A service workshop also operates from the main station car park.
- 5.41** The character area extends eastwards past the the train station to a cluster of eight or so properties at Station Cottages. These are accessed via the A1307 and the train station car park. These homes are physically separated from properties along Mill Common by trees and hedges as well as the by different

access arrangement, hence they have been included in a separate character area. Plot sizes are irregular, several are in semi-detached pairs but there are also large detached homes. These are later additions utilising land within this clearly defined area.

- 5.42** The area is undergoing significant change as a result of transport infrastructure improvements. There are few development opportunities apart from extensions and alterations to existing properties.

Development proposals should:

- Reflect the existing materials and colour palette within the immediate vicinity of the character area.
- Ensure extensions and alterations to existing properties are of an appropriate size and scale to the original dwelling and do not detract from the surrounding area.
- Protect and enhance where possible the trees protected by the conservation area designation who contribute to the character of the area and provide screening to the transport network and wider countryside.
- Provide safe access from Brampton Road and the A1307 and do not adversely impact the transport network or travel flows in this area.
- Promote opportunities for the enhancement and maintenance of amenity spaces to provide increased opportunities for play space, wildlife and conservation.
- Protect the setting and historical significance of the listed train station office.
- Support active modes of transport and routes to and from nearby residential estates and the town centre to the train station.
- Enhance and provide additional covered cycle storage spaces for train users to encourage active modes of transport.

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Huntingdon Character Area 6: Newtown



The cemetery to the east of Primrose Lane complements that to the west providing a substantial area of green space within this part of the town



Semi-detached houses on Ambury Hill are typical of this area with short front gardens and wide plots being a strong feature

5.43 Newtown is located to the north east of the historic centre. It is a residential area which also benefits from several community facilities including Huntingdon Community Centre, the Newtown Centre, Priory Road Chapel with cemetery and Priory Fields Surgery as well as being in walking distance to services and facilities in the town centre. Residential properties are typically older in the southern part of the area which includes small Edwardian terraces. As the area moves north a semi-detached form becomes more prevalent, particularly amongst the interwar Arts and Crafts semi-detached homes; the main building types are 2A, 3A, 3B, 3D and 3E although some modern infill of building type 3F has been incorporated. An example of modern infill can be seen along West Street where several terraced style properties have recently been built alongside the conversion of a former public house demonstrating how modern development can be sympathetically integrated into historic areas.



The former PH and modern infill behind in West Street

5.44 The form and scale of residential development is fairly consistent with generally rectangular plots with small front gardens and some back of pavement development but additions over time and major development and redevelopment have added diversity in the design, materiality and housing types found within the character area. On-street parking typically dominates the street scene in much of the area which is attractive to users of the town centre and local community facilities as well as residents.

5.45 Drivers Avenue, Coronation Avenue, Queens Drive, Coldhams North and Coldhams South are included within this character area and consist of terraced and semi-detached two storey housing and single storey detached properties set in regimented plots and an orthogonal road layout in three distinct parcels. Coxons Close follows a similar pattern of development with semi-detached properties from a similar age however arranged around a more free flowing road layout. Horse Common Lane is located at the northern most point of the character area. It has a mixture of terraced properties with a central amenity space and Bushey Close has footpaths through it increasing permeability. Properties around the amenity space are semi-detached and in larger plots accentuating the impact of the open space in contrast to the terraces located along the edge of the development.



Coldhams North

5.46 There are large pockets of open space including Priory Road cemetery where the quality and historic significance of the chapel and porters' lodge are recognised by their designation as grade II listed buildings. Primrose Lane and North Street both contain allotment gardens. Together these all provide the area with green backdrops with views connecting housing to the cemetery and allotments as well as to the nearby river and riverside. To the west, properties benefit from views out across Spring Common. In this part of the character area is Nightingale Mews, a residential redevelopment of a former hospital, which adds diversity to the character area with a mixture of thirty six houses and apartments arranged in a horseshoe shape creating an enclosed space.



Nightingale Mews

5.47 The character area includes St Mary's Terrace, a short parade of Victorian terraced housing and church along Hartford Road. This is an unusual development for Huntingdonshire in that it did not, when built around 1880, attempt to link to the existing townscape. These properties benefit from scenic views directly out over Riverside Park and its pavilions, café and car parking. The River Great Ouse and tree coverage provide strong linkages between the eastern edge of this urban character area and the Ouse Valley landscape character area.

5.48 This is an established residential area with limited opportunities for further major development other than extensions to existing buildings and some small scale infill development.

Development proposals should:

- Reflect the dominant buff brick colour palette in any new development and support creativity in architectural detailing.
- Reflect the dominant building pattern of terraces and semi-detached houses in any infill development.
- Reduce the visual dominance of cars through increased planting and high quality boundary treatments and consider restricting car parking to discrete zones or alternate sides of the road to enhance the street scene.
- Ensure extensions and alterations to existing properties are of an appropriate size and scale to the original dwelling and do not detract from the surrounding area.
- Protect the existing areas of greenspace and tree planting which contribute to the character of the area.
- Support the retention and opportunities for expansion of existing leisure, recreational and community facilities.

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Huntingdon Character Area 7: Hartford Village



Cottages along Church Lane with All Saints Church in the background



Local facilities at Main Street, Hartford reinforce the area's origins as a separate village

5.49 Hartford is a former village on the eastern fringe of Huntingdon located within a conservation area containing 1-2 storey medieval buildings, 18th and 19th century terraced homes and some red brick modern infill. There is a mix of uses including residential, civic, place of worship, public house and small-scale commercial within this character area reflecting its origin as a village centre. These provide a range of building types including 1B, 2A, 2B, 3D, 3E, 3F and 6A. Hartford was subsumed by Huntingdon during the middle and later part of the 20th century due to considerable residential expansion.



The Old Manor House, 66 Hartford Road

5.50 Back of pavement development and a continuous building frontage on Main Street create a sense of enclosure and help retain the original village character. The historic character has been retained despite some modern infill and influence of Hartford Road/Longstaff Way, which runs through the centre of the village. Hartford House, a grade II listed L-shaped red brick property built around 1720 is set behind a large red brick wall and forms a key focal point at the centre of the former village. Much of the wall is a modern rebuild, particularly fronting onto Main Street with most of the original wall fronting onto The Hollow.

5.51 The grade II listed Barley Mow public house has a distinctive mansard roof and helps define the centre of the former village. To the north of this, short terraces with small front gardens dominate Sapley Road mostly built in buff brick or rendered. The King George V playing field provides an open aspect to the west of Sapley Road. South of Main Street/Longstaff Way is a cluster of substantial detached properties.

5.52 There are several narrow lanes including The Hollow, Church Lane and The Grove with footpaths to and along the river. Along these thick vegetation creates a sheltered and attractive atmosphere. Buildings located here include All Saints Church (grade II*) and several large residential properties with generous gardens. This aspect of the character area strongly relates to the wider landscape setting of the Ouse Valley. Several seating areas enable people to enjoy this character area and its landscape setting. There has been some modern infill development, of note is a striking building marketed for sale as The White House.



'The White House'

5.53 This is an attractive historic village which has retained many original buildings. There are some opportunities for small scale infill development but change should be carefully managed.

Development proposals should:

- Enrich the area by reinforcing its distinctive village character through the protection of important historic buildings and areas of green space.
- Reflect the existing built forms and relationship with the street prevalent in the immediate locality.
- Reflect the existing materials and colour palette of buff brick to Sapley Road; and white and pastel painted brick, timber frame, red brick, plain gault clay tiles and slate within the historic parts of the character area.
- Promote high standards of design and architectural detailing to enhance the historic character of the area.
- Maintain, and improve where possible, views to the Ouse Valley.
- Protect the existing trees and vegetation as a green backdrop to development, particularly those located within the conservation area and protected by a tree preservation order.
- Explore the provision of public art at key locations to interpret the historical significance of Hartford as a separate village.
- Improve pedestrian access across Hartford Road to boost physical connectivity of the character area.
- Support the retention of existing leisure, recreational and community facilities.

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Huntingdon Character Area 8: Modern Hartford



This bungalow on Arundel Road is typical of many in the immediate locality forming an area of relatively low density housing



Hartford Village Hall is typical of modern civic buildings and provides modern community meeting facilities

- 5.54** This is a large L-shaped residential area with supporting community facilities dispersed throughout reflecting characteristics of building types 3D, 3E, 3F, 7B and 7C. Development dates from the mid-20th century with most properties originating in the 1970s, although some have with modern additions. The road layouts tend to be organic with few straight elements. Desborough Road is the principal road running through the area from Hartford Road to the south and to Sapley Road to the north east. There are many smaller residential streets and culs-de-sac diverging from it.
- 5.55** The area is predominantly residential with some community facilities including Hartford Village Hall which exemplifies late 20th century civic design. It also has Hartford Junior School and Infant School, a therapy centre and Hunter's Down care home in the east of the area bordering the Newtown and Oxmoor character areas. Due to the location of the character area more services and facilities can be accessed in surrounding character areas, the town centre or Tower Fields retail and leisure park.
- 5.56** This is a predominantly lower density area with a diverse mix of styles and forms. Single and 1.5 storey detached housing which is set back from the road and footpath dominates, the bungalows in Arundel Road, Mill Road and Desborough Road are good examples. Most properties are constructed of brick with tile roofs. Properties with 1.5 storeys have steeply pitched roofs typified by those along Charles Drive. Architectural detailing tends to be limited although some properties include tile hanging, bargeboards or decorative brickwork features and windows are usually large.
- 5.57** Overall, the character area has an open feel with several grass verges and central pieces of open space with some tree planting along road sides and within the pockets of open space. The medium to large front gardens have allowed for tree and hedge planting adding to the vibrancy of the residential area. Due to the amount of open space and the general lower density form of development, some infill development has taken place over time which is in keeping with the surrounding characteristics of the area. The character area experiences changes in levels contributing to this sense of openness, for example heading northwards to Kings Ripton Road via Desborough Road there is a steady incline and heading south to Hartford along Sapley Road there is a steady decline.
- 5.58** This is an established residential area with few opportunities for significant development, however some infill and extensions and alterations to existing properties can be accommodated.



Spacious layout along Desborough Road

Development proposals should:

- Reflect the dominant building pattern of detached and semi-detached single storey or 1.5 storey houses in any infill development unless located to the west of the character area where two storey semi-detached housing predominates.
- Reflect the existing built forms and relationship with the street in the immediate locality.
- Ensure extensions and alterations to existing properties are of an appropriate size and scale to the original dwelling and do not detract from the surrounding area.
- Reflect the dominant materials and colour palette of buff brick houses with brown concrete tiles.
- Protect the existing local greens and mature trees, particularly in the Desborough Road area, and promote opportunities for wildlife and nature conservation initiatives to enhance the area's ecological value.
- Support initiatives for the creation of additional services and community facilities within the residential area possibly through conversion or redevelopment.
- Maintain and improve the network of pedestrian footpaths to support active modes of travel within and through the area.
- Where possible incorporate renewable energy generation.

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Huntingdon Character Area 9: The Birds Estate



Houses on Sparrowhawk Way represent the mixed sizes found in the many cul-de-sacs which dominate the layout of 'The Birds' estate in Hartford



Further house type found and found across 'The Birds' estate in Sparrowhawk Way

5.59 The Birds Estate adjoins the historic village of Hartford and is separated from modern Hartford by Sapley Road. The character area also includes Wallace Court and linear development along Sapley Road which are of a similar age and style to these within the Birds Estate. The estate derives its name from its street names, all of which are named after species of birds. The estate comprises a series of culs-de-sac all accessed off either Eagle Way or Owl Way. Many are interconnected by footpaths which aid pedestrian permeability.

5.60 The character area comprises generally lower density detached and semi-detached housing along with some bungalows of building type 3E. The estate is a cohesive group of properties with a limited mix of building materials and house types providing a clear identity. Materials include buff and red brick, dark roof tiles, rendering and mock Tudor. Features include porches, canopies, bay windows, dormer windows and a mix between small decorative gables, large gables on side or front elevations and hipped roofs. There is typically on plot parking and garages on plot reducing the impact of cars on the street scene. The use is entirely residential with no local services or community facilities however residents have access to such facilities in Hartford, Oxmoor and in Sapley. The estate benefits from mature trees, shrubs, hedges and small local greens providing an attractive and open character to the area.



Goshawk Close access from Sapley Road

5.61 On the northern edge of the estate is heavy screening from the A141 (Spittals Way) acting as a visual buffer from traffic. Due to the surrounding road layout, the estate forms a roughly triangular shape with its narrowest point to the north where there is linear detached development facing onto Sapley Road and looking back over the A141. As the buffer from the A141 is narrowest here, the properties benefit from longer rear gardens.

5.62 There are few opportunities for further development within the estate. Any future development should seek to reinforce the dominant building types and patterns as a means of consolidating, rather than fragmenting their existing character.

Development proposals should:

- Maintains and enhances the limited physical and visual connections landscape views and maintains pedestrian permeability.
- Reflects the existing materials and colour palette of predominantly red brick with some buff and grey brick, brown concrete tiles and red pantiles, particularly where extensions are being constructed.
- Ensure extensions and alterations to existing properties are of an appropriate scale and design to the immediately surrounding area.
- Support initiatives for the provision of services and community facilities within the residential area possibly through conversion or redevelopment.
- Maintain screening from traffic noise from the A141.
- Promote opportunities for enhancement of amenity green spaces to provide increased opportunities for recreation and nature conservation and to help provide distinctive local landmarks.
- Protect the existing roadside vegetation along Sapley Road.
- Where possible incorporate renewable energy generation.

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Huntingdon Character Area 10: Oxmoor



Kent Road shows the open space and pedestrian access to frontages common in the Radburn layout



The Whaddons provides an example of the successful integration of redevelopment

5.63 Oxmoor is a large area of relatively high density housing situated north of the historic centre between the St Peter's Road industrial area and more recent residential development toward Hartford. Oxmoor is one of the older residential expansions to the town dating from the 1950s and 1960s, originally built as Greater London overspill housing following the Town Development Act 1952. The area is typified by terraced housing arranged in a Radburn layout with open space and pedestrian access to frontages and road access and parking courts to the rear (building type 3C). There are also some small flat roofed bungalows. The layout is dominated by straight lines with the majority of properties running on a broadly north-south alignment ensuring habitable rooms gain east-west daylight.

5.64 Although the perception is of relatively high density housing Oxmoor also includes an extensive network of green spaces and pedestrian footpaths and footways over roads and through underpasses. A substantial landscape buffer runs north from Spring Common separating the residential area from St Peter's Road Industrial Area with a similar landscaping belt further east following the route of Oxmoor Lane footpath.

5.65 The area contains a wide mix of uses to support the local community. Oak Drive includes retail, health and community facilities towards the north of the area such as the Oak Tree Centre which is part of a larger complex of health uses. These most closely relate to building types 5D and 7B. The six storey Suffolk House facing Mayfield Drive at the southern extremity of the area is a focal point in close proximity to another cluster of community and leisure facilities. There are several small shops and takeaways, gymnastics club, several primary/junior and infant schools and places of worship. These are primarily located along Mayfield Road to the south of the character area. Cambridge Regional College (Huntingdon Campus), Huntingdon Primary School and Spring Common School form a focal point on California Road and American Lane which with accompanying playing fields reinforce the provision of green space. On the eastern side of the area Coneygear Park provides extensive recreational and play facilities as well as the Coneygear Centre, a large community centre which opened in February 2020.



Suffolk House with neighbouring bungalows

5.66 As well as Radburn layout and style housing, there are pockets of other styles, for example, the parcels of late 20th century development that have taken place on land originally used by the college such as Wellsfield and Bevan Close. These provide additional variety to design and materials found in the character area including pastel coloured rendering, however the general character takes inspiration from the wider area with short terraces, some bungalows and amenity areas. These demonstrate building type 3E. The

Saxon Gardens development demonstrates building type 3F with a mixture of buff and red brick homes. Site allocation HU7 in the [Huntingdonshire Local Plan](#) allocates further land formerly associated with the college for residential development, detailed permission was granted for 56 homes in 2021.

5.67 There has been several residential rebuilds, infill development and the demolition and redevelopment of garage blocks for additional homes. These have generally been successfully integrated into the area demonstrating characteristics of building type 3F. Major examples of redevelopment include the Whaddons to the north of the character area along Butts Grove Way. This incorporates modern design principles and distinctive rooflines and integrates them into the character area where an area of bungalows was redeveloped. As part of a regeneration project for Oxmoor, Moorhouse Drive, a cluster of homes in the centre of the character area have been built with varying roof levels creating a varied street scene, extensive planting and open space and pedestrian and cycle access. Another example located on the boundary between the Oxmoor and the Modern Hartford character area is Greenheart Grove including Edward Lees House. This is a cluster of homes and flats of modern design with a grassed verge providing substantial separation from the road layout. It has been included within the Oxmoor character area due to the closer architectural design and materiality of the development to other major development such as the Whaddons.



Moorhouse Drive

5.68 This is a predominately older residential area which has undergone some regeneration, however further opportunities remain as well as small scale infill and extensions to existing properties.

Development proposals should:

- Promote enhanced standards of design and architectural detailing to add character and distinctiveness to new developments.
- Reflect the existing materials and colour palette of predominantly buff brick houses with brown concrete tiles, red brick walls and black steel railings.
- Promote improvements to key areas of green space for public access, recreation and nature conservation purposes.
- Protect the green space along the western edge of the estate and promote its enhancement through new planting as a buffer and screen to the adjacent industrial estate.
- Ensure adequate provision of car parking to reduce the impact on the street scene of on-street parking within residential streets.
- Support initiatives for the creation of additional services and community facilities within the residential area possibly through conversion or redevelopment.
- Where possible incorporate renewable energy generation.
- Provide where appropriate electric vehicle charging points particularly in parking areas for community buildings.
- Maintain and improve the network of pedestrian footpaths to support active modes of travel within and through the area.

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Huntingdon Character Area 11: West of Ambury Road



Properties along St Peter's Road dating from the early to middle 20th century



Spring Common open space with Spring House to the left of picture. Ambury Road is located to the east of the picture

5.69 This character area is centrally located within the town to the north of the historic centre and its periphery. It is north of Ermine Street and Cromwell Walk and runs along St Peter's Road on its western edge and along Ambury Road on the eastern edge. It is south of St Peter's Road Industrial Area. The area has a mix of uses, including residential properties, St Peter's Secondary School, leisure and recreational facilities including One Leisure, a cricket ground and bowls club. Its location and mix of uses makes this a busy character area with steady flows of traffic throughout the day. In the middle of the character area east of the recreational and leisure facilities and adjoining St Peter's playing field, Spring Common is an area of open landscape with streams and tree coverage adding a natural and green feel to this centrally located character area. It also visually separates the area from the neighbouring Newtown character area along Ambury Road.

5.70 The character area hosts a variety of residential properties, predominantly of two storeys, however there are some bungalows for example in St Lukes Close. Most properties date from later part of the 20th century with names based on flowers and gardens. Examples of earlier development are found in Ashton Gardens and Kings Gardens representing building type 3E, with examples of higher density housing of mostly short terraces of three or four properties with each group arranged around a central car parking court. Development from the 1990s include Walnut Tree Drive, Cherry Tree Close and Rowan Close which have greater occurrences of semi-detached properties and early 2000s in Hawthorn Drive and Alder Drive which have a higher proportion of detached properties. Materials are fairly consistent with red and buff brickwork found throughout but limited architectural detailing beyond some gable features, canopies, porches. There are several walkways throughout the area increasing pedestrian permeability to shops and services.



Walnut Tree Drive

5.71 The oldest properties in the character area located along St Peter's Road near the railway line, these are from the early 20th century, with some having been extensively modernised or converted to business uses. There has also been some modern infill, these are generally set back from the road providing, in combination with the road, an open feel. This also allows for on plot parking reducing the need for on street parking.

5.72 North Side and South Side are two small older residential streets at the northern most point of the character area and are shielded from the neighbouring commercial uses by fencing and tree planting. Immediately to the south are the only listed buildings in this area which are well screened from the road by mature

trees; 27, 28 and 29 St Peter's Road were all built in 1828-50 for managers of the County Gaol they are two storey substantial properties built of gault brick with stone dressings and slate roofs. The variety of properties do not give rise to a cohesive range of building materials or colour palette. Building types vary from 3A, 3B, 3D, 3E, 3F and 7B.

- 5.73** This is an established mixed use area with some capacity for infill development and extensions to residential or recreational and community facilities.

Development proposals should:

- Ensure extensions and alterations to existing properties are of an appropriate scale and design to the immediate area.
- Reduce the visual dominance of cars through increased planting and boundary treatments to existing car parks and properties.
- Ensure adequate provision of car parking to reduce the impact on the street scene of on-street parking within residential streets.
- Support initiatives for the creation of additional services and community facilities within the residential area possibly through conversion or redevelopment.
- Promote opportunities for the enhancement of Spring Common to provide increased opportunities for wildlife and conservation.
- Support the retention of existing leisure and recreational facilities and opportunities for their expansion where possible.
- Where possible incorporate renewable energy generation and electric vehicle charging points particularly in parking areas of leisure facilities.

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Huntingdon Character Area 12: St Peter's Road Industrial and Retail Estate



Bridge Centre, St Peter's Road - mixed industrial and trade counters



Hotel Chocolat is a large employer in Huntingdon located along Redwongs Way

- 5.74** St Peter's Road Industrial Area is on the eastern side of the railway, on either side of St Peter's Road and inclines significantly up towards the A141. The majority of the character area falls within the identified established employment area within the [Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036](#). It borders predominantly residential character areas: St Peter's Road to the south, Oxmoor to the east via Redwongs Way and Sapley to the north. Industrial uses have been established within the character area since the 1950s when the first developments were part of the Oxmoor Greater London overspill development.
- 5.75** The area has large industrial buildings, a Royal Mail sorting office, builders merchants and warehousing buildings (some with trade counters) and homeware stores, reflecting building type 5B. A landmark unit is Hotel Chocolate on Redwongs Way which occupies a large site and factory unit with permission for an extension. Buildings are typically one or two storeys with flat roofs often with brick cladding to the ground floor and corrugated panels above. An exception is along Clifton Road where the sawtooth roof design has been made into an architectural feature.
- 5.76** Some more recent redevelopment and infill development has taken place, for example, the Bridge Centre which is located on the western side of St Peter's Road and contains 8 warehouse and trade counter units constructed in the mid 2000s. Reds, browns, greens and blue are frequently used as colour detailing on properties. Sapley Water Tower is a prominent landmark when approaching northwards along St Peter's Road.
- 5.77** There is limited tree planting within the industrial area, instead it is dominated by roads, security fencing, car parking and storage areas. Along St Peter's Road itself there are several wide green verges some with trees planted providing some visual breaks from the industrial warehouses and factories on either side of the road. There is increased tree and hedge planting along the western edge of the character where it is closest to the railway line. Grassed areas and allotments on the edge of the Oxmoor character area provide a buffer and screen from the industrial operations within the estate.
- 5.78** The industrial and retail areas are well established. There is some capacity for new units, extensions, change of use to other appropriate land uses or the redevelopment or renovation of older and vacant properties.



Sawtooth roofs along Clifton Road

Development proposals should:

- Ensure that redevelopment and infill schemes respond positively to the specific opportunities available.
- Promote high standards of design for any new frontage development.
- Co-ordinate the range of materials and colours in any future development.
- Support proposals for renewable energy where appropriate and electric vehicle charging points.
- Protect the existing grass verges and provide additional large scale planting along St Peters Road to screen external parking areas and enhance the approach route into the town.
- Reduce the visual dominance of cars through increased planting and boundary treatments to existing car parks and properties.
- Support proposals where they encourage active modes of transport such as cycling and walking.
- Improve the screening of the eastern side of the estate where this abuts the Oxmoor residential areas.

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Huntingdon Character Area 13: Sapley



Sapley recreation ground



Flats on the corner between Robertson Way and Kings Ripton Road provide a distinctive landmark within this area and contrast between the mixed housing on Kings Ripton Road and the 21st century design within Robertson Way

5.79 This area is located in the northern corner of Huntingdon, it extends north of Coneygear Road up to Kings Ripton Road and beyond to the boundary with the A141. Development is visually and physically contained with tree and hedge planting along the boundary with neighbouring non-residential uses within Towerfields and the Tesco superstore as well as the A141. The area has several pockets of open space including the Jackson Walk playground and Sapley recreation ground.

5.80 It has a series of sub-areas with distinctive characteristics. The first sub-area is north of Kings Ripton Road. The Robertson Way estate was built in the early 2000s in a cul-de-sac layout with a central play area and extensive tree and hedge planting creating a green feel to the area. The styles of properties vary with those along Robertson Way and Collinson Crescent being typically higher density with a mixture of terraced, semi-detached and detached properties with shallow front gardens and some properties up to three storeys and some flats. A noticeable block of flats are located on the corner of Robertson Way fronting onto Kings Ripton Road providing additional variety to this mix of housing types along Kings Ripton Road. In contrast, Wolff Close has a mixture of more spacious detached and semi-detached properties of single and two storeys. There is further diversity within Howell Drive where several three storey blocks of flats are located. This part of the character area demonstrates building type 3F with modern design and materials reflecting neo-Georgian architectural features combined with some shared surfaces where cars and pedestrians are not separated by footpaths. There are footpaths to the adjoining superstore and car park.

5.81 Another sub-area is properties on the south side of King Ripton Road and within Green Tiles Close. Here properties are more spaciouly laid out, usually detached with generous rear and front gardens. These are older than the housing to the north and demonstrate characteristics of building type 3E. There have been several additions over time to these streets including modern infill such as Lawrence Close. Kings Ripton Court is a cross shaped building used as supported living accommodation by the Salvation Army and adds further diversity in design and accommodation types in the area.



Green Tile Close

5.82 The next sub-area is south of Kings Ripton Road and comprises Sapley recreation ground. There is a car park and some play equipment and pavilion buildings. A tree belt follows the edges of the recreation ground providing some screening from the transport network. It provides a

large piece of outdoor recreational and leisure space for local residents from various estates. The 1990s housing within Beaumont Close and Lamport Drive are enclosed on three sides via the recreation ground with its eastern edge facing onto Sapley Road.

5.83 The area south of the recreation ground but north of Coneygear Road consisting of Florida Avenue and Maryland Avenue continues the theme of American street names observed within the Oxmoor character area. Housing is predominantly arranged within fairly uniform rectangular plots although some irregular shaped corner plots exist. Properties are typically either semi-detached or detached and two storey and of a simple design. The colour palette consists of a mixture of grey and brown with some incorporating alternative coloured brickwork adding visual interest. There have been some modern infills which have been generally sensitively integrated. There are several footpaths and areas of green space running between properties and play areas such as Maryland Avenue playground with access to Sapley recreation ground to the north.



Florida Avenue

5.84 Thames Road provides a contrast to this with higher density flats arranged within several blocks with connecting wings. To the south is Primrose Hill care home providing approximately 60 rooms built in the early 2000s and Skate Court a large block of flats facing onto Coneygear Road. To the west of Thames Road is a modern example of major redevelopment of the former Springfield School. It incorporates additional variety in design with a mix of housing types and designs which when viewed collectively create a varied streetscape with buildings that 'turn' corners creating a continuous built frontage in places. It comprises mainly two storey properties although a feature is a three storey block of flats provided at the junction between Thames Road and Sapley providing a key focal point. The development contains a public square and an area of open space, parking areas are mostly screened from public view.



Thames Road redevelopment with playspace

5.85 This is an established mixed use area with limited opportunities for major development, there may be opportunities for extensions to existing properties and extensions and change of use to retail and leisure buildings.

Development proposals should:

- Promote high standards of design, particularly for those that face directly onto the road frontage.
- Ensure extensions and alterations to existing properties are of an appropriate scale and design to the surrounding area.
- Co-ordinate the range of materials and colours in any future development.
- Enhance the visual qualities of the area by inclusion of greater architectural detailing on new developments.
- Maintain the tree belts providing screening from the A141 and separation between residential area and retail park.
- Enhance where possible walkways to nearby shops and facilities.
- Protect the existing trees and vegetation as a green backdrop to development.
- Support the retention of existing leisure, recreational and community facilities.
- Promote improvements to key areas of green space for public access, recreation and nature conservation purposes.
- Where possible incorporate renewable energy generation.

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Huntingdon Character Area 14: Huntingdon Retail Park and Towerfields



Tesco superstore



Restaurants and cinema within Towerfields

- 5.86** This area consists of three parcels of retail and leisure facilities built in the 1990s and 2000s located to the north and west of Kings Ripton Road and bounded by the A141 to the north. To the east of the character area are footpaths through to the nearby modern developments within Robertson Way and Jackson Walk. There is also a footpath to development along Kings Ripton Road and down St Peter's Road. A footpath over the railway line provides access to the northern edge of the Stukeley Meadows Industrial Estate.
- 5.87** The colour palette of the area is predominately browns and greys with cladding, large windows, buff and red brickwork and some decorative features such as contrasting brickwork, covered areas and gable features (building type 5D). Additional colour and diversity to store fronts are found through signage with company logos and colours.
- 5.88** On the northern most part of the character area is a superstore, petrol station and substantial amounts of surface level car parking. This is a large building with large gables providing a distinctive architectural appearance. This style is shared with the adjacent units within the Huntingdon Retail Park located on the other side of the roundabout. The park has four large retail units for homeware, garden and pets arranged in an 'L' shape with some 350 car parking spaces. The opening of a Costa in 2016 has added a service use to the retail park.
- 5.89** To the south of the superstore is the Tower Fields Leisure Park which has a gym, cinema, several chain restaurants, drive thrus and extensive surface level car parking. Building materials contrast with greater amounts of cladding and grey colour palette. The units here are generally smaller apart from the combined cinema and gym building which dominates this parcel. Smaller units are located on the northern edge of the parcel and typically have flat roofs with some decorative design detailing.
- 5.90** The various car parks create areas of openness in between large units but hardstanding dominates heavily. There is tree planting and hedges which provide visual buffers to the roundabout, St Peter's Road and A141 and some planting within car parking areas to soften the effect of the hardstanding as well assisting to distinguish between parking areas. Most planting is found on the edges of parcels helping to enclose the sites and screen the uses from nearby residential areas. Footpaths provide some permeability to surrounding areas.
- 5.91** There are few development opportunities remaining apart from alterations to existing units or change of uses.



Costa unit

Development proposals should:

- Promote high standards of design for any new frontage retail development.
- Ensure adequate parking and the safety of access is not compromised by additional development or change of uses.
- Enhance the visual qualities of the area by inclusion of greater architectural detailing on new developments.
- Maintain the tree belts providing screening from the A141 and separation between the residential area to the east.
- Support proposals for renewable energy where they are appropriate and electric vehicle charging points.
- Enhance and increase where possible permeability throughout the area and encourage active modes of transport from nearby residential areas.
- Ensure signage is in an appropriate location and does not impact road safety.

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Huntingdon Character Area 15: Stukeley Meadows



Grasmere is typical of the buff brick detached houses with shallow front gardens predominating on the main routes through Stukeley Meadows



The Stukeley Nature Reserve is a key influencer on the character of the Stukeley Meadows estate. The reserve has several areas of play equipment allowing for additional enjoyment to the area

5.92 Stukeley Meadows is located to the north west of the historic centre north of the railway line and extends to the A141 from which it is separated by a combination of planting and acoustic fencing. Housing at Stukeley Meadows is set back from the main road and is bordered by significant areas of green space including Stukeley Meadows Nature Reserve and play area. This is a 4.5 hectare Local Nature Reserve made up of grassland, bramble thickets and wetland which arcs round the northern part of the estate. The reserve also contains a multi-use games area, a trim trail and a skate park. The wide variety of habitats on the site provides homes for insects, including butterflies and bush crickets. Barracks Brook runs through the reserve, this serves as an important channel for draining flood water away from the housing estate but is also rich in biodiversity.

5.93 The only substantial area of landscaping running through the estate is focused on the narrow stream known as Long Moor Balk, which separates the northernmost homes. There is little planting within the estate other than the shallow to medium depth front gardens which most homes benefit from. Views from Stukeley Meadows open space look onto Stukeley Road where a supermarket and large scale industrial and commercial developments are located although trees do mitigate this.

5.94 This area predominantly comprises housing built between 1986 and 1998 comprising building type 3E. Properties are typically arranged as a series of culs-de-sac off estate access roads with few footpath connections between them restricting the permeability of the estate. Properties are predominantly semi-detached or detached with both buff and red brick being common with red and grey roof tiles. There is limited architectural detailing beyond contrasting colour brickwork features, mock Tudor designs and some decorative bargeboards. Some homes retain the brown frames and leaded lighted windows that were a feature, particularly in the older part of the state, when first built. Garaging is often a prominent feature to the front of properties.



Mock Tudor along Lake Way

5.95 On the southern entry to the estate, Percy Green Place is a modern addition with a higher density and flatted development form distinguishing it from the original estate (building type 3F). This is located on the route towards the town centre and near the railway line. Within the estate, there are limited community facilities comprising a primary school and mini supermarket. Stukeley Meadows is closely located to homeware stores within Stukeley Meadows Retail Park and Business Centre.



Percy Green flats

5.96 There are few opportunities for further development within Stukeley Meadows. Any future development should seek to reinforce the dominant building types and patterns as a means of consolidating, rather than fragmenting its existing character.

Development proposals should:

- Ensure extensions and alterations to existing properties are of an appropriate scale and design to the surrounding area.
- Control the use of materials and colours in any building extensions to reflect existing properties which are predominantly red brick with some buff and grey brick, brown concrete tiles and red pantiles and Mock Tudor detailing.
- Maintain and enhance physical and visual connections to key landmarks to promote legibility and pedestrian accessibility.
- Reduce the visual dominance of cars by promoting enhanced boundary landscaping and planting.
- Reflect the existing built forms and relationships with the street in any new development.
- Support initiatives for the creation of additional services and community facilities within the residential area possibly through conversion or redevelopment.
- Promote opportunities for the enhancement of the Stukeley Meadows green space to improve screening to Stukeley Road and provide increased opportunities for wildlife and nature conservation.
- Maintain Barracks Brook as a key channel to divert flood water and where proposals are located in an area at a higher risk of flooding ensure they adequately respond to this risk in their design.
- Protect and enhance grass verges and landscape planting areas and provide additional street trees where space and service restrictions permit.
- Where possible incorporate renewable energy generation.

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Huntingdon Character Area 16: Stukeley Road



Stukeley Meadows Retail Park hosts several large units and substantial car parking



Terraces located along Stukeley Road

- 5.97** The character of the area is influenced by Stukeley Road and the relationship that the buildings located along or have direct access from it. As such the area is mixed use with a retail park, Victorian/Edwardian terraces, 20th century infill and in depth development and a supermarket. It has a close relationship with the Stukeley Meadows housing estate to the south (Character Area 15) and the adjoining Stukeley Meadows Business and Industrial Estate located to the north (Character Area 17) with some of the buildings that fall within the established employment area being included in this character area due to their relationship with Stukeley Road and their point of access deriving from Stukeley Road.
- 5.98** On the northern end of the character area is a garage and car showroom which is constructed from grey cladding with large windows with a large number of parked cars along the roadside. Here the showroom and entrance to the industrial area from Stukeley Road faces onto Stukeley Meadows residential estate but is separated by the road and screened by tree planting from the play area and nature area. These have a strong relationship with the road and provide an active frontage.
- 5.99** Further south on Stukeley Road is a small retail park. The retail units are of building type 5D and access is via a roundabout on Stukeley Road where the land level drops down. Several units are arranged on the edge of the park with central areas of car parking. Some units blend industrial production with trade and retail counters. The colour palette is predominantly grey with large windows as well as flashes of bold colours from company logos.
- 5.100** Further south still is a series of buildings representing the oldest elements of this character area. These are Victorian/Edwardian terraces opposite the Stukeley Meadows Business and Industrial Estate. These demonstrate characteristics of building type 2A with their narrow form, symmetrical window and door placements with brick detailing above and limited set back from the road. Over time there has been modern infill development along Stukeley Road and the addition of Goodliff Close and Thomas King Drive behind it. There have been further modern additions including 3 storey flats at Fern Court and Meadow Court. These add diversity to this busy part of the character area demonstrating characteristics of building types 3D, 3E and 3F.
- 5.101** Opposite these residential uses are a series of businesses that fall within the Stukeley Road Established Employment Area with direct access from Stukeley Road. These reflect building type 5B and 5C with businesses varying from a car service workshop, industrial workshops, warehouses, bakery and offices



Meadow Court

including Stanton House occupied by Cambridgeshire County Council. A mixture of single storey low pitch grey metal cladding to industrial buildings and buff and red brick buildings for offices. The brickwork for offices are arranged in a decorative style adding architectural points of interest particularly on the road frontage.

- 5.102** A recent addition on the very eastern edge of the character area on the western side of the railway line is the Lidl supermarket (building type 5D). The supermarket is accompanied with approximately 78 car parking spaces and cycle storage. It is of a modern design with a monopitch roof, a grey base topped with silver cladding panels and full height glazing along the prominent Stukeley Road elevation. Its distinctive roofline is sympathetic to those in Fern Court with its lowest point toward the public footpath between the two buildings.



Lidl on Stukeley Road

- 5.103** This is a sensitive area with the impact on the transport network and traffic flow a key consideration. Major development and redevelopment has occurred leaving only opportunities for extensions or alterations to existing properties.

Development proposals should:

- Support and retain the current uses in the character area through renovation, refurbishment or extensions to buildings.
- Ensure that development responds positively to the specific opportunities available to reinforce the retail and employment uses in the area.
- Ensure that adequate car parking is provided and maximise opportunities for covered cycle storage spaces.
- Consider and mitigate any potential harmful increase in vehicular movements from Stukeley Road and on the wider local transport and highway network.
- Reflect appropriate architectural detailing, materials and colour palette in the design of new buildings and provide where possible active frontages.
- Support initiatives for the creation of additional services and community facilities possibly through conversion or redevelopment.
- Support proposals for renewable energy and active modes of transport.
- Provide appropriate non-illuminated signage to protect neighbouring resident amenity and highway safety.
- Maintain and enhance where possible boundary treatments such as hedges to reinforce the separation between uses and the road network.
- Enhance connectivity to the Stukeley Meadows Local Nature Reserve and to the nearby housing estate where possible to improve screening to Stukeley Road and provide increased opportunities for wildlife and nature conservation.

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Huntingdon Character Area 17: Stukeley Meadows Business and Industrial Estate



One unit from the Hilton Foods complex located along Latham Road in the north of the character area. In this location larger units and more spacious layouts with greater parking and fencing predominate



Alms Close - typical blending of brickwork and steel cladding

5.104 Stukeley Meadows Business and Industrial Estate is a narrow character area located between the East Coast mainline railway on its eastern edge and the A141 (Spittals Way) on its western edge. The industrial and business elements of the character area are identified as an established employment area within the [Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036](#). The northern part of the character area inclines significantly along Latham Road.

5.105 Business and industrial units are located further into the character area away from residential areas. Units used for business and industrial uses include those on Blackstone Road and Latham Road and are typically small, medium or large buildings constructed from a mixture of metal cladding and buff brick with flat or low pitched roofs representing building type 5B. In the northern part of the estate, Hilton Foods occupy several very large industrial units. Typically smaller and medium sized units are found to the south of the area with a more condensed feel and less parking within plots resulting in on street parking dominating the street scene. Larger units are found throughout the area but are concentrated in greatest quantities along Latham Road. Units along here are typically set back from the road separated by fencing, car parking or greenery with some tree planting. There are clusters of smaller, single storey units such as Halcyon Court supporting smaller businesses and a number of vehicle servicing and repair businesses arranged around a central court yard and car parking area.



Halcyon Court

5.106 Redevelopment opportunities within the industrial estate are being utilised with two blocks of commercial buildings constructed in 2020 from metal cladding to provide 7 new light industrial/storage for B1, B2 and B8 uses within Alms Close on land off Blackstone Road which had been used as a builders material storage yard and rough grassed area adjacent to existing industrial buildings. Another example are the alterations and extension to 2-12 Latham Road and the addition of a car and lorry park to the north of the building. The car and lorry park provides a large break in the building line along Latham Road, this assists in reducing the number of vehicles that park along Latham Road improving the immediate street scene.

5.107 Along its eastern edge by the railway line is the Great Stukeley Railway Cutting SSSI which holds plant communities typical of calcareous clay grassland. This provides a green north eastern edge to the character area and provides screening from the railway line and a green setting which is a welcome contrast to large scale industrial buildings.

- 5.108** The industrial and retail areas are well established. There is some capacity for new units, extensions, change of use to other appropriate land uses or the redevelopment or renovation of older and vacant properties.

Development proposals should:

- Reinforce the use of the area as one of Huntingdon's primary employment locations.
- Reflect the colour palette of surrounding properties whilst endeavouring to enhance the visual qualities of the area by inclusion of greater architectural detailing.
- Reduce the visual dominance of cars by promoting enhanced boundary landscaping and planting.
- Incorporate renewable energy options where they are appropriate and electric vehicle charging points.
- Support proposals where they encourage active modes of transport.
- Maintain and reinforce the tree and landscape corridors along the railway line and the A141 to provide wildlife corridors.
- Promote opportunities for the enhancement of areas of planting and the Great Stukeley Railway Cutting SSSI to provide increased opportunities for wildlife and conservation.

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Huntingdon Character Area 18: Ermine Business Park and Washingley Road



Ermine Centre



Avro Court business unit demonstrating the architectural detailing and style found within the business park

5.109 Ermine Business Park extends northwards of the A141 (Spittals Way) accessed from Ermine Street and Spittals Way via a roundabout. It is an established employment area within the [Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036](#). The site is slightly irregular in shape with a pond between the southern part of the business park and Spittals Way. The site has a green gap between the boundary of the business park and Spittals Way which has planning permission for business uses so has been included within the character area. The site is located on an incline; the boundaries of the business park are well screened from the road by tree and hedge planting which limit its impacts on the surrounding landscape. Within the business park further tree planting along roads and within car parks serves to break up the appearance of car parking and buildings. Adjoining the site to the west, the [Local Plan to 2036](#) allocates land for a mixed use development under site allocation reference HU1 (Ermine Street).

5.110 The business park has expanded since the 1990s with the southern part of the site developed first and over time development connected it to the large warehouse building in the northern part of the site. The southern part of the site recognises the local ties to the RAF through street names such as Lancaster Way, Hurricane Close and Spitfire Close. The northern part of the site consists of several small units and one very large warehouse building which is screened by dense trees and hedges from the rest of the site. Within the park, units are organised in orthogonal blocks separated by roads and planting. The units are a mixture of buff brick and metal cladding. Some have colourful detailing to walls, roofs and window frames adding vibrancy to the character area, an example being Avro Court. The Ermine Centre adds further diversity in design and colouring with its distinctive white and black design. The Forum is a very distinctive building within the business park with its shallow roof line and large windows. These features fall within building type 5C.



The Forum

5.111 Washingley Road and Vantage Business Park are contiguous with Ermine Business Park lying directly to the north, accessed by their own junction from the A141. Vantage Park provides high quality modern accommodation with a pale buff and cream colour palette on predominantly two storey buildings. Into Washingley Road itself units are formed of pale grey metal cladding with cars dominating the frontages. A tree belt separates a single large distribution warehouse in the north of the area also providing screening from the A141 aspect.

5.112 The business park is well established but there is potential for expansion within the business park and to west. There is capacity for new units, extensions, change of use to other appropriate land uses or the renovation of older and vacant properties.

Development proposals should:

- Promote high standards of design and support creativity in architectural detailing.
- Reinforce the colour palettes of the adjoining buildings.
- Carefully consider the visual impact on the Central Claylands landscape character area in determining the potential for any expansion of the Ermine Business Park and Washingley Road to the north.
- Retain tree and hedge planting to screen the business uses from Ermine Street and from longer distance views from Green End.
- Support provision of renewable energy where appropriate.
- Support provision of facilities which encourage active modes of transport.

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Huntingdon Character Area 19: Hinchingsbrooke Estate



The Ornamental Lake within Hinchingsbrooke Country Park is an attractive feature in a woodland setting and rich in biodiversity.



Flamsteed Drive - large detached houses with brick detailing

- 5.113** Hinchingsbrooke is a large area to the west of Huntingdon railway station and south of the A14. Hinchingsbrooke Estate contains two sub-areas of residential development. Most of the area is united by its access via Hinchingsbrooke Park Road which is on a steady incline, creating an open character which then drops down into the country park on one side and down towards Hinchingsbrooke Business Park on the other. A link road to the northern section of the A1307 opened in September 2021. The area has a strong relationship with the surrounding landscape and areas of open space within Hinchingsbrooke Country Park.
- 5.114** The first sub-area is the smaller and consists of properties accessed off Snowdonia Way and Dartmoor Drive. These date from the late 20th century in a cul-de-sac layout typically with buff brick detached houses with bay windows and strong gable features, garages and on plot parking all comprising building type 3E. A small proportion of red brick homes add diversity to the character. Front gardens are typically 2 to 4 metres in depth contributing to the green nature of this area which also has extensive tree planting and areas of green space. This also enables room for on plot parking which reduces the impact of parked cars on the streetscape.
- 5.115** Further north, is the larger of the two sub areas. This is a more architecturally mixed area where development started in 1999 and was ongoing until 2020. The area benefits from substantial tree and hedge coverage. Christie Drive is a key access route into the estate, other points of access are found from Cromwell Drive and Flamsteed Drive. Development along Christie Drive demonstrates a mixture of the cul-de-sac layout and modern townhouse design with some properties being 3 storeys of symmetrical design of red and sand brick representing building type 3F. This aspect of the character area demonstrates the diverse mix of architectural styles, materials and detailing to be found in Hinchingsbrooke. Properties along the southern edge face onto the country park and benefit from views into Bobs Wood. Properties along the western edge have been carefully screened through tree planting from the A14. Within this residential area several local shops are integrated as well as a primary school (building types 5D and 7C). The Glades play area forms a central open space containing a variety of play equipment with homes arranged around it in a circular layout. There are several green footpaths increasing the permeability of the area.



Christie Drive

- 5.116** The site of the former forensic science laboratory along Christie Drive was redeveloped in 2019/20 for residential use as Cromwell Gardens with a combination of family sized housing ranging through to one bedroomed properties. Bloomfield Drive is the principal road which loops through the site; in the middle of this loop are several properties and a central piece of amenity space. This redevelopment is complementary to the existing surrounding uses and architectural styles with landscaped areas. It improves the gateway into the Hinchingsbrooke Estate and a continues active frontage on the north side of Christie Drive.
- 5.117** Adjoining the Hinchingsbrooke Estate is Hinchingsbrooke Country Park which is a fundamental influencer on the character of this area. The Country Park is not included within the boundary of the character area as it covers an extensive area. Hinchingsbrooke Country Park was opened in April 1989. Historically, it formed part of the large estate surrounding Hinchingsbrooke House which is now part of Hinchingsbrooke School. It consists of several scenic woodland walks, large lakes and bodies of water and open land. These attract a vast range of people and supports many local sports and activity groups as well as being a source of rich habitat and biodiversity. This makes it a valuable community asset. To support the growing need for additional open space and green infrastructure, the [Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036](#) has allocated some 27.5ha of land to extend the Country Park.
- 5.118** The character of the Hinchingsbrooke Estate has continued to evolve through residential development. Following recent developments, there are limited opportunities for further major development, however, extensions to properties and small scale infill may be accommodated.

Development proposals should:

- Maintain and enhance physical and visual connections to key buildings and landscape views.
- Encourage screen planting along the boundary of the A1307 to provide a more substantial landscape buffer to areas of residential development.
- Protect areas of mature trees and develop a strategy for their long term maintenance and replacement where appropriate.
- Ensure extensions and alterations to existing properties are of an appropriate scale and design to the surrounding area.
- Reflect the existing materials and colour palette in any building extensions to reflect existing properties using predominantly red and sand brick with some buff and grey brick, brown concrete tiles and red pantiles.
- Ensure adequate provision of car parking to reduce the impact on the street scene of on-street parking.
- Protect and reinforce the network of footpaths set in green corridors to aid wildlife corridors and nature conservation, particularly on the edge of the residential estate where they closely relate to the adjoining Country Park.
- Support initiatives for the creation of additional services and community facilities within the residential area possibly through conversion or redevelopment.

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Huntingdon Character Area 20: Hinchingsbrooke Civic Area



Hinchingsbrooke House from the south front, this part of the school is predominately used by sixth form students but also holds some functions and weddings.



Hinchingsbrooke Hospital - civic buildings set in open landscaping

- 5.119** This character area contains a mix of uses including Hinchingsbrooke Hospital and associated medical accommodation and police headquarters built following the land being sold to the County Council in 1962. The area also includes a secondary school with a rich history tied to the Hinchingsbrooke Estate. The buildings within this character area demonstrate building types including 2E and 7B.
- 5.120** The extensive grounds of Hinchingsbrooke School link directly to Hinchingsbrooke Country Park and relate to the wider landscape of the Ouse Valley landscape character area. The school includes a series of listed buildings, including the grade I listed Hinchingsbrooke House which is visible from Brampton Road above a surrounding grade II* wall. The house originates from the 16th century and is of stone and brick with substantial remodelling in the 1830s and roofs are castellated throughout giving a striking appearance. Also grade I listed is the gatehouse which dates from 1500 and was moved from Ramsey Abbey by the Cromwells. The remaining elements of the school grounds consist of a variety of buildings dating from the late 1960s onwards through to 2020. These are used as classrooms, sports hall, swimming pool, Performing Arts Centre, reception and caretaker facilities.
- 5.121** Hinchingsbrooke Hospital in the northern part of the character area is set within an open landscape with hospital buildings and car parking visible from across much of the Hinchingsbrooke Estate. It is set up on the inclining Hinchingsbrooke Park Road with residential properties to the south and west and the business park to the north. Buildings are mostly utilitarian in style and comprise one or two storeys but with no cohesive design or colour palette. On the eastern and southern edges hospital staff accommodation is situated which is mostly brick built. Further east lie the Cambridgeshire Constabulary and the Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue headquarters. Again these are fairly utilitarian buildings ranging from one to three storeys, mostly in pale shades with some blue framed windows,
- 5.122** There are several tree belts in the character area: on its eastern boundary, the hospital and former police playing fields are shielded from the open landscape of Views Common, with the Brampton Road Water Tower visible, which is on an incline towards Hinchingsbrooke. Along the southern boundary of the hospital a substantial tree belt and footpath separate it from the former playing police playing field; a further tree belt exists along Hinchingsbrooke Park Road. As of 2021 this part of the character area is undergoing considerable change. The Views Common link road opened in September



Tree belt

2021 connecting Hinchingsbrooke Park Road to the A1307. Part of the former playing fields is allocated for development in the [Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036](#) for residential and care uses and Water Tower has planning permission for conversion to offices.

5.123 This character area is undergoing change and expected to undergo further change through major development complimentary to the existing land uses and landscape setting.

Development proposals should:

- Ensure that development responds positively to the specific opportunities available to reinforce the civic nature of the area.
- Support and retain the current uses in the character area through renovation, refurbishment or extensions to buildings.
- Maintain and enhance physical and visual connections to key buildings and landscape views.
- Protect and conserve Hinchingsbrooke House and its associated listed buildings as well as its landscape setting.
- Reflect appropriate architectural detailing, materials and colour palette in the design of new buildings.
- Retain the existing tree belts between the hospital and former police field, Hinchingsbrooke Park Road and between Views Common and former playing field.
- Protect the existing wide grass verges along Hinchingsbrooke Park Road that provide the spacious setting to development served from this road.
- Support provision of facilities which encourage active modes of transport.

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Huntingdon Character Area 21: Hinchingsbrooke Business Park



The Marriott Hotel



Business unit within Ramsay Court demonstrates colour detailing to add visual interest and cycle parking spaces with some planting

5.124 To the north of the Hinchingsbrooke residential and civic character areas is Hinchingsbrooke Business Park, it is the smallest of the four established employment areas within Huntingdon identified in the [Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036](#). The business park has developed since the end of the 1990s, first developed was the buff and red brick Marriott Hotel and a warehouse. The park has continued to grow since and is now a mixed use area with many commercial businesses and industrial workshops based there.

5.125 Units vary in size and are modern in design with large windows, buff brick, low pitch roofs and a variety of colours providing detailing to window surrounds and brickwork which provides diversity and contrast in the colour palette for the area. Several units have solar panels and covered areas dedicated for cycle parking. These units exemplify building type 5C.

5.126 The park is bounded to the north west by A141 which links to the A1 and new A14 at Brampton Hut and to the north east by the A1307 which leads to the Views Common link road. Large scale buildings on the business park are highly visible from the surrounding roads. There is vehicular and pedestrian access to the business park from the residential estate, however extensive tree and hedge planting screens the commercial uses of the business park from properties along Parkway, Dyson Close and Halley Close. There is extensive tree planting along the internal road layout of the estate creating a green and attractive feel to the business park, between trees signage is interspersed throughout. Ramsay Court, a mixture of semi detached and detached units have created an enclosed space with car parking in the centre. The openness of the car park is broken up by tree planting and the use of different coloured materials to define spaces.

5.127 The business park is well established, there is some capacity for new units, extensions, change of use to other appropriate land uses or the renovation of older and vacant properties.



Unit within Falcon Court

Development proposals should:

- Promote high standards of design and support creativity in architectural detailing.
- Reflect the materials and colour palette of immediately surrounding buildings.
- Carefully consider their visual impact on the Central Claylands landscape character area.
- Maintain and reinforce the planting and landscaping around car parking areas to minimise their visual dominance.
- Retain and maintain existing tree and hedge planting, particularly along the A14 and to Hinchingsbrooke Estate.
- Support proposals for renewable energy where they are appropriate and electric vehicle charging points.
- Support active modes of transport like cycling.

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Brampton

5.128 Brampton is located within the valley of the River Great Ouse approximately 2 miles south east of Huntingdon and 9 miles north of St Neots.

Landscape Setting

5.129 Brampton is located within the Ouse Valley Landscape Character Area and its immediate landscape setting to the north and east is provided by the valley floor and gentle valley sides of the river floodplain. The village lies between the A1 to the west, Thrapston Road and Alconbury Brook tributary valley to the north, the valley of the River Great Ouse to the east and former RAF Brampton to the south. Originally, the village of Brampton was founded on a narrow shoulder of land, running east west between the Alconbury Brook and the River Great Ouse Valley.

5.130 The traditional Ouse Valley landscapes are of inherently high quality containing areas of pasture, water meadows and wetland vegetation with willow trees a strong feature. These provide a strong landscape setting for the historic core of the village and strong physical and visual links to the Ouse Valley and River Great Ouse giving it a strong sense of place. This is particularly noticeable on the eastern edge of the village which is still rural in nature with limited residential development along it and which looks out onto the Ouse Valley Way and Brampton Park Golf Course.

5.131 The village is largely segregated from the former RAF base (now Brampton Park) site to the south by a belt of open, arable land which forms a green wedge along the southern village edge demarcated by streams and a significant belt of vegetation along the northern edge of Brampton Park. Housing development since the 1970s has extended the historic core south down to one of the tributaries of the River Great Ouse providing these properties with a strong visual connection to the Ouse Valley. The northern and southern parts of the village are connected by a string of development along Buckden Road.

Edges and Visual Prominence

5.132 Brampton is visually contained and the village centre is not openly visible from the surrounding landscape or major highway network. This high degree of visual containment results from the relatively low lying and flat topography, the screening and segregating effect of surrounding transportation corridors, and established vegetation along the village edges, notably along Buckden Road and the B1514 (Thrapston Road). The exception is the residential development to the western edge of the village which is highly visible from the elevated junction of the A1 and A14, and from the distant ridge at Alconbury. The A1 and A14 form a strong western edge to the village, with development along Thrapston Road closest to the highway network.

5.133 Hinchingsbrooke Country Park lies beyond the B1514 to the north of the village with its wetland areas and woodland combining to create a highly distinctive landscape of significant wildlife value. To the west and south west, beyond the A1, the landform rises and the character of the landscape changes to that of the Southern Wolds. Whilst the Southern Wolds do not greatly influence the character of Brampton largely due to the physical and visual separation provided by the A1 with its associated road embankments, fencing and planting, the landscape to the western and southern edges of the village lies at the junction of the Wolds and the Ouse Valley, and can therefore be regarded as transitional. The open agricultural land which lies to the south of the village provides the immediate landscape setting to the adjacent residential areas.

Townscape Character

5.134 A total of ten urban character areas have been identified (Figure 5.2 and can be viewed on the [interactive map](#)). The character of Brampton is varied, but the most notable area is the historic core defined by buildings along both sides of the High Street and to the northern end of Buckden Road. The core has several listed buildings and is designated as a conservation area with an attractive green located towards the centre of the village opposite Brampton Primary School. Notable landmarks include the church of St Mary Magdelene and Pepy's Farmhouse on the eastern outskirts.

- 5.135** The village has since grown substantially through residential development including several estates first built to accommodate personnel from the former RAF Brampton to the south and further residential estates on the eastern, northern and western edges of the village comprising of cul-de sac layouts. Along the south and eastern edges of the village, linear development along Buckden Road including residential properties, a garden centre, golf course and car dealership has further extended the village into the Ouse Valley and connects this part of the settlement to the core village and Brampton Park. Brampton Park is a mixed use redevelopment of principally the northern part of the former RAF base with the remaining elements of the site still being used for housing military personnel.
- 5.136** The road layout within the village has been influenced by improvements to the A1 and A14, which have severed a number of roads which originally connected the village to the wider landscape to the north and west. The B1514 is a busy road which provides a connection to Huntingdon to the north east, and to the westbound carriageway of the A141 linking to the A1.

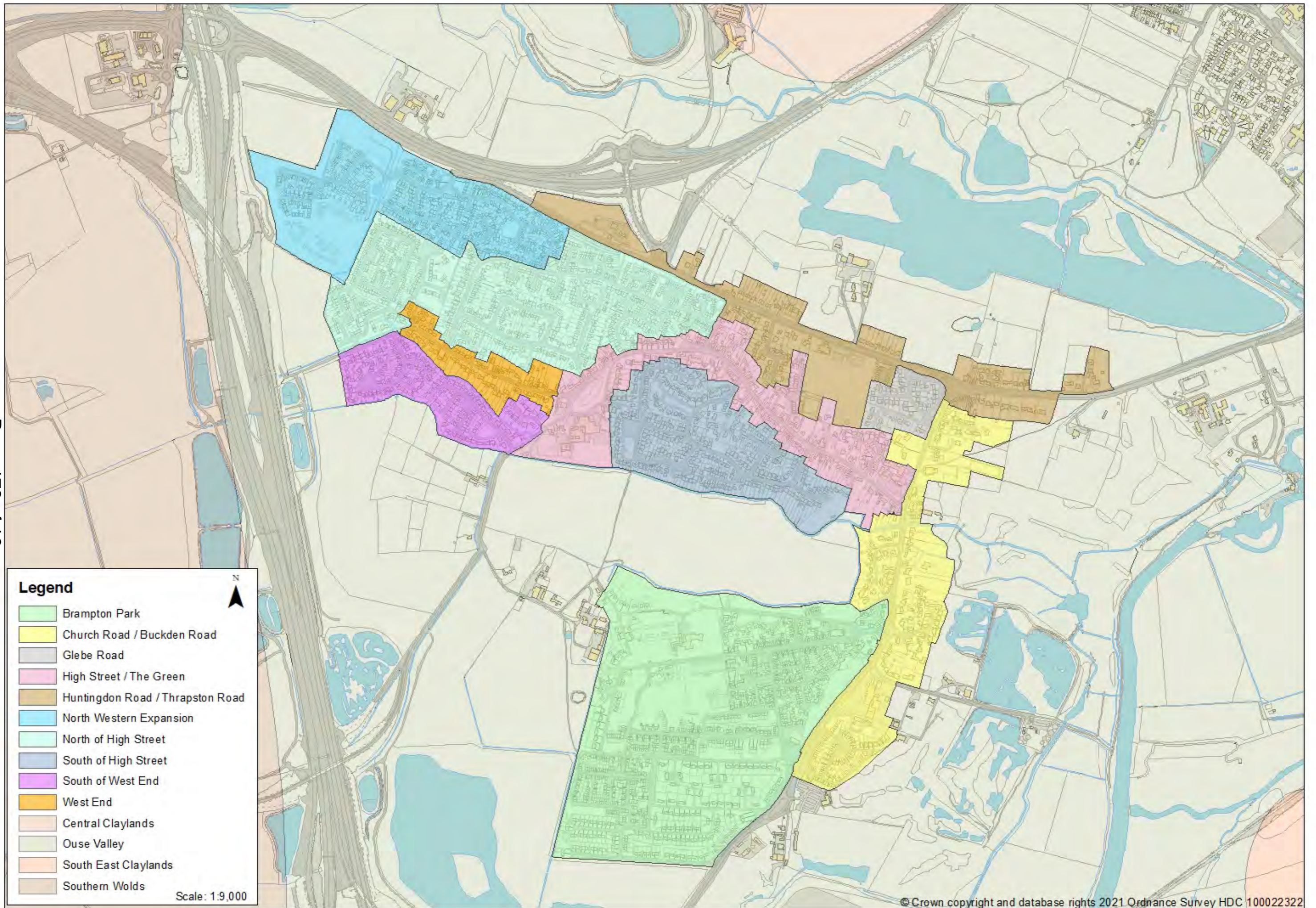


Figure 5.2 Brampton Character Areas

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Key Features

Historic routes	The High Street and the Green
Historic gateways	Along West End to the Green and High Street
Landmarks	St Mary's Church, Pepys Farmhouse and the Green
Memorable areas	High Street and the Green
Key views	To east over the Ouse Valley and to the north towards Hinchingsbrooke Park



Thatched cottage facing The Green



St Mary Magdalene Church



View from Thrapston Road to the Ouse Valley



Brampton Park is a redevelopment of the former RAF base

Brampton Character Area 1: High Street/The Green



The Manor care home set amongst mature trees



High Street streetscene at the junction with Horseshoes Way

5.137 The character area broadly follows the boundary of Brampton Conservation Area. It includes the High Street which runs into the centre of the village to the Green. It is roughly semi-circular in shape with some elements extending irregularly outward to include in depth development and the development of back land accessed via the High Street, for example Walnut Tree Grove and Garner Close. The area includes some of Grove Lane as the buildings here relate most closely to the High Street, for example the grade II listed Glen Cottage. This character area is predominantly residential with local services and civic buildings including public houses, a post office, convenience shops, care facilities, places of worship, a church hall and a sports and social club.



Shops along the High Street

5.138 The approach to the village from the eastern edge has an enclosed and leafy nature where significant tree planting and hedgerows have been maintained, resulting in buildings being well screened from pedestrians and vehicles. The Manor care home located on the junction between Church Road and the High Street is an example of this. This character area has largely retained its original townscape value, however, there has been some modern infill development of varying styles. From the High Street, there has been some in depth modern infill developments, for example Manor Close with large detached mock Tudor and red brick properties and some tile fronted ones from the 1980s and Garner Close with terraced development built in the 2010s. As a result, the character area has a variety of building types ranging from 1B, 2A, 2B, 2C, 2E, 3A, 3D, 3E, 3F, 5B, 6B, 7A and 7B.

5.139 No. 115 High Street, also known as the Grange is not listed but is an imposing red brick Georgian building in its own fairly substantial grounds in a prominent position with the street scene (building type 2E). A low front brick wall defines the frontage with several mature trees on site. Vehicular access is arranged in an 'in and out' arrangement directly from the High Street. It was converted into 12 flats and maisonettes in 2016.

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5.140 The High Street contains a wide range of property types and sizes drawn together by the predominant buff brick building material interspersed with a few red brick and rendered properties. The prevalence of mature trees is a strong feature at either end of the High Street with buildings set further back from the road frontage than in the central stretch. The Brampton Institute forms a landmark building and is a striking example of late Victorian civic building. Adding further interest is 107 High Street. This is a mid 19th century grade II listed cottage of octagonal plan and one storey with gardens to all sides with a low boundary wall up to the pavement. It was originally an infirmary erected by Lady Olivia Bernard Sparrow, a prominent local figure who lived in Brampton Park House.



Brampton Institute

5.141 Further west from the High Street is the Green. The Green forms a distinctive element of this character area. It has substantial mature trees around all sides with places to sit and enjoy its peaceful nature. This is an attractive part of the village with its diverse range of properties and architectural detailing adding further historic interest and distinctiveness to the character area.

5.142 There are a few 17th century timber framed thatched cottages facing onto the Green, some of which are listed buildings. Other properties include several Victorian houses and a Methodist Church with red brick detailing above windows and doors and ornate chimneys. Some mid-19th century properties have 'OBS' carved onto their frontage referring to Lady Olivia Bernard Sparrow who commissioned them and represent building type 2C. Typically properties built during the 20th century are set back further from the road with generous front gardens behind a low brick wall or fence. The village primary school faces onto the southern edge of the Green. The original Victorian school building faces onto the Green along with some hard standing and car parking; the site also contains modern extensions. This diverse range of properties and uses are all drawn together by their situation fronting onto the open space.



Methodist Church and thatched cottage facing the Green

5.143 There are limited opportunities for new development within the character area, future development should seek to enhance and conserve the existing character of the area.

Development proposals should:

- Enrich the character of the area by reinforcing and acknowledging its historic character.
- Protect and conserve the historic buildings located along the High Street, Church Road and around the Green.
- Promote high standards of design and architectural detailing to enhance the historic character of the area.
- Protect the existing mature trees and hedgerows where these contribute to the character of the street scene.
- Reflect the existing materials and colour palette of red and buff brick, timber framing, white and pastel painted brickwork and render. Plain gault clay tiles, slate and thatch.
- Support initiatives for the retention of existing or creation of additional services and community facilities.
- Conserve and reflect the intimate scale of the compact historic centre through the control of shopfront design and building renovations.
- Conserve and maintain the village green.
- Enhance and support initiatives for rights of way throughout the village to key services and to the wider countryside.

Brampton Character Area 2: Church Road/ Buckden Road



Black Bull Public House and the pastel rendered Manor Cottage



Housing in River Lane relates to the surrounding countryside

5.144 Church Road and Buckden Road is a historically important area within the village, and with the High Street they form a sideways 'T' shape in the road layout. It is predominantly residential with some community facilities and services such as a parish church, church hall, public house, Frosts Garden Centre and access to a golf club. Properties are of mixed ages including bungalows and two storey properties. Infill development has occurred over time providing a variety in design along Buckden Road. Consequently there is a variety of building types in this character area ranging from 1B, 2A, 2B, 3A, 3B, 3D, 3E, 3F, 6A and 7A.

5.145 It is a characterful area with several listed buildings. A key landmark is the grade I listed St Mary's Church. A parish church was mentioned on the site in the Domesday Survey of 1086 but the chancel is 13th century and the nave, north and south aisles are 16th century with the west tower built in 1635. Others are located in close proximity to the Parish Church such as the grade II listed nos. 19 and 21 Church Road which are a pair of 17th century timber framed single storey with attic cottages of plaster render with thatched roofs and a shared red brick ridge stack. Another is the grade II listed Black Bull Public House which is a late 16th century (possibly earlier) timber framed and roughcast rendered house of three bays and lobby entry plan. It had a carriageway but was filled in with a window in the 20th century. Other non-listed buildings such as the Church Hall add diversity and interest to this area.



St Mary Magdalene Church

5.146 Over the last century several in depth residential areas have taken place demonstrating building types 3D, 3E and 3F. For example along Church Road with Pepys Road (a short road with mid-20th century bungalows) and also further down along Buckden Road with Allen's Orchard and St George's Close. Allen's Orchard is located on the western side of Buckden Road and consists of large detached 1980s

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homes. They connect the village at the southern point of the High Street and and the northern point of Brampton Park and overlook the green wedge that dissects the village. St George's Close is a similar development located on the eastern side opposite Brampton Park at the roundabout.

5.147 Baker Close, a 21st century addition to the village is unusual as it is set within a farmyard style courtyard reflecting the previous use of the site as part of Manor Farm. It complements the style and nature of the historic centre and conservation area and benefits from views out across the Ouse Valley. From the High Street, the development creates a strong terminating vista. Finally, the most recent major addition to this area has come at Sarazen Gardens with a mixture of housing types including large detached homes, short terraces and a block of flats in its southern western corner. They benefit from views out over Brampton Golf Course.



St George's Close

5.148 The character area has a close relationship with the Ouse Valley landscape character area with many properties containing substantial mature trees adding to the character of the area and emphasising this relationship. River Lane also relates strongly to the Ouse Valley with well spaced properties benefiting from extensive landscape views and dense shrubbery and tree planting creating a rural feel separated from the main village. There is also a plant nursery located along here. The extensive grounds of Brampton Golf Course provides additional openness and enjoyment to the wider landscape. The location of Frosts Garden Centre here complements this relationship through its horticultural nature. Due to its location within the Ouse Valley and the extensive networks of tributaries and water bodies to the east of the area, the area is in parts at higher risk of flooding.



Sarazen Gardens

5.149 There are limited opportunities for major new development in this character area as a result of its connection to the surrounding landscape and flooding constraints.

Development proposals should:

- Protect and conserve the historic buildings and conservation area and their settings.
- Protect the existing mature trees and hedgerows where these contribute to the character of the street scene.
- Protect the landscape setting of the Ouse Valley and maintain existing views out across it.
- Reflect the existing materials and colour palette of red and buff brick, white and pastel painted brickwork and render. Plain gault clay tiles and slate.
- Ensure extensions and alterations to existing properties are of an appropriate size and scale to the original dwelling and do not detract from the surrounding area.
- Promote opportunities for wildlife and conservation within the Ouse Valley.
- Enhance and support additional opportunities for public rights of way throughout the Ouse Valley and to the wider countryside as well as services located in the main village.
- Support initiatives for the retention of existing or creation of additional services and community facilities.
- Consider the impact of potential flooding from tributaries of the River Ouse on new development and how careful design can mitigate this.

Brampton Character Area 3: South of High Street



Lenton Way tile hung property with a spacious setting



Horseshoe Way includes a cluster of detached bungalows providing variety to the housing mix

5.150 Since the 1950s Brampton has expanded rapidly around its High Street. The residential development to the south of the High Street is a distinctive area within the village based on the types of houses and its relationship to the Ouse Valley and the green wedge that dissects the village separating the main village from Brampton Park. The area has several green spaces and grass verges allowing for planting which in combination with the lower density form of development and many single storey properties provide the area with an open and leafy character. There are small footpaths in between properties increasing permeability to the High Street.

5.151 The building type found in greatest abundance is type 3D. The principal road is Horseshoes Way which slopes downwards from the High Street. Properties in this area were mainly built in the 1960s and 1970s, whilst containing a mix of bungalows, semi-detached and detached homes the styles have common features including tile hung fronts, weatherboards and large windows. They typically have shallow or moderate depth front gardens separating properties from the street scene often with relatively narrow pavements. Hilary Lodge is a large building which contrasts the general style of the area albeit utilises the same materials. It is located along Horseshoes Way near to the High Street ideal for residents to access local services and shops. It contains 28 self contained retirement flats and bungalows built in 1960.



Hilary Lodge

5.152 Properties along the southern edge of the area along Horseshoes Way and Lenton Close are set in long rectangular plots, the gardens are generous and extend to a tributary of the River Ouse and overlook the green wedge that dissects the village to the south. These properties are at a significant risk of flooding due to their location. Long range views from this part of the character area are somewhat screened by tree and hedgerow planting through which Brampton Park can be seen as well as wider countryside views.

5.153 There are limited opportunities for further significant development within this character area so are generally limited to extensions and alterations to existing properties.

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Development proposals should:

- Protect the existing trees where these contribute to the character of the street scene and consider ways of increasing vegetation cover where space and service restrictions permit.
- Ensure extensions and alterations to existing properties are of an appropriate scale and design to the surrounding area.
- Reflect the existing materials and colour palette of buff brick, white and pastel painted brickwork and render. Plain gault clay tiles and slate.
- Promote opportunities for enhancement of amenity green spaces to provide increased opportunities for recreation and nature conservation and to help provide distinctive local landmarks.
- Where possible increase tree and vegetation planting to screen the impact of development on the Ouse Valley landscape.
- Consider the impact of potential flooding from tributaries of the River Ouse on new development and how careful design can mitigate this.
- Where visually appropriate seek to incorporate renewable energy options.

Brampton Character Area 4: West End



Lavender Cottage is one of the older properties along West End



21st century infill Carrington Place off West End

5.154 West End is a linear character area that diverges from the Green and has a mixed but locally distinctive nature. It is residential with a wide range of house types ranging from 1B, 2A, 2B, 3B, 3D, 3E and 3F. Despite the range in house types and the occurrence of vernacular cottages, there are no listed buildings in the character area, however, some cottages are still locally significant in the street scene. Materials vary from thatch, pan tiles, buff brick, red brick and rendering. House types vary ranging from bungalows, semi-detached, detached, terraced to cottages. The southern side in particular tends to include properties with mature trees. The properties on the southern side also have more varied plot lengths as these end at the brook which runs through this area, resulting in some having very long narrow gardens.

5.155 The building line is varied with some properties fronting directly onto the footpath while others have some front gardens and boundary markers such as low hedges or walls to clearly mark out public and private space. Typically later properties have this greater separation than those from the 19th century and earlier. Some older properties also vary which elevation fronts onto the road, some have side and front elevations that run along the road, whereas later properties have a more conventional front elevation facing the road. Some properties have as a result limited on plot parking and cars are parked on street. As well as a varied building line, the roof lines also vary greatly, this is attributed to the variety of building styles but also bungalows found along West End and providing further diversity in the types of housing.

5.156 Several properties stand out within the area. Lavender Cottage is an example of a thatch roofed rendered vernacular cottage found along West End, there are several other examples which are also thatch but constructed from brick. There is also a small terrace of Victorian properties with a distinct flat roof with prominent chimneys. They contrast the general pattern of detached homes in this area. Modern infill development has in some cases occurred through the subdivision of large plots, such as in the corner plot 3 West End.



Flat roofed terraces

5.157 The largest recent infill development is found in the north western edge of the character area at Carrington Mews and Carrington Place. These are examples of 21st century infill development that add greater variety in the types of homes within the character area. While utilising modern design principles they also reflect the materiality, design and style of properties found within the High Street. Larger properties have symmetrical proportions with dormer windows. These are a mixture of terraced properties some of buff brick others of white render exterior. Properties have modest front gardens with boundary makers clearly separating public and private space. Those facing onto Carrington

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Mews have access to a rear parking court with residential use above providing a small break in the street scene. Opposite this infill development several large white rendered detached properties have been built which broadly reflect elements of the mixed styles, materials and designs found along West End.

5.158 This is a characterful area derived from the range of building types and proximity to Brampton's conservation area. There are limited development opportunities remaining apart from extensions and alterations to existing properties.

Development proposals should:

- Consider the impact on neighbouring properties and those that are locally significant to the area's character.
- Protect the existing trees where these contribute to the character of the street scene and consider ways of increasing vegetation cover where space and service restrictions permit.
- Ensure extensions and alterations to existing properties are of an appropriate scale and design to the surrounding area.
- Reflect the existing materials and colour palette of the immediate vicinity.
- Promote high standards of design and architectural detailing.
- Consider the impact of potential flooding from tributaries of the River Ouse on new development and how design can mitigate this.

Brampton Character Area 5: South of West End



Elizabethan Way semi-detached property with a side extension



Riddiford Crescent central greenspace with properties around

5.159 This is a residential character area located to the south of West End and forms the south-western built edge of the village. It has three clusters of homes within it focused around Elizabethan Way, Centenary Road and Willow Close. Building types consist of 3D, 3E and 3F. Between all three sub-areas, there are no pedestrian routes through to either which reduces the permeability of the character area as whole. Throughout are several trees protected by Tree Preservation Orders.

5.160 Willow Close is a short road accessed from Park Road consisting of 12 detached homes set in spacious plots. Materials include brick, most have either rendering or weatherboarding elements to the design, flat roofed side garages are common although some have steeply pitched roofs which line up with the property roofline adding diversity. Some properties have first floor extensions over garages. There is on plot parking with driveways and some generous front gardens allowing additional tree, hedge and flower planting creating a leafy character.



Willow Close

5.161 Adjoining these properties but on the other side of a brook are more recent properties along Centenary Way. These were built in the 1990s and consist of large detached homes. Plots again are large with on plot parking but shorter front gardens with fewer established trees or hedges although there are some low boundary hedges. Materials are a mixture of buff and red brick and rendering with a variety of house types with features such as dormer windows, double garages, dramatic gables, porches and bay windows. There is a central green space with properties organised around it along Riddiford Crescent which provides an open feel and additional play space. A tree belt forms a clear boundary between the southern edge of the development and screens the presence of properties from view to the wider countryside.

5.162 The final sub-area is Elizabethan Way located to the north west of Centenary Way. Properties date from the 1970s and consist of predominantly two storey detached and semi-detached homes with the opportunity for extensions. There is on plot parking as well as some bungalows dispersed throughout adding greater diversity in housing types in this area. Vehicular access to the area is via West End. As with Centenary Way, there is a large central green space with established trees with properties organised around it. Plots are typically rectangular and more uniform and less spacious than the two other areas. Tree belts to the western and southern edges provide important screens to the wider countryside and follows the tributaries and brooks of the River Ouse.



Large gables in Riddiford Crescent

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5.163 This is an established residential area with few opportunities apart from extensions and alterations to existing properties.

Development proposals should:

- Protect the existing trees where these contribute to the character of the street scene and consider ways of increasing vegetation cover where space and service restrictions permit.
- Ensure extensions and alterations to existing properties are of an appropriate scale and design to the surrounding area.
- Reflect the existing materials and colour palette of the immediate vicinity.
- Promote opportunities for enhancement of amenity green spaces to provide increased opportunities for recreation and nature conservation and to help provide distinctive local landmarks.
- Where possible increase tree and vegetation planting to screen the impact of development on the Ouse Valley landscape.
- Consider the impact of potential flooding from tributaries of the River Ouse on new development and how careful design can mitigate this.
- Where possible incorporate renewable energy generation.

Brampton Character Area 6: North of High Street



Short terraces and semi-detached houses dominate the area around Mandeville Road



Waterloo Close is one of several residential streets where properties face toward areas of amenity space with fences, garages and parking spaces occupying the centre of the close

5.164 Since the 1950s Brampton has expanded rapidly around its High Street. Residential development to the north has taken the built up limits of the village out to Thrapston Road and extended westwards towards the A1 and A14 around West End and eastwards up to Grove Lane.

5.165 The area north of the High Street comprises housing built in the 1950s, 60s and 70s. Throughout the area there are verges and open green spaces with numerous mature trees, many of which are protected under a Tree Preservation Order. These create a green feel which in addition to the pockets of green space at the front and side of houses create an attractive and village like quality. There are also small footpaths in between properties increasing permeability throughout the area.

5.166 The building type found in greatest abundance here is 3D with some minor infill development diversifying this to include 3E and 3F sporadically throughout. Predominant materials include pale grey and dark red bricks, dark roof tiles and some weatherboarding and tile hung fronts. Housing has also evolved through later extensions and alterations to meet changing needs. Generally these have been sensitively integrated. While not all built at the same time, properties demonstrate variations in design and materials that share a consistent character. This provides the character area with many varying architectural styles creating various points of interest. The area is residential but also includes a local convenience shop and a doctor's surgery. The surgery is a distinctive flat roofed single storey building (building type 7B).



New build on Mandeville Road

5.167 Miller Way is the principal road throughout the area connecting West End to Grove Lane. There are several short closes and roads diverging from it, examples include Emery Close, Waterloo Close and Spinney Close. Properties are organised around the short road facing outward with parking spaces, garages and boundary fences dominating the centre of the street scene. Properties on corner plots often face onto neighbouring closes reducing the active frontages onto the main spine road.

5.168 The western extent of the character area is Hansell Road which extends northwards forming Belle Isle Crescent. Properties along Hansell Road and Belle Isle Crescent predominantly consist of short terraces and semi-detached properties of buff and red bricks and occasionally some pastel coloured rendered elevations. The orthogonal road pattern within Belle Isle Crescent creates a uniform layout to the area with properties equally spaced and plots similar sizes. This style of development is continued on along Olivia Road, Mandeville Road and the western part of Miller Way although

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greater diversity is observed through staggered terraces, bungalows and semi-detached homes with hipped roofs, porches and greater variation in fenestration. Most properties have on plot parking spaces but there are several examples of garage courts and parking areas.

5.169 A small group of three storey flats adds to the diversity of the street scene in Williams Close, these contrast the general form of development and provide additional diversity in housing options. The flats are also surrounded by open space and established trees.

5.170 Hanover Court in the eastern part of the character area provides greater variation in housing types in this area. It is a complex of 33 retirement flats ranging from 1 to 3 bedrooms built in 1981 arranged in four main groups. Apartments have shared gardens, residents' lounge and guest facilities and a central parking area and are within a few minutes walking distance to the High Street. Around is generous amenity space and footpaths with established trees and hedging particularly along Thrapston Road.



William Close flats

5.171 This is an established residential area with few opportunities remaining for minor infill development, instead there are greater opportunities for extensions and alterations to existing properties.

Development proposals should:

- Promote opportunities for enhanced screening to Thrapston Road.
- Reflect the existing materials and colour palette of the immediate vicinity.
- Ensure extensions and alterations to existing properties are of an appropriate scale and design to the surrounding area.
- Ensure that new development responds positively to the specific opportunities available within the area.
- Support initiatives for the provision of services and community facilities within the residential area possibly through conversion or redevelopment.
- Promote opportunities for enhancement of amenity green spaces to provide increased opportunities for recreation and nature conservation and to help provide distinctive local landmarks.
- Protect and conserve where possible trees protected by a Tree Preservation Order.
- Maintain and enhance where possible walkways connecting to other residential areas and areas where community services and facilities are located.
- Where visually appropriate incorporate renewable energy options.

Brampton Character Area 7: North Western Expansion



New housing at Brampton Gate includes a variety of sizes and finishes



Detached housing at Lomax Drive is predominantly red brick and some have scope for extensions

5.172 The northwest of the village has continued to see residential expansion towards the physical confines imposed by Thrapston Road and the A1 since the 1980s. Housing styles are different to those from the mid-20th century with greater quantities of larger detached homes and variation in building materials such as mass produced red brick and mock Tudor panelling which were frequently used house building trends during the 1980s and 1990s.

5.173 Laws Crescent connects to Thrapston Road in the northernmost point of the character area while Lomax Drive is a key road connecting this later expansion area to Miller Way in the south. A pedestrian route connects to Crane Street which extends this character area to the east also connecting to Miller Way. Generally, there are few footpath connections with estate access roads restricting the permeability of the estate particularly to residential streets in the adjoining residential character area. This area includes mainly detached houses with some semi-detached and bungalows (building types include 3E). Homes are a mixture of red and buff brick with limited detailing with shallow and moderate front gardens and on plot parking. A cul-de sac street layout predominates with some roads blocked off to reduce vehicles rat-running and few landmarks to aid navigation. There is a reasonable amount of tree and hedge planting along front gardens and to the side of properties creating a pleasant feel to the character area. Along Crane Street is a large area of open space with tree planting around its edges providing a tranquil spot.

5.174 There is further expansion of this residential area from Laws Crescent and Dorling Way which has secured screening, noise and pollution buffers particularly along the A1 and former A14. The site is allocated in the [Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036](#) under site allocation HU10. The area includes a diverse range of house types and sizes including some maisonettes and bungalows with two storey properties dominating. This range is brought together through a cohesive palette of materials and colours focusing on buff brick, pale render and dark grey plain roof tiles. A seasonal pond set in a substantial landscaping area forms the northern boundary to this area with informal open space throughout the development. The majority of the open space is situated around the edges of the site, acting as a buffer to the A1, former A14 and providing a degree of separation to the existing residential properties to the east of the site. This arrangement creates a green edge to the site, delivering a transition to the open countryside to the south and east.



Brampton Gate from seasonal pond

5.175 There are limited opportunities for further significant development within this character area, however there may be some opportunity for extensions to existing properties.

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Development proposals should:

- Promote opportunities for enhanced screening to Thrapston Road and A1 and protect existing landscape buffers.
- Reflect the existing materials and colour palette of red and buff brick, white and pastel painted brickwork and render. Plain gault clay tiles and slate.
- Ensure extensions and alterations to existing properties are of an appropriate scale and design to the surrounding area.
- Ensure that new development responds positively to the specific opportunities available within the area.
- Support initiatives for the provision of services and community facilities within the residential area possibly through conversion or redevelopment.
- Maintain screening from traffic noise from the A1 and A14.
- Promote opportunities for enhancement of amenity green spaces to provide increased opportunities for recreation and nature conservation and to help provide distinctive local landmarks.
- Where possible incorporate renewable energy generation.

Brampton Character Area 8: Huntingdon Road/Thrapston Road



Linear development on Thrapston Road interspersed with views through to the Ouse Valley



Terraces along Huntingdon Road facing onto the roundabout between Huntingdon Road, Church Road and Thrapston Road

5.176 Thrapston Road/ Huntingdon Road (the B1514) is located on the north eastern edge of the village and connects to Huntingdon to the east. There is a roundabout which forms a junction between Huntingdon Road, Church Road/Buckden Road to the south and onwards to Thrapston Road to the west. Buildings and properties are characterised by their relationship with the road. Building types are varied including 1A, 2A, 2B, 3B, 3D, 3E, 3F and 7C. Some of the character area falls within the Brampton Conservation Area.

5.177 Development along Huntingdon Road and Thrapston Road is primarily linear ribbon type development with landscape gaps looking over and into Hinchingsbrooke Country Park, although for stretches of the road a fence and dense tree planting prevents longer range views to the countryside. Its proximity to Hinchingsbrooke Country Park and Alconbury Brook means that parts of the character area are at higher risk of flooding. On the approach into the village from Huntingdon is Pepys House a property from the late 16th/ early 17th century with alterations made in the 18th and 20th centuries. It is grade I listed and is a distinctive timber framed building, rendered with a jettied first floor and underbuilt in brick. It is obscured from public view largely due to a boundary hedge albeit still contributes to the historic character of the village on this approach.

5.178 Residential properties predominantly date from the mid-20th century, some single storey but mostly two storeys mixed between detached, semi-detached and terraced forms. Further west where the road becomes Thrapston Road additional house types exist with semi-detached pairs of pebble dashed and render design with hipped roofs. Generally these are well screened from the road through tree and hedge planting. Bell Field provides an example of in depth development in this area with large detached properties with distinctive gables, render and brick work designs with steep rooflines. Low boundary walls and hedges provide a clear separation between private space and the road and footpath. Some properties have a large set back from the road increasing this separation. In contrast, the Edwardian and Victorian properties located on the corner of Huntingdon Road and Church Road front directly onto the back of the pavement.



Semi-detached properties along Thrapston Road

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5.179 The Hurdles are located at the northern boundary of this character area from the junction of Huntingdon Road and Church Street and adjoining the sports and recreation ground. The Hurdles is a modern redevelopment of a former garage site for residential use. The design of these properties has created an active frontage onto Thrapston Road and provides shared space within the site. It demonstrates building type 3F and adds diversity to the character area.



The Hurdles facing Thrapston Road

5.180 The area has several important local and community facilities. There is a community centre with a main hall, stage, entrance hall/café area, changing rooms and car park. It is constructed from brick with some metal cladding and a curved roofline. Surrounding this is Brampton Memorial Park and Garden, a skateboarding park, playground and multi-use games area. Hedging provide some screening from Thrapston Road. In the south eastern corner of the recreational field is a bowling green enclosed by planting but with access via the field and along Coronation Way via the High Street.

5.181 The character area extends toward another roundabout and to Meadow View Farm. This is a triangular piece of land bounded by Thrapston Road to the south, the A14 to the north and the B1514 to the east. The site mainly consists of grassland and a small cluster of agricultural buildings (some dilapidated) and a two-storey farm cottage in the south-eastern corner. The site has approval for a care home and 30 properties which will extend the building line on the northern side of Thrapston Road. The site is partially located on the site of a scheduled monument.



Brampton recreation ground

5.182 This is a sensitive area due to its relationship with the countryside and road network

Development proposals should:

- Protect the existing trees where these contribute to the character of the street scene and provide screening from the impact of traffic noise and sight from Thrapston Road and Huntingdon Road.
- Ensure that development does not adversely impact the road network and that safe access from Thrapston Road and Huntingdon Road can be achieved.
- Ensure extensions and alterations to existing properties are of an appropriate scale and design to the surrounding area.
- Reflect the existing materials and colour palette in the immediate vicinity.
- Promote opportunities for enhancement of amenity green spaces to provide increased opportunities for recreation and nature conservation and to help provide distinctive local landmarks.
- Where possible increase tree and vegetation planting to screen the impact of development on the Ouse Valley landscape.
- Consider the impact of potential flooding from tributaries of the River Ouse on new development and how careful design can mitigate this.
- Conserve heritage assets such as the conservation area and listed buildings in the immediate vicinity.

Brampton Character Area 9: Glebe Road



Rectory Close with hipped roofs to property, garages and porches and amenity space



Two storey properties within Glebe Road with connecting flat roof garages and open space to the front where Glebe Road connects to Church Road.

- 5.183** This is a small residential character area located on a corner between Thrapston Road and Church Road. It has been separated into its own character area as properties do not have a vehicular access from Thrapston Road and hedges provide a degree of separation from the road network. The gardens of properties running along the area's western edge border the recreational facilities within Brampton Memorial Centre. The consistency in style and materiality of the housing, its location, sense of enclosure and general spaciousness of plots has its own distinctive character.
- 5.184** Glebe Road is the central route through the character area with Knowles Close and Budge Close diverging from it. There is also access from Glebe Road to Rectory Close. These are short roads with housing on either side, the housing is mixed including bungalows and two storey detached family sized homes. These demonstrate building type 3D with buff, orange and dark brick the dominant materials along with dark roof tiles. Many properties have front porches and on plot parking. There are no physical features such as gates or boundary walls marking out public and private space. Some have connecting single storey garages which provide a break in the building line. Others' garages and porches have hipped roofs that replicate the property roofline, this is particularly seen along Rectory Close.
- 5.185** There are several green spaces and the spacious size of plots creates an open feel and trees are planted throughout adding a leafy feel to the area too. Trees from the gardens in Knowles Close provide additional screening between properties along Rectory Close and established trees along Church Road extenuate the leafy character of the area and a sense of separation from the wider surroundings.
- 5.186** Development proposals are limited to extensions and alterations to properties.

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Development proposals should:

- Protect the existing trees where these contribute to the character of the street scene and provide screening from the surrounding road network.
- Consider ways of increasing vegetation cover where space and service restrictions permit.
- Ensure extensions and alterations to existing properties are of an appropriate scale and design to the surrounding area.
- Reflect the existing materials and colour palette of buff brick, orange and dark bricks and roof tiles.
- Promote opportunities for enhancement of amenity green spaces to provide increased opportunities for recreation and nature conservation and to help provide distinctive local landmarks.
- Where possible incorporate renewable energy generation.

Brampton Character Area 10: Brampton Park



Properties along North Road with a variety of designs and materials set within attractive landscaping utilising the mature trees on site within the design



Local facilities are integral to the redevelopment of Brampton Park

5.187 This area contains two sub-areas, the northern part of the site being redeveloped as Brampton Park and the remaining site still in use by military personnel. Brampton Park had served as an RAF base since 1955 and before been used in both First and Second World Wars.

5.188 The redevelopment of the northern part of the site is allocated in Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 for a mixed-use scheme. An [Urban Design Framework](#) for RAF Brampton was prepared detailing the urban form and character of the former RAF base before its redevelopment. Central Avenue is the primary route in the site from a small roundabout. The site is predominantly residential with varying forms and sizes including family sized housing and flats, reflecting building type 3F. There is a range of materials and colours used within the development including buff brick, dark grey slate tiles and timber boarding with extensive use of sage green paintwork on properties along Central Avenue. Some properties have dormer windows, sash windows and low front railings. The redevelopment has removed the security separation between the former RAF base and the main village helping to tie this growing community to the wider village. Within the vicinity of the entrance are most of the new community services and facilities built to support the growing community including a leisure hall, Co-Operative food shop (building type 5D) and care home.



Further examples of house types, design and materials along Central Avenue

5.189 Brampton Park House and its outbuildings are grade II listed and demonstrate many of the characteristics of building type 2E; there are plans to convert them to residential use. The House was built in the early 19th century for its then owner Lady Olivia Bernard Sparrow whose initials can be found on several properties in the Historic Centre of Brampton. The house was partially rebuilt in 1907 following a fire and extended in the mid-20th century and later refurbished in the 1980s. It had symmetrical parkland to provide an impressive landscape setting to the House and was later used by the RAF as the Officers Mess. The use of the House for military personnel has resulted in some damage to its historic fabric especially its internal features.



Brampton Park House

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5.190 There is also a grade II listed Gatehouse located on the eastern edge of the site. It has largely retained its historic features including a rustic thatched roof and rough hewn timber columns characteristic of the Cottage Ornee style. It is likely the Gatehouse is timber framed, materials present include roughcast render and a thatched covering to the roof. This an unusual building, the closest building type it relates to is 1B. As part of the redevelopment of the site, the Gatehouse has consent to be converted into one property.



The Gatehouse

5.191 The site has numerous Tree Preservation Orders, these mature trees add to the landscape setting of heritage assets and create a pleasant backdrop to this predominately residential area. Development to the north of Brampton Park House has been redeveloped with a mix of house types reflecting vernacular cottages and homes set around areas of green space and mature trees. This creates a strong sense of place and demonstrates successfully how redevelopment opportunities can be tailored to address site specific characteristics such as heritage assets and mature trees. In this area is a play area and a widened and improved walkway and cycleway to the main village and primary school.

5.192 The remaining elements of former RAF Brampton are still used for housing military personnel in principally 2 storey, semi-detached and detached married quarters (building types 3A, 3B and 3D) with generous areas of open space and children's play areas. Most properties are set back from the road with generous gardens. There is an open and leafy nature to this sub-area due to the quantity of tree planting. Properties along Sparrow Close and Sokemans Way look out across arable fields and the reworked A1/ A14 junction. The site including the southern part is no longer closed to civilians, however, extensive tree planting and security fencing screen properties from traffic from Buckden Road maintain an enclosed nature.



Married Quarter along South Road

5.193 Due to the comprehensive redevelopment of the northern part of the site, limited development opportunities remain, however, opportunities may arise over time if the southern part of the site is made available for redevelopment. There maybe some scope for some extensions to existing properties.

Development proposals should:

- Promote opportunities for enhanced landscape screening out across the Ouse Valley and from the A14.
- Protect and conserve the historic and landscape setting of Brampton Park House and its outbuildings and Gatehouse.
- Protect and conserve the mature trees throughout the site where they positively add to the street scene.
- Reflect the materials and colour palette of the agreed design code.
- Ensure that new development responds positively to the specific opportunities available within the area.
- Ensure extensions and alterations to existing properties are of an appropriate size and scale to the original dwelling and do not detract from the surrounding area.
- Support the retention of community facilities.
- Seek improved pedestrian and cycle links to the village centre.
- Promote opportunities for the enhancement of green space to provide increased opportunities for wildlife and nature conservation and areas of recreation.
- In the case of major development on the southern part of the site, ensure development is integrated with the wider redevelopment and that adverse impacts on the wider transport network and countryside are addressed.
- Where possible incorporate renewable energy generation.

Godmanchester

5.194 Godmanchester is situated immediately south of Huntingdon on the eastern bank of the river Great Ouse.

Landscape Setting

5.195 Godmanchester is situated on the junction of the Ouse Valley and South East Claylands Landscape Character Areas. The Ouse Valley landscape provides the setting of the town to the west and contributes significantly to the character of the settlement. The river landscape dominates the north western side of the town with extensive flood meadows setting the landscape context between Huntingdon to the north and Brampton to the west. Portholme Meadow forms a significant feature in the landscape setting between the three settlements. Portholme is the largest surviving traditionally managed meadow in the UK, with an area of 104ha. To the northeast the A1307 cuts off views across the river valley enclosing the town much more closely and separating this side from its wider landscape setting.

5.196 To the south west Stoneyhill Brook continues the river valley character southwards as the landform rises gently. The new A14 is mainly set down within a cutting south of Godmanchester and has little visual impact on the town's landscape setting. To the south east the landform rises and becomes much more undulating leading into extensive arable fields relating to the South East Claylands.

Edges and Visual Prominence

5.197 The western and north western edges of Godmanchester largely blend into the Ouse Valley landscape with gardens providing a soft urban edge. Long distance views across Portholme give the town limited visual prominence from this side. The north eastern side of Godmanchester is closely constrained by the A1307 which provides an elevated, heavily planted artificial edge to the town largely preventing links to the countryside beyond. Much of this side of the town can be seen from the vantage point of the A1307 as can the flooded gravel pits and countryside beyond to the north of the A1307.

5.198 The south western edge includes a series of small scale pasture fields associated with Stoneyhill Brook. Ancient hedgerows, primarily of hawthorn, bound these and Silver Street creating an enclosed rural feel to this edge of the town. The landform rises significantly such that the urban edge is clearly visible from points along Silver Street. The south eastern edge of the town is again set on rising land around the A1198 reaching a summit just north of Wood Green Animal Shelter. The character of this edge is evolving as development progresses at Romans' Edge.

Townscape Character

5.199 Godmanchester has an asymmetrical urban form due to its riverside location. The town has a highly distinctive historic core generated by the pentagonal Roman street layout and narrow lanes, fine historical buildings including well preserved timber framed houses and an attractive riverside setting with views from Causeway across the river to the Chinese Bridge, recreation ground and flood meadows beyond. There are numerous historic farm buildings which generate a village rather than town character and the most important historic gateways to the town remain intact. Areas of modern housing estates are located to the south and east of the historic centre. The A1307 flyover and the large warehouses at Cardinal Park have a significant impact on the setting of the town when approached from the north east.

5.200 Ten character areas have been identified (Figure 5.3 and can be viewed on the [interactive map](#)) reflecting the long history of Godmanchester and extensive development in the 20th and 21st centuries. The main urban node is located at the junction of Cambridge Street and Causeway adjoining the 16th Century Queen Elizabeth School and the Chinese Bridge leading across from the town to the recreation ground and beyond to Portholme meadow.

5.201 The town has many buildings of historic interest, particularly on Earning Street, West Street, Post Street and Old Court Hall, all roads which broadly align with the outskirts of the Roman town. Significant housing growth took place from the mid-20th century onwards, initially to the east of the historic centre and then

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southwards. Situated to the east of the A1198 the Romans' Edge development forms a 21st century expansion further to the east and includes Godmanchester Bridge Academy and shops alongside a variety of new houses and flatted development accessed via the A1198 and south of the A1307.

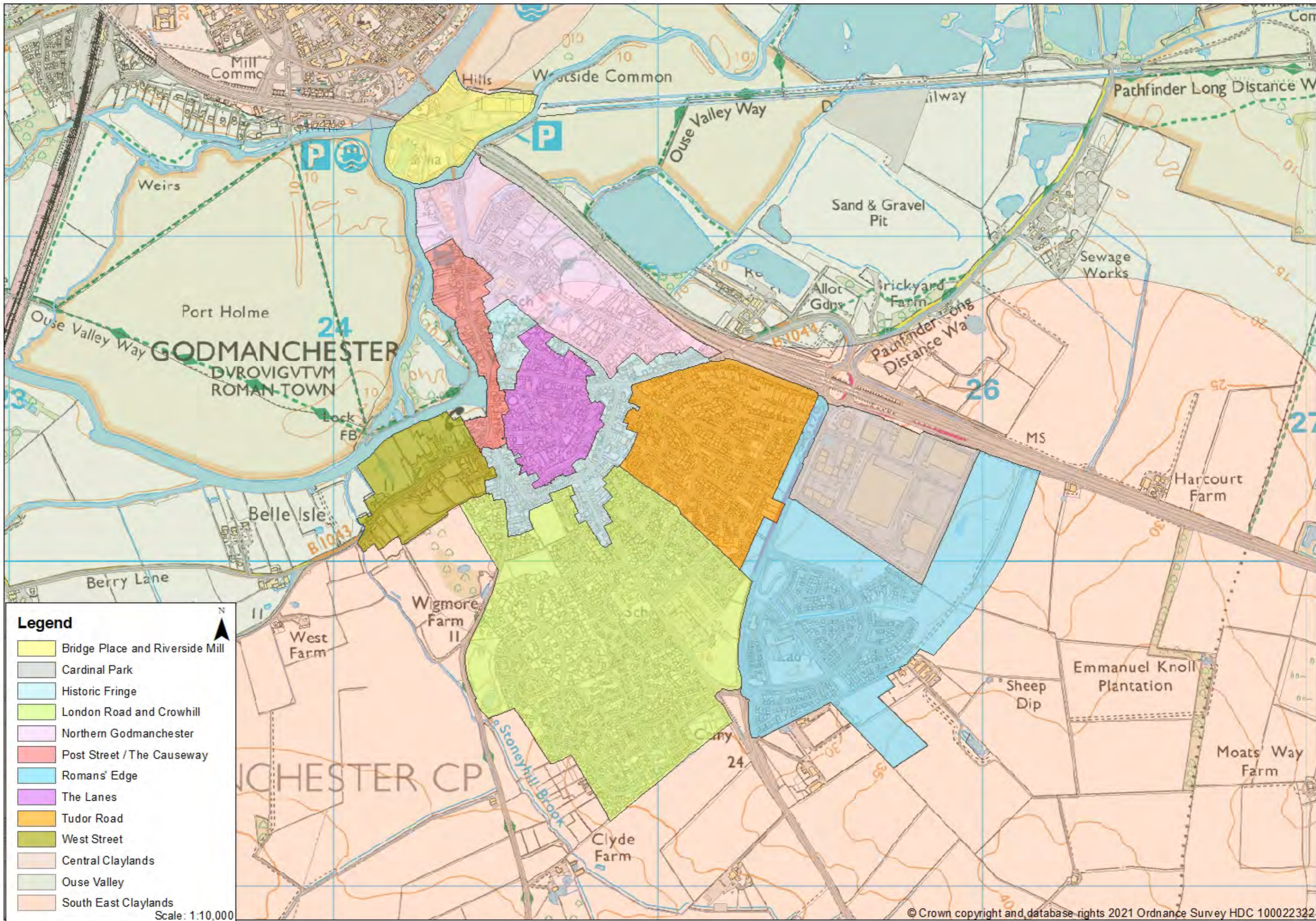


Figure 5.3 Godmanchester Character Areas

Key Features

Historic routes	The Avenue/Post Street, Cambridge Street/Cambridge Road, London Road, Earning Street
Historic gateways	Post Street, West Street, Cambridge Road, Silver Street, London Road
Landmarks	St Mary's Church, Chinese bridge, Farm Hall, Tudor Farm, Island Hall, Queen Elizabeth School
Memorable areas	Causeway, Post Street, Earning Street
Key views	From the Causeway to the Chinese bridge and riverside park, from Farm Hall towards the river, east along Earning Street, along West Street



The spire of St Mary's Church is a key landmark which can be seen from many parts of Godmanchester



Island Hall faces Post Street opposite Godmanchester Community Academy; it has a symmetrical front of red brick and extensive gardens down to the river including its own island



The Chinese Bridge provides access past Queen Elizabeth School and the Town Hall to the recreation ground



The White Hart on Cambridge Road is mainly of 17th century construction with an 18th century brick extension

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Godmanchester Character Area 1: Post Street / The Causeway



The Causeway has buildings on one side only facing onto the water which leads to the mill race



Post Street contains a range of properties of distinctive character with gaps providing glimpses to St Mary's Church

5.202 Post Street and the Causeway are key roads in the historic part of Godmanchester and reflect the town's close relationship with the River Great Ouse. This is the commercial and community heart of Godmanchester containing many landmark and historic buildings. There is a mix of uses including residential, offices, shops, public houses and restaurants. Linear development defines the routes into the central area with significant historic character generated by a wide diversity of building ages and heights. Post Street contains many listed buildings such as the former Rose and Crown now the Quaker Centre dating from the 18th century with its distinctive mansard roof forming a focal point on the eastern side of Post Street. Immediately north of this is Halton House a two storey timber framed 17th century house.



Post Street

5.203 This area contains several impressive and imposing historic buildings with Island Hall being the prime example. Island Hall is a grade II* listed building dating from the mid-18th century constructed in red brick with stone dressings, its central portion is of three storeys set prominently in the street scene behind iron railings. Also prominently located at the foot of the Chinese Bridge is the grade II listed Queen Elizabeth School which is a high single storey red brick building built around 1560 as a school with a steeply pitched plain tile roof that now provides community meeting halls. Further north along Post Street The Holme is a substantial gault brick property with strong red brick detailing built directly onto the back of the pavement.

5.204 There are a variety of building types including 2-3 storey 18th and 19th century town houses, grand town houses, public buildings, some properties with distinctive Dutch gables, medieval half-timbered buildings and modern infill. The building types include 1A, 1B, 2D, 2E, 6 and 7A. Building materials include buff and red brick, white and pastel painted render and roofs of plain tiles and slate. The street frontage is well defined by back of pavement development with few properties having more than very shallow front gardens.

5.205 There are views to St Mary's Church from Post Street and fine views across the river and recreation ground from the Causeway. The Chinese Bridge links the area to Portholme meadow and the Ouse Valley landscape. The war memorial forms a focal viewpoint at the junction of Post Street with The Avenue leading into Huntingdon.

5.206 This is a distinctive area of high architectural, historic and landscape quality which is considered highly sensitive to change. The protection of the existing environment should be the key priority.



Godmanchester war memorial

Development proposals should:

- Conserve the many buildings of historic interest, especially the 17th Century timber-framed buildings that contribute significantly to the historic character of the town.
- Promote the enhancement of the historic centre as the core of Godmanchester.
- Reflect the existing materials and colour palette of buff and red brick, white and pastel painted brickwork and render, plain gault clay tiles and slate.
- Reflect the existing relationship between buildings and the street with back of pavement development or inclusion of only shallow front gardens.
- Maintain, and improve where possible, views into the historic centre from the recreation ground and Portholme and across the river from the Causeway.
- Seek improved pedestrian and cycle links through the area linking primarily residential areas into Huntingdon.
- Support initiatives for the retention of existing or creation of additional services and community facilities.

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Godmanchester Character Area 2: Historic Fringes



Tudor Farm on Earning Street has exposed timber framing and dates from 1600 -1603; sympathetically renovated in 1994/5 it is subdivided into two homes



Victorian homes on Cambridge Street front directly onto the pavement

5.207 The historic fringes are a relatively narrow character area which wraps around the Lanes character area. It is largely defined by Earning Street, London Street and Old Court Hall which reflect the outskirts of the pentagonal Roman town layout. It also extends along Cambridge Street and Cambridge Road to reflect the linear building pattern of the Victorian period. The area contains many high quality historic buildings, including several timber framed Tudor buildings, which contribute substantially to the historic environment and the character of Godmanchester more generally.



11 Chadley Lane

5.208 The northern part of the area includes the grade I listed St Mary's Church which forms a significant local landmark with the spire visible from much of the town. The extensive churchyard is contiguous with open space within the Northern Godmanchester character area. Properties on the western side of Chadley Lane which terminates in the primary entrance to the church front directly onto the pavement and comprise a mixed terrace of low flat-fronted gault brick cottages with one 17th century timber-framed and plastered house forming a focal point at the northern end. The eastern side it entirely enclosed by the high brick wall encircling Chadleigh House, a large white brick early 19th century property set in a very substantial garden.

5.209 Earning Street contains two high status timber framed farmhouses. Tudor Farm dating from 1600-03 is grade II* listed and is an L-shaped timber framed property with a projecting upper storey facing the street frontage with dominant projecting gables at either end. The Gables dates from 1625, again timber framed it is finished in black and white and also has projecting gables and a projecting upper storey. The agricultural origins of The Gables is reflected in the range of listed barns and granary in its adjoining farmyard. The historic character of Earning Street reflects the variety of individually designed properties including several 18th and early 19th century listed buildings. The 17th century Plantagenet House forms a strong landmark on the northern side of the street with a distinctive gabled oriel window. Building types are diverse and include 1A, 1B, 3D and 4; materials and colours are also very diverse although a soft colour palette predominates.



The Gables

5.210 The character of London Street is more enclosed with properties on the northern side fronting directly on to the narrow pavement. These are primarily of Victorian construction although some are older, mainly in terraced form with a few villas. Roman Gate flats form a rather incongruous element of 1960s three storey flats with a dominant glass-fronted central stairwell on the corner of London Street and Earning Street. Properties on the southern side are mostly 20th century red or brown brick set back behind shallow front gardens. Old Court Hall contains a wider range of historic properties including 17th century timber-framed ones along with 18th and 19th century gault brick or rendered properties. Most are situated close to the pavement with 1 Old Court Hall being the exception as the mid-19th century large gault brick house is set back behind raised gardens forming a distinct break in the street scene. Building types include 1B, 2A, 2B, 2E and 3D.



London Street

5.211 The north side of Cambridge Road is more diverse. Listed buildings include the timber-framed White Hart public house, along with the grade II listed Dial House which is a fine example of a soft red brick Queen Anne property dating from 1714. Old brick walls enclose the back of the pavement along a significant stretch of the road behind which are set numbers 3, 4 and 5 all of which are substantial listed individual properties of building types 1A and 2E. This part of the character area also includes Victorian terraces often in buff brick and early to mid-20th century homes.



Dial House

5.212 Across this character area building materials are very variable. Warm, earth tones dominate many properties; a variety of red and buff bricks are present along with timber-framing and render, with slate, gault tile and thatched roofs. A strong sense of enclosure is generated by back of pavement development in many parts with few gaps in the street frontage.

5.213 This is a sensitive area containing many historic buildings of great character. There are few opportunities for development other than through building extensions and/or conversions.

Development proposals should:

- Maintain physical and visual connections to landmark buildings throughout the area, particularly views to St Mary's Church spire.
- Protect and conserve the wide variety of historic buildings and their settings.
- Protect and conserve the original architectural detailing, including window and door details to existing terraces.
- Reflect the existing warm, earthy colour palette of materials that predominates in the area.
- Carefully consider the visual impact on landmark buildings which reinforce the historic character of the area.
- Consider restricting car parking to discrete zones or to alternate sides of the road to enhance the setting of key buildings.
- Protect existing areas of greenspace and mature trees where these contribute to the character of the street scene.
- Seek to improve the gateway along Cambridge Street into Character Area 1: Post Street/ The Causeway, particularly along the southern side whilst supporting and retaining local services and community facilities.
- Seek to incorporate public art at key locations to 'announce' entry points and interpret the historical significance of the area, including the Roman origins of the street layout.

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Godmanchester Character Area 3: The Lanes



Pipers Lane illustrates the narrow streets and intermittent pavements of The Lanes where modern properties are successfully integrated amongst historic ones



St Ann's Lane contains typical Victorian homes using a combination of buff and red brick

5.214 The historic residential core of Godmanchester lies on the site of the original Roman settlement within the pentagonal streets of the Historic Fringe and primarily comprises a network of narrow lanes well connected to the Historic Fringe and the Causeway. Cambridge Street runs through the area introducing some diversity of uses including shops and a social club occupying a historic civic building of type 7A. On the northern side of Cambridge Street no. 4, The Old Manor House, forms a landmark 16th century timber framed building fronting straight onto the pavement. A break in the townscape is provided by the grounds of the former Particular Baptist Chapel now laid out as an open seating area.



Particular Baptist Chapel garden

5.215 The area is typified by small scale 18th and 19th century terraces fronting a network of narrow lanes which are often only wide enough to accommodate a narrow pavement on one side. Most properties are relatively modest in scale with clusters of back of pavement two storey terraced homes dominating areas like New Street. Small areas of modern housing are integrated notably at Pinfold Lane and Pipers Lane. The area is predominantly residential and contains homes built in a wide variety of styles including short terraces semi's and detached. Building types include 1B, 2A, 3B and 3D.

5.216 Pinfold Lane contains a scattering of listed buildings adding individual character to the streetscene. The 18th century red brick malthouse and malthouse provide very distinctive rooflines adjacent to the GP surgery. The single storey, gault brick Manson's Almshouses, now no. 14, form a landmark building representing building type 2C.



Converted malthouse in Pinfold Lane

5.217 The streetscape is well defined in places by continuous building frontage and housing is often directly on to the pavement or in some places straight onto the road. Other areas are defined by low walls and planting to front gardens. As a result, the area generally has an intimate scale and a strong sense of enclosure. Building materials are predominantly buff brick with some red brick and roofs mostly of slate or brown pantile.

5.218 This is an area of historic character that remains intact despite the impact of modern residential development.

Development proposals should:

- Maintain the strong sense of enclosure that characterises the area with new development replicating the groups of continuous building frontage.
- Reflect the vernacular building materials and colour palette of predominantly buff brick with some red brick, white and pastel painted brickwork, render, slate and brown pantile.
- Protect and conserve the integrity of the older residential terraces through sensitive extensions and alterations to architectural details.
- Maintain views to key historic buildings, particularly St Mary's Church spire.
- Ensure adequate provision of car parking to reduce the impact on the street scene of on-street parking.
- Retain and improve the network of pedestrian links to the town centre.
- Seek to incorporate public art at key locations to 'announce' entry points and interpret the historical significance of the area.

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Godmanchester Character Area 4: West Street



West Street blends historic dwellings with a wide variety of building materials, styles and sizes



Built in 1746 Farm Hall presents a grand symmetrical frontage to West Street with the extensive gardens screened by soft red brick walling

5.219 This is a linear character area located along both sides of West Street and forms the main approach to the town from the south west. It is semi-rural in character with properties ranging from small thatched cottages to grand villas. It contains numerous historic houses of high architectural quality. Most properties are built straight onto the pavement, particularly on the southern side of West Street, although larger villas are often set back from the street frontage with gardens and brick walls to the frontage. Mature trees and hedges to plot frontages enhance the area's historic character. This character area has a strong relationship with the Ouse Valley, the vegetation of which provides a green backdrop to the north.



The Chestnuts

5.220 There is a landmark building at Farm Hall dating from 1746 presenting a symmetrical front to the street with a substantial brick wall enclosing the mid 19th century kitchen wing and gardens. Farm Hall is grade II* listed and sits directly opposite an ornamental brick wall associated with the house containing a small meadow with a boating access inlet linking the streetscene directly to the river. Close to the junction with the Causeway the northern side of West Street is dominated by The Beeches, The Chestnuts and Oak Tree Court which provide a range of flats and sheltered apartments all screened behind a buff brick wall and presenting a strongly decorated black and white frontage to much of West Street.

5.221 Immediately south of West Street itself lies Corpus Christi Lane which includes a group of listed timber prefabricated agricultural workers houses built in 1948. These are grade II listed as particular examples of prefabricated homes shipped from Canada to assist in the post World War II reconstruction effort, their gardens are large and relatively open creating a very rural feel to the lane.



Corpus Christi Lane

5.222 Building materials in this area include red and buff brick, cream and white render and painted brickwork. Roofing materials are diverse including slate, stone tiles, pantile and thatch. Building types include 1A, 1B, 2B, 2E, and 4.

5.223 This is a distinctive area of high architectural and historic quality which is considered highly sensitive to change.

Development proposals should:

- Respond positively to the limited development opportunities in the area through promotion of creative, individually designed schemes that reflect the area's high quality built environment.
- Protect and conserve the historic buildings and their settings along West Street, Old Court Hall and Corpus Christi Lane.
- Retain and reinforce the use of brick boundary walls to define the road frontage on West Street.
- Protect the existing mature trees which contribute to the rural character of the street scene.
- Protect the landscape setting of Farm Hall and maintain the open aspect to the river arising from its land to the north of West Street.
- Seek to improve the appearance of the junction of West Street with the Causeway.
- Reflect the existing materials and colour palette of red and buff brick, cream render, timber frame with white render to upper elevations and white painted brickwork with roofs of slate, stone tiles, pantile and thatch.

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Godmanchester Character Area 5: London Road and Crowhill



Red brick and Georgian style windows are typical of this area



Estates west of London Road include a high proportion of 4 and 5 bed roomed detached houses with garaging

5.224 This is a large character area comprising of housing built from the 1980s onwards and two small business estates.

5.225 In terms of housing style it includes a series of distinct sub-areas drawn together by being accessed from London Road. Properties are typically arranged as a series of culs-de-sac off estate access roads with footpath connections between these allowing more permeable routes for pedestrians. Also within the area is a small amount of 21st century development within Ream Close accessed off Silver Street.

5.226 The largest sub-area is focused on Crowhill and Sweetings Road area and east of London Road including Croftfield Road and running across to Dovehouse Close. Buildings here are predominantly detached in form with a high proportion of four bedroom properties although small terraces, a few semi-detached properties and the occasional bungalow are intermingled providing more diverse accommodation. Red brick is the most common building material although some buff brick is interspersed. Mock Tudor decorative panels are found in clusters with some houses retaining the original diamond pattern windows; a high proportion of the other homes have Georgian style windows. The building type is 3E. Garaging is often a prominent feature to the front of properties. The area also includes a primary school and play areas. Immediately adjoining is Roman Way, an infill group of homes comprising building type 3F with a mixture of two and two and half storey homes built around a central green. Chord Business Park and Roman Way Industrial Estate both front onto London Road and introduce a small area of type 5B industrial, commercial and office properties. These are identified as an Established Employment Areas within the [Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036](#).



Footpath from Middlemiss View



Mock Tudor detailing on Fishers Way

5.227 The remaining three sub-areas are smaller but each are distinctive in style reflecting the dates at which they were constructed. Devana Park is a group of large four and five bedroom properties accessed off Sweetings Road built in the mid-1990s. Homes are set back from the road frontage with driveways and double or triple garages a common feature. The building type is 3E. Pavements are sometimes separated from the road by a grass verge and extensive soft landscaping is integral to the area's layout. A substantial play area with a small community orchard contains a footpath link to Silver Street.



Community orchard

5.228 Comben Drive and Stokes Drive although separate both include more diverse property sizes and densities ranging from one bedroom coach house apartments to five bedroom detached homes. The building type is 3F. The building materials are predominantly buff brick, roofing is a mixture of grey and red plain tiles. Homes in Stokes Drive frequently have weatherboard detailing. Rear and side gardens which have road frontages are frequently bounded by brick walls. Very shallow front gardens are common on most properties to provide a small amount of setback and to maximise rear private garden space.

5.229 Silver Street leads to three culs-de-sac all containing substantial detached housing of building types 3D and 3E. Houses are notably set back behind front gardens of generally 3 to 5m depth forming a spacious layout. Trees are commonly integrated into both front and rear gardens.

5.230 There are very limited development opportunities within this area, primarily limited to extensions and reuse of existing properties.

Development proposals should:

- Ensure that new development responds positively to the specific opportunities available within the area.
- Reflect the existing red or buff bricks, brown and red pantile roofs and architectural detailing of the immediate locality.
- Ensure extensions and alterations to existing properties are of an appropriate size and scale to the original dwelling and do not detract from the surrounding area.
- Maintain and enhance physical and visual connections to key landmarks to promote legibility and pedestrian accessibility.
- Reduce the visual dominance of cars by promoting enhanced boundary landscaping and planting.
- Reflect the existing built forms and relationships with the street in any new development.
- Protect and enhance grass verges and landscape planting areas and provide additional street trees where space and service restrictions permit.
- Protect and enhance existing green spaces to promote their roles both for recreation and nature conservation.
- Support proposals for renewable energy and active modes of transport.

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Godmanchester Character Area 6: Tudor Road



Semi-detached houses are the most frequently found form in this area with most pairs separated by driveways or garages



Buff brick dominates the Bascraft Way and Walks area which combines short terraces and small three storey blocks of flats

5.231 This area comprises a succession of housing estates built where distinct phases of building can be identified through the varied styles of homes. Cambridge Road and Cambridge Villas in the north east of the area contain the oldest housing in this area which is building type is 3B. Front gardens are typically 4 to 6m deep and some homes, particularly on Cambridge Villas, have rear gardens of up to 50m in length. All homes along Cambridge Villas are semi-detached with very regular spacing. Cambridge Road has slightly more diversity including building types 3B and 3D; the regular spacing remains a feature. Leading south off Cambridge Road homes in Meadow Way and Almond Close include a variety of bungalows and detached houses with red brick predominating as the building material.

5.232 Further south along Tudor Road as far as The Close and Windsor Road building of 'The Tudor Estate' began in 1962. Housing is almost entirely built in semi-detached form with a few short terraces mostly on Hilsdens Drive. Entirely residential in use the homes comprise building type 3D. Red brick and plain tiles are the most frequent building materials with painted brickwork adding variety. Front gardens are commonly 2 to 4 m deep and usually separated from the pavement by low walls or hedges. Side and rear extensions have been added to many properties. Garages are often to the side of properties, frequently set well back into gardens or in blocks serving a group of homes. Pavements and roads tend to be relatively narrow and on street parking adds congestion to many streets.



Extended semi-detached homes on Fairey Avenue

5.233 The Walks and Bascraft Way provide a distinctive, higher density area of development with homes provided as short terraces or three storey flats arranged in small, often interconnected blocks. This sub-area also includes a range of sheltered elderly person's accommodation and bungalows. Although comprising building type 3D many sections have design features in common with the Radburn layouts of type 3C. Entirely built in buff brick a high proportion of homes have front access along footpaths with parking either to the rear or in separate parking courts. Most houses have relatively shallow front gardens with few hedges or fences to provide separation, with the flats usually sitting in publicly accessible grassed areas often dissected by footpaths.



Merton Walk

5.234 There are very limited development opportunities within this area, primarily limited to extensions and reuse of existing properties.

Development proposals should:

- Maintain and enhance physical and visual connections to key landmarks to promote legibility and pedestrian accessibility.
- Reflect the predominance of semi-detached properties and support the retention of a regular street scene through careful positioning of any extensions to existing homes or positioning of infill development.
- Ensure adequate provision of car parking to reduce the impact on the street scene of on-street parking.
- Be sympathetic to the materials and colour palette in the immediate vicinity.
- Protect the existing areas of greenspace and trees and maximise opportunities to enhance their contribution to the character and quality of the street scene.
- Support proposals for renewable energy and active modes of transport.

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Godmanchester Character Area 7: Northern Godmanchester



Fox Grove contains semi-detached houses built in a regularly spaced layout



Godmanchester cricket pitch provides a substantial green landscape buffer on the northern edge of the town separating homes from the A1307

5.235 Northern Godmanchester contains two distinct clusters of homes connected by green spaces providing the cricket pitch and a landscaping buffer to the A1307 (formerly A14). The western cluster links from Post Street to Pavilion Close and includes mixed uses with Godmanchester Community Primary Academy, the Community nursery gardens and a variety of housing styles. Housing is of varied form including types 3B and 3D. The oldest houses in this area are large inter-war semi-detached properties; sitting north of these are smaller properties including sheltered apartments and bungalows. Buff brick predominates here with pebble dashing to the upper storeys of the semi-detached houses. The westernmost part of the area contains a mobile home park set behind a long entrance drive. East of the primary school lies a separate group of larger detached housing built in the late 1990s representing building type 3E. These are constructed from a brindle brick with many having distinctive arched entrance porches topped by catslide gables.

5.236 The eastern cluster of development is wholly residential with Lancaster Way, Fox Grove and Rectory Gardens providing a variety of housing types and styles, mostly 3D with a small group of 3E as a detached group from the most recent development in the western cluster. Footpath links are common throughout this area connecting north west to the Historic Fringe and south east to Cambridge Road. Most homes are of red brick with moderate front gardens often separated from the pavement by hedges.



5.237 Between the two clusters of development and connecting the whole character area is a series of green spaces running from the Community Nursery east to Godmanchester Cricket Club and continuing to the landscaping buffer associated with the A1307 and homes at Rectory Gardens. The area includes intermittent tree and scrub planting and informal footpaths.

Landscaping screening the A1307

5.238 The open spaces of the Northern Godmanchester character area provide a valuable buffer between the A1307 and the residential areas of Godmanchester and should be protected from development. There are significant opportunities to enhance the value of the urban edge and respond to the changing nature of the A1307 following opening of the southern route connecting Ellington to Fen Ditton.

Development proposals should:

- Enrich the area by reinforcing the character arising from the series of green spaces running through it.
- Retain the existing tree belt along the boundary with the A1307 and improve screening through additional planting along the northern boundary of the open space.
- Promote nature conservation initiatives to enhance the ecological value of the land.
- Support and enhance the pitch and facilities of Godmanchester Cricket Club.
- Maintain and enhance physical and visual connections to key landmarks to promote legibility and pedestrian accessibility.
- Provide low level lighting and street furniture along main pedestrian routes.

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Godmanchester Character Area 8: Cardinal Park



The western part of Cardinal park provides a range of smaller industrial units



Most of Cardinal Park contains large scale warehousing

- 5.239** Cardinal Park is a business and distribution park located adjacent to the A1307 on the eastern fringe of the settlement. It is identified as an Established Employment Area within the [Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036](#).
- 5.240** It was originally separated from the town by the A1198 but now adjoins the northernmost extent of Romans' Edge. Cardinal Park contains numerous large, high bay warehouses of building type 5B with a material and colour palette of grey and white steel cladding, buff and red brick. It also contains a group of smaller units close to the A1198 boundary. The road layout is designed to facilitate easy movement of heavy goods vehicles with strips of tree and hedge planting providing internal screening along some road frontages.
- 5.241** The site level falls significantly from east to west. Warehouses on the elevated eastern areas are highly visible from the A1307 and the wider landscape. The screen bunding, planting and native hedgerows provides a clear boundary to the south and east. The ornamental tree and shrub planting on individual sites are not generally visible from outside the site. The southern boundary adjoins the Romans' Edge character area which has reduced the impact of Cardinal Park on the approach from the south.
- 5.242** The business and distribution park is well established, there is some capacity for new units, extensions, change of use to other appropriate land uses or the renovation of older and vacant properties.

Development proposals should:

- Retain and reinforce the existing tree belt along the boundary with the A1307 to improve screening.
- Minimise and co-ordinate the range of materials and colours in any future development.
- Support proposals for renewable energy and the incorporation of electric vehicle charging points.
- Promote opportunities for enhanced landscape screening to the eastern and southern boundaries.
- Provide landscape improvements to the north eastern gateway to Godmanchester.
- Seek improved pedestrian and cycle links across the A1198 into the town.
- Support proposals where they encourage active modes of traveling.

Godmanchester Character Area 9: Romans' Edge



Homes on Butcher Drive present a distinctive design ethos



Three storey properties give variety and definition along one of the main roads within Romans' Edge and help to enclose the streetscene

5.243 Romans' Edge is a new neighbourhood for Godmanchester situated east of the A1198 and immediately south of Cardinal Park. It is allocated in the [Local Plan](#) under HU16 (Bearscroft Farm). The first homes, primary school and local shops were started at Romans Edge in 2016. Development is expected to continue over approximately 10 years. The landform rises slightly to the south east with the southern edge of the development being bounded by the rural Bearscroft Lane leading to the football club grounds. The eastern and southern edges of Romans' Edge immediately adjoin the South East Claylands landscape character area; peripheral landscaping will gradually soften the boundary between the two.



Godmanchester Bridge Academy

5.244 The A1198 was slightly diverted to the east to include a roundabout providing a primary access into Romans' Edge which now forms the southern gateway into Godmanchester. Romans' Edge is all accessed off a looping spine road, Gumcester Way, with Butcher Drive forming a link between the northern and southern ends of this broadly parallel to the A1198. Building types in this area include 3F, 5D and 7C.

5.245 Romans' Edge is designed as a cohesive area incorporating a primary school, local shopping parade and public open spaces to serve the new community. To aid integration with the town sections of the development are designed to front directly onto the A1198 and crossing points have been included linking to footpath connections.



Local shops

5.246 Homes vary from one to three storeys in height with a full range of flatted, terraced, semi-detached and detached properties. Materials include a high proportion of pale buff brick frequently complemented with sage green decorative features including weatherboarding. Some red brick is also included, particularly amongst the larger detached homes. Plain tiles are most common for roofing in either dark grey or red. The building type is consistent throughout at 3F. Spacing between properties varies considerably although most have a fairly consistent shallow set back from the adjoining pavement. Car parking is provided in a mixture of on-plot garages and driveways, parking courts and on-street.

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- 5.247** A linear water feature runs east to west through the centre of the area providing drainage and a strong landscaping feature helping to establish local identity with some homes looking directly over this. A smaller linear grassed area runs broadly north-south connecting Godley Green past the extensive primary school playing fields with a footpath adding connectivity.
- 5.248** This is a large urban extension to Godmanchester providing substantial further growth during its construction although with very limited opportunities for extensions and alterations beyond that.

Development proposals should:

- Facilitate visual connections to key landmarks and features, within the historic town centre particularly St Mary's Church spire, and within Romans' Edge itself.
- Reflect the materials and colour palette of the agreed design code.
- Enhance the visual qualities of Romans' Edge by incorporating trees and landscaping to reduce the sense of exposure, particularly on the eastern edge and reinforce the tree belt on the southern edge along Bearcroft Lane.
- Improve screening from Cardinal Park to the north to minimise the impact of the area's proximity to large scale warehousing.
- Seek improved pedestrian and cycle links across the A1198 into the town.
- Support initiatives for the creation of additional community facilities, leisure and recreational facilities.
- Where possible incorporate renewable energy generation.

Godmanchester Character Area 10: Bridge Place and Riverside Mill



RGE Engineering



Riverside Mill, a converted Hosiery Mill is located on the banks of the River Ouse next to the historic gateway Town Bridge

5.249 Bridge Place and the Riverside Mill form a small but distinct character area containing a cluster of high quality historic buildings separated from the main body of Godmanchester at the foot of the Town Bridge into Huntingdon. The area is dissected by the flyover carrying the A1307 across the River Great Ouse. Separated from the main built part of the area by the flyover is Huntingdon Boathaven and caravan park which connects the area directly to its riverside setting within the Ouse Valley landscape character area.



Barges on the River Great Ouse

5.250 Riverside Mill (formerly Huntingdon Hosiery Mill) was built in the mid-19th century adjacent to Godmanchester railway station and converted to apartments in the early 1980s. Grade II listed, the section adjoining The Avenue is highest, originally three storeys plus attics it now accommodates five storeys plus ground floor mezzanines due to the distinctive round headed sash windows. Other sections, also originally three storeys but lower in form variously accommodate four and five storeys of apartments. The entire structure is of white brick and tiled roof and built directly up to the river on the northern side and is of building type 5A.

5.251 South of Riverside Mill lie RGE Engineering and Bridge Place car park, jointly allocated for residential redevelopment in the [Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036](#) as HU14 for approximately 90 homes and the re-provision of some of the site as a car park. Previously containing Godmanchester railway station and yards this site also included Brown and Goodman's Flour Mill which was of similar styling to Riverside Mill but of seven storeys plus attics, demolished in 1969.

5.252 On the southern side of The Avenue at the southern foot of the Town Bridge lies 3-5 Bridge Place, a distinctively shaped red brick building with a tile hung mansard roof dating from 1801. Close by and built in the mid 19th century in association with the railway is 22 Bridge Place. This is of gault brick with fish scale slates and is built in the Jacobean style with distinctive shaped end gables and is of building type 2C. The building has now been renovated into 12 apartments.



3-5 Bridge Place

5.253 There are some major development opportunities remaining in this character area. Its location as a gateway to and from Huntingdon and Godmanchester is a key consideration.

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Development proposals should:

- Ensure that development responds positively to the opportunities available from the area's riverside setting arising from the River Great Ouse and Cook's Stream.
- Promote high standards of design and support creativity in architectural detailing.
- Protect and conserve the area's heritage assets and landscape setting.
- Seek to reinforce and improve the area's character as a major gateway into Huntingdon.
- Maintain, and where possible improve, views to Westside Common and the Ouse Valley landscape character area whilst protecting the existing vegetation as a green backdrop.
- Consider the impact of potential flooding.
- Consider the provision of public art to interpret the historical significance of the area.

6 St Neots Spatial Planning Area

St Neots

- 6.1** St Neots is situated on the River Great Ouse approximately 9 miles south of Huntingdon to the south of the District.

Landscape Setting

- 6.2** St Neots is located at the southern edge of the Ouse Valley Landscape Character Area. The landscape to the west lies within the Southern Wolds and the South East Claylands lie to the east. The setting provided by the River Great Ouse is strongly integrated into the fabric of the town. It is the close association of the town with the river, both historically and currently, in terms of visual links, public open space, ecology and recreation, that gives St Neots a strong sense of place and a highly distinctive landscape setting. The open river floodplain and countryside between the settlements of St Neots and Little Paxton, as well as the landscape between these settlements and Hail Weston, Duloe, Wyboston and Little Barford, performs an important function providing a landscape gap separating these settlements and ensuring that they each retain a clear and distinct identity.
- 6.3** To the east of St Neots, the landscape of the Central Claylands comprises agricultural land with large open fields and limited boundary vegetation. The landscape is influenced by the East Coast mainline railway, large scale industrial development along Cromwell Road and late 20th and 21st century development east of the railway line at Loves Farm and Wintringham Park.

Edges and Visual Prominence

- 6.4** The A1 frames the settlement along its western boundary and the East Coast mainline railway traditionally formed a strong eastern edge although Loves Farm has introduced residential development screened by boundary planting to the north east. Strategic development at Wintringham Park located beyond the railway line is underway which will see the A428 form the western edge to the settlement.
- 6.5** St Neots is not widely visible from the surrounding landscape except when approached from Abbotsley to the south east, or Great Paxton to the north. Vegetation surrounding many edges of the town helps to screen and filter views to the urban edge, particularly along the A1 to the west of the village and the railway line to the east.
- 6.6** The Ouse Valley Landscape Character Area bisects the town resulting in a very strong relationship between the two. In the northern part of the town Lammas Meadow and Islands Common provide rough grassland separating St Neots from Little Paxton to the north. The narrowest section of the Ouse Valley Landscape Character Area where it passes through the town is crossed by the B1428 St Neots Road linking the original settlements of Eaton Ford and Eaton Socon with St Neots. This lies at the heart of St Neots providing the main connection to the town centre. On the eastern bank the Ouse Valley landscape character area connects directly into the town centre with buildings such as the Priory Centre immediately adjoining the river. Boat clubs, a marina and campsite all reflect the interconnectedness of the river valley landscape with the town.
- 6.7** The Ouse Valley Landscape Character Area hosts the very extensive Riverside Park which is situated on the western bank of the river and lies both north and south of the St Neots Road bridge. Riverside Park provides a wide variety of both formal and informal leisure facilities for the residents of St Neots as well as for visitors to the town strongly reinforcing the connection between the landscape and the town itself. The Ouse Meadows leads south to the cricket ground and the Castle Hills scheduled monument a Norman ringwork castle overlaying an earlier Saxon settlement which provides an attractive group of earthworks and trees.

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- 6.8** Further south the Willow Bridge and its linked paths provide pedestrian and cyclist access across the widest part of the Ouse Valley Landscape Character Area within the town. These connect the eastern edge of Eaton Socon close to the Castle Hills scheduled monument across to the Ernulf Academy and One Leisure complex. The river and its floodplain are approximately 1km wide in this area.
- 6.9** The southern section of the river valley between Eaton Socon and Eynesbury is dominated by former gravel extraction pits now comprising lakes. This area hosts two marinas both of which are directly overlooked by homes. The area has more trees further north, as well as meadows and Barford Road pocket park. The A428 provides the second vehicular crossing of the Ouse Valley Landscape Character Area for St Neots; much of the route is screened by trees and hedging but occasional glimpses of the Ouse Valley can be obtained.

Townscape Character

- 6.10** The historic market town of St. Neots straddles the River Great Ouse. The valley narrows as it passes through the historic heart of the town where it provides the setting to a number of historic buildings along the eastern river bank. A single crossing of the river at Town Bridge connects the two urban areas and provides a gateway into the historic core where the market place is a key node in the urban fabric.
- 6.11** The urban area has increased significantly through post war development and is now physically constrained by the A1 to the west and the East Coast rail line to the east. The town still retains many historic features including a market square bordered by 2-3 storey town houses with Georgian facades, a number of ancient churches, attractive parks and common land. The original villages of Eynesbury, Eaton Ford and Eaton Socon can still be clearly identified and provide focal points along the main routes through the town. The urban fabric is punctuated by significant areas of green space notably at Priory Park to the north east, and along Hen Brook and Duloe Brook.
- 6.12** The town has good communication links, being accessible to the A1, the A428 and the East Coast mainline railway. Development to the east of the East Coast mainline railway at Wintringham Park is underway and will form a large urban extension to the town. The character of this area will therefore evolve over many years as the development is built.
- 6.13** The settlement is of varied character and 20 character areas have been identified (Figure 6.1 and can be viewed on the [interactive map](#)). The greatest diversity of character is found around the original settlement to the east of the river. Here, the Historic Centre is interconnected to areas of 19th and early 20th century housing at Phoenix Square and Avenue Road. There are traditional building materials found in the Historic Centre and village cores include timber frame, buff and multi buff brick, cobbles, slate and plain gault clay tiles. The original village of Eynesbury is distinct in character from the surrounding and more recent housing development. 18th and 19th century buildings dominate the road frontage between Eaton Socon and Eaton Ford creating a historic route through the surrounding peripheral estates. Priory Park and Hen Brook provide important areas of open space. Large-scale industrial development dominates the southern and eastern edges of the settlement.

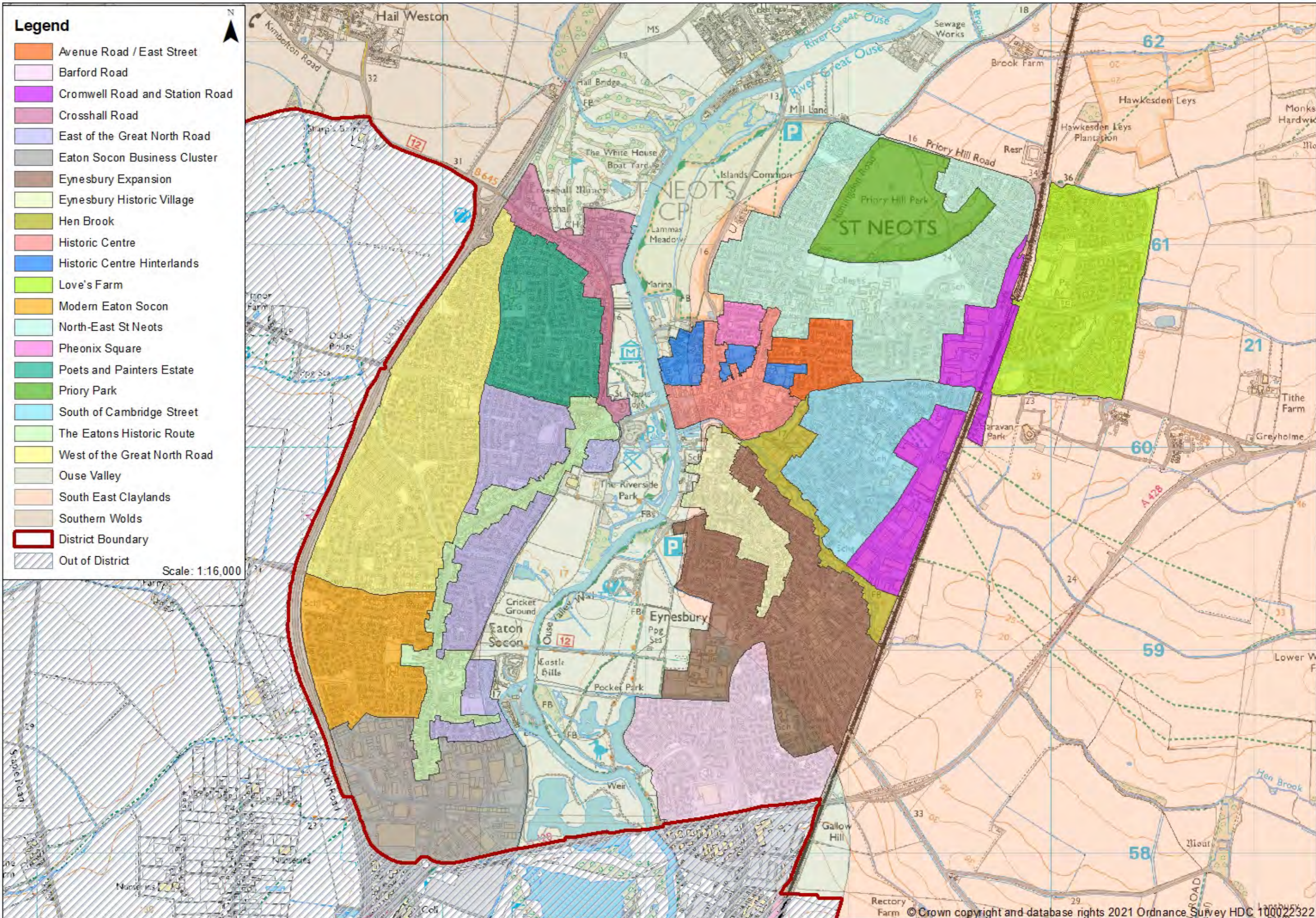


Figure 6.1 St Neots Character Areas

Key Features

Historic routes	Roman road: A1. North-south route through Eaton Ford and Eaton Socon
Historic gateways	St Neots Road bridge
Landmarks	St Mary's in St Neots, Paines Mill in Market Square, Paine's Corn Mill in Phoenix Square, St. Mary's in Eynesbury, St Mary's in Eaton Socon
Memorable areas	The Market Square, St Neots Road bridge, the former village cores, the Riverside Park and Priory Hill Park
Key views	To the river from St Neots Road bridge, from Priory Park to urban edge, from Crosshall Road across Ouse valley



The riverside area sets a key characteristic for St Neots' town centre



The market square provides a key urban space in the town centre with modern surfacing and trees on the western edge



Riverside Park provides large scale green infrastructure through the heart of the town



St Mary's church, Eaton Socon is largely 15th century in appearance although much was rebuilt in the 20th century after fire damage, the four stage square tower forms a strong feature in local views

6 St Neots Spatial Planning Area

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St Neots Character Area 1: Historic Centre



The High Street contains a wide variety of buildings and strong historic characteristics above the ground floor shop frontages



The southern side of the Market Square includes a high proportion of listed buildings reflecting its high townscape value

- 6.14** The Historic Centre of St Neots is located to the east side of the River Great Ouse and is closely associated with the river. The area has a historic street pattern and contains historic buildings and landmarks that generate a strong sense of place and help define the distinctive character of the town. There is a medieval street pattern and back of pavement development creates well-defined spaces and a strong sense of enclosure. The area is of varying ages with some buildings dating back to the 1730's and earlier, but many streets include modern infill. There is a mix of uses including shops, offices, hotels, pubs and places of worship with some residential properties. The Historic Centre can be congested with traffic at times of peak travel.
- 6.15** The large Market Square forms a strong feature in the townscape. The southern side forms a large group of listed buildings. These are mainly from the early 19th century although often with earlier elements to them. Many are three storeys in height with gault brick and tile roofs being dominant materials. The Market Square contains several landmark buildings which add to the quality of the townscape. Paines Brewery is the most distinctive building on the southern side with a symmetrical facade of 3 storeys and 7 windows wide with a clock at second floor level and the inscription '1831'; the earliest parts of the buildings however date back to the 17th century. The Old Falcon Inn situated on the western side of the Market Square contains elements ranging from the 15th to 19th centuries illustrating how buildings evolve over time. In the centre of the Market Square is Day's Column. Erected in 1832 this is a large cast iron fluted column with four scrolled arms supporting lanterns on a stone pedestal which forms a focal point to the square. Building types include 2A, 2E, 7A and 5A.
- 6.16** The High Street effectively forms the northern side of the Market Square with a further cluster of listed buildings at the western end close to the the bridge over the River Great Ouse further reinforcing the quality of townscape in this area. These now house a range of shops and service units at ground floor level. The Bridge Hotel forms a landmark at the eastern end of the bridge; this originates from the 16th century with 19th century additions with painted brick to the ground floor and pebbledash above. Towards the eastern end of the High Street the United Reform church, building type 6B, provides the only break in the otherwise solidly commercial frontage.
- 6.17** Site allocation SN1 (St Mary's Urban Village) in the [Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036](#) is allocated for a mix of units containing approximately 45 homes and some retail floorspace. It includes Brook House, a Grade II* listed building, considered to be one of the finest buildings in St Neots. There are two other listed



Bridge House

buildings within the site, and several adjacent, including St Mary's Church. Several permissions have been granted covering the majority of the site. The redevelopment of this site will assist in improving its aesthetic contribution and reintegrate it with the surrounding area by improving permeability from the High Street to Brook Street and Hen Brook.

6.18 The southern part of the Historic Centre leads to the northern bank of Hen Brook and is a quieter area with a mixture of commercial and residential properties. Church Street and Brook View are mixed use areas with very diverse properties in terms of age, scale and building materials. Building types include 2A, 2B, 2D, 3E, 5A and 6A. Some late 20th century infill redevelopment has been integrated into the area, such as Church Meadows, reflecting building type 3E. The grade I listed St Mary's Church and its extensive churchyard provide a peaceful oasis within the town centre. The church mainly dates from the late 15th century, although a church has been on the site since the 13th century.



St Mary's Church

6.19 The Historic Centre also extends along main routes from the High Street north along New Street and Huntingdon Street and east along Cambridge Street. New Street demonstrates a strong character with buildings predominantly from the early to mid 19th century at the southern end including several listed buildings mostly in gault brick with large sash windows. Nos 14-18 comprise a low group of mid-19th century grade II listed double fronted cottages built in gault brick. In contrast, at no 26 Vernon House is an imposing three storey late 19th century property, again built in gault brick set back from the street frontage behind low brick walls. The street continues with 19th century villas and terraced housing of types 2A and 2B. Huntingdon Street and Cambridge Street contain a more diverse mixture of properties in terms of both use and building type. Fewer listed buildings exist along these roads although the north side of Cambridge Street has an attractive group of late 18th and early 18th century houses, mostly of gault brick comprising two storeys plus attics.



Huntingdon Street

6.20 The protection and enhancement of the Historic Centre is a key conservation objective.

Development proposals should:

- Conserve the historic character of the settlement by retaining the tight urban grain and authentic architectural detailing.
- Protect and conserve the historic buildings and promote the continued refurbishment and renovation of key buildings.
- Ensure that new development reflects the materials and colour palette of surrounding buildings (buff and multi-buff brick, white and cream painted brickwork and render, slate, plain gault clay tiles, modern brown and red brick) and promote back of pavement development to conserve the intimate scale of streets.
- Enhance the streetscape by improving the quality of modern infill and through controls on shop front design.
- Prioritise pedestrian rather than vehicular movement to ease congestion and improve pedestrian access.
- Seek improved pedestrian and cycling facilities to and within the area to promote accessibility and activity within the town's historic centre.
- Consider any further opportunities to enhance the quality of the space and promote increased activity in the Market Square.
- Explore the provision of additional public art at key locations to interpret the historical significance of the area.

6 St Neots Spatial Planning Area

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St Neots Character Area 2: Historic Centre Hinterlands



Rowley Arts Centre was integrated to the east of Huntingdon Street and opened in 2014



Large scale retail buildings and associated car parking dominate much of this area

6.21 Although not contiguous the three elements of this area display similar townscape characteristics. The Priory Quarter is situated on the eastern bank of the River Great Ouse and covers the northern part of the site of St Neots Priory scheduled monument. The Priory Quarter includes some of the larger scale civic buildings in the town including the red brick Priory Centre opened in 1980, representing building type 7C. The 23m tower which forms part of the grade II listed 18th century oast house acts as a landmark building adjacent to the Priory Centre.



Oast house

6.22 The area contains a variety of building scales including large scale supermarkets on Bec Road and Cambridge Street. All three elements function largely as service areas for the commercial heart of the town and contain significant areas of public car parking. Service and delivery yards for numerous businesses face onto Tan Yard and Tebbutts Road. The area has numerous timber railings and tall metal lighting columns resulting in a colour palette of asphalt, buff brick, slate, timber and metal. Overall, the townscape value is low with only limited tree planting incorporated. There are strong physical links to the Historic Centre making this a busy area with pedestrian and vehicular movement.

6.23 Small clusters of housing are included within this area, particularly around St Anselm Place which are building type 3D. Adding to the diversity of the townscape are uses relating to the river itself such as St Neots Rowing Club occupying a brick and weatherboarded modern property.

6.24 This is an important and busy area currently dominated by car parking and which is used by many pedestrians as the main approach to the town centre. Redevelopment opportunities have already been taken up in some parts of this area, exemplified by the Rowley Arts Centre which opened in 2014. Further opportunities for redevelopment and improvement of the townscape remain.

Development proposals should:

- Maintain and enhance physical and visual connections to key buildings, views of the Ouse Valley and increase permeability.
- Improve the visual quality of the Priory Lane area through a programme of improvements to building facades and boundary treatments.
- Protect and conserve the historic buildings located here that enrich its character by reinforcing and acknowledging its historic character.
- Promote pedestrian priority along Priory Lane as a key link to the town centre.
- Improve signage to and from the town centre and to the Priory Centre to the west.
- Improve tree planting and boundary treatment of car parks.
- Support the retention or replacement of existing leisure and recreational facilities where this improves the quality of the built environment.

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St Neots Character Area 3: Phoenix Square



Modern infill development can blend sympathetically within a historic environment as achieved in homes adjoining Paines Mill



The elaborate brickwork and height of Paines Mill tower form a highly distinctive local landmark

- 6.25** This is a small area of high-density housing located to the north and west of the Historic Centre Hinterlands. It is focused on Paines Mill, constructed in 1890 from yellow stock brick with red brick dressings in a modified Gothic style, this includes a six storey tower which forms a distinctive local landmark.
- 6.26** Otherwise the area consists primarily of two storey Edwardian and inter-war semi-detached and terraced homes of building types 2A, 2B and 3B. Substantial late 20th century infill is also present which has taken strong design cues from Paines Mill in terms of brick colours and banding details. The area demonstrates a cohesive urban form provided by terraced housing fronting Bedford Street and Rycroft Avenue with good links to the town centre along Huntingdon Street. There is a grid based street pattern with narrow streets resulting in parking in rear courts and gardens with some on-street parking where capacity exists. This creates a strong sense of enclosure and a quiet atmosphere.
- 6.27** This is a small but distinctive area of residential development offering few opportunities for development.

Development proposals should:

- Protect and conserve the Paines Mill building and its immediate setting.
- Conserve and reflect the small scale, high-density terrace form for housing.
- Reflect the red and yellow colour palette in any new development.
- Ensure adequate provision of car parking to reduce the impact on the street scene arising from further parking demand.
- Protect views from the west of the area out across Lammas Meadow.
- Support provision of facilities which promote cycling and pedestrian links to the town centre.

St Neots Character Area 4: Avenue Road / East Street



The mixed heights of properties along East Street add variety to its character



Avenue Road is characterised by large Victorian homes often with full height bay bay windows

6.28 This is a distinctive discrete area of large Victorian and Edwardian properties situated to the north east of the Historic Centre and centred on Avenue Road comprising mainly building type 2B with sections of type 2A 19th century terraced housing such as on the southern side of East Street. This is a quiet residential area with wide, well-defined streets with pavements to both sides. The streetscape is defined by continuous building frontage with housing regularly spaced along streets. Nearly all properties have low front boundary walls and shallow front gardens. Rear gardens contain large numbers of mature trees which provide a green backdrop as they can be seen from the street in gaps between houses and from the footpaths which run between rear garden boundaries. These footpaths are a feature of the area providing high connectivity.

6.29 There is a homogenous character to this area with houses from the same era with little modern infill. Gault brick is the predominant building material and bay windows are a strong design feature. This area supports the character of the historic centre. The only significant non-residential use in the area is St Joseph's Roman Catholic Church on East Street which reinforces the local character as it is constructed in the same gault brick as the surrounding houses.



St Joseph's RC Church

6.30 This is a small, attractive residential area with a leafy character and a strong sense of place. There are few opportunities for large scale development.

Development proposals should:

- Maintain the integrity of the street scene by conserving the original architectural detailing particularly on building facades and details.
- Ensure that any new development fronts the street and reflects the dominant materials and colour palette of buff and red brick, slate and cream painted render.
- Promote a consistent approach to the design of garden boundaries where these front directly onto the street.
- Protect existing mature trees vegetation along the road frontage and visually significant trees within private gardens.
- Ensure adequate provision of car parking to reduce the impact on the street scene of on-street parking.

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St Neots Character Area 5: North East St Neots



Chamberlain Way typifies the extensive developments of large detached homes built in the 1980s and 1990s in this area with houses quite close to the street frontage with no boundary fences or hedges



The post WW2 housing boom saw many short terraces like these at The Crescent typically with about a 2 metre front garden with hedges or fences separating private space from the pavement

6.31 This is an extensive residential area developed in various phases since 1945 with a few local services integrated within it. In terms of housing style it includes a series of distinct sub-areas each reflecting the architectural character of the time. The oldest sub-area is focused to the west of Huntingdon Street immediately north of the Phoenix Square character area. This comprises homes built immediately post 1945 predominantly in short terraces representing building type 3D. Homes are generally set back from the pavement by fairly shallow front gardens with a wide variety of fencing and walling denoting the property boundaries. The older homes mainly depend upon on-street parking and where deep enough many have converted front gardens to allow on-plot parking. Leys Road and Queensway are predominantly in semi-detached form with side garages being commonly found. Light brown brick and brown concrete roof tiles are the predominant building materials with a small number of rendered properties along The Crescent. A small area of mixed use development to the east of Huntingdon Street is broadly contemporary to this including a cluster of civic uses providing medical and emergency services.



Queensway

6.32 The second sub-area typifies 1980s/ early 1990s housing developments built as a series of culs-de-sac all accessed off either Barringer Way or Chamberlain Way. All homes are detached predominantly four bedroom properties with a garage on the plot. Mock Tudor detailing provides decoration to most houses in the form of mock beams with cladding panels or decorative brickwork inserts and are exclusively building type 3E. Front garden depths vary depending on relationship between individual properties and the road access particularly within culs-de-sac.

6.33 South of Priory Park lies a relatively large sub-area of homes originating from the 1959 Town Development Plan and a cluster of educational establishments including Longsands Academy and a doctors' surgery. The extensive playing fields associated with the schools form a green buffer between the housing areas and Priory Park to the north. Homes are mainly semi-detached in form interspersed with small groups of bungalows such as those on Princes Drive and a few short terraces. Yellow and light brown brick are the most frequently used building materials with some properties featuring decorative tile hanging to the first floor. Low pitched roofs with brown concrete roof are a strong characteristic. All homes fall within building type 3D. Front gardens are



Astrea Sixth Form College

commonly 2 to 5 m deep and are often separated from the pavement by low walls and hedges. Small garage blocks are scattered throughout the area with many front gardens converted to enable on-plot parking. A parade of local shops on the corner of Longsands Road and Princes Drive are built in a similar style to the housing. This sub-area includes numerous grassed amenity areas with mature trees which benefit its townscape character.

- 6.34** The final sub-area wraps around the eastern edge of Priory Park. A strong belt of trees defines the end of each cul-de-sac off Longsands Road whilst the rear gardens of homes accessed off Priory Hill have more direct linkages with the park. Built in the 1970s this sub-area includes a high proportion of larger detached houses with a small number of semi-detached homes to the east of Longsands Road. All are classified as building type 3D. The street scene gains interest from the variety of brick colours present with gables forming a strong design characteristic.



Falcon Close

- 6.35** There are limited development opportunities within this area, primarily for extensions of existing properties.

Development proposals should:

- Ensure that new development responds positively to the specific opportunities available within the area.
- Reflect the existing built forms and relationship with the street in the immediate locality.
- Ensure extensions and alterations to existing properties are of an appropriate size and scale to the original dwelling and do not detract from the surrounding area.
- Reflect the dominant materials and colour palette within the immediate vicinity.
- Maintain and enhance physical and visual connections to large scale green infrastructure within and around the area.
- Protect existing grass verges and reinforce tree planting where space and utility services permit this.
- Protect the existing areas of greenspace and tree planting which contribute to the character of the area.
- Promote high standards of design and support creativity in architectural detailing.
- Support provision of facilities which promote cycling and pedestrian links to the town centre.
- Support initiatives for the retention and creation of additional services and community facilities.
- Where visually appropriate incorporate renewable energy.

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St Neots Character Area 6: Priory Park



A range of play equipment attracts visitors to Priory Park



Priory Park's extensive area allows trees to grow to their full height providing a landscape offering benefits to people and wildlife

6.36 Priory Park is situated on rising land to the northern fringe of the town. It contains numerous magnificent mature trees principally oak and lime set within an undulating landscape that falls significantly toward the urban edge of St Neots to the south. The park is segregated from the adjacent urban edges by belts of dense tree and shrub planting along the western and eastern boundaries. It is used for recreation with activities including informal open space, sports pitches (football and rugby) and play areas. There is a small car park and pavilion to the south west corner of the park. The park is visually enclosed with only intermittent views toward Huntingdon Street and Priory Hill Road.

6.37 Priory Park should be protected as a key asset for the town with development limited to that focusing on supporting the use of the park for recreation.

Development proposals should:

- Consider new pedestrian access points to link the park more effectively with the surrounding residential estates.
- Protect the existing mature trees and continue the programme of replacement planting.
- Maintain the integrity of the tree screen around the park's boundaries.
- Consider opportunities to enhance the footpath network within the park.
- Promote opportunities for enhancement of green spaces to provide increased opportunities for recreation and nature conservation and to help provide distinctive local landmarks.

St Neots Character Area 7: Love's Farm



A strong vertical pattern to these three storey homes complement the scale of the open space at Station Square



Diverse homes along Great High Ground overlook the open space associated with Fox Brook

6.38 Love's Farm is situated to the east of St Neots railway station with the East Coast mainline railway influencing the layout of the western edge of the whole character area. Planned as a major new neighbourhood it contains some 1,400 homes, a primary school, local shops, community facilities and large areas of open space and sports facilities. As a single planned entity Love's Farm incorporates a wide range of styles, types and densities within an agreed masterplan but all falling within building type 3F for housing, 5D and 7C for non-residential buildings. Both red and yellow brick are widely used with detailing provided by coloured rendering, weatherboarding and red and grey roof tiles.



Local shops

6.39 Love's Farm is broadly divided into three sections by landscaping belts which form distinctive character features. The southern one is focused on Fox Brook and is reinforced by a series of balancing ponds and incorporates both natural green infrastructure and more formal play areas. The northern landscaping belt builds on the green space provided by St Neots football club and the playing field associated with Round House Primary School. The landscaping belts help to reduce the impact of the development on the surrounding South East Claylands landscape character area.



Fox Brook

6.40 Higher density development fronts onto Cambridge Road, Great High Ground and Station Square creating distinctive entrances to areas within Love's Farm. Properties range up to 4 storeys in height with a strong vertical emphasis to their design. Parking is frequently provided to the rear of these properties benefiting the streetscene on the frontage but resulting in some access routes being very car dominated. Local services are clustered in close proximity to the railway station within purpose built shop and community facility buildings with mono-pitch roofs and wood, glass and coloured render panels.

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6.41 The majority of Love's Farm is solely in residential use including detached, terraced and flatted properties. Corner properties are frequently designed to present active frontages to both facing roads to promote interest and activity to the street scene. The northern section of the character area includes sections of lower density housing with detached homes facing onto the surrounding countryside. Footpaths running through landscaping corridors promote accessibility away from street frontages.



Bargroves Avenue

6.42 East of the railway and around Love's Farm will develop further through Strategic Expansion Location 2 (St Neots East) for 3,820 homes and SN2 (Loves Farm Reserved Site) for 40 homes. The latter utilises some spare land within the original Love's Farm development. The strategic expansion includes Love's Farm East which adjoins the existing Loves Farm development on the northern side of Cambridge Road and Wintringham Park to the south. Delivery of this urban extension is expected to progress through into the 2040's with a new Wintringham Primary Academy built and the first phase of homes built and more under construction as at 2021. Many reserved matters will be submitted for the site over the course of its development, for further details on its progress, visit the [Wintringham website](#). Once complete, this will likely be its own character area.

6.43 Development proposals within the existing Love's Farm and limited to extensions and alterations to existing properties, however the character area will continue to experience changes over many years.

Development proposals should:

- Promote high standards of design and support creativity in architectural detailing.
- Reflect the dominant materials and colour palette within the immediate vicinity.
- Protect the existing mature trees and semi-natural open spaces of the structural landscaping areas.
- Provide increased opportunities for wildlife and nature conservation initiatives to enhance the ecological value of the green infrastructure areas.
- Protect the existing grass verges and support additional tree planting where space and utility services permit this.
- Support initiatives for the retention and creation of community and recreational facilities within the residential area.
- Where possible incorporate renewable energy generation.

St Neots Character Area 8: Hen Brook



Buildings fronting onto Hen Brook reflect their historic waterfront uses



St Neots Marina lies on the confluence of Hen Brook and the River Great Ouse bringing vitality and character to the waterfront area

6.44 The Hen Brook character area includes the open space on either side of the brook, St Neots cemetery, allotments and areas of public open space to the north east. Together, these areas provide an important network of green spaces within the heart of the residential area, which is well used by local residents both as a means of access and for informal recreation. The central area is well connected to adjacent residential areas through surfaced footpaths, however there is no formal access to the north western area which runs behind residential properties along Chestnut Grove.

6.45 Much of the area is mown grassland with occasional mature trees. Willow trees and native shrubs are common along the brook which offer an important wildlife refuge. Although not urban in its own nature this character area provides an important green backdrop to the South of Cambridge Street and Eynesbury Expansion character areas and provides physical and visual connections between them and the Historic Centre.



6.46 This is an important area of green space which links the eastern peripheral housing estates to the Historic Centre of the town and to the Ouse valley.

Hen Brook

Development proposals should:

- Improve the wildlife value of the brook and the associated open space through new planting and effective park management.
- Promote provision of high quality street furniture in play areas and parks along the brook's route.
- Provide low level lighting along main pedestrian routes to ensure a safe environment whilst minimising the impact on wildlife.
- Improve opportunities for safe access to the water's edge in selected locations.
- Support initiatives for improved marina and boating facilities where Hen Brook relates to the River Great Ouse and the town centre.

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St Neots Character Area 9: South of Cambridge Street



The 5 storey flats provide a focal point on the corner of Duck Lane



Cambridge Street forms a major route into the town centre; the mature trees and formal flower borders add significant quality to the street scene

6.47 The area to the south of Cambridge Street is predominantly residential along with primary schools and a few local facilities. Homes mainly date from the 1960s and 1970s being primarily built as a result of the St Neots Town Development Plan 1959. Two storey semi-detached and short terraces are the most frequently found building forms but the area also includes bungalow and some low rise blocks of flats, mostly of three storeys rising to a maximum of five storeys. All fall within building type 3D. Older and more variety of properties are found along Cambridge Street itself, by The Lane. The area's only listed buildings are found here although both have limited visibility from the street. Shortsands House (also known as Bethany Francis House) is an intricately decorative property with Morton House being a multi-coloured brick house from the early 19th century.



Sandfields Road

6.48 Building materials and detailing contain localised variations in different streets. Manor Grove for instance is predominantly pale brick with coloured render whereas Duck Lane contains a distinctive group of homes with white and brown weatherboarding. Low pitched roofs are ubiquitous across the two storey properties in the area whilst the flats are flat roofed.

6.49 Road layouts are often complex with significant numbers of culs-de-sac. Wide grass verges with mature trees benefit the street scene in some locations. Front garden depths are very variable across the area ranging from 1 to 10 m in depth depending on the immediate relationship with the road arrangement. On plot parking and garages are rare. Garages are frequently provided in blocks interspersed amongst housing or by the ends of terraces and can give rise to poorer quality townscape. Parking courts and bays on the edges of streets also lead to some areas being visually dominated by cars.



Whitehall Walk

6.50 Within the character area is a distinctive sub-group of housing built in the Radburn style, categorised as building type 3C. Cars are separated to the rear of properties whose fronts generally face onto footpaths and linear green spaces. This area is focused around Whitehall Walk and parts of Duck Lane. Properties are predominantly short terraces with very regular design features.

- 6.51** The southern part of the area adjoins Hen Brook and the linear green space associated with this. Footpath connections along this are good and many homes benefit from overlooking the green space. Houses, mainly semi-detached, are arranged to front onto the green space with communal parking to the rear.
- 6.52** There are limited development opportunities within this area, primarily for extensions of existing properties and some redevelopment of garage and parking blocks where adequate alternative arrangements can be made.



Hen Brook

Development proposals should:

- Maintain and enhance physical and visual connections to key landmarks to promote legibility and pedestrian accessibility.
- Enrich the role of Cambridge Street as a key gateway to the town centre.
- Reflect the existing built forms and relationship of properties with the street frontage in the immediate locality.
- Reflect the dominant materials and colour palette within the immediate vicinity.
- Reflect the diverse mix of housing sizes, types and tenures present in the area contributing to an inclusive community.
- Protect and enhance grass verges and landscape planting area and provide additional street trees where space and service restrictions permit.
- Support provision of renewable energy where visually appropriate.
- Support provision of facilities which promote active modes of travel.

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St Neots Character Area 10: Eynesbury Historic Village



St Mary's Street forms the historic connection to the modern town centre reflected in the variety of styles and uses of properties lining the route



The former primary school reflects typical architecture and building materials of mid 19th century civic buildings

6.53 Eynesbury is a former village which forms a distinct, broadly triangular area focused around Berkley Street, Montagu Street and Luke Street. St Mary's Street then connects over Hen Brook through to the Historic Centre. The area extends west towards the River Great Ouse and has strong connections with this landscape character area. Green infrastructure uses including playing fields, cemetery and marina predominate on the western edge of this character area. Although primarily residential, the area also includes some retail and commercial uses, particularly along St Mary's Street.

6.54 This character area contains a substantial number of listed buildings. St Mary's Street contains a series of 17th to 19th century properties, often timber framed, some plastered and others in multiple red colourings. St Mary's Church at the northern end of Berkley Street is of 12th and 13th century origin with the tower rebuilt in the late 17th century; it is grade II* listed and forms a focal point in the street scene particularly when coming south along St Mary's Street. West of the church is the Old Primary School which forms a landmark building at the road junction.

6.55 Buildings range across a wide age spectrum and include 17th century cottages, 18th and 19th century town houses, Victorian terraces and some modern residential development to the north (building types include 1B, 2A, 2B, 2D, 3B, 6A and 6B). Forming the southern boundary of the area is a group of early 20th century housing on Ferrars Avenue built in type 3A Arts and Crafts influenced housing with substantial semi-detached homes set behind shallow front gardens mostly separated from the pavement by neat hedges. The variety of building types helps the area retain some of its former village character despite heavy traffic along St Mary's Street and Berkley Street.



Ferrars Avenue

6.56 Building materials are also diverse with both buff and red brick being frequently used along with a significant number of properties being plastered or rendered and painted. Grey slate roofs are commonly found. There are numerous buff and red brick boundary walls to the street frontage providing a sense of enclosure, reinforced by narrow pavements. Many properties are built directly onto the rear of the pavement or have shallow front gardens of 1 to 2 m. At



Village sign

the southern end of Luke Street Eynesbury Green brings a level of softness to the streetscape with its mature trees and flower beds complemented by green space across the junction with hosts the Eynesbury village sign reinforcing the area's historic identity as a separate settlement.

- 6.57** This is a residential area of varied character containing some fine historic buildings offering some development opportunities including extensions, infill and redevelopment schemes.

Development proposals should:

- Protect and conserve the historic buildings and promote the continued refurbishment and renovation of key buildings.
- Protect views to and from St Mary's Church.
- Ensure that new development responds positively to the specific opportunities available within the area.
- Protect trees to the street frontage and those within the village green, protect the character and integrity of existing boundary walls.
- Protect the existing views across the Ouse Valley landscape character area from the western edge of the area.
- Reflect the existing materials and colour palette of buff and red brick and slate or plain gault clay tiles.
- Promote the retention of original architectural features to the exterior of buildings experiencing renovation or extension.

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St Neots Character Area 11: Eynesbury Expansion



One Leisure and Ernulf Academy form a concentration of community facilities



Pale brick homes with large windows and tile hung detailing are widespread in this area

6.58 This is a relatively large area of housing interspersed with schools and local services including shops, takeaway and healthcare. Land north of the B1046 was developed as a result of the 1959 St Neots Town Development Plan resulting in its character being very similar to that of area 9: South of Cambridge Street. The area is intersected by area 10: Eynesbury Historic Village and area 12: Cromwell Road.

6.59 This area contains a wide range of housing types including clusters of detached houses such as in Burnt Close and bungalows such as those found in Linley Road and Willow Close. Semi-detached and short terraces of houses are the most frequently found form with small blocks of four storey flats such as those on Springbrook.



Springbrook

6.60 Pale and mid-brown brick are used throughout the area with detailing usually found in the form of rendered or weather boarded panels. Properties are a mixture of building types 3C and 3D. Localised variations are found in clusters, such as Bishops Road being mainly in a darker brown brick and the southern end of Howitt's Lane containing a group of stepped terraced homes with steep pitched roofs rather than the low pitch used elsewhere.

6.61 The road network is complex with many culs-de-sac, particularly leading north to Hen Brook. Parts of the area are built on a Radburn layout with housing facing onto footpaths which often leads to road frontages having limited pavements or grass verges and frequently being bordered by brick walls. Parking is in a mixture of on plot, garage blocks or parking courts and detracts from the quality of the built form in some areas.

6.62 A distinct sub-area of homes exists off Howitt's Lane where the St Neots mobile home park is located. Set behind a close boarded fence giving very limited street visibility this provides a cluster of single storey park homes bounded to the west by industrial uses forming part of area 12: Cromwell Road.

6.63 The south western part of this character area contains a distinct sub-area of community uses with the Ernulf Academy, One Leisure St Neots and Eynesbury Rovers football club. These present a mixture of one and two storey properties to the street frontage, mainly in red brick with substantial glazed areas. Set in extensive playing fields and landscaping this sub-area provides a transition between surrounding residential areas and the Ouse Valley landscape character area to the west.

- 6.64** There are limited development opportunities within this area, primarily for extensions of existing properties and some redevelopment of garage and parking blocks where adequate alternative arrangements can be made.

Development proposals should:

- Respond positively to any redevelopment opportunities available.
- Maintain and enhance physical and visual connections to key buildings, landscape views and increase permeability.
- Reflect the diverse mix of housing sizes, types and tenures present in the area contributing to an inclusive community.
- Reflect the dominant materials and colour palette within the immediate vicinity.
- Reduce the visual dominance of cars by promoting enhanced boundary landscaping and planting.
- Reflect the existing relationships between buildings and streets in any new development.
- Protect and enhance grass verges and landscape planting areas and provide additional street trees where space and service restrictions permit.
- Support proposals for renewable energy and active modes of travel.
- Support the retention of existing community and leisure facilities and opportunities for their enhancement and expansion.

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St Neots Character Area 12: Cromwell Road and Station Road



Large industrial units are set back behind grass verges containing mature trees



Large industrial unit surrounded by fencing and parking on Cromwell Road

- 6.65** This area primarily comprises the land earmarked for industrial development in the St Neots Town Development Plan 1959. The character area is split in two by the South of Cambridge Street character area. Both elements of this character area have an Established Employment Area within them (as identified within the [Local Plan](#)): Station Road Industrial Area in the northern area and Cromwell Road Industrial Estate to the south. Cromwell Road is lined by pavements and grass verges often with mature trees on both sides creating a spacious setback for the large scale industrial premises which dominate the area. The southern end of Cromwell Road has walls and fencing facing on to the western side from residential and educational properties within character area 11: Eynesbury Expansion. Station Road has industrial units only on the western side with high walls overhung by mature trees dominating the eastern side.
- 6.66** Most units are single or at most two storeys high and built of a mixture of buff or red brick and corrugated metal and surrounded by extensive areas of asphalt. Pale shades of grey, green and beige dominate the colour palette with red and blue providing some highlights. Galvanised steel security fencing fronts many of the industrial units with little internal screening of activities. Car parking is often visible from the street frontage. Clusters of smaller units are included particularly towards the southern end.
- 
- 6.67** The area immediately around the railway station contains a mix of uses including extensive surface level car parking and a small number of houses along with the station itself which opened in 1850. Building forms are typically low with limited soft landscaping giving a relatively harsh, open aspect to the area. The railway bridge crossing Cambridge Road and associated embankments form a key feature in the local townscape and provide the main route eastwards from the town. Situated east of the railway is a small sub-area comprising low level development providing a builders yard and a Gypsy and Traveller residential site.
- 6.68** The industrial area on the western side of Cromwell Road is not part of the Established Employment Area, much is allocated in the [Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036](#) for redevelopment for residential purposes (SN3 and SN4). This provides the opportunity for integration of this part with the surrounding residential area along with concentrating the industrial uses to the eastern side of the road.
- 6.69** This area will undergo significant change through redevelopment opportunities including residential development. For industrial areas, there is capacity for new units, extensions, change of use to other appropriate land uses or the renovation of older and vacant properties.

Small units

Development proposals should:

- Reinforce the use of the area as one of St Neots' primary employment locations.
- Ensure that development responds positively to emerging redevelopment opportunities and maximise the accessibility advantages of the area.
- Protect the existing grass verges and mature trees and supplement these where space and service restrictions permit.
- Promote high standards of design and support creativity in architectural detailing.
- Improve pedestrian and cycle linkages into surrounding residential areas.
- Promote opportunities for the enhancement of views and connectivity to Hen Brook.
- Support provision of renewable energy where appropriate and electric vehicle charging points.

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St Neots Character Area 13: Barford Road



Caernavon-Andrew Road



Three storey townhouses in Buttercup Avenue are designed to make efficient use of land

- 6.70** The Barford Road area comprises the southernmost extension to Eynesbury. Two distinct sub-areas exist with the eastern side of Barford Road being built in the 1980s and 1990s and the western side of Barford Road being built in the early 2000s.
- 6.71** The eastern side of Barford Road comprises the typical layout of the 1980s with major spine roads leading to a series of culs-de-sac. Footpath connections link many of these allowing more permeable routes for pedestrians. The placement of homes in relation to the road frontage is inconsistent leading to significant variety in the depths of front gardens. Hedges form the most frequent separation between pavements and private property with occasional brick walls, mostly on corners; fences are very rare on road frontages. Buildings are entirely residential other than Middlefield Primary School.
- 6.72** The form of homes varies with detached, semi-detached and short terraces all present within the area. Distinct clusters of house types can be found such as a concentration of detached properties in Richmond Close and Barnard Close and mainly short terraces and semi-detached homes in Pembroke Avenue and Carisbrooke Way. Lindisfarne Close includes a distinct group of cluster homes with substantial areas given over to parking courts. All homes are either buff or red brick with a variety of detailing. Towards the north of the area detailing is generally limited to coloured brick banding or tile hanging. Further south, for instance around Richmond Close mock Tudor decorative panels are frequently found. All homes fall within building type 3E.
- 
- 6.73** Development to the west of Barford Road commenced with the Tesco superstore situated in the south eastern corner of this sub-area. Located immediately north of it are a medical centre and Poppyfield's extra-care housing scheme. Development started in the very early 2000's and progressed quickly with Knights Park in the south western corner being the last section started in 2010. The layout varies from the eastern side of Barford Road in that although still served by a limited number of spine roads housing is generally arranged off them in blocks allowing greater permeability.

Lindisfarne Close

6.74 This sub-area is largely split horizontally by Wren Walk and its associated green infrastructure which provides a wide central landscaping belt with substantial bands of mature trees surrounding residential boundaries. This links into the strategic green infrastructure of the Ouse Valley landscape character area. Homes on the north western edge all front directly onto a small lake within this connecting directly to the River Great Ouse with boat moorings extending the entire length of this section. These properties are a mixture of three and four storeys maximising opportunities of the waterside views.



Apartments by moorings

6.75 The building type throughout this sub-area is 3F. The main building materials are red and buff brick closely intermingled along the same streets with both red and grey pantiles and grey artificial slates used as roofing materials. The form of housing includes a high proportion of terraced housing with detached homes primarily limited to those overlooking green infrastructure. A significant difference from the eastern side of Barford Road is the height of properties with some remaining at two storeys but a significant proportion of houses being two and half and three storeys and apartments being three and four storeys high. Buttercup Avenue contains a distinctive group of three storey townhouses which typify building type 3F being three storey townhouses in buff brick with rendered panels in pale blue or cream with limited roadside parking and separate car parking courts interspersed amongst housing.

6.76 This is a recently established residential neighbourhood with few opportunities for further development within the estate.

Development proposals should:

- Maintain and enhance physical and visual connections to key buildings and views.
- Reflect the existing built forms and relationship with the street in any new development.
- Protect the existing grass verges, local greens and mature trees and reinforce provision of open space and landscape planting.
- Complement the existing materials and diverse colour palette of the immediate locality.
- Ensure adequate provision of car parking to reduce the impact on the street scene of on street parking.
- Provide increased opportunities for wildlife and nature conservation initiatives to enhance the ecological value of the green infrastructure areas and the river corridor frontage.
- Support the retention of existing leisure, recreational and community facilities and opportunities for their expansion or enhancement.
- Where possible incorporate renewable energy generation.

6 St Neots Spatial Planning Area

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St Neots Character Area 14: The Eatons Historic Route



Victorian terraced housing built very close to the pavement on the western side of Great North Road



Eaton Socon war memorial is set in a substantial grassed area fronting Great North Road immediately south of St Mary's Church

6.77 This is a historic linear route through the former villages of Eaton Socon and Eaton Ford which was a former coaching road prior to the construction of the A1. The southern part of the route comprises the Old Great North Road, diverging north east to the St Neots Road (B1428) to cross the River Great Ouse and connect the area into the Historic Centre. The route is lined with buildings of various ages but mainly from the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries. The use is predominantly residential, but also includes places of worship and commercial uses. Many building types are represented including 1B, 2A, 2B, 2D, 3B, 6A and 6B. The route is surrounded by modern residential development to the west and east.

6.78 A small cluster of listed buildings is focused around Eaton Ford Green which forms a focal point in the north of this area. The primary building in this group is the grade II* listed Ford House which dates originally from the mid 15th century and is a timber framed property with notable brick and stone chimneys now in use as a care home. Further south the grade II listed White House was built around 1842 as a workhouse; it contains one to three storey ranges all of gault brick and slate roofs now converted into a series of individual homes. It is well set back from the road and the mature trees in the grounds make an attractive contribution to the streetscape.



White House

6.79 The character area is strongly focused on properties fronting directly onto the road. Some sections are well-contained with properties built either directly onto the back of the pavement or with shallow front gardens of under two metres. Other sections of the route are more spaciouly laid out either where substantial older properties are surrounded by private gardens or where properties facing onto side roads adjoin this route. The presence of large mature trees gives the route a green character but it is subject to heavy traffic with traffic calming measures in several places.



Mature planting

6.80 A key feature of this character area is the number of current and former inns and public houses reflecting the history of the Great North Road as a main coaching route between London and Scotland. Many of these properties date from the 17th and 18th centuries and examples such as The George and Dragon Inn, The Old Plough Inn (now a restaurant) and the White Horse Hotel all reinforce the historic character of the area. The White Horse Hotel is grade II listed and constructed of red brick with sash windows; its car park forms a distinct break in the street frontage to the north of the building.

6.81 The historic character of the area is clear at Eaton Socon where Mary's Church and the adjacent green with the war memorial provide a strong focal point. There are many listed buildings in Eaton Socon reflecting the historic nature of the route and reinforcing the village character of the original settlement. A particular cluster is found at the junction of Ackerman Street and the Great North Road with cottages ranging from the 17th to early 19th centuries. The timber framed cottage at 134 Great North Road with its very steeply pitched thatched roof provides a distinctive feature.



Ackerman Street

6.82 This Historic Route forms the main approach to St Neots from the south west and the quality of the existing built environment should be protected. Development opportunities do however exist through building refurbishment and new development where gaps in the street frontage occur.

Development proposals should:

- Protect and conserve the historic buildings located along St Neots Road and the Great North Road.
- Maintain the integrity of the street scene by conserving the original architectural detailing particularly on building facades and details.
- Maintain existing visual connections to the Ouse Valley landscape character area and the glimpsed backdrop of mature trees it provides along this route.
- Facilitate visual connections between new development and key historic buildings and open spaces where achievable.
- Protect the village greens at Eaton Socon and Eaton Ford.
- Protect the setting of St Mary's Church at Eaton Socon.
- Conserve and reflect the intimate scale of the historic core of Eaton Socon village.
- Ensure that new development generally fronts the road and reflects the local building styles and colour palette of buff and red brick, cream render, white painted brickwork, timber frame with white render, slate, pantiles and plain tiles.

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St Neots Character Area 15: Crosshall Road



Savile's Close typifies the substantial detached homes of this area with a variety of style and ages with substantial trees



Some properties have been substantially extended and renovated

6.83 Crosshall Road forms the northern and eastern boundary between Eaton Ford and the Ouse Valley landscape character area with which it has a strong inter-relationship. There is a rising topography with western areas greatly elevated from those to the south. The road frontage is defined by low brick walls, hedges and a wide grass verge. Mature trees and vegetation to private gardens creates an overall green character with views to the east across the Ouse Valley from houses on the lower slopes.



6.84 The road is dominated by substantial detached houses and villas, some of which have had large scale extensions, and forms the approach into St Neots from the north west. The area is predominately in residential use with the exception of St Neots Golf Club and the Eaton Oak public house. The grade II* listed Crosshall Manor is a timber framed red brick property dating from the 17th century which forms a notable feature when approaching over the A1 from the north west.

Eastern side of Crosshall Road

6.85 The vast majority of Crosshall Road only has properties on the western side with the Riverside Park dominating the eastern side. The oldest homes are found at the southern end with a small group of two and two and half storey Victorian properties closely followed by a few inter-war detached and semi-detached homes representing building types 2B and 3B respectively. These create a very suburban feel to the streetscape. Wide grass verges and greens set the 1960s development further north of building type 3D away from the road with mature trees and hedging often shielding properties from sight along the road frontage.

6.86 As Crosshall Road swings north-west a group of homes breaks across to the north-eastern side of the road; most of those accessed directly from Crosshall Road can barely be glimpsed from the road through mature trees and gardens. The majority of this group are accessed off Savile's Close which contains a variety of houses and bungalows, mainly of building type 3D, generally set in substantial plots with mature trees which give a high quality townscape. To the south of Crosshall Road immediately east of the junction with the Great North Road is a linear group of bungalows and large detached homes from the 1950s onwards all well set back from the road reinforcing its rural character. The majority of these are building type 3D built typically of red brick with some



Golf Clubhouse

white render, with individual access drives to the road set in generous rectangular shaped plots. To the north is situated St Neots Golf Course which blends the road frontage uses into the Ouse Valley landscape character area.

- 6.87** This is a small but prosperous residential area with a strong relationship with the Ouse Valley. There are limited opportunities for new development as the green character of the road corridor provides an attractive approach to the town.

Development proposals should:

- Ensure that new development responds positively to the specific opportunities available within the area.
- Protect the existing views east across the Ouse Valley landscape character area from the southern end of Crosshall Road.
- Protect the grass verges and mature trees along the road edge
- Improve screening to the car park of St Neots Golf Club.
- Promote the retention of original architectural features to the exterior of buildings experiencing renovation or extension.
- Reflect the existing built forms and relationship with the street in any new development.
- Ensure extensions and alterations to existing properties are of an appropriate size and scale to the original dwelling and do not detract from the surrounding area.
- Provide increased opportunities for wildlife and nature conservation initiatives to maintain and enhance the area's ecological value.
- Where possible incorporate renewable energy generation.

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St Neots Character Area 16: The Poets and Painters Estate



Whistler Road in Eaton Ford typifies the mixed dwelling styles and sizes of many of the peripheral estates



The view east from Lawrence Road shows the type of housing extensively built in the 1960s and 1970s, here following the fall of the landscape down the Ouse Valley

6.88 The Poets and Painters Estate is contained within the Great North Road and Crosshall Road. Wholly residential, other than Crosshall Primary Academy, the housing dates primarily from the 1960s onwards representing building type 3D although a small amount of housing of 3B dating from the 1930s along some from the 1950s can be found on Mill Hill Road which forms the southern boundary and on Great North Road.

6.89 The topography rises towards the north-west of the area and strongly shapes views eastwards across the River Great Ouse towards the Historic Centre helping connect this character area to the wider landscape setting. The topography influences the layout of development and adds interest to the resultant street scene.

6.90 The housing style is fairly consistent throughout the area. Buff brick is the dominant building material with tile hanging and bargeboards used for decoration. A high proportion of homes are detached with single or sometimes double garages on the plot. Semi-detached homes are found in clusters, particularly towards the southern end of the estate. Likewise there are a few groups of short terraces, particularly towards the south-east. All homes fall within building type 3D.

6.91 The estate is spaciouly laid out with wide grass verges and generous front gardens being found throughout. Areas of green space and mature trees are also widespread enhancing the attractiveness of the streetscape.

6.92 This is an established residential area with limited opportunities for further development other than extensions.



Mill Hill Road



Milton Avenue

Development proposals should:

- Ensure that new development responds positively to the specific opportunities available within the area.
- Maintain visual connections to key buildings and landscape views including those across the Ouse Valley towards the Historic Centre.
- Ensure extensions and alterations to existing properties are of an appropriate size and scale to the original dwelling and do not detract from the surrounding area.
- Reflect the existing materials and colour palette of properties in the immediate locality.
- Reflect the existing built forms and relationship with the street in any new development.
- Protect the existing grass verges and mature trees and supplement these where space and service restrictions permit.
- Support initiatives for the creation of additional services and community facilities within the area.
- Where possible incorporate renewable energy generation.

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St Neots Character Area 17: East of the Great North Road



These houses in Alamein Court provide a very regular street scene; the dark brown brick is uncommon in the district



Wheatsheaf Road includes bungalows with grass verges and street trees

- 6.93** The East of the Great North Road character area is dissected by the Eatons Historic Route character area. It contains a series of sub-areas where road names are themed reflecting their date of construction. To the north of the Eatons Historic Route is 'The Battles' sub-area whilst to the south are two further sub-areas with 'The Rivers' to the north of Duloe Brook and housing off Shakespeare Road to the south which have an eastern boundary with the Ouse Valley landscape character area. The Paddock forms a small separate sub-area in the north of the area of 2 and 3 storey homes of type 3D which includes substantial mature trees and has a close relationship with the adjoining Ouse Valley landscape character area.
- 6.94** 'The Battles' sub-area primarily comprises housing from the 1960s and 1970s built in a range of forms. A high proportion of homes, particularly in the western roads, are detached properties with single or double garages included within the plot. Towards the north-east more properties are semi-detached with garage parking often to the side of the plot contributing to a spacious layout. All properties are within the building type 3D. The southern area around Orchard Road includes some chalet style homes, also of type 3D, and a cluster of later homes at the eastern end of Orchard Close comprising building type 3E. A wide range of brick colours are used throughout the area adding diversity to the streetscape with decorative detailing again provided mostly in the form of hanging tiles or painted bargeboards. The road layout in this area is very inconsistent with a mixture of relatively straight connecting roads and culs-de-sac. Houses are typically set back around 2 to 5 m from the pavement edge with a small proportion accessed from footpaths rather than directly from the road. Parcels of green space are dispersed throughout the area combined with grass verges and mature trees.
- 6.95** 'The Rivers' sub-area includes an unusual cluster of mono-pitch roofed houses in the northern end while the majority of the area comprises more traditionally styled tile hung semi-detached houses or unadorned brick detached houses usually with a gable front to the road. Many homes have garages located to the side and some gardens have been hard surfaced to provide on plot parking. Gardens directly adjoin pavements with grass verges being very rare in this sub-group.
- 6.96** Blending down into Eaton Socon the southernmost sub-area of housing is primarily focused off Shakespeare Road. Housing is similar in styling to 'The Rivers' sub-area with the addition of some housing arranged as short terraces. Clusters of bungalows are present such as those on Wheatsheaf Road where the street scene is enhanced by grass verges with trees. The Crescent provides the only older housing within the character area with a small group of



Brook Road

bungalows representing building type 3B. Capulet Close includes a small area of newer homes of type 3E featuring yellow brick with red brick detailing. These two sub-areas have little interaction with the Ouse Valley landscape character area to the east although mature trees within this can be glimpsed from the streetscape forming a backdrop to some housing.

- 6.97** This is an established residential area with limited opportunities for further development other than extensions.

Development proposals should:

- Ensure that new development responds positively to the specific opportunities available within the area.
- Ensure extensions and alterations to existing properties are of an appropriate size and scale to the original dwelling and do not detract from the surrounding area.
- Reflect the existing materials and colour palette of properties in the immediate locality.
- Reflect the existing built forms and relationship with the street in any new development.
- Promote high standards of design and support creativity in architectural detailing.
- Maintain and facilitate where possible views to the green backdrop provided by the mature trees of the Ouse Valley landscape character area.
- Protect the existing grass verges and mature trees and supplement these where space and service restrictions permit.
- Where possible incorporate renewable energy generation.

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St Neots Character Area 18: West of the Great North Road



Lottings Way homes are set around a cul-de-sac and display mock Tudor detailing



Low rise flats off Duke's Road are set in extensive open space with footpaths linking throughout the local area

6.98 This is an extensive character area extending north of Bushmead Road up to the A1 junction by Crosshall Road. The western boundary comprises a landscaping belt to the A1 with a combination of grassed open space, trees and hedging to separate homes from the impact of this major trunk road.

6.99 Part of the substantial growth of Eaton Ford and Eaton Socon starting in the 1960s this character area grew northwards with homes built in the 1960s and 1970s being focused between Bushmead Road and Duloe Brook. This sub-area is largely built in the Radburn style with housing facing onto footpaths and areas of green public open space with road access to garages and parking courts being at the rear of homes. Three storey blocks of flats are interspersed particularly in the centre and on the western edge of the sub-area. Building type 3C is most extensive with some crossover with type 3D. Red and brown bricks are most frequently used although buff and yellow bricks appear in some clusters such as at Peer Road which run into type 3E from the early 1980s.



Duke's Road

6.100 Queens Gardens and Monarch Road are the only roads crossing Duloe Brook and provide vehicular connections to the next sub-area which extends north to Duloe Road. Built primarily in the 1980s as type 3E housing in this sub-area presents a mixture of detached and semi-detached housing with introduction of single aspect cluster homes and loss of bungalows being distinct differences between this sub-area and earlier housing. A wide range of brick colours are used with red and buff being widespread and red and brown pantiles being the ubiquitous roofing material. Decorative features are limited although box bay windows to the ground floor are frequently incorporated. The street layout comprises the culs-de-sac accessed off estate spine roads that typify housing estates of this age. Most gardens immediately adjoin the pavement without roadside grass verges other than small areas of green open space. This sub-area also contains a supermarket and community centre which are both low rise buildings designed to blend in with the domestic scale of nearby properties.



Cornwall Court

6.101 Screened behind trees on the south side of Duloe Road is this character area's only listed building. Duloe Hill Windmill is an early 19th century 4 storey tower mill now converted to a dwelling. Duloe Road includes a very small number of older properties reflecting its long standing role connecting hamlets to the west into St Neots. A wide road it is bounded by grass verges along much of its length and numerous mature trees. Housing is mostly two storey and of building type 3D with many houses screened by hedging.

6.102 North of Duloe Road is the final sub-group in this character area representing the most recently built homes of building type 3E. Houses are predominantly detached in form although small terraces and cluster homes are included along the western edge in closer proximity to the A1. Red, buff and brindle bricks are used across the area with red and brown concrete pantiles being the most frequently used roofing material. Decorative detailing varies with clusters such as Silverweed featuring extensive use of neo-Georgian windows and others like Burwell Road favouring mock-Tudor panels. Garages are often prominent features on the street frontage.



Silverweed

6.103 This is an established residential area with limited opportunities for further development other than extensions.

Development proposals should:

- Ensure that new development responds positively to the specific opportunities available within the area.
- Promote legibility and pedestrian accessibility.
- Reflect the existing built forms and relationship of properties with the street frontage in the immediate locality.
- Reflect the diverse mix of housing sizes, types and tenures present in the area contributing to an inclusive community.
- Promote high standards of design and support creativity in architectural detailing.
- Protect and enhance grass verges and landscape planting area and provide additional street trees where space and service restrictions permit.
- Support provision of renewable energy where visually appropriate.
- Maintain, and improve where possible, views to the existing landscaping as a green backdrop particularly along the western edge of the area.
- Promote opportunities for enhancement of amenity green spaces to provide increased opportunities for recreation and nature conservation and to help provide distinctive local landmarks.
- Support initiatives for the creation of additional services and community facilities within the residential area.

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St Neots Character Area 19: Modern Eaton Socon



Whinfell Close was built in 2016 redeveloping former industrial land



Side extension on a semi-detached chalet style home in Wilkinson Close

6.104 The Modern Eaton Socon character area has grown to the west of the few historic properties to the west of the Great North Road and spread across towards the A1 with the most recent development. It is a residential area also containing a primary school and several play areas. 1960s and 1970s development is limited to a small number of culs-de-sac, all within building type 3D; these contain a relatively high proportion of bungalows. Building materials are predominantly pale brick with some bargeboards and tiles forming decorative features. Generally well set back from the road frontage many properties have a driveway leading to a single garage to the side. McNish Court and the Hillings provide specialist assisted living accommodation for elderly people integrated amongst the wider community.

6.105 Further west the housing blends through into building type 3E which sees a higher proportion of red brick and a greater variety of house sizes although less bungalows. To the west of Nelson Road in particular there is a greater concentration of smaller dwellings. Decorative features include patterned tile hanging such as that along Cornwallis Road and contrasting brick detailing. The road layout is dominated by culs-de-sac with a variety of garden depths most of which are sufficient to allow on plot parking supplemented by occasional small parking courts.



Cornwallis Court

6.106 There are two distinct sub-areas of 21st century housing which have been integrated into this area representing building type 3F. To the north at the western end of Bushmead Road is Linton Close a development of three storey townhouses and blocks of apartments with a small number of two storey houses. They are mainly built in a very pale brick although some are red brick and all have grey artificial slate roofs with relatively shallow front gardens but purpose designed allocated parking spaces to the front. The second sub-area comprises Whinfell Close and Nelson Lodge care home, again building type 3F, which are built of red brick with pale render. These have very shallow front gardens often with long driveways leading to garages immediately to the rear of the houses and a shared surface access road.



Linton Close

6.107 This is an established residential area with limited opportunities for further development other than extensions.

Development proposals should:

- Ensure that new development responds positively to the specific opportunities available within the area.
- Maintain the glimpsed visual connections to key buildings and landscape views to reinforce the wider context of the area.
- Reflect the existing materials and colour palette of properties in the immediate locality.
- Reflect the existing built forms and relationship with the street in any new development.
- Promote high standards of design and support creativity in architectural detailing.
- Protect the existing grass verges and mature trees and supplement these where space and service restrictions permit.
- Maintain, and improve where possible, views to the existing landscaping as a green backdrop particularly along the western edge of the area.
- Where possible incorporate renewable energy generation.

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St Neots Character Area 20: Eaton Socon Business Cluster



Brick buildings with clad upper elements are widespread in the industrial estates; this example contains a characterful piece of street art adding to a local sense of identity



Quora Retail Park's car parking dominates the road frontage

6.108 The concentration of industrial and allied commercial uses at the southern end of Eaton Socon largely reflects this character area's accessibility to the A1/ A428 junction and the tendency in the 1970s-early 1980s when many of the industrial units were originally built to locate them in separate clusters but in close proximity to residential areas where workers might live. The area contains three distinct sub-areas: Little End Road, Howard Road and Colmworth Business Park. All are identified as Established Employment Areas in the [Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036](#).

6.109 Little End Road industrial estate contains a mixture of one and two storey buildings in various combinations of brick, corrugated metal and coloured cladding panels. Building sizes vary significantly with clusters of small units integrated such as those in Foundry Way. Although the industrial buildings are prominent and the galvanised steel security fencing around some is very harsh the townscape is softened by a significant number of mature trees throughout the area. The building type is 5B with the colour palette being dominated by browns, sand and greys. Predominantly still industrial in character the area also includes a small proportion of trade counters and service uses.

6.110 Howard Road industrial estate contains a higher proportion of two storey buildings with some three storey elements. Materials include a high proportion of cladding, generally in soft greens, greys and blues with substantial use of glazing. The building type is again 5B. Close to the junction with the Great North Road part of the industrial estate has been redeveloped for the Quora Retail Park with a small number of building type 5D units set amongst a large area of car parking. There is limited tree planting to provide screening between industrial units on Howard Road and residential properties adjoining the northern boundary with a footpath providing both connectivity and separation. The eastern side of Howard Road adjoins the extensive open space of the Ouse Valley landscape character area where it runs north-south through the town. There is little integration between the two with substantial tree belts separating them.



Howard Road

6.111 Colmworth business park is the newest sub-area within this character area. It contains a range of trade counters, industrial, office and leisure uses. Buildings collectively comprise building types 5B and 5C. Sizes and styles of units vary considerably from big box corrugated warehouses to brick and glass office buildings. The colour palette includes mainly buff and grey with detailing in cream, red and blue. Larger units are mainly concentrated in the north and east with a cluster of smaller office buildings and a hotel in the south western corner. Car parking dominates the frontage of most properties with limited landscaping to soften the area.



Leisure uses

6.112 There is some capacity for further redevelopment and intensification within this character area that reinforce its industrial and commercial nature.

Development proposals should:

- Reinforce the use of the area as one of St Neots' primary employment locations.
- Respond to the specific redevelopment opportunities available whilst reinforcing the area's industrial and commercial nature.
- Promote high standards of design and support creativity in architectural detailing.
- Improve pedestrian and cycle linkages into surrounding residential areas.
- Incorporate renewable energy options where they are appropriate and electric vehicle charging points.
- Reduce the visual dominance of cars through increased planting and improved boundary treatments.
- Retain the landscaped corridor along the northern boundary of the area.
- Minimise the impact of new development on the adjoining Ouse Valley Landscape Character Area.

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Little Paxton

6.113 The village of Little Paxton is situated approximately 1km north of St Neots on the western banks of the River Great Ouse, and east of the A1 and has maintained a separate identity from St Neots.

Landscape setting

6.114 Little Paxton is located within the Ouse Valley Landscape Character Area. The landscape to the west lies within the Southern Wolds and the South East Claylands lie to the east. It is constrained to the west by the A1 which has resulted in a limited physical and visual relationship between the village and the surrounding landscape to the west.

6.115 There has been considerable gravel extraction within the floodplain resulting in the creation of a number of lakes which have now been incorporated within the Paxton Pits Nature Reserve to the east and north of the village. The open river floodplain and countryside between the settlements of St Neots and Little Paxton, as well as the landscape between these settlements and Hail Weston, Duloe, Wyboston and Little Barford, performs an important function providing a landscape gap separating these separate settlements and ensuring that they each retain a clear and distinct identity.

Edges and Visual Prominence

6.116 Little Paxton is most visible from the south and east where it is seen from the surrounding valley sides within the Ouse Valley. Trees and shrubs to the north and north east of the village screen wider views across the landscape and the low ridge to the south west precludes longer distance views across the South East Claylands. The landscape to the north of the village has several nature conservation designations including a County Wildlife Site and a SSSI, and forms part of the wider Ouse Valley landscape. There is a clear boundary between this semi natural landscape and the urban area to the south.

6.117 The River Great Ouse runs along to the east and south of the village providing a high quality landscape setting of high ecological value. Immediately to the east of the river is the East Coast mainline railway which provides a harsh border to the landscape of the village. Additionally, the A1 frames the settlement along its western boundary, it meanders away from the village as it travels south. The landform here is generally flat and low lying, but rises toward a local high point to the south west corner. A field to the south east of the road comprises rough grassland and the redevelopment of former industrial buildings can be seen to the north of the area. This area is visually contained to the south by existing vegetation along the boundary with the golf course, which occupies the southern part of the area and is bordered by the river to the east.

Townscape Character

6.118 The village has a distinctive historic centre comprising of the High Street orientated around St James' Church, a grade II* building. Other notable buildings within the historic centre include Grove Farm and Paxton Hall (now a care home) with its large grounds and tree planting. The historic centre is relatively small when compared to the remainder of the village, which otherwise consists of modern residential estates. The exception is an area formerly used for mill and industrial buildings along the River Great Ouse on the south eastern edge of the village which has been redeveloped for housing. There is a peninsular of land that is bounded on either side by the River Great Ouse opposite these connected via Mill Lane which runs through the village and connects via the B1041 to St Neots .

6.119 A total of nine character areas have been identified for Little Paxton (Figure 6.2 and can be viewed on the [interactive map](#)). The largest of the character areas is the extensive residential development from the middle of the 20th century focused around the historic centre along Little Paxton Lane within the confines of the River Great Ouse, the Great North Road and Paxton Pits Nature Reserve. 21st century residential development has been focused along the riverside with the redevelopment of former mill and industrial buildings providing three storey properties with attractive views out across the Ouse Valley landscape.

Other development opportunities have occurred on former industrial sites within the main village. A small employment area consisting of Conservatory Village, Enterprise House and a Co-Op are located to the north of the village accessed from the B1041.

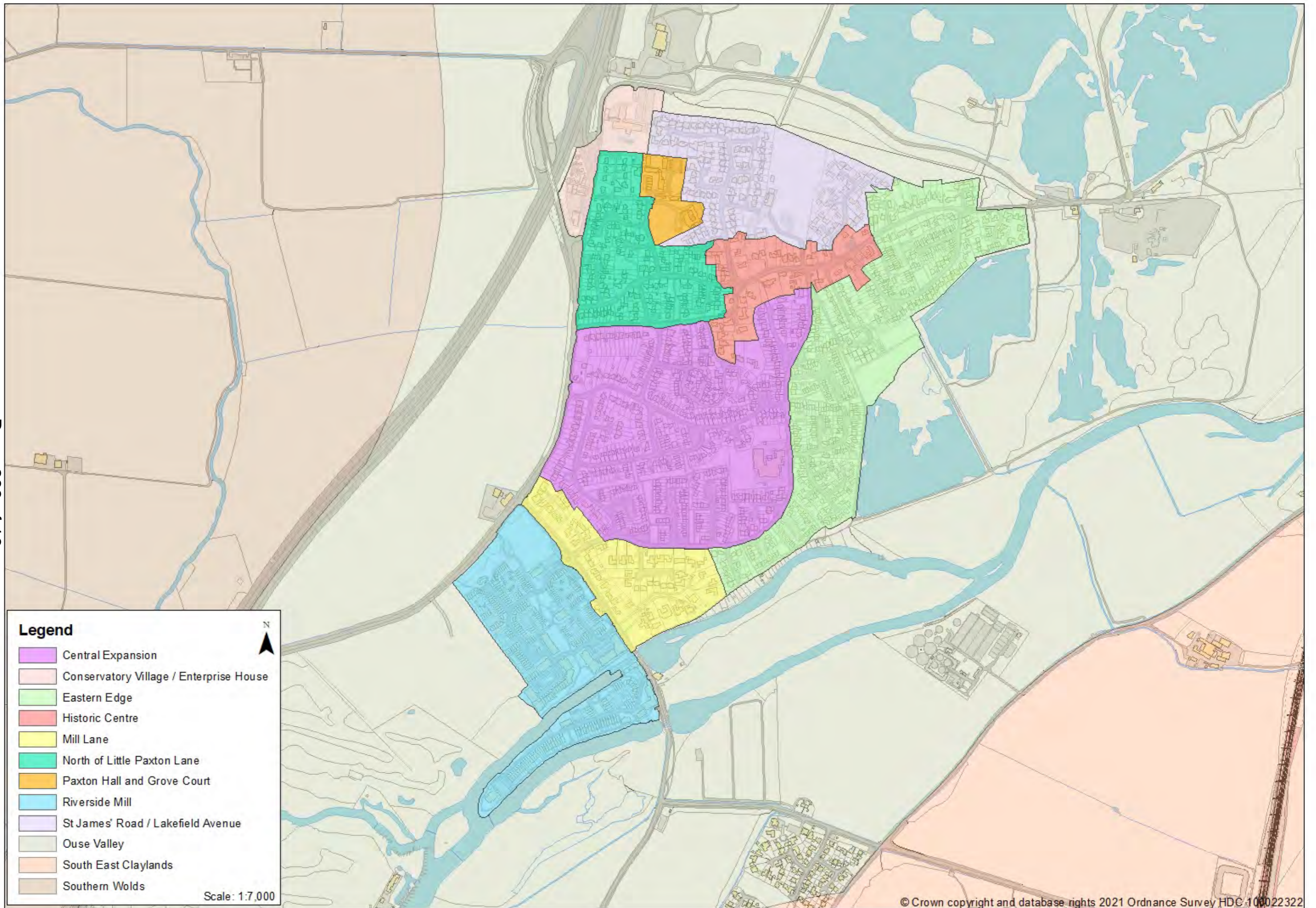


Figure 6.2 Little Paxton Character Areas

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Key Features

Historic routes	Little Paxton Lane, High Street and St James Road
Historic gateways	Great North Road
Landmarks	St James' Church and Paxton Hall
Memorable areas	The historic centre, Riverside Mill and Paxton Pits Nature Reserve
Key views	Views out onto Paxton Pits Nature Reserve and across the Ouse Valley



St James's Church is completely surrounded by the churchyard forming a tranquil green space in the centre of the village



The village expanded considerably around its historic centre in the 1950s, 60s and 70s with many properties facing onto areas of greenspace and mature planting. This example is Beeson Close



Lodge Drive exemplifies 21st century redevelopment of former industrial land within the centre of the village



Paxton Pits provides space for wildlife and recreation at the former gravel works

Little Paxton Character Area 1: The Historic Centre



The junction between the High Street and St James' Road creates a spacious layout with mature trees forming an integral part of the character of the area



St James's Church

6.120 The Historic Centre is located to the east of the Great North Road and runs through the centre of the village along Little Paxton Lane, slightly south along Bydand Lane, along the High Street and slightly north along St James's Road. The area is distinguished by its listed buildings, extensive tree and hedge planting and low density housing with generous set backs from the road enabling on plot parking heightening its green and open feel. Many of the trees within the Historic Centre are protected with a Tree Preservation Order. The oldest properties in the village are located along the High Street, some dating to the 17th century. The character area has experienced some significant infill development with a mix of house styles and ages adding further diversity and interest demonstrating characteristics of house types 3D, 3E and some 3F. Most properties are detached including bungalows with brown brick or white painted bricks and larger two storey construction of red and buff brick.

6.121 64 High Street (Dial House, an 18th century former inn) is the first listed building when approaching the village from the west side and sits at the point where Little Paxton Lane merges onto the High Street. This sets the context for a small cluster of listed buildings focused around St James's Church and the historic route through the village. This demonstrates the characteristics of building type 1B with its painted red brick and plain tile roof, end chimney stacks and two flat roofed dormer windows. The north eastern section of Bydand Lane includes a collection of 19th and early 20th century large detached homes with prominent gables, buff brickwork with red brick detailing (building type 2B). These have been altered and extended over time. There has been some later 20th century bungalow infill development on Little Paxton Lane. Tree and hedges partially obscure these properties from public view. Fencing and gates provide a clear distinction between public and private space too with some green verges providing an open feel along Little Paxton Lane.



64 High Street

6.122 The grade II* listed St James's Church is a 12th century parish church representing building type 6A. Over the centuries, the church has been extended and altered including a 14th century west tower. A full restoration of the church was undertaken in 1849 where many original features were rebuilt and restored. The church is set back behind a low boundary wall on raised ground from the High Street with a surrounding church yard. Mature



North Lodge

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tree planting creates an attractive and green setting to the church and village centre. Neighbouring the church is the grade II listed St James cottage (formerly two) with a thatched roof and painted white brick of building type 1B and several late 19th century and early 20th century properties.

6.123 The character area extends up to the grade II listed no. 24 High Street where planting follows the public footpath only breaking to allow access to properties which are set back from the road with generous front gardens. 24 High Street is a 17th century timber framed and plastered house with plain tiles and gabled former windows. Opposite is 19 to 25 High Street, an example of some of the semi-detached and terraced properties in the character area. These date to the 19th century and reflect building type 2B. Adjacent to these is the Anchor Inn, a public house with seating areas to the front and rear. It is a two storey building of painted brick with a sympathetic lean to extension and single storey side extension. It has a low boundary wall with car parking to the rear accessed along Hayling Avenue.



The Anchor Inn

6.124 Another point of interest is the Old Post Office located along St James Road just north of the parish church. It demonstrates different architectural characteristics from other properties in the road as it is built in Tudor style with white render and black timber framing with plain tiles, dormer windows and several outbuildings. Due to the contrast in materials and architecture it provides a distinctive focal point amongst the surrounding mid-20th century housing

6.125 The Historic Centre has undergone significant development over several decades. There is some capacity for infill development and extensions and alterations to existing properties which should carefully consider the impact on designated heritage assets and the overall character of the area.

Development proposals should:

- Protect and conserve the historic buildings located along the High Street.
- Promote high standards of design and architectural detailing to enhance the historic character of the area.
- Protect the existing mature trees and hedgerows where these contribute to the character of the street scene.
- Protect the setting of St James's Church.
- Reflect the existing materials and colour palette of red and buff brick, timber framing, white and pastel painted brickwork, render and plain tiles.
- Support initiatives for the retention of existing or creation of additional services and community facilities.
- Conserve and maintain the areas of green space within this area to reinforce the general sense of openness of the area.

Little Paxton Character Area 2: Paxton Hall and Grove Court



Paxton Hall originates from the mid 17th century with 19th century additions and built of red brick with limestone dressings. It is set in substantial landscaped gardens and is now used as a care home.



Grove House is a red brick 18th century property originally a farmhouse with an attractive symmetrical facade and distinctive canted bay windows

- 6.126** This is a small but historically significant character area located to the north of the Historic Centre. It comprises Paxton Hall and Grove House and Grove Court.
- 6.127** Paxton Hall is a grade II* listed house built in the 17th century with subsequent alterations and extensions in the 18th and 19th centuries. This reflects building type 2E. Paxton Hall is a key landmark in the village set within spacious grounds and mature tree planting. It is a two storey property with attics built from predominately red brick, rendered brick with limestone dressings and plain tile. In the 1980s it was converted to a care home for the elderly. A red brick wall separates the site from the surrounding properties and creates a physical boundary which the character area boundary follows. Access to the Hall is from Rampley Lane.
- 6.128** Grove House, is a grade II listed 18th century red brick farm house formerly known as Grove Farm. It is a two storey property with a symmetrical facade with canted bay windows. A modern link extension was completed connecting Grove House with other buildings associated with the house. The main building is used as one residential property while the building to the rear is a group of flats. The other grade II listed buildings within this character area are the former barn and stable associated with Grove House which are now located within Grove Court. These date from the late 17th century or early 18th century, both are red brick and have been converted to flats.
- 6.129** The neighbouring Grove Court consists of mid-20th century bungalows and terraced houses. These reflect building type 3D. They are built of buff brick with tiled roofs, velux windows, short front gardens and are served by parking areas along the edge of the courtyard area and also on street parking. Between the two rows of terrace housing is a central green space and planting creating a focal point. Adjacent to the terraces in the north eastern corner of the character area, there are two rows of garages that serve these properties. The planting throughout the court creates a green and pleasant feel to this enclosed space.
- 6.130** Grove House and Grove Court have limited connections to the rest of the village due to physical separation from Grove Road by a red brick wall positioned around the grounds of Paxton Hall with only pedestrian access connecting them. There is vehicular access along Rampley Lane which connects to the Great North Road. There is no access from the east or north as residential back gardens back onto the character



Grove Court conversions

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area. This accentuates the area's separate character and distinguishes it from the Historic Centre despite the several listed buildings within it. These listed buildings have been converted to residential use, predominantly flats and form part of an urban group of flats, terraces, bungalows and garage development.

6.131 This is a small but characterful area with some opportunity for further alterations and extensions to buildings. These must be carefully assessed in light of designated heritage assets and access limitations.

Development proposals should:

- Protect and conserve the historic buildings located within Grove Court and Paxton Hall and enrich the character of the area by reinforcing and acknowledging its historic character.
- Protect the existing trees and vegetation where they contribute to the street scene and consider ways of increasing vegetation cover where space and service restrictions permit.
- Reflect the existing materials and colour palette of red and buff brick and plain tiles.
- Promote high standards of design and architectural detailing and the retention of original architectural features.
- Support and improve pedestrian access to the area and the rest of the village.
- Consider parking arrangements and capacity.

Little Paxton Character Area 3: Riverside Mill



New homes at Skipper Way benefit from attractive riverside views whilst ensuring public access



The three storey townhouses are typical of the increased focus in the early 21st century of making more efficient use of previously developed land

6.132 Industrial, storage and office buildings formerly associated with the Riverside Mill paper working mills were demolished and redeveloped for residential and community use in the 2000s. This formed a significant high density residential extension to the south west of the village along the River Great Ouse. The area is predominantly residential, however community facilities such as a community and leisure hall known as 'Little Paxton Hub' and playing fields are incorporated to the north of the site adjacent to the junction with Mill Lane and Gordan Road. The building types present are 3F and 7C.

6.133 The development has created an attractive and distinctive riverside frontage with a pleasant riverside walkway. This has improved the river gateway into the village from St Neots. Many properties are three storeys utilising local materials and colours of sand coloured brick and slate roofs with on plot parking and balconies looking out over the river. Garages form the ground floor for many properties to mitigate potential risk and harm of flooding in the area. Properties are arranged in either a series of terraces or blocks of flats providing a relatively high density development which maximised the brownfield land opportunity as well providing a design consistent with its historic land use as a mill. The centre of the site has a green corridor providing open space which helps create a sense of place. The landscaped boundaries of the site create an enclosed feel and screen properties from the Great North Road and Mill Lane.



Little Paxton Hub

6.134 Sharing these design features and architectural detailing is Skipper Way, another mixed residential development of flats and houses located on a small peninsula of land surrounding by the River Great Ouse on all sides. These high density developments have a different character to the rest of the village but are appropriate based on the historic use of the land and its location. Although within Little Paxton the peninsular is located within the St Neots Conservation Area and has numerous Tree Preservation Orders on site. This gives the area a natural and green feel closely related to its landscape and river setting.

6.135 This is a sensitive area that has undergone significant recent major redevelopment, there are very limited opportunities for further development and the conservation of its setting as a key river gateway and area of mature trees should be a conservation priority.

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Development proposals should:

- Protect the existing trees and vegetation as a green backdrop to development, particularly those located within the conservation area and protected by a tree preservation order.
- Reflect the existing materials and colour palette from local materials of sand coloured brick and slate.
- Promote high standards of design and architectural detailing.
- Support initiatives for the retention of existing or creation of additional services and community facilities.
- Maintain, and improve where possible, views to the Ouse Valley.
- Promote opportunities for the enhancement of green space to provide increased opportunities for wildlife and nature conservation.
- Consider the impact of potential flooding from the River Ouse in new development and how careful design can mitigate this.
- Where appropriate consider the impact of the development on the St Neots Conservation Area.
- Support and improve pedestrian access where necessary along the river frontage and to the main village.
- Support proposals for active modes of transport.
- Incorporate renewable energy generation where visually appropriate.

Little Paxton Character Area 4: Central Expansion



The semi-detached brick built houses with hanging tiles facing onto green open space in Booth Way typify 1960s homes growth in Little Paxton



Park Crescent contains a cluster of chalet style homes popular in the 1960s and 1970s with generous front gardens and low walls or hedges providing separation between private and public space

6.136 The village grew significantly as a result of residential development post the 1950s. This was initially focused around the Historic Centre and has spread outwards within the boundaries of the river and lakes. Little Paxton's location and history of quarrying work meant that many of the houses built during the 20th century were built from local resources. The majority of the residential expansion occurred during the 1960s and 1970s. Little Paxton Lane, Gordan Road, Park Side and Park Avenue forms the principal roads with numerous small residential roads and culs-de-sac diverging from them.

6.137 This area of housing is bounded by the Great North Road to the west, Little Paxton Lane and the High Street to the north and Gordon Road to the south and east. This is a residential area built during the 1950s, 60s and 70s with some infill and rebuilding experienced over time adding further variation throughout. Building types are therefore 3D, 3E and 3F. It has relatively few community facilities with a small cluster of shops along Park Drive and Park Way. Little Paxton Primary School is also located within this area built in the early 1970s and opened in 1972. This is a large single storey building accessed from Gordon Road with fencing providing a clear boundary to the entrance of the school. It has a spacious setting with playing fields that are enclosed on three sides by residential development. This demonstrates building type 7B.



Modern home along Park Avenue

6.138 Most housing is semi-detached with some detached and terraced properties dispersed throughout representing building type 3D. While not all built at the same time and demonstrating variations in house types, design and materiality, the character area has a distinct nature and various points of interest. Many properties have weather boarding or tile hung frontages, constructed from red, buff or grey brick with large windows and moderate front gardens. There are some pastel rendered and painted properties adding diversity. There are a mixture of integrated garages, some to the side of the property and some arranged in garage courts to the side or rear of closes such as Sweeting Avenue, Booth Way and Rampley Close which demonstrate characteristics of building type 3C where the homes front onto footpaths and green space with vehicular access to the rear. The area also has numerous pockets of bungalows and chalet style homes, for example along Park Avenue, Park Crescent and Reynolds Drive. They are constructed from red and buff brick, tiles with a low brick boundary walls or hedging enclosing generous front gardens creating a clear distinction between public and private space.

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6.139 The area has a significant amount of open space with tree planting creating an open and green setting. There are several footpaths between roads and areas of open space increasing the permeability of the area. Church Close and several such spaces are found near the primary school south of Park Drive. These are found between fairly regimented laid out streets, roads and closes. As well as these areas of amenity space, there are pockets of grassed areas to the side of properties and along the road which provide a spacious layout. These all complement the character of this predominantly residential area and are important to maintain.

6.140 Within this area, there have been several modern additions and redevelopments, the largest of which is Lodge Drive. This is a redevelopment of an industrial site in the centre of the village demonstrating building type 3F. The site had a mixture of single and two storey industrial/ warehouse buildings that were removed for a mixture of one, two and 2.5 storey detached, semi-detached and terraced properties arranged in a circular form with several dual aspect properties. Due to its location with established housing on all sides, design consideration was required on overlooking and neighbour amenity to successfully redevelop this brownfield site and improve the overall appearance and character of the area. There is access to the west via Dandby Close and to the north via Bydand Lane. Lodge Drive has a pedestrian route that follows the edge of the development round to a play area.



Lodge Drive

6.141 This is an established residential area with few remaining opportunities for major development with opportunities focused on extensions and alterations to existing properties.

Development proposals should:

- Ensure that new development responds positively to the specific opportunities available within the area.
- Reflect the existing built forms and relationship with the street in the immediate locality.
- Ensure extensions and alterations to existing properties are of an appropriate size and scale to the original dwelling and do not detract from the surrounding area.
- Reflect the dominant materials and colour palette within the immediate vicinity.
- Promote opportunities for enhancement of amenity green spaces to provide increased opportunities for recreation and nature conservation and to help provide distinctive local landmarks.
- Maintain and enhance physical and visual connections to key buildings and open spaces and support permeability of the area.
- Support initiatives for the creation of additional services and community facilities within the residential area possibly through conversion or redevelopment.
- Protect the existing trees where these contribute to the character of the street scene and consider ways of increasing vegetation cover where space and service restrictions permit.
- Where possible incorporate renewable energy generation.

Little Paxton Character Area 5: North of Little Paxton Lane



Semi-detached properties along High Street with a spacious layout



Manor Close

6.142 This is a small 'L' shaped residential character area located on the north side of Little Paxton Lane, bounded by the Great North Road to the west and Grove House, Grove Court, Paxton Hall and the Historic Centre to the east. The High Street runs through the area creating an island of properties between it and Little Paxton Lane including the Sycamores and Dial Close. Grove Road runs to the north and extends the character area to Meadow Close, Manor Close, Rampley Lane and the Orchard.

6.143 Housing is either semi-detached or detached two storey properties representing building types 3D and 3E built during the very late 1970s through to mid 1990s. There are some variations in house types, design and materiality providing the character area with varying architectural styles. There are few examples of weather boarding or tile hung frontages as seen in earlier developments with most being of either red, buff or grey brick. Garages are typically on plot to the side of the property but a few garage courts can be found such as within the Sycamores, Hawthorn Close and Dial Close.

6.144 The area has a significant amount of open space with tree planting creating an open and green setting. There are several footpaths between roads and areas of open space increasing the permeability of the area. Chestnut Walk, Church Close, Meadow Close are examples with Manor Close an example of a central green with homes arranged around it. These add to the character of the area and reflect the spacious and green nature of housing development found throughout the village. Plots are typically set back from the road enabling on plot parking which reduces the impact of vehicles on the street scene and in turns creates more space for planting within front gardens. This in combination with limited hard boundary treatments such as low boundary fences or walls retains this sense of spaciousness.

6.145 The Orchard is located at the northernmost extent of the character area and consists of 8 properties all of which are oriented inwards. They are constructed from red brick and have brown tiled roofs. Several properties have been altered and extended utilising their large plots. These are accessed via the Great North Road with no access via Rampley Lane. As a result there is tree planting along the western boundary to mitigate the visual impact of the road. Their visual impact on the adjacent grade II listed Grove House is also screened via a tree belt along the boundary line. This makes this sub-area somewhat separate to the rest of the character area.



The Orchard

6.146 This is an established residential area with few remaining opportunities for major development with opportunities focused on extensions and alterations to existing properties.

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Development proposals should:

- Ensure that new development responds positively to the specific opportunities available within the area.
- Ensure extensions and alterations to existing properties are of an appropriate size and scale to the original dwelling and do not detract from the surrounding area.
- Reflect the dominant materials and colour palette of red, buff and grey brick.
- Reflect the existing built forms and relationship with the street in the immediate locality.
- Promote opportunities for enhancement of amenity green spaces to provide increased opportunities for recreation and nature conservation and to help provide distinctive local landmarks.
- Maintain and enhance physical and visual connections to key buildings and open spaces and support permeability of the area.
- Protect the existing trees where these contribute to the character of the street scene and consider ways of increasing vegetation cover where space and service restrictions permit.
- Where possible incorporate renewable energy generation.

Little Paxton Character Area 6: St James Road/ Lakefield Avenue



Little Paxton Village Hall



Elm Croft dates from the 1970s

6.147 This character area is located north of the High Street between Grove Court and Enterprise House to the west and the eastern edge character area. It is heavily screened from the lakes to the north due to tree planting. This is a mixed use area with residential properties dating from the 1970s, 80s and 90s focused around the principal roads of St James Road and Lakefield Avenue. It is also a key area for community and recreation facilities such as a playing field and play equipment, GP surgery and village hall. Building types are 3D, 3E, 7B and 7C. To the north there is access to Little Paxton Sailing Club and to the wider network of lakes within Paxton Pits.



Little Paxton sailing lake

6.148 St James Road is slightly earlier than Lakefield Avenue. Elm Croft, Field Close, Hall Close, the Rookery and Jubilee Close are very small clusters of homes that diverge from St James Road. Red and buff brick are the most frequently found materials throughout this area. Garages and on plot parking are key features to the front of these properties. The area has parcels of open and green space breaking up the building lines and creating a pleasant feel. Some homes such as those within Elm Croft are slightly earlier from the 1970s. The most variety in features are found at the western end of St James Road where mock Tudor homes are located and the neo-Georgian homes in Jubilee Close. These are large detached homes with a mixture of gabled and hipped roofs with canopies, decorative arches, dormers creating a varied street scene which reflect the changes in housebuilding in the 1980s.

6.149 Homes in Lakefield Avenue contain a mixture of red brick, buff brick and white rendering, have some decorative tile hung and weather boarding to the front elevation and some have double garages. Properties are typically gable ended with some small gables adding decorative features to the front elevation alongside some dormer windows. These are large detached homes within spacious plots enabling on plot parking, planting and grassed areas between homes. Some have been altered and extended over time.



St James Road Mock Tudor design

6.150 Between these two residential roads are the recreation ground, sports pavilion, sports courts, doctor's surgery and village hall which have vehicular access via the High Street and a footpath from the Rookery. This patch has an open character with some fencing around areas of play equipment and car parking area. A tree belt runs along the edge of the recreation ground so views out across the lakes are limited, however, it borders the Little Paxton Pits non-SSSI County Wildlife Site. The village hall is a single storey, flat roof, grey brick building which opened in 1975. The GP surgery was built in the mid 2000s and is single storey brick clad exterior and tile roof

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located next to the Scout Hut; their low level and contained nature means the visual impact on the street scene is minimal. These mix of uses and additions over time have reinforced this part of the village as being a centre for the local community.

- 6.151** A further small expansion of this area is allocated within the [Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036](#) under site allocation SN5 for approximately 35 homes. As the development is not under construction it has been excluded from the boundary of the character area but once developed will result in a boundary amendment in a future review. This is an established area where further opportunities will mainly be for alterations and extensions to existing properties and to community facilities.

Development proposals should:

- Reflect appropriate architectural detailing, materials and colour palette in the design of new buildings.
- Protect the existing open space and grass verges that provide the spacious setting to development and retain trees and planting where they contribute to the street scene.
- Support and retain the current uses in the character area through renovation, refurbishment or extensions to buildings.
- Ensure that development responds positively to the specific opportunities available to reinforce the community, recreational and leisure uses in the area.
- Utilise existing access provision and not cause a detrimental impact on the local transport network or on the amenity of neighbouring properties, particularly for proposals for community or leisure uses.
- Minimise the visual impact of development through additional tree and hedge planting and the retention of existing planting.
- Provide, where appropriate, an ecological assessment and enhancement scheme for the site that addresses its impact on Paxton Pits Nature Reserve and SSSI, including the County Wildlife Site.
- Support provision of renewable energy where visually appropriate.
- Support provision of facilities which encourage active modes of transport.

Little Paxton Character Area 7: Eastern Edge



Weedy Lake within Paxton Pits Nature Reserve. The network of lakes around the eastern edge of Little Paxton are a key influencer on the character of the village but especially those properties located on the eastern edge.



Willow Close with a central greenspace and walkway

6.152 This residential character area is a linear area located on the eastern side of Gordon Road. The majority of the housing found within this area dates to the middle of the 20th century with most occurring from the 1970s with some later additions and it continues the layout, building styles and materiality found within the central expansion character area. Consequently, the area includes building types 3D, 3E and 3F. An example of infill development is 6A and 6B High Street which has been sensitively integrated into the style and form of development found within the surrounding area.



6, 6A and 6B High Street

6.153 There is an established tree line which separates properties from the lakes to the east and mitigates the impact of housing development on the surrounding landscape setting. There are several footpaths from the character area which extend out toward the lakes and the wider public rights of way network. Located to the south of Lakeside Close is an allotment area. Properties located to the north of the High Street within this character area are bounded by the Little Paxton Pits non-SSSI County Wildlife Site. Due to their location in relation to the network of lakes, properties and land adjoining along very eastern edge of the area are at a higher risk of flooding.

6.154 The principal roads throughout the area are Gordon Road and Hayling Avenue which loops round with access into and out onto the High Street. Hayling Avenue contains a mixture of bungalows and two storey properties. Properties are a mix of red and grey brick, rendering, weatherboarding and tile hung frontages. Most have flat roof porches and flat roof garages to the side. This style is found throughout the character area along Gordon Road and within Davis Close. Variations of these materials are found within Beeson Close and Wantage Gardens with predominantly either brick or rendered properties. Greater variation in housing types are found in slightly later development within School Lane with higher density flatted development and semi-detached homes, then the Crofts and Willow Close with detached properties.



Hayling Avenue

6.155 There are several garage courts found throughout the area including at Paxton Court, Beeson Close, Gordon Close and Lakeside Close. From Gordon Road in the south of the character area, there are several clusters of properties which are oriented around a central green space with the rear of the properties facing a central parking and garage area demonstrating characteristics of building type 3C.

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6.156 This area includes Kingfisher Close, a further example within the village of a modern redevelopment of an industrial site. This is a small easterly extension located in the northernmost corner of this area built in the early 2000s to the north of Rudd Lake. It predominantly comprises large detached houses with some smaller terraced and semi-detached properties. Properties demonstrate characteristics of building type 3F with white render, buff brick, symmetrical window placements, some dormer windows and a mixture of on plot parking and on street parking. There is dense tree planting along the southern and eastern edges screening the surrounding landscape from the redevelopment minimising its landscape impacts.



Kingfisher Close

6.157 Remaining development opportunities are limited, with most opportunities arising from alterations or extensions to existing properties.

Development proposals should:

- Ensure that new development responds positively to the specific opportunities available within the area.
- Ensure extensions and alterations to existing properties are of an appropriate size and scale to the original dwelling and do not detract from the surrounding area.
- Reflect the dominant materials and colour palette within the immediate vicinity.
- Reflect the existing built forms and relationship with the street in the immediate locality.
- Support provision of renewable energy where visually appropriate.
- Protect the existing areas of green spaces and mature trees and promote opportunities for wildlife and nature conservation initiatives to enhance the area's ecological value, particularly those areas nearest to Paxton Pits Nature Reserve and Little Paxton Pits Non-SSSI County Wildlife Site.
- Minimise the visual impact of development through additional tree and hedge planting and the retention of existing planting.
- Maintain and enhance physical and visual connections to key buildings and open spaces and support permeability of the area.
- Maintain and enhance where possible opportunities for public rights of way.
- Support and enhance where possible community areas such as the allotment grounds.
- Consider the impact of potential flooding from the surrounding lakes on the and how careful design can mitigate this.

Little Paxton Character Area 8: Mill Lane



Mill Lane - boundary markers, planting and set back screen properties from the traffic of the road



River Close

- 6.158** This character area is located to the south of the village adjacent to the Riverside Mill character area on the eastern side of Mill Lane (B1041). It extends up to the Great North Road and is bounded to the east by Mill Lane, Gordon Road to the north and by the River Great Ouse to the south. Its character is heavily influenced by its relationship to the river, the adjacent higher density Riverside Mill redevelopment and its close association with the lower density form of the historic Mill Lane route.
- 6.159** It is a residential area with linear development facing onto Mill Lane with in depth development along Silvan Close, Hayling Walk and River Close. Properties are typically detached with a handful of semi-detached ones. There are two storey houses but the majority of properties are bungalows and chalet bungalows. Most date to the middle of the 20th century with a handful pre-dating this period. These are set in more spacious plots than properties in the adjoining Central Expansion and Eastern Edge character areas which allows for more scope for extensions to properties. Materials are generally consistent with red and buff brick and dark roof tiles but there are some rendered properties. Features such as dormer windows are found throughout.
- 6.160** Properties facing along Mill Lane are largely obscured from view by tree planting and hedges, some have low boundary walls separating private space from the footpath. The set back of properties is quite generous allowing for on plot parking. There has been several examples of infill development within the gardens of existing properties, these have generally been sensitively integrated into the street scene by reflecting the scale, style and materiality of pre-existing properties.
- 6.161** Properties along Hayling Walk face onto the river and are the largest plots in the area and have a closer association with river. These are accessed from a private road which has extensive tree planting providing an enclosed feel. Several trees within the plot of the bungalow 'Byways' are protected by a Tree Preservation Order. The back gardens of these properties go up to the banks of the river and therefore lie adjacent to the St Neots Conservation Area.
- 6.162** This is sensitive area with close associations with Mill Lane and the River Great Ouse. Development proposals are limited to alterations and extensions to existing properties.

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Development proposals should:

- Provide safe access onto Mill Lane (B1041) and not adversely impact the highways network.
- Ensure that new development responds positively to the specific opportunities available within the area.
- Ensure extensions and alterations to existing properties are of an appropriate size and scale to the original dwelling and do not detract from the surrounding area.
- Reflect the dominant materials and colour palette within the immediate vicinity.
- Minimise the visual impact of development through additional tree and hedge planting and the retention of existing planting.
- Avoid the loss of trees and planting where these contribute to the street scene and recreation ground, particularly those protected by a Tree Preservation Order.
- Consider the impact of potential flooding from the surrounding lakes on the and how careful design can mitigate this.
- Where appropriate consider the impact of the development on the nearby St Neots Conservation Area.

Little Paxton Character Area 9: Conservatory Village and Enterprise House



Enterprise House provides significant employment opportunities within a spacious laid out office complex



Conservatory Village is well screened by trees and shrubs from Great North Road although the parking area is more visible

6.163 This character area consists of two distinct areas of employment uses with access to the transportation links via the A1 southwards to St Neots and northwards to Huntingdon. A grass verge helps to screen the A1 from the village with further pockets of green space located within the existing road network where it turns off on to the B1041 and Great North Road.

6.164 Conservatory Village is a collection of buildings for small and medium sized businesses ranging from commercial shops, restaurants, retailers and offices. It has been in use since the mid 1990s. It is located to the west of the Great North Road segregated between that and the A1 and B1041. It is generally well screened from residential properties opposite within the Orchard and Rampley Lane, however, its car parking facilities are more visible. This collection of buildings demonstrate characteristics of building type 5B with many units being of single storey buff brick, plain tile construction with conservatory extensions while some units have steel cladding. A recent addition



Co-op shop

to the area is a Co-Op food store located to the south of the character area where an elevated section of the B1041 connects to the village enhancing the community facilities within the village. This demonstrates building type 5D.

6.165 Enterprise House is a spacious laid out office complex located to the east of the Great North Road surrounded on two sides by residential development. It is set within large grounds with a pond and mature trees, several of which have Tree Preservation Orders, which provide separation between it and properties within the Orchard and Grove Court. The north of the site consists of green space and a car parking area. Due to its layout and tree planting along all of its boundaries, it is well screened from the adjoining residential properties. The complex is a two storey pitched roof building constructed from a mixture of buff brick and darker coloured brick with dark roof tiles. Window placements are typically square with a large central window and triangular detailing at the entrance. The building form has several wings set at different angles which with the pitched roof creates variation in the roof line. Architectural detailing, such as painting the end of the roof line white and adding white gables, break up the roof line. Enterprise House is most closely reflective of building type 5C.

6.166 This is an established area used for employment with few further opportunities for major development. There is capacity for extensions, alterations and the change of use of units although access and highways safety must be considered.

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Development proposals should:

- Support initiatives for the creation of additional services and community facilities possibly through conversion or redevelopment.
- Promote high standards of design and support creativity in architectural detailing.
- Reflect the materials and colour palette of immediately surrounding buildings.
- Carefully consider their visual impact on nearby residential properties.
- Maintain and reinforce the planting and landscaping around car parking areas to minimise their visual dominance.
- Conserve trees protected by a Tree Preservation Order and retain and maintain other existing tree and hedge planting, particularly those within the grounds of Enterprise House.
- Support proposals for renewable energy where they are appropriate.
- Support active modes of transport and connectivity to the rest of the village.
- Ensure highway safety and capacity is not compromised with any new development.

7 St Ives Spatial Planning Area

- 7.1** St Ives is located in the east of Huntingdonshire, approximately 5 miles east of Huntingdon on the northern bank of the River Great Ouse.

Landscape Setting

- 7.2** St Ives is situated at the junction of two landscape character areas. The Ouse Valley dominates the southern side of the town with its wide flat floodplain, traditional water meadows, woodlands, willow trees and the lakes occupying former gravel pits all coupled with the River Great Ouse itself providing a high quality landscape setting to the historic part of the town. The Ouse Valley Way long distance footpath runs alongside or close to the river providing opportunities for people to interact with this landscape character area. The Central Claylands Landscape Character Area surrounds the north of St Ives giving a more undulating landscape typified by large fields and mature vegetation. This landscape generally has an open character dominated by views of the sky. Although very different in nature the landscapes of the Ouse Valley and the Central Claylands are both of inherently high landscape quality.
- 7.3** Land to the east of Somersham Road forms the transition between the Ouse Valley and Central Claylands character areas. It is bordered by Somersham Road industrial estate to the west and Compass Point and the A1123 to the south. The landform rises to the north where the collection of buildings around Hilltop House are prominent.

Edges and Visual Prominence

- 7.4** Marley Road, the B1040 Somersham Road and the A1096 create clearly defined edges to the north, east and south east of the town although some development such as Compass Point and Morrisons has occurred to the east of the road. The southern and south eastern edge of the settlement is clearly defined by the river and the landscape of the Ouse valley.
- 7.5** To the west, the land to the south of Houghton Road occupies part of a landscape plateau at the top of a steep slope above the Ouse Valley. The area includes substantial groups of trees and woodland along with a county wildlife site to the south of Houghton Grange and provides a mature landscaped setting for the western edge of St Ives.
- 7.6** The northern fringe of St Ives comprises an extensive area mainly in agricultural use with the exception of an industrial site and waste water treatment works at the south eastern end of the area. It forms a strong edge between landscape and townscape character areas. There are limited views north from Marley Road resulting in little visual connection between homes to the south of the road and the wider landscape beyond mainly due to embankments and mature screen planting along the road edge. The landscape of the area slopes gently down towards Marley Brook gap and then rises towards a ridgeline to the north and east. Agricultural fields are medium to large in scale and relatively open in character other than the woodlands around Wiggin Hill Farm.
- 7.7** Land to the east of Harrison Way is situated within the floodplain of the River Great Ouse. It is visually prominent from surrounding roads and public footpaths and is perceived as part of the Ouse Valley landscape which forms the eastern fringe of St Ives. It is predominantly rural in character although it contains the Busway park and ride site, some industrial properties, pasture and large areas of water in former gravel pits.
- 7.8** To the south of St Ives the landscape is dominated by the River Great Ouse and its flood meadows. The landform is flat with the rough grassland of Hemingford Meadow providing long distance views both across the town and along the river valley. Buildings along The Quay and The Waits relate well to their riverside location. Holt Island separates the south western corner of the town centre from the main river channel

7 St Ives Spatial Planning Area

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and helps bring the countryside setting close into the town. This woodland and countryside belt between the built part of the town and the river meadows is reinforced to the west by Copleys Scout Centre and The Thicket.

Townscape Character

- 7.9** St Ives is situated on the north bank of the River Great Ouse and has developed to the north of the river with a very distinct historic centre that has a large market square that forms the main node of the settlement. The historic market town is a thriving shopping and tourist centre that has retained its distinctiveness with medieval streets and buildings, fine monuments and a picturesque riverside quay. There are good visual and physical links between the historic centre and the river, which provides a distinctive and high quality setting to the town. The town is linked to the A1307/A14 and Cambridge via the A1096 and to Huntingdon via the A1123, which cuts straight through the settlement providing a secondary node at the junction with Ramsey Road.
- 7.10** Due to the riverside location, the town has expanded in an asymmetrical manner into the landscape of the Central Claylands and to the limits currently imposed by existing roads, which define the settlement edges to the north and east. The River Great Ouse and its extensive flood meadows are key features of the southern gateway to the town and provide a tranquil green setting. There are a large number of historic industrial and commercial buildings and merchant houses along the riverfront including The Quay and The Waits, and views of All Saints and the Free Church creating a memorable and well-defined riverside edge, particularly when viewed from the Hemingford Meadow. This setting provides an ideal location for a mix of uses including a hotel, marina, residential properties and offices. The area is served by extensive public access to the river edge notably at The Waits, The Quay and to the Hemingford and Wilhorn Meadows, this is supported by limited vehicular access to the area. There has been significant development at St Ives Business Park and Meadow Lane located on the edge of the Ouse Valley.
- 7.11** A total of thirteen individual character areas have been identified, although many of these occur within a relatively small area of the town to the south east (Figure 7.1 and can be viewed on the [interactive map](#)). Here, the character of the historic centre with its well defined medieval street pattern, market square, burgage plots and architecture of small scale 2 or 3 storey town houses dominates, providing a distinctive area with a number of key landmarks. Due to this, traffic and parking in parts of the town centre detract from the otherwise high visual quality of the area. The Historic Centre is linked to a number of smaller character areas to the north and east which include a mix of commercial, light industrial and residential development and a range of building types. The remainder of the settlement consists of modern residential housing estates which have extended north from the historic centre and are clearly segregated from the industrial development located to the north east of the town. To the west is modern development known as 'The Spires' with Houghton Grange being redeveloped as of 2021 extending into Houghton and Wyton parish.

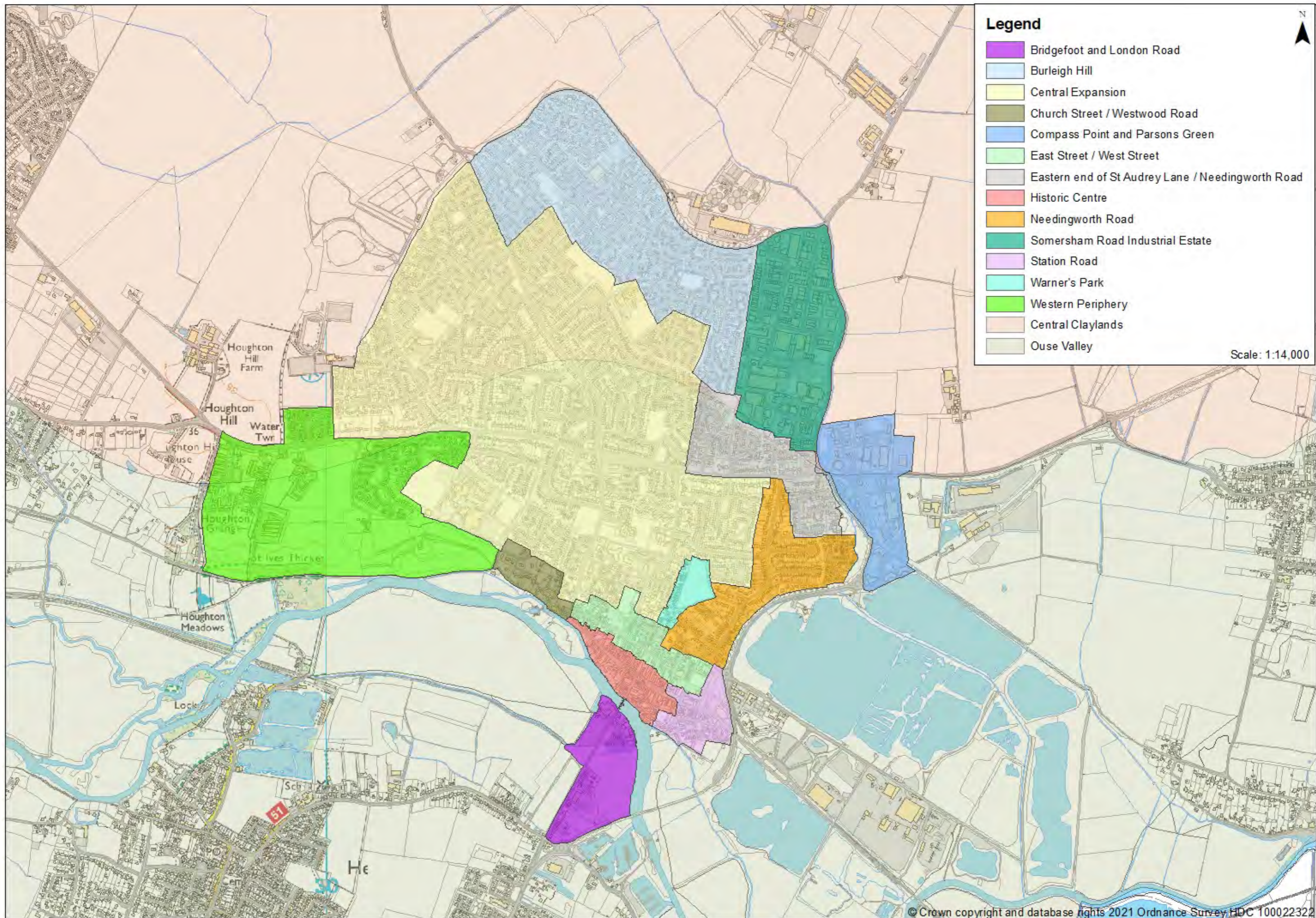


Figure 7.1 St Ives Character Areas

Key Features

Historic route	London Road
Historic gateways	The early 19th Century New Bridges and the 15th Century bridge and chapel consecrated in 1426, All Saints Church mostly built between c.1450 and c.1470 and the east end of Market Hill
Landmarks	All Saints Church, The Free Church, the Old Mill, the 15th Century bridge and chapel
Memorable areas	The historic centre, the Quay, the Waits, the Ouse Valley, Warner's Park
Key views	From the historic bridge towards the river and the river front; from the A1096 crossing the Ouse Valley towards the Old Mill, bridge and Quay, from the river frontage across Hemingford Meadow



The Waits with the Norris Museum



Market Hill provides a spacious shopping area with views dominated by the Free Church spire



All Saints on Church Street provides a quiet green area at the western end of the Historic Centre



Quayside buildings reflect St Ives' important river trading history

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St Ives Character Area 1: The Historic Centre



Market Hill has a strong historic character with many individually designed and now listed buildings



Queen Victoria's 1897 Jubilee Fountain forms a focal point on The Broadway

7.12 The historic core of St Ives is centred along The Broadway, Market Hill and Bridge Street running parallel to the River Great Ouse. The relationship between this area and the river is very strong reflecting St Ives' medieval history as one of the busiest inland ports in England. The street pattern is mainly medieval which creates an intimate scale and a distinctive network of passages and alleyways linking Broadway to the river and West Street. There is a broad range of uses and facilities including shops, places to eat, civic and community facilities, public houses and places of worship.

7.13 The Waits contains a series of individually designed properties mostly built in the 18th or early 19th centuries, including several listed buildings, all on the north side of the street overlooking Holt Island and the river. The Waits is contiguous with Broadway which is enclosed by continuous buildings on both sides. Buildings tend to have narrow frontages with deep plots reflecting their medieval layout. Three storeys are commonly found. Building types include 1B, 2A and 2E with a wide range of building materials including many gault brick and rendered properties. At the eastern end of Broadway the road is split by a small island of buildings set between Merryland and Crown Street which form a small area of much more intimate townscape with properties ranging from low two storey buildings of type 1B to substantial three storey town houses of type 2D; most of these have commercial shopfronts on the ground floor.



Former butchers at The Waits

7.14 The Pavement, Market Hill and Sheep Market now form the commercial heart of the town centre. This part of the Historic Centre retains a wide pavement from historic use as a sheep market. Many attractive listed buildings reinforce the high quality character of this part of the town. Buildings are mainly of 2-3 storeys and of mixed styles and ages reflecting the evolution of the historic centre over time with Georgian, Victorian and Edwardian frontages all visible, representing building types 2A, 2D, 2E, 6A, 6B and 7A. A wide variety of materials is found but pale and mixed buff brick with painted stonework detailing are most frequent, along with white and cream painted brickwork, colour rendered facades and colourful shop fronts and signage.



Lloyds Bank

7.15 Numerous distinctive buildings can be found in this area reflecting St Ives' historic prosperity. The Corn Exchange dating from 1864 is constructed of gault brick with red brick and stone dressings and forms a fine example of a Victorian civic building of type 7A. The quality and variety of current and former public houses such as the three storey Golden Lion Hotel reflect the town's historic commercial importance. The steeple of the Free Church forms a distinctive landmark and prominently located in the centre of the area are the St Ives Cross of Sacrifice war memorial and a statue of Oliver Cromwell.



Oliver Cromwell

7.16 The famous St Ives Fair was held along the axis created by these streets with Bridge Street and the 15th century town bridge leading into the commercial centre. The bridge itself is constructed from pale Barnack stone and is both grade I listed and a scheduled monument; it contains the two storey Chapel of St Ledger forming a prominent, attractive feature facing onto the river. On the western side of Bridge Street numbers 6-28 all form a group of listed buildings. They are predominantly 18th century displaying a range of red and gault brick and plastered frontages. Sitting in a prominent position at the foot of the historic bridge Manor House, 28 Bridge Street, is a grade II* listed late 16th century timber framed property.

7.17 The Quay is a particularly historic element of St Ives' townscape and reflects the original importance of this area for ship-borne trade. One of the most distinctive buildings on The Quay, no. 2, dates from the mid-19th century and was built in the Jacobean style with an elaborate Dutch gable to the front. North of The Quay east from Bridge Street, extending to Market Hill and east across to Priory Road is an area of passages, lanes and courtyard associated with the settlement that grew up around the Priory precinct. The informality of the streetscape of this cluster complements the more formal layout of Market Hill and The Broadway.



St Ledger Chapel

7.18 There are limited opportunities for development within this area other than infill, renovation and occasional redevelopment sites.

Development proposals should:

- Enrich the character of the area by reinforcing and acknowledging its historic character.
- Conserve the river setting and retain its function as a natural edge and buffer between St Ives and Hemingford Grey.
- Protect and conserve the historic riverfront including the Quay, the Waits and the 15th Century bridge and chapel.
- Conserve and enhance the historic route (London Road) as the gateway to St Ives from the south across the river.
- Reflect the varying scales of development in the immediate vicinity of any proposal and the sense of enclosure deriving from the back of pavement development.
- Conserve the distinctive street pattern and promote active frontages to the network of existing lanes and passages.
- Protect views of All Saints Church and the Free Church.
- Reflect the soft colour palette of the area.
- Support initiatives for the retention of existing or creation of additional services and community facilities in core frontages.
- Seek improved pedestrian and cycling facilities to and within the area to promote accessibility and activity within the town's historic core.

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St Ives Character Area 2: Bridgefoot and London Road



New Bridges dominates the approach into St Ives across the flood meadow



Riverside Mill has been converted into apartments

7.19 Bridgefoot and London Road is a linear character area running south from the historic town bridge which provides direct access to the historic centre for pedestrians and cyclists. The only building on the western side of the road is the Dolphin Hotel, rebuilt in 1986 it is a mixture of one and two storeys in buff brick with prominent pantile roofs with elements arranged in a pavilion style. The building type has much in common with the office buildings found in type 5C. The remainder of the western side of the road comprises the open grassland of Hemingford Grey meadow slightly screened by hedgerows with intermittent trees.



Dolphin Hotel

7.20 On the eastern side, immediately south of the bridge are two listed buildings dating from the late 17th/early 18th century which are two storeys with attics built straight onto the back of the pavement giving a sense of enclosure to the streetscene when combined with the only three storey element of the Dolphin Hotel directly across the road. Wrapped to the south and east of this is Enderbys Wharf. This comprises a residential development focused around the former Enderbys paper mill with a range of renovated and new buildings incorporated. The Old Mill comprises six main floors constructed in buff brick with simple, symmetrical elevations and a slate roof; it represents building type 5A. The Old Mill, Riverside and Bridgefoot House collectively dominate the view in the local area and from across the river. Other buildings are a mixture of three storey townhouses and three and four storey apartments reflecting the same colour palette for materials. They variously represent building types 2B and 3E.

7.21 Further south the eastern side of the road has a predominantly linear development form with a break in the streetscene arising from Wilhorn Meadow immediately south of Enderbys Wharf. All properties have extensive views west across Hemingford Grey Meadow. The road is enclosed by brick walls on both sides containing pavements on both sides until Bridge Terrace is reached. Bridge Terrace contains 13 two storey homes with varying roof heights some with semi-basements and steps up to the ground floor. Within the terrace nos. 8, 9 and 10 are listed as being of early to mid-19th century construction of gault brick. All homes in the terrace comprise building type 2A. Properties are set back behind shallow gardens and basement areas with hedging often adjoin the pavement.



Bridge Terrace

- 7.22** South of Bridge Terrace is the former Murketts Garage which contains a variety of car showroom and workshop buildings in a semi-derelict condition as of 2021 which forms an eyesore in the immediate streetscene. Further south are a variety of mostly mid-19th century terraced houses and villas, several of which are listed. Terraces are typically set back with shallow front gardens and detached villas further set back within more extensive gardens. Gault brick with slate roofs are the most frequently used building materials although some such as The Willows are painted adding variety to the streetscene. These represent building types 2A and 2B.
- 7.23** The area offers limited further opportunities for change and has significant historic sensitivities which would need to be taken into account.

Development proposals should:

- Enrich the area by reinforcing its special qualities and acknowledging its local character.
- Maintain and enhance physical and visual connections to the Historic Centre and key buildings.
- Ensure that proposals respond positively to the specific opportunities available.
- Protect and conserve the historic character of the area and its heritage assets.
- Promote opportunities for wildlife and nature conservation initiatives to protect and enhance the ecological value of Wilhorn Meadow.
- Reflect the dominant materials and colour palette of the area of gault brick with slate or dark red/ brown roof tiles.
- Protect the existing trees and hedgerows which contribute to the rural edge and views across Hemingford Grey Meadow.

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St Ives Character Area 3: East Street / West Street



Crown Walk terraced homes with shallow front gardens



East Street retains a mix of uses

7.24 East Street and West Street form an area of mainly 18th and 19th Century expansion adjacent to the Historic Centre based on the original back lane to the medieval burgage plots fronting onto streets into the Historic Centre. It contains a variety of uses including public car parking and a health centre along with retail, commercial and residential uses. The eastern end of the area contains the bus station which retains the gault brick grade II listed entrance gates and lodges to the cattle market, built around 1886, indicating the historical use of the area.



Bus station with former cattle market buildings

7.25 The streetscene of the southern side of both East Street and West Street is interspersed by access passages that connect the area to The Broadway, Crown Street and The Pavement reflecting the layout from the burgage plots. The northern side has a more varied streetscene with less continuous development.

7.26 This an area of evolving streetscene in which conversions of older properties and infill redevelopments continue to introduce additional variety into the range of building types along the two main streets in particular with building types 1B, 2A, 2B, 2D, 3E, 3F, and 5A all represented. Materials include both red and buff brick and painted brickwork with slate roofs being common. There is less of a concentration of listed buildings in this area than the Historic Centre. Of particular note is the Particular Baptist Meeting House on the corner of East Street and Crown Place which is a severe building of gault brick and slate dating from the mid-19th century.



Hopbine Yard infill housing

7.27 The area includes a network of narrow residential streets, some with back of pavement development creating an intimate scale and strong sense of enclosure particularly along Crown Walk where some homes on the western side have shallow front gardens but the majority are built directly onto the pavement. Mostly built in gault brick with slate roofs these represent building type 2A. More substantial 19th century terraced homes are found along Cromwell Place with numbers 1-8 being grade II listed and providing a very consistent frontage to the street.

7.28 There is little green space to break up the built form although the cemetery on Broad Leas provides some mature trees along the frontage with North Road. Facing Cromwell Terrace the original formal grounds of Slepe Hall provide a grassed area bounded by mature trees which makes a very attractive contribution to the streetscene.

7.29 The area is capable of accommodating further, sensitively designed change.

Development proposals should:

- Ensure that proposals respond positively to the specific opportunities available.
- Enrich the area by reinforcing its special qualities and acknowledging its local character.
- Maintain and enhance physical and visual connections to the Historic Centre and key buildings.
- Protect and conserve the original terraces along the residential side streets and promote continued retention of original architectural features.
- Reflect the intimate nature of the area created by the back of pavement and shallow front garden layout.
- Ensure that any new residential development fronts the road and reflects the dominant materials and colour palette of the area (muted pastels, red and buff brick, white painted brickwork and slate).
- Protect the existing trees and consider ways of increasing tree planting where space and service restrictions permit.
- Incorporate renewable energy options and electric vehicle charging points where appropriate within the bus station and car parking area.

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St Ives Character Area 4: Station Road



The supermarket has a large scale relatively low form



Redeveloped homes at Oldman Court

7.30 The Station Road area is located south east of the Historic Centre and historically was the site of the Priory and the old cattle market. The predominant uses and facilities include a supermarket, car parking, the main bus station and the town library. The western corner of the area contains the grade II listed remains of part of the 14th century Benedictine Priory with walls from a barn now forming garden walls to Priory House. Traffic, including the Busway, has a significant impact on the area.



Priory barn walls

7.31 The area contains a mix of building types including large scale commercial buildings, town houses and bungalows with building types 2A, 2D, 3E and 3F. The northern part of the area is dominated by community facilities which are contained on the eastern edge by a substantial tree belt separating the area from the A1096. The southern part of the area has experienced significant redevelopment since 2000 for residential uses with the introduction of many homes in building type 3F. Buildings are typically limited to 2 storeys, sometimes with attics on older properties, giving an overall lower built form than in the adjoining Historic Centre. The extensive use of pale gault and buff bricks throughout the area for both old and modern buildings helps to provide continuity, complemented by more varied roofing materials.

7.32 The area is considered able to accommodate further change.

Development proposals should:

- Ensure that development responds positively to the specific opportunities available.
- Reflect the predominant colour palette of the area of pale gault and buff bricks with limited use of red bricks and render.
- Reduce the visual dominance of cars through increased planting and improved boundary treatments to existing car parks.
- Ensure high standards of design within any new development and provide off street parking where possible.
- Protect the entrance lodges and gates into the main car park.
- Protect the tree belt along the A1096 frontage which contains the area within the adjoining landscape.
- Explore the provision of public art at key locations to announce entry points into the town such as the Guided Bus route and to interpret the historical significance of the area.
- Support the retention of community facilities.
- Support renewable energy options including electric vehicle charging points where visually appropriate.

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St Ives Character Area 5: Church Street / Westwood Road



Church Street's character arises from a variety of substantial historic properties



All Saints Church and its surrounding churchyard provide a calm space

- 7.33** The parish church of All Saints forms the focal point of this small character area based around a medieval part of St Ives and bounded by the river to the south. All Saints' spire is a strong feature in the townscape both within the area and from surrounding areas, particularly from the Historic Centre. Other than the church, the area comprises residential properties, a surgery and a cemetery.
- 7.34** Older properties are mainly concentrated along Church Street with several being listed as of architectural or historic interest. The late 17th/early 18th century cottages at numbers 1-3 Westwood Road form a strong focal point at the road junction, set back behind a small green. Properties on Church Street are generally older and front directly onto the street or have small front gardens bounded by low walls.
- 7.35** Most houses in the area comprise large detached properties set back from the road and generally concealed by trees and shrubs and high boundary walls, particularly along Westwood Road. Older properties include substantial town houses, villas and cottages mainly built of soft red brick or rendered and painted with some substantial 20th century properties integrated at the western end. Building types include 1B, 2B, 3D, 3E and 6A.
- 7.36** The area has a relatively open feel to the townscape with large mature trees and tall hedges allowing some significant views between buildings. This is complemented by the green spaces provided by the churchyard immediately surrounding All Saints, the cemetery off the western end of Westwood Road which contains many substantial mature trees and the tree lined Thicket Path which follows the southern boundary of the area.
- 7.37** The Church Street / Westwood Road character area offers few opportunities for new development given its enclosed nature.



Westwood Road

Development proposals should:

- Maintain and enhance physical and visual connections to key buildings and landscape views.
- Preserve the setting of All Saints Church.
- Reflect the existing spacious layout of development and the relationship with the street of properties in the immediate vicinity.
- Ensure development proposals reflect the materials and colour palette of the area of red and mixed buff brick, white render, pastel render, slate and concrete tiles.
- Maintain, and improve where possible, views to the Ouse Valley and protect the existing mature trees as a significant feature of the area.
- Conserve the brick boundary walls along Westwood Road and the Ouse Valley Way.

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St Ives Character Area 6: Warner's Park



The Edwardian villas fronting Warner's Park give a strong, regular character to the building line



Warner's Park provides a substantial green space and recreational opportunities close to the town centre

- 7.38** Warner's Park is an established area of open space hosting a pavilion, football field and play area with mature trees and hedgerows. It provides a valuable area of green space within the the urban townscape with a quiet atmosphere. Gifted to the town in 1905 it retains traces of the medieval ridge and furrow field pattern. The park has clearly defined boundaries with a strong sense of enclosure. The park is not bordered by any roads with all accesses being limited to pedestrian routes other than gates allowing for maintenance.
- 7.39** The park is overlooked from the west by a row of Edwardian properties comprised of building types 2A and 2B which are separated from the park by Crown Walk footpath with vehicular access only being from the rear. To the east it is bounded by a mixture of inter-war suburban houses and mid-20th century properties. The materials in the vicinity are predominantly green with buff and red brick, white painted render and slate.
- 7.40** Warner's Park is a small area of distinctive character which provides an important area of green space within the urban fabric of the town. There are few opportunities for new development and inappropriate building alterations and extensions would detract from the unity and simplicity of the area.



Terraced homes facing onto the park

Development proposals should:

- Ensure that new development responds positively to the specific opportunities available within the area.
- Retain the simplicity of the building line and the relationship of houses to the park.
- Maintain a continuous building frontage to protect the sense of enclosure.
- Maintain and enhance visual connections to the park and pedestrian permeability from surrounding areas.
- Control the use of materials and details in house extensions and alterations to maintain the integrity of the original design.
- Maintain and increase trees and hedgerows close to the boundaries without impeding recreational use of the park.
- Support the retention and improvement of recreational facilities.

St Ives Character Area 7: Needingworth Road



Arts and Crafts style homes with distinctive design features provide a strong sense of local identity



Needingworth Road was a main route for Victorian expansion

- 7.41** Needingworth Road developed as an important highway connecting St Ives to settlements to the north and east although most properties along it date from the late 19th century onwards. Needingworth Road bisects the area with housing to both sides, straight cul-de-sac side streets and large mature trees and hedges which provide a sense of enclosure and a well-defined street frontage. The eastern edge of the area is bounded by a strong tree belt paralleling the A1096. The area contains two distinct sub-areas of properties developed in different phases. The only listed building in this character area is the Church of the Sacred Heart, built in Cambridge around 1843 of red brick with stone dressings and a slate roof, it was reconstructed on its current site in 1902.
- 7.42** The first sub-area is focused along Needingworth Road itself. The southern end contains predominantly Victorian properties with a mixture of large detached villas of building type 2B and terraced houses of type 2A. Most properties are set back from the road frontage by shallow front gardens, with brick boundary walls being a strong feature in the townscape. St Ives mosque occupies a converted Victorian terraced house. Further north along Needingworth Road the building types become more varied with Victorian and Edwardian terraced houses interspersed with Arts and Craft influenced housing of type 3A and mid-20th century housing of type 3D. Brick boundary walls and low hedges to shallow front gardens and integration of mature trees is a unifying feature along all of Needingworth Road. Building materials are very varied with red brick and pale painted render being most common along with some buff and pale brick.
- 7.43** The second sub-area contains a mixture of Arts and Crafts influenced homes of type 3A such as those in Great Farthing Close, 1920s and inter-war suburban properties of type 3B and mid-20th century housing which are concentrated in Park Avenue and Little Farthing Close. Properties in this sub-area are mostly set in substantial gardens with front hedges and grass verges providing a soft, green aspect to the townscape. Again building materials are varied with pale painted render being widely used. This area also includes a substantial group of Park Homes at the eastern end of Farthing Lane set amongst small, neat plots surrounded by mature trees.
- 7.44** Needingworth Road is an established residential area which provides a key route into the town centre. It contains a mix of building styles and presents opportunities for small scale development, infill plots and extensions.



Park Homes

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Development proposals should:

- Ensure that new development responds positively to the specific opportunities available within the area.
- Reflect existing built forms and relationship with the street in any new development.
- Reflect the area's materials and colour palette of buff and red brick, white and pastel painted render, slate, red pantile and brown concrete tile.
- Promote high standards of design and support creativity in architectural detailing.
- Protect existing mature trees which contribute to the character of the streetscape.
- Retain and reinforce the existing tree belt along the eastern edge of the area to maintain screening of the A1096.
- Support initiatives to promote cycle and pedestrian use of Needingworth Road to access the Historic Centre.

St Ives Character Area 8: Central Expansion



Green hanging tiles and partial rendering provide soft finishes with the detached house set back sufficiently to allow on plot parking



Tile hung semi-detached homes often have scope for extensions

7.45 St Ives saw very substantial numbers of new homes built in the 1950s to 1970s expanding north and west from the East Street/ West Street urban character area. This Central Expansion area is bisected by the A1123 (Houghton Road - St Audrey Lane). The area has strong common characteristics with homes being relatively spaciouly laid out, set back from the road by medium depth front gardens and interspersed by grassed areas and mature trees. Semi-detached homes are prevalent with detached homes more frequently included in developments built in the mid-1960s onwards. Housing is almost entirely building type 3D with a very few examples of 3B along Houghton Road.



Fire Station on Ramsey Road

7.46 This area contains a series of sub-areas of housing reflecting their original construction as housing estates. To the south of St Audrey's Lane housing is interspersed with a variety of civic uses such as police and fire stations which are typically set in landscaped grounds with surface level car parking forming a break in the built frontage. The western edge of the sub-area comprises a large civic complex with sports and leisure facilities and the St Ivo Academy. The extensive playing fields associated with this blend through into the Ouse Valley landscape character area to the south. Adjoining the complex is site allocation SI2 (St Ives Football Ground) in the [Local Plan](#), allocated for approximately 30 homes. The site has outline permission and permission to relocate the sports buildings on site to an alternative site. Therefore, this established residential character area is expected to under go some minor change.

7.47 A key townscape feature of this area is the sense of openness created by the three main roads running through it. Either side of the southern section of Ramsey Road the playing fields of Slepe Hall Field and Westfield School provide substantial open spaces. Heading north Ramsey Road is bounded by grass verges and mature street trees. The southern part of Hill Rise is mostly fronted by boundary hedges and trees and further north the whole western edge is bounded by the trees of Long Plantation beyond which is situated the outdoor leisure centre. Bisecting the area, the A1123 is fronted by wide grass verges, generous front gardens and a substantial length to the east of Ramsey Road is fronted by a wide area of grass, trees and reed fringed drainage areas.



Hill Rise Long Plantation

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7.48 Housing is predominantly semi-detached or in the form of short terraces with a few groups of detached properties contributing to a diverse mix of homes. Almost all properties are two storeys high with a few bungalows concentrated in Oxford Road and a very few three storey blocks of apartments such as at Langley Close. Layouts are typically spacious with moderate or generous front gardens. Side garages or driveways are common facilitating parking within the plot reducing the impact of on-street parking. Some streets benefit from separate grass verges and street trees such as much of Green Leys and High Leys although pavements are often relatively narrow. Building materials include pale and red brick with green or black hanging tiles being a frequently found decorative feature along with some pale weatherboarding or render.

7.49 North of the A1123 street names often help identify clusters of homes built in similar styles. For example, homes in the cluster of streets named after poets often include integral garages with some properties having garages provided in nearby blocks. The 'trees and shrubs' cluster includes a wider variety of homes with bungalows, semi-detached and detached properties with pale brick being a dominant feature.



Wellington Avenue

7.50 Homes in the 'aircraft' streets often have space for parking at the side with a variety of driveways, car ports and garages; some homes have extended into these spaces. The sense of openness is reinforced on the eastern edge of the area in this vicinity by the linear open space connecting down towards Wheatfields School. Continuing the trend of building north and westwards a small group of larger detached homes of building type 3E is integrated at the western end of Ansley Way which retain the spacious layout common across this character area.

7.51 The area has limited scope for development with extensions to existing homes being most achievable.

Development proposals should:

- Enrich the role of the A1123 as a key gateway to St Ives and reinforce the sense of openness and high quality landscaping.
- Reflect the existing materials and colour palette within the local vicinity of the proposed scheme.
- Reflect the existing built forms and relationship of properties with the street frontage in the immediate locality.
- Ensure extensions and alterations to existing properties are of an appropriate size and scale to the original dwelling and do not detract from the surrounding area.
- Protect existing grass verges and street trees and incorporate additional provision within major development schemes.
- Ensure adequate provision of car parking to minimise the impact on the street scene of on-street parking.
- Protect existing trees where they contribute to the character of the street scene.
- Support provision of facilities which encourage active modes of travel such as cycling.
- Support initiatives for the retention and enhancement of community facilities and recreational provision.
- Support proposals for renewable energy where appropriate.

St Ives Character Area 9: Burleigh Hill



Red brick homes with neo-Georgian windows in Da Vinci Close



Dark and white weatherboarding provides distinct identity to homes in Kent Close

7.52 This area comprises housing primarily built in the last two decades of the 20th century with all homes representing building type 3E with a local centre providing retail, food and drink and community services at Constable Road representing building type 5D. The area is strongly bounded to the north by Marley Road which serves as a major distributor road taking traffic around the outskirts of St Ives and influences the character of the access to many homes. Properties are typically arranged as a series of loop roads and culs-de-sac off accessed off Marley Road with footpath connections between these allowing more permeable routes for pedestrians. The area is relatively consistently developed with two main grassed recreational open spaces being located north of Edinburgh Drive and north of Alwyn Close.



Burleigh Hill Co-op

7.53 The northern section where roads are all named after places comprises a large sub-area of detached properties with single or double garages to the side of properties or occasionally dominating the front aspect. Building materials include buff and red brick with box bay and arched feature windows, often in a Georgian style. Front gardens are usually of sufficient depth to allow on-plot parking and immediately adjoin the pavement without grass verges to separate them. There are also clusters of homes arranged in short terraces with garages grouped in distinct parking courts to the rear. These are predominantly buff brick and some feature dark weatherboarding.



Buff brick house with box bay window and tiled porch features

7.54 The 'Artists' culs-de-sac are all arranged off Constable Road and comprise a more diverse mix of sizes and types of homes with several groups of cluster homes, some arranged as semis and short terraces and many detached properties. Building materials include red and buff brick and pale render with concrete roof tiles. Decorative features include a variety of box bay windows, Georgian style windows and weatherboarded panels. Larger homes typically have single or double garages to the side with single garages sometimes integral to the house. Smaller homes typically have garages in small clusters or private parking courts. This area contains a substantial local centre providing services for the northern part of St Ives with a supermarket, smaller retail units, public house, community centre and GP surgery. The extensive car park is well landscaped with mature hedging and trees screening it from surrounding homes.

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7.55 The 'Rivers' sub-area has a much higher proportion of cluster homes, short terraces and semi-detached properties with detached homes interspersed in some culs-de-sac. The relationship between homes and the street frontage varies considerably with some only being set back around 1 m whilst others face onto pedestrian routes with parking courts to the rear. Buff and red brick are used throughout this sub-area with decorative features including mock-Tudor paneling, Georgian style windows, box bay windows and occasional use of render and dark weatherboarding. A linear landscaping belt of grass and hedging separates this sub-area from the Somersham Road Industrial Area.



Mock Tudor home with side garage

7.56 The area has limited scope for development with extensions to existing properties being most achievable.

Development proposals should:

- Maintain and enhance visual connections to the Central Claylands landscape to the north across Marley Road.
- Reflect the existing materials palette and colour palette of predominantly red and buff brick with brown concrete tiles and pantiles, particularly where extensions are being constructed.
- Ensure extensions and alterations to existing properties are of an appropriate size and scale to the original dwelling and do not detract from the surrounding area.
- Increase trees and soft landscaping where space and service restrictions permit.
- Support provision of renewable energy where visually appropriate.
- Retain and enhance the landscaping belt between the area and the Somersham Road Industrial Estate.
- Promote opportunities for enhancement of amenity green spaces to provide increased opportunities for recreation and nature conservation and to help provide distinctive local landmarks.
- Support the retention and enhancement of existing retail, community, leisure and recreational facilities and opportunities.

St Ives Character Area 10: Eastern end of St Audrey Lane/ Needingworth Road



Older houses set well back on the northern side of St Audrey Lane provide a green frontage to the A1123



Large detached homes are found in culs-de-sac throughout the area

7.57 This small area also comprises late 20th century homes all of building type 3E. The northern part takes access directly from St Audrey Lane and the southern part from Needingworth Road. Homes are predominantly detached throughout with some short terraces linked by garages and semi-detached homes in Landcliffe Close. Most homes have moderate front gardens immediately adjoining the pavement with sufficient depth to allow on plot car parking. Single and double garages are common throughout either to the side of the property or integral to the house.



Different finishes help distinguish each house in the pair

7.58 This area contains an extensive range of decorative features on its homes. Arched windows with contrasting brickwork are a particularly strong feature on homes to the north of St Audrey Lane, particularly along Woodside Way. Mock Tudor paneling is also widely found in the area. Other decorative features include render panels, bell and mono-pitch tile topped bay windows and leaded light glazing.

7.59 Properties facing directly onto St Audrey Lane and Needingworth Road include more variety of house type with some comprising building type 3D. On the southern side properties are typically well set back from the main road with extensive front gardens often containing mature trees which contribute a softness to the street scene slightly reducing the dominance of the A1123. Grass verges and landscaped areas with trees are found intermittently along the A1123. By the Stock's Bridge roundabout at the very eastern edge of the area are situated a petrol station with small foodstore and a former public house now providing a second foodstore.



The A1123 strongly shapes the area

7.60 The area has limited scope for development with extensions to existing properties being most achievable.

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Development proposals should:

- Ensure that new development responds positively to the specific opportunities available within the area.
- Reflect the existing built forms and relationship of properties with the street frontage in the immediate locality.
- Ensure extensions and alterations to existing properties are of an appropriate size and scale to the original dwelling and do not detract from the surrounding area.
- Continue the characteristic of strong architectural detailing to individual properties.
- Ensure adequate provision of car parking to retain the limited impact of car parking on the street scene.
- Seek to protect the soft, open landscaping along this key gateway to St Ives.
- Protect existing trees where they contribute to the character of the street scene and consider ways of planting more where spaces and services permit.
- Support provision of facilities which encourage active modes of travel, for example cycling.
- Support the retention of the existing retail and service provision in the area.
- Support provision of renewable energy where visually appropriate.

St Ives Character Area 11: Western Periphery



Homes designed to present frontages around the corner



Effective integration of mature trees and flood water storage

7.61 The western periphery urban character area comprises two sub-areas of 21st century homes representing building type 3F, situated either side of Houghton Road. The majority of the character area comprises site allocation SI1 (St Ives West), a mixed use site allocation in the [Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036](#) located to the south of Houghton Road. The site partially falls within the Ouse Valley Green Infrastructure Priority Area. The allocation includes four main parcels of land: 'The Spires', Houghton Grange, the Houghton Grange grassland county wildlife site and a central parcel known as the BBSRC field. To the south, the area has a close association with the Ouse Valley landscape character area with the Thicket Path running along the side of the River Great Ouse.

7.62 In the northern sub-area focused on Garnier Drive, homes vary from two to three storeys in height; properties facing junctions are dual aspect and often higher than adjoining properties to provide local feature points. All homes in this sub-area are red brick with cream or white render forming the main decorative feature. Roofs are a mixture of red and grey plain tiles. Car parking is incorporated through rear parking courts accessed underneath upper floors of properties or in small groups of garages with a few on-plot garages and driveways. Most homes are located close to the street with shallow front gardens separating them from the pavement. Some parts have shared surface accesses with no or little distinction between pavement and roadway. The northern boundary comprises a narrow belt of hedging and trees separating the homes from the outdoor recreation centre to the north.

7.63 Properties in the larger southern sub-area, SI1 includes Houghton Grange and 'The Spires'. Redevelopment of Houghton Grange, formerly used by the Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC), has detailed approval for redevelopment which started in 2021 and includes the sensitive conversion of the listed buildings on site. Houghton Grange is a grade II listed Elizabethan Revival style country house built in 1897 of red brick with stone dressings. The site extends into the neighbouring parish of Houghton and Wyton and is located within its Conservation Area.



Knights Way

7.64 Homes in The Spires estate are all accessed off Knights Way with an intricate street layout facilitating a number of clear blocks of housing. Most properties are positioned close to the pavement with very shallow front gardens being common, particularly where they face onto shared surface access routes. Retention of mature trees is a strong characteristic throughout this sub-area, especially in the landscaping belt which separates the homes from the A1123 to the north. Homes on the eastern side of Wilson Way front onto two green areas where mature trees have been retained adding significantly to

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the townscape value in the vicinity. Substantial contrasts have been incorporated in materials with red and buff brick, pale render and black weatherboarding all adding detail to properties with red and grey plain tiles used for roofing. To the south of 'The Spires' is Berman Park which was opened in April 2021.

7.65 New homes will be built over the next few years including through conversion of listed buildings. For areas of established homes, there is very limited scope for development other than some potential for extensions.

Development proposals should:

- Maintain and enhance physical and visual connections to key buildings and landscape views.
- Ensure that new development responds positively to the specific opportunities available within the area.
- Ensure extensions and alterations to existing properties are of an appropriate size and scale to the original dwelling and do not detract from the surrounding area.
- Reflect the existing materials and colour palette of properties in the immediate vicinity.
- Reflect and maintain the existing built forms and relationship with the street.
- Protect and conserve the heritage assets and their setting.
- Protect the existing areas of greenspace and trees, particularly those contributing to this gateway to St Ives and those protected by a Tree Preservation Order.
- Promote opportunities for enhancement of amenity green spaces to provide increased opportunities for recreation and nature conservation and to help provide distinctive local landmarks.
- Retain tree and hedgerow belts providing screening between homes and adjoining uses.
- Promote opportunities for the enhancement of areas of planting, green space, public rights of way and the Houghton Grange grassland CWS to provide increased opportunities for wildlife, conservation and enjoyment of the area inline with the aspirations of the Ouse Valley Green Infrastructure Priority Area.

St Ives Character Area 12: Somersham Road Industrial Estate



Simple structures in soft grey and neutral shades typify more recent industrial buildings



Older buildings include smaller properties with a range of industrial and service occupiers

7.66 This area provides the main industrial concentration for St Ives and is situated to the north east of the town. It is identified as an Established Employment Area within the [Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036](#).

7.67 The building type throughout is 5B hosting a wide range of uses including warehouses, industrial premises with some trade counters, builders merchants, vehicle sales and servicing and bulky home furnishings suppliers. Premises are mostly single storey with some two storey buildings particularly in the northern part of the estate. A wide variety of construction materials create diversity in the street scene. Older properties are often brick with newer ones displaying a variety of more colourful claddings. Browns and greys are widespread but detailing in red, green and blue can be found in many locations.

7.68 The estate is bounded to the east by the B1040 Somersham Road across which there are wide views of the Central Claylands landscape character area. Much of this frontage comprises a wide landscaping band of grass with some trees and shrubs. Within the estate, road widths vary with many being wide enough to meet the needs of large delivery vehicles. Vehicle parking areas dominate the frontages of many premises too, resulting in tarmac and concrete dominating much of the surfacing of the area. Grass verges can be found in some of the older parts of the estate with integral landscape planting more being frequently found alongside more recently built premises. Caxton Road and Burrell Road are notable for having wide grass verges.



Landscape planting softens this industrial unit on Burrell Road

7.69 The industrial and business uses are well established, there is some capacity for new units, extensions, change of use to other appropriate land uses or the renovation of older and vacant properties.

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Development proposals should:

- Support and retain the current uses in the character area through renovation, refurbishment or extensions to buildings.
- Ensure that development responds positively to the specific opportunities available to reinforce the employment uses in the area.
- Ensure that redevelopment and infill schemes respond positively to the specific opportunities available.
- Promote high standards of design for any new frontage development onto the B1040 to enhance the approach route into the town.
- Co-ordinate the range of materials and colours in any future development.
- Support proposals for renewable energy where appropriate and electric vehicle charging points.
- Protect the existing grass verges, trees and landscaped area and provide additional planting to reduce the visual dominance of parking areas where space and services permit.
- Support proposals where they encourage active modes of transport such as cycling and walking.

St Ives Character Area 13: Compass Point and Parsons Green



The area contains a range of modern office buildings with distinctive styling in local clusters



The area offers two large modern supermarkets in simply styled buildings surrounded by surface level car parking

7.70 The land to the east of St Ives comprises three distinct areas of commercial development. To the north of the A1123 is Compass Point Business Park, either side of Harrison Way and south of the A123 is a retail cluster known as the Abbey Retail Park along with Morrison's supermarket and the Marsh Harrier public house. The third sub-group is the St Ives Business Park at Parsons Green to the east of the A1096 Harrison Way. Compass Point and Parsons Green Business Parks are identified as Established Employment Areas in the [Local Plan](#).

7.71 Building types here represent categories 5B, 5C and 5D with distinct styles shaping each sub-area. Compass Point presents a very unified form of buildings and materials. The first phase situated to the west of the entrance road comprise two storey buildings 'pavilion style' constructed of pale brick with cream render to the upper floor, grey brick detailing and brown plain tile roofs. Buildings in the second phase to the east retain the pale brick but have distinctive pale green window frames and metal detailing. Pale grey buildings are integrated including the landmark circular property facing the Stock's Bridge roundabout which contributes a distinct, modern commercial feel to the streetscene when approaching the business park from the town. Car parking areas are sub-divided and partially screened by integral shrub and tree planting.



Stocks Bridge roundabout dominates the approach from the east

7.72 To the north of Compass Park is site allocation SI3 (Giffords Farm). The 5.6ha site is allocated in the [Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036](#) for employment development to comprise any class 'B' uses except 'B1a' offices and 'B8' storage and distribution. Development on the site will require to provide detailed flood risk assessment and flood mitigation works and suitable access.

7.73 The Abbey Retail Park provides a supermarket and a range of food and drink establishments either side of Harrison Way. Extensive areas of surface car parking adjoin the buildings along with drive through facilities for some. The architecture of individual buildings varies reflecting corporate identity; all are single storey often with monopitch roofs with grey and brown being dominant colours. The building type is 5D. In combination, the area provides a significant concentration of food and drink suppliers and for food shopping. The western parcel adjoins the eastern extent of residential areas with significant tree planting along the site boundary keeping the uses distinctly separate. However, there is limited planting within the retail park which creates an open feel dominated by hard surfaces and parking.

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7.74 To the south-east of the area is situated the St Ives Business Park at Parsons Green. This comprises office buildings of type 5C set in a spacious layout with shrubs and trees providing substantial screening of car parking areas. Most are two storeys in height with a maximum of three storeys. Buff brick and brown plain tiles are the dominant materials with varied window detailing being a strong feature.



Offices at Parsons Green

7.75 The sites are almost fully developed, leaving limited opportunity for further new developments.

Development proposals should:

- Support and retain the current uses in the character area through renovation, refurbishment or extensions to buildings.
- Ensure that development responds positively to the specific opportunities available to reinforce the employment and retail uses in the area.
- Promote high standards of design and support creativity in architectural detailing.
- Reinforce the colour palettes of the adjoining buildings.
- Ensure signage is in an appropriate location and does not impact road safety.
- Reduce the visual dominance of car parking area through planting and soft landscaping on boundaries.
- Carefully consider the visual impact on the Ouse Valley landscape character area to the east.
- Retain tree and hedge planting to screen the business uses from longer distance views from Long Reach lake.
- Support provision of renewable energy where appropriate and electric vehicle charging points.
- Support provision of facilities which encourage active modes of transport and pedestrian linkages.
- Provide safe access and mitigate any potential impacts on Somersham Road, A1096, A1123 and wider highways network.
- Ensure they adequately assess and mitigate flood risk in their design and layout.

8 Ramsey Spatial Planning Area

- 8.1** Ramsey is situated to the north east of Huntingdonshire, equidistant from Peterborough to the north and St Ives to the south.

Landscape Setting

- 8.2** Ramsey is located mainly within the Fen Margin Landscape Character Area. Bury is located on the northern edge of the Central Claylands Landscape Character Area and overlooks the Fen Margins to the east. Ramsey is closely associated with the Fen landscape which extends to the north and east of the town. Given its flat nature long distance views can be gained across the landscape from the edge of the town in many places, field boundary hedges and trees and agricultural buildings being the most common vertical features. Wind turbines to the north of Ramsey can be seen from many angles.
- 8.3** To the east of Ramsey the golf course and Bury Brook form an important green corridor connecting Ramsey to Bury. The valley sides of Bury Brook create an attractive green wedge between the main village to the west of the brook and the cluster of homes around Holy Cross Church to the east. The landscape has a very open character giving a memorable approach to Bury. To the west of Bury the landscape is dominated by the level plateau of Upwood Airfield. Heading to the west of Ramsey the land falls gently from south to north with mixed size field patterns almost entirely in arable use. The elevated landscape of the Central Claylands to the south and west, combined with the lack of significant vegetation allows extensive views both to and from the settlement

Edges and Visual Prominence

- 8.4** Ramsey is predominantly on the Fen Margin and surrounded by low lying land, as a result much of the town is only visible in limited glimpses from the wider landscape except where this rises onto the higher ridge of the Central Claylands. The northern edge of Ramsey is influenced by linear industrial and commercial developments along St Mary's Road and High Lode/ Stocking Fen Road where some large scale buildings are prominent in views from the surrounding Fen landscape. The northern eastern edges of Ramsey contain largely recreational uses, the cemetery and Ramsey Rural Museum which give the area a relatively open, green character forming an effective transition from the town to the surrounding countryside. Further round to the east the edge of Ramsey running down to the eastern edge of Bury is dominated by the open green landscape formed by Ramsey golf course. This land is more undulating as it transitions into the Central Claylands Landscape Character Area. There are expansive views to the south.
- 8.5** The southern and eastern edge of Bury has limited hedgerows to soften the edge of existing development, particularly around Valiant Square and RAF Upwood. The hangars at RAF Upwood are particularly prominent in views from footpaths to the west of the village and from the approach to Bury along Ramsey Road.
- 8.6** The western edges of Ramsey are relatively well contained visually in the landscape by a local ridgeline. However, the built up area here typically involves relatively straight boundary lines with limited vegetation to soften them. Residential developments begun in 2018 include landscaping schemes which may assist with a softer transition between residential development and the open countryside. The northwestern edge of Ramsey around Star Lane has a very abrupt edge between homes and the agricultural landscape which has a rigid field pattern with very little vegetation to interrupt long distance views across the Fens. The area is highly visible from the approach to Ramsey from the B1040.

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Townscape Character

- 8.7** Ramsey was founded around the Abbey in AD 969 and although a relatively small town serves a large rural area. Bury lies to the south and is a small settlement with strong links to Upwood Airfield, which has developed on the south-western edge of the village. Originally two distinct settlements linked by the B1040, Ramsey and Bury have now merged as a consequence of recent residential development to the south west of Ramsey and along Upwood Road north east of Bury.
- 8.8** The settlement lies along the B1040 on the edge of the Fenland landscape. Historically Ramsey developed around the Abbey on the eastern side of the town with the Gatehouse and Church of St Thomas a Becket remaining forming part of a landmark group. The town centre is now defined by the High Street and Great Whyte, the junction of which provides the main urban node. The High Lode Industrial Area defines the northern edge of the town.
- 8.9** Bury is a separate parish from Ramsey although the townscape is now contiguous. It falls into two distinct areas, one clustered broadly between Upwood Road and Owls End and the second east of High Lode focused around Holy Cross Church. Most of the built element of RAF Upwood is also situated within Bury parish. The junction of Upwood Road and the B1040 forms the main urban node and defines the point at which Ramsey and Bury merge. When approached from the south east along the B1040 a number of older houses at 'The Cross' define the southern gateway into the village. The character of Bury is dominated by recent housing development to the east of Upwood Road and the Upwood Airfield to the south west.
- 8.10** A total of fourteen individual character areas have been identified (Figure 8.1 and can be viewed on the [interactive map](#)), reflecting the complex small scale pattern of growth of Ramsey and Bury. The Historic Centre of Ramsey is defined by the buildings and streets of the High Street and Great Whyte, and to the north the Abbey Greens represent one of the most unique features in Huntingdonshire. Few medieval and post-medieval buildings remain as a result of extensive damage caused to the town by fires during the 17th and 18th centuries. The Abbey Greens area sees a diverse range of building types and ages including Georgian, Victorian and Edwardian houses as well as more recent development from the 19th and 20th century which is demonstrated through the mix of diverse building materials (buff, slate and red/brown plain tile, red brick and white cream rendering to the corrugated iron of the industrial warehouses). Post 1950s, Ramsey and Bury grew substantially with several distinct estates forming expanding the built edges and joining the two settlements with the High Lode Industrial Area defining the northern edge of the town and former RAF Upwood the southern end.

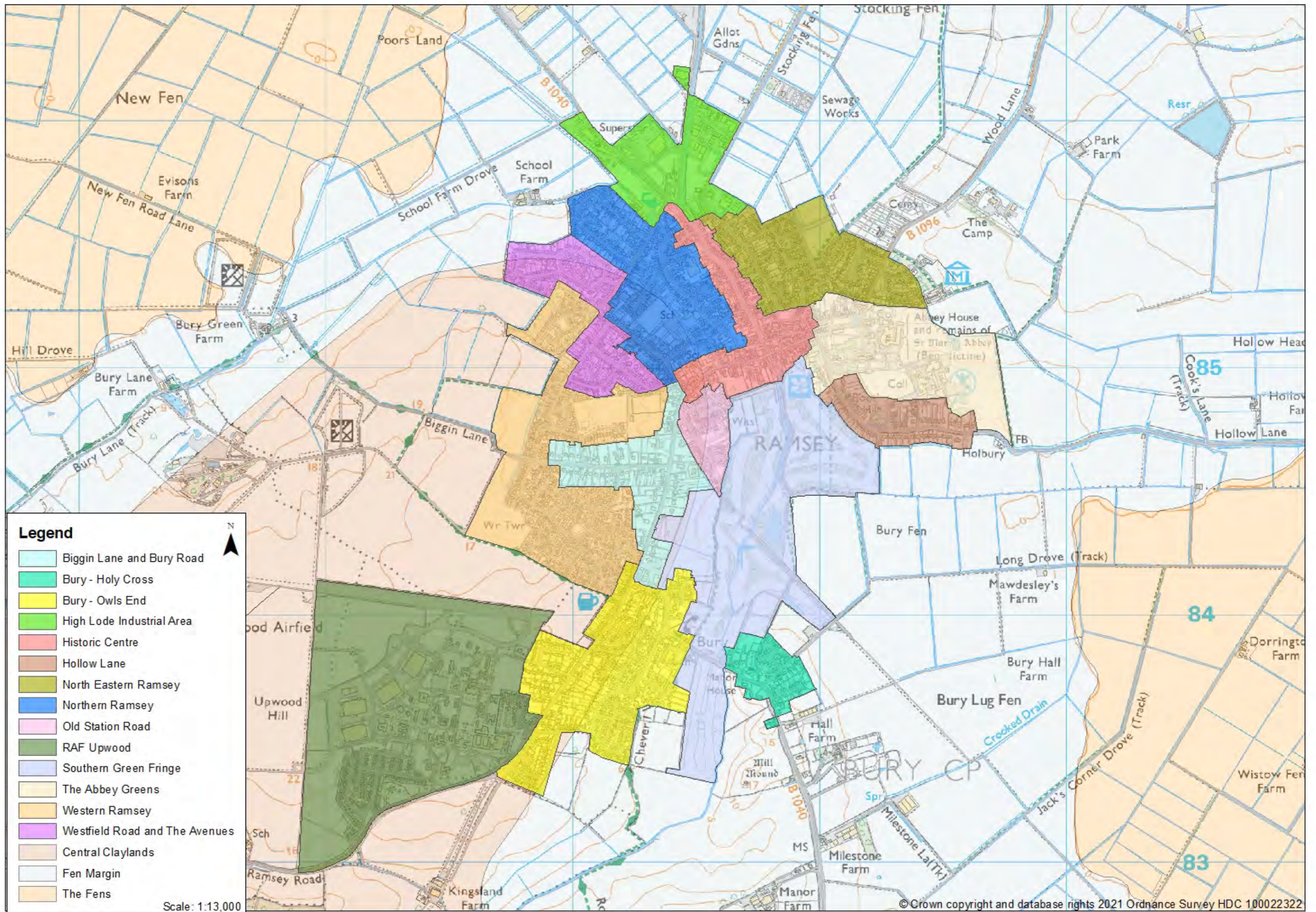


Figure 8.1 Ramsey Character Areas

Key Features

Historic route	Wood Lane, High Street, Great Whyte
Historic gateways	Gatehouse by Hollow Lane, eastern approach into the Abbey Greens, northern approach into Great Whyte by High Lode and Mill Basin
Landmarks	The Abbey School, Church of St Thomas a Becket, Ramsey Abbey Gatehouse, Salem Chapel, Cemetery Chapel, Holy Cross Church at Bury, Rivermill apartments
Memorable areas	The Abbey Greens and pond, the High Street and Great Whyte
Key views	Along High Street and Great Whyte, Wood Lane at Church Green, St Mary's Road to north



The Grade I listed Ramsey Abbey was built as a country house in the early 1600s and modernised in the early 19th century provides a sense of grandeur



Ramsey historic centre looking north with its distinctive Jubilee Clock



The oldest properties in Bury are concentrated on Owls End



Ramsey golf course provides extensive semi-rural green space south of the High Street and north east of Bury

8 Ramsey Spatial Planning Area

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Ramsey Character Area 1: The Historic Centre



High Street contains numerous historic buildings constructed of a wide range of materials



Great Whyte contains an attractive mix of building types with pastel render being a strong feature interspersed amongst buff brick

8.11 The Historic Centre is characterised by the two major routes through Ramsey, the High Street running east to west and Great Whyte running approximately north to south. Great Whyte is an exceptionally wide street having originally been bisected by the navigable High Lode (Bury Brook) with buildings set back either side of the bank. The brook was culverted in the 19th century resulting in the current spacious layout. In contrast the High Street is narrower with a relatively enclosed character. The eastern end of High Street terminates in a view of St Thomas's Church connecting the commercial centre of Ramsey to the Abbey Greens area.

8.12 Great Whyte includes a number of listed buildings and prominent at the southern end of the road is no. 11 which is a two storey mid-19th century house in gault brick with stone dressings occupied until 2016 by Barclays Bank. Also listed is the cast iron clock tower erected in 1888 which forms a key feature in the street scene. The Windmill Bakery at 34 Great Whyte is a listed 17th century property with a late 19th century shopfront. It now forms a distinctive feature in the townscape since completion of a colourful mural on the northern side of the building in April 2019.



Street art mural

8.13 The area has a well-established street pattern enhanced by a high proportion of back of pavement buildings, high density and mixed use. Ramsey's historic and commercial heart contains a wide diversity of building types further highlighting the historic nature of this core area though the variety of individually built properties. Some parts along Great Whyte can be dominated by traffic and car parking which impacts on the quality of the street scene.

8.14 Buildings include 18th century town houses, 18th and 19th century terraced houses, ecclesiastical buildings and Victorian and Edwardian civic buildings (building types 2A, 2E, 6A and 7A). Some incorporate commercial use on the ground floor with a mixture of residential and commercial upper floor uses. The older properties are interspersed by 20th and 21st century redevelopments. The dominant colour palette is of buff brick and pale painted render with a small number of red brick buildings interspersed in the area.



Pale render on Great Whyte

8.15 The area continues to present opportunities for new development through the renovation of redundant properties, improvements to the public realm and reduction of the dominance of car parking on the street scene along Great Whyte.

Development proposals should:

- Protect and conserve the existing historic buildings.
- Promote renovation or redevelopment of redundant buildings.
- Enrich the area by reinforcing its special qualities and local character.
- Promote high standards of design and support creativity in architectural detailing.
- Reduce the visual dominance of parking within the town centre, in particular along the Great Whyte.
- Seek to introduce tree planting or open up sections of the culverted High Lode watercourse in the central space.
- Reflect the existing built forms and local relationship with the street in any new development.
- Support provision of facilities which encourage active modes of transport within and to the Historic Centre.
- Reflect the area's colour palette and building materials of buff brick and pale render to promote a cohesive appearance.

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Ramsey Character Area 2: The Abbey Greens



Church Green is fronted by 18th and 19th century properties of varied design



Ramsey Abbey gatehouse

8.16 Located on the north eastern fringe of Ramsey, the Abbey Greens is a highly distinctive character area centred around Church Green which contains many of Ramsey's landmark buildings and unique historical features. The area contains a high concentration of listed buildings indicative of the quality of its townscape. The original Benedictine Abbey around which development was focused is no longer extant. However, the late 15th century Gatehouse faces onto Abbey Green and Wood Lane. Grade I listed it is a two storey building with an octagonal north turret. The adjoining grade II* listed Precinct Wall from the original abbey forms a strong historic feature running along the eastern and southern sides of Church Green and Abbey Green. The Church of St Thomas à Becket originates from the 12th century in part with the western front and tower forming a focal point from the High Street.



St Thomas à Beckett Church

8.17 Abbey Green and Church Green with its pond are complemented by the extensive churchyard open space and mature lime trees lining Wood Lane creating a village-like appearance in contrast to the more formal planned landscape around Ramsey Abbey and the extensive playing fields associated with Ramsey Abbey College and One Leisure Ramsey.

8.18 Church Green is lined by listed buildings on the northern side. Dating from the 18th and 19th centuries these are mainly constructed from a mixture of red and yellow brick and were originally built to support the Ramsey Abbey estate. Abbey Green is overlooked by both the Almshouses built in 1839 from reused abbey stone decorated by a stone plaque with the Fellowes family crest and the 1848 Elementary School surmounted by a bell turret. Ornate windows, chimneys and brickwork are a strong feature of properties facing both the greens. The historic buildings in combination with the green provide a rich environment with a green and peaceful character.



Former Elementary School

8.19 The extensive grounds and playing fields on the eastern edge associated with Abbey College and One Leisure reinforce the green setting of the eastern part of Ramsey. Ramsey Abbey itself is grade I listed with the main house originating from around 1600 having been built on the site of the Benedictine Monastery with several phases of extensions in the early 19th century. A combination of three and four storeys it is built in ashlar stone and features diamond patterned lead light window ranges on the north side. The use of Ramsey Abbey as a country estate shaped the townscape and landscape of the surrounding land resulting in several 19th century buildings which are now listed such as the former stable and coach house and the walls and gateway surrounding a one acre recently restored Victorian kitchen garden.



Ramsey Abbey

8.20 Beyond the school and leisure centre buildings in the area are predominantly residential with most homes being of Georgian and Victorian date and represent building types 2B and 2C. The colour palette for materials is very locationally specific with clusters of stone, red, gault and yellow brick all present in different parts of the character area.



Church Green pond with variety of historic homes

8.21 The Abbey Greens character area is the most distinctive part of Ramsey and represents a sensitive environment within which there is little potential for development.

Development proposals should:

- Maintain and enhance physical and visual connections to key buildings and landscape views, including protecting views of the Church of St Thomas à Becket from the High Street.
- Protect and conserve the historic buildings and their settings.
- Protect the open, historic character of the existing greens and buildings fronting them.
- Support the retention of the row of lime trees along Wood Lane.
- Reflect the existing built forms and local relationship with the street in any new development.
- Ensure retention of the playing fields associated with Abbey College and One Leisure.
- Reflect the varied building materials and colour palette including buff and dark buff brickwork with slate and brown tile as well as red brick to contribute to the areas distinct character.

8 Ramsey Spatial Planning Area

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Ramsey Character Area 3: High Lode Industrial Area



High Lode links Ramsey into the surrounding Fen landscape with High Lode industrial estate



Former mill building converted to apartments retaining the historic character of the northern end of Great Whyte

8.22 The High Lode industrial area is a large area of degraded land that extends northwards from the junction of Great Whyte and Field Road and extends into the landscape of the Fen Margin. There are extensive views from the Fen Margin landscape to the north due to its flat topography and poor boundary treatment. These contain several groups of windmills with Ramsey wind farm off St Mary's Road being a key focal point in the landscape beyond the character area due to the height of the turbines in the low lying land.



8.23 The area has limited historic character which developed within the context of the disused railway and the High Lode. The area hosts a variety of uses including scrap yards, a plant nursery, industrial buildings, a supermarket and recent housing conversions at Rivermill Apartments (building types include 5A and 5B). As a result of these uses, there is a relatively harsh colour palette ranging from dull grey and brown building materials to yellow and blue signage which highlights the mix of uses and character of the area.

Wind turbines north of St Mary's Road

8.24 Ramsey is experiencing significant growth, a large supermarket opened at the north of the town along St Mary's Road in 2010 adjacent to the High Lode Industrial Estate (building type 5D). Residential developments are also moving forwards on parts of this urban character area on Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 site allocations RA1 and RA2, with construction having started in 2020. Allocation RA3 has yet to gain planning permission with the viability of retaining the Northern Mill which forms a local landmark still to be determined. These will bring significant numbers of new homes into the area and extend the residential elements to complement existing retail and commercial premises.



Tesco superstore

8.25 The area has already undergone significant change and is capable of accommodating further development.

Development proposals should:

- Respond positively to the opportunities available within the area by promoting environmental improvement schemes to restore areas of derelict and vacant land.
- Promote high standards of design and support creativity in architectural detailing.
- Support the provision of renewable energy where visually appropriate and electric vehicle charging points.
- Ensure adequate provision of car parking to promote highway safety.
- Maintain and where possible improve views to the adjoining Fen Margin landscape character area whilst providing localised screening to the northern edge.
- Provide screening to industrial premises through improved planting and fencing to site boundaries.
- Seek improved pedestrian and cycle linkages into the Historic Centre and to local services.

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Ramsey Character Area 4: Northern Ramsey



Small, bay fronted villas set back off the pavement form part of the character of this established residential area



Substantial semi-detached homes on Blenheim Road built in 1924 with bay windows and mock timber framing

8.26 The Northern Ramsey character area is an established residential area to the north west of the Historic Centre to which it is closely linked. It forms an area of older housing interspersed with a small amount of post-war and modern development. Older elements of the area and those in closer proximity to the Historic Centre contain more mixed uses including a garage, primary schools and public car parking.

8.27 There is a diverse range of building types including Victorian and Edwardian villas and 19th Century terraced housing representing building types 2A and 2B. These typically are located directly on to the back of the pavement or have small front gardens bounded by walls and hedges. Most older properties in the area are concentrated along Blenheim Road, Station Road and Whytefield Road with a small number extending out on Star Lane and Princes Lane. These streets have a strong linear pattern, with housing to both sides of the road creating a well defined street frontage with few gaps. The predominant building material is buff brick often complemented by slate roofs.



Victorian villa on Whytefield Road

8.28 Within and extending this linear pattern is a mixture of inter-war housing and more modern infill developments. Some substantial properties were built during the 1920s which strongly reflect the building features of the time with two storey bay windows to the front and mostly in semi-detached format. A range of inter-war homes of building type 3b are found in the area of which brick colours are varied with some rendered properties adding colour to the street scene. The converted former Police Station on Blenheim Road provides a feature building of this era.



Converted Police Station on Blenheim Road

8.29 Mid and late 20th century homes are also interspersed amongst the area, of types 3D and 3E. These are typically found in smaller groups having often been built on infill plots situated between the linear street pattern established by the older properties. Some extend the area out towards the adjoining Central Claylands landscape such as those at the northern end of Princes Street.

8.30 The Hankins Car Sales garage on Whytefield Road is allocated through the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 for approximately 40 homes. Redevelopment of this site will need to be sensitive to its conservation area location and will consolidate the residential nature of the street. A previously developed site at 94 Great Whyte is also allocated for residential development in close proximity to the services and facilities of the town centre.

- 8.31** This is a residential area with a strong sense of character and a mix of building types and ages. There is potential for development through building extensions and urban infill.

Development proposals should:

- Respond positively to the specific opportunities available for infill redevelopment
- Maintain and enhance physical and visual connections to the Historic Centre, landscape views and promote permeability
- Reflect the dominant building pattern of terraces and semi-detached homes and the relationship with the street in the immediate area.
- Ensure adequate provision of car parking to reduce the impact on the street scene of on-street parking.
- Reflect the dominant buff brick and pale render colour palette.
- Support provision of renewable energy where visually appropriate.
- Protect existing trees where they contribute to the character of the street scene and seek to increase vegetation cover where space and service restrictions permit.

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Ramsey Character Area 5: Westfield Road and The Avenues



Large semi-detached homes with hipped roofs and generous gardens typify Westfield Road



The post-war semi-detached homes create a very regular pattern of development along West Avenue

8.32 Although homes in this area were constructed in both the interwar and immediately post World War II periods they have strong unifying characteristics. The majority of homes are generously sized semi-detached properties with substantial rear gardens some of which are over 40m in depth.

8.33 The Avenue represents the oldest part of this area with the first homes built in the 1920s. Each pair has a wide frontage and features hipped roofs. The flat fronted homes typically have roofs that extend to ground floor level at either end. Others have paired end gables, some protruding forward about one metre from the central section of the properties. Almost all are finished in pale painted render. Gaps between the pairs of homes are relatively narrow with parking confined to front gardens or on-street.



Large gables feature on homes in The Avenue

8.34 West Avenue has very regular spacing and layout, again of semi-detached homes but brick built in the 1950s. Wider gaps between properties than in the earlier homes has facilitated introduction of garages and parking spaces between many homes. Medium depth front gardens are typical of the area with strong frontage building lines being clearly apparent. Low hedges separate many homes from the relatively narrow pavements.

8.35 Accessed off Field Road, Westfield Road contains homes built in an identical style to those in The Avenue although not constructed until immediately post-war. A small cluster on the south eastern limb of Westfield Road are also rendered. However, the distinguishing feature of the majority of Westfield Road is that although the same style the homes are brick finished instead. The central part of the oval formed by Westfield Road is occupied by a cluster of bungalows accessed off North and South Walks providing some diversity in the size and type of properties within the area. Allen Road contains a mixture of the same house design and layout as found in Westfield Road along with a cluster of mid-century semi-detached homes all in red brick. Further diversity is provided through a small single storey residential care home built in yellow brick.



Bungalows on Westfield Road

8.36 This is a very distinctive character area with some scope for extensions and redevelopment of existing properties.

Development proposals should:

- Enrich the area by reinforcing its special qualities and acknowledging its strong local character
- Reflect the existing building materials and colour palette of red brick and pale render according to the immediate surroundings.
- Reflect the existing built forms and relationship with the street to maintain the characteristic regular layout.
- Protect and reinforce the mature boundary trees, particularly those between Allen Road and the adjoining Fen margin landscape character area and those to the north east of The Avenue providing separation to homes as St Thomas Park (Wagstaffe Close).
- Ensure adequate provision of car parking to reduce the impact on the street scene of on-street parking.
- Support provision of renewable energy where visually appropriate.

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Ramsey Character Area 6: North Eastern Ramsey



The area has a substantial number of spaciouly laid out mid-20th century bungalows such as this in Abbey Fields



Newtown Road Victorian house

8.37 The western edges of this area adjoin the Historic Centre with Newtown Road having clear linkages through to premises on the Great Whyte. Older properties within this area are mainly found on Newtown Road and New Road comprising small numbers of 19th century homes of building types 2A and 2B. The area is almost all residential in use now with modern infill developments occupying former industrial sites. Buildings have a variable relationship to the street frontage with medium depth front gardens being predominant. A diversity of styles and types add complexity to the townscape with detached, semi-detached and terraced homes along with an apartment block all present representing building types 3B and 3D. Most properties are brick with a varied colour palette. The Church of the Sacred Heart and its adjoining car park present a distinct break in the residential nature of Newtown Road.



Church of the Sacred Heart

8.38 The majority of this character area is focused off Mill Lane and was predominantly built in the 1960s through to the 1980s. In the south-western corner of the area Mill House provides a cluster of low level retirement apartments. Other than these, properties include a substantial number of bungalows and family homes. Turvers Lane and Millfields are dominated by homes of building type 3D. Turvers Lane is spaciouly laid out with areas of grass and mature trees adding softness to the street scene.



Spacious layouts in Turvers Lane

8.39 The eastern edge of the character area contains a small group of late 20th century homes of type 3E. All detached homes these are constructed in pale brick with render used to provide decorative features. Single and double garages are situated to the sides of homes giving wide plots with front gardens typically deep enough to at least park one car. Trees are incorporated into front gardens which directly adjoin the pavements.

8.40 Much of this area has a strong relationship with the adjoining Fen Margin landscape character area with views out to trees and the wider landscape being found in many locations. The area contains two extensive green spaces which contribute to its edge of settlement context. The Tom Jones Memorial playing fields include children's play equipment and sports fields to the east of Mill Lane. The second, larger green space is that of Ramsey Cemetery off Wood Lane. This also contains the character area's only two listed buildings. The chapel and mortuary within the cemetery has an octagonal belfry and spire providing a local landmark although there are only limited long distance views to it, while the Tudor Gothic lodge building from 1865 abuts Wood Lane.



Tom Jones memorial playing field

8.41 This is a tightly developed character area with limited scope for further development other than extensions and redevelopment of existing properties.

Development proposals should:

- Enrich the varied character of the area by responding to the specific opportunities available.
- Reflect the existing built forms and relationship with the street and reinforce the pattern of integrated areas of green space.
- Ensure adequate provision of car parking to ensure new properties do not create a detrimental impact on the street scene from on street parking
- Maintain views to the existing extensive green spaces and the wider Fen margin Landscape Character Area.
- Support provision of renewable energy where visually appropriate.
- Protect the existing green spaces and mature trees within and adjoining the character area and promote improvements to key areas for public access, recreation and nature conservation.

8 Ramsey Spatial Planning Area

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Ramsey Character Area 7: Hollow Lane



At the south eastern end of Hollow Lane gardens adjoin grass verges with no pavement



Detached homes with wide, deep plots typify this area

8.42 The Hollow Lane character area interacts closely with the Abbey Greens area to the north and the Fen Margin landscape character area to the south. Although small it has a distinctive character compared to the adjoining areas. Hollow Lane has a low density layout with homes closest to the Abbey Greens end of the road extending east to Booths Hill dating from the early to mid 20th century and those further east being predominantly of 1960s and 1970s construction. All are united in having substantial front gardens with homes being well set back from the road with gardens deeper towards the eastern end of the area. Grass verges are found along most of Hollow Lane. Towards the eastern end pavement is only located on the northern side of the road with homes on the southern side being commonly separated from the road by hedges and grass verge.

8.43 The greatest continuity of design and materials is found at the northern end of the road with dark red brick detached and semi-detached homes dominating with limited use of pale rendering. Roofs are plain tiles, bay windows and arch doorways are frequently found decorative features. Building types present are 3B and 3D. Car parking is predominantly to the side of houses with garages often at the end of long driveways which run the depth of the house in to the rear garden. This style of building extends to Abbey Road which links Hollow Lane north to where the area transitions into the green spaces associated with Ramsey Abbey and the playing fields of Abbey College and One Leisure.



Abbey Road

8.44 Booth's Hill stands on the northern side of Hollow Lane and forms a distinct break in the townscape. This open space is a scheduled monument comprising a small 12th century motte within a moat adapted to incorporate a 19th century ice house. Largely covered in trees it contributes to the semi-rural character that increases further east along Hollow Lane. Mature trees within gardens add to the green, spacious feel of the area and contribute to separating this character area from those adjoining it.



Booth's Hill

8.45 From the junction with Booth's Hill and Abbey Road Hollow Lane turns east and its character becomes more rural. Along this length it contains many individually designed properties leading a great variety of styles and sizes. Front gardens become increasingly deep and house types are dominated by 3D with a very few 3E. Building materials include a wide range of brick colours with pale, red and dark brown bricks all used along with limited use of rendering and timber cladding as decorative features. Mature trees are found throughout this part of Hollow Lane providing substantial screening of many properties from the road. At the eastern end the character area blends into the adjoining Fen Margins landscape character area where trees continue along the northern side of the lane into the countryside and wide views open up to the south.



Hollow Lane blends into the Fen Margins

8.46 Hollow Lane is a small established character area offering little potential for further growth beyond extensions and redevelopment of existing homes.

Development proposals should:

- Enrich the area by reinforcing its distinctive local character.
- Promote high standards of design and support creativity in architectural detailing.
- Reflect the existing built forms in the immediate vicinity to maintain the spacing of properties.
- Reflect the relationship with the street and retain the existing distinctive deep front gardens of many plots within the area.
- Protect the existing grass verges.
- Ensure adequate provision of car parking within any development plot to protect the street scene.
- Maintain and where possible improve views to Ramsey Abbey and Booth's Hill within the character area and out to the adjoining Fen Margin landscape character area particularly along the southern edge.
- Protect and add to the existing trees where these contribute to the character of the street scene.
- Promote opportunities for the enhancement of Booth's Hill to provide increased opportunities for wildlife and nature conservation initiatives.
- Support provision of facilities which encourage active modes of travel such as cycling.
- Support the retention of existing leisure, recreational and community facilities and opportunities for their expansion or improvement.

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Ramsey Character Area 8: Old Station Road



Signal Road 3 storey modern homes



Fairfield Drive was the first redevelopment within the character area including mainly semi-detached and Q homes

8.47 The first relatively small group within this area is concentrated around Old Station Road and includes homes built from the 1980s to the early 21st century representing building types 3E and 3F. Formerly an industrial area, this has been largely redeveloped for housing now with a scientific instrument manufacturer remaining on the eastern edge of the area, a repair garage and a substantial telephone exchange by the junction with Bury Road.

8.48 Fairfields Drive and its associated culs-de-sac were the first area redeveloped for housing. Constructed in a mixture of red and yellow brick with pantile roofs the properties are mostly arranged as Q-homes with separate garage blocs or semi-detached homes. The Q-homes are mostly surrounded by high walls or fencing closing them off from the street scene. Car parking and garaging are a relatively dominant feature in this section. A small group of detached homes on the eastern edge with tall mature trees behind lend greenery to the character area.

8.49 Redevolutions fronting Old Station Road are the most recent forming building type 3F. Two distinct clusters exist. One, centred on Armadale Court, comprises two storey apartments and two pairs of three storey semi-detached homes. Constructed in pale brick with render and timber cladding detailing these have distinctive grey window frames and a very cohesive appearance. Properties are separated from the pavement by hedging and a very shallow landscaping strip. Parking is provided in the form of a rear parking court. Of similar styling but without the grey window frames, Banks Court provides two storey homes in a variety of arrangements. Front gardens are again very shallow with parking on street in purpose designed parking bays.



8.50 The landscaped entrance to the manufacturing unit forms a distinct, green break in the streetscape separating the second cluster of 21st century homes situated at the southern end of the area, representing building type 3F. These comprise a range of two to three storey homes laid out in a variety of forms with one apartment building adding to the mix. Almost entirely constructed of pale brick some have rendered or part timber cladding finishes with occasional red brick properties adding to the colour palette. Efficient use of land is made by use of private drives to incorporate some homes set to the rear of others. Front gardens are shallow with some variety in depth responding to the street



Pirate Park provides local play opportunities

geometry, some immediately adjoin the pavement whilst the southern part of the area has shared use access surfaces. Rear gardens vary from around 8 to 15m with garages and parking typically arranged to the rear of homes either accessed by a short service road or underneath coach-house properties to a parking court. A well landscaped green with an equipped play area connects the area to mature trees in the adjoining Southern Green Fringe character area.

- 8.51** This is a small character area based on redevelopment of industrial uses where some scope remains to continue this.

Development proposals should:

- Reflect the existing materials and colour palette to reinforce the more cohesive appearance of the more recent elements of the area.
- Maintain and enhance physical and visual connections to the adjoining Southern Green Fringe landscape character area and the Historic Centre.
- Promote high standards of design and support creativity in architectural detailing.
- Ensure adequate provision of car parking to reduce the impact on the street scene of on-street parking.
- Retain the existing tree belt to the eastern edge of the area.
- Support provision of renewable energy where visually appropriate.
- Support opportunities to improve the gateway between Old Station Road and Bury Road.

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Ramsey Character Area 9: Western Ramsey



Wagstaffe Close in the St Thomas Park development offers a range of sizes and types of homes



Homes in Dayhorse Road include mock Tudor detailing and a mixture of brick colours

8.52 The western edge of Ramsey contains development primarily from the late 1960s onwards and includes land being developed as of 2021. Although building designs vary depending on date of construction the area is unified by its dominance by detached houses with front and rear gardens and on-plot parking arrangements.

8.53 Working from north to south through the character there are five sub-groups of development.

8.54 The first homes at St Thomas Park off Field Road were built during 2018 and the estate was completed in 2020. This was allocated in Huntingdonshire's Local Plan of 2036 as site RA4. This sub-group contains a mixture of 1 and 2 bedroom apartments in small three storey blocks and two storey 3 and 4 bedroom homes. The colour palette is dominated by dark buff bricks and grey roofs and feature window frames. Pale rendering is used to add detailing and diversity. The building type is wholly 3F. Homes have shallow front gardens with a mixture of garages and on-street parking bays integrated into the scheme. A 35m tree belt defines the north-western edge of the area separating it from the adjoining Central Claylands landscape.



Wagstaffe Close, St Thomas Park

8.55 Park Road and the north-western section of The Malting contain the oldest group of properties in this area being a small cluster of type 3D mid 20th century homes. Canberra Court is a small cluster of type 3E higher density homes arranged as 3 storey apartments, and two storeys semi-detached and short terraces of houses. Built in pale brick they feature red brick detailing with projecting front porches with concrete pantiles forming a strong design feature. Again of type 3D, mainly detached homes on Queen's Walk and Fellowes Drive maximise the benefits of their outlook onto a large open recreation ground which serves the wider area. The remainder of the sub-group contains semi-detached and short terraces of homes of type 3D finished with coloured render panels and a small number of detached bungalows and houses. A distinctive element of this section is the presence of grass verges separating pavements from the road in most instances and/ or deeper front gardens.



King George V playing field, Fellowes Drive

- 8.56** East of Westfield Drive the majority of The Malting forms a cohesive estate of type 3E homes with a series of culs-de-sac leading off The Malting. The colour palette is diverse with a range of buff, brown and red bricks used with pantile roofs throughout. Detailing is provided through use of render, gable windows and a limited use of mock-Tudor panels. The density is relatively low and areas of amenity green space are dispersed through this sub-group where many homes have established planting to front gardens providing a sense of greenery. Houses are primarily detached with a wide variety of arrangements to the road frontage particularly within the culs-de-sac reflecting their accessibility to the road. Garages are frequently found to the side of homes with the layout of housing giving some extensive lengths of boundary walls and fences immediately adjoining the pavement.
- 8.57** The most recent extension to this character area is Ramsey Park which started construction in 2021 providing a range of 3 to 5 bedroom homes. Situated either side of Biggin Lane this extends to the west of the town taking the built limits further into the landscape of the Central Claylands. This is designed with homes ranging from 1 to 5 bedrooms in a wide variety of formats including bungalows, semi-detached and detached properties in buff and red brick with red, brown and grey roof tiles.
- 8.58** This is an expanding residential area with new growth being integrated and some potential for redevelopment within older areas.

Development proposals should:

- Ensure that development responds positively to the specific opportunities available.
- Reflect the existing built forms and relationship with the street of the immediate locality.
- Protect the existing grass verges and provide additional large scale planting where space and services permit.
- Ensure adequate provision of car parking to reduce the impact on the street scene of on-street parking.
- Maintain and where possible enhance views to the surrounding Central Claylands Landscape Character Area.
- Promote opportunities for enhanced landscape screening on the eastern edge of the area to provide increased opportunities for wildlife and nature conservation initiatives to enhance the area's ecological value.
- Protect existing trees where they contribute to the character of the street scene.
- Support the retention of existing recreational facilities and spaces and opportunities for their enhancement.
- Support provision of facilities which encourage active modes of transport such as cycling.
- Support provision of renewable energy where visually appropriate.

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Ramsey Character Area 10: Biggin Lane and Bury Road



Trees form the dominant frontage onto Biggin Lane



Bury Road is fronted by hedges and mature trees

8.59 Biggin Lane and Bury Road are an exceptionally low density character area comprised almost entirely of detached houses set in substantial plots fronting onto long established routes. Biggin Lane brings a green corridor in from the west. Bury Road formed the original link between Ramsey and Bury with development now almost continuous along this route except for one small field on the eastern side of the road between White Arches and Low Bury which provides an important link through the Southern Green Fringe and out to the Fen Margins landscape character area.

8.60 Biggin Lane is flanked by individually designed detached homes set in extensive gardens with mature landscaping forming a spacious, leafy character. Building types 2B, 3B and 3D dominate in this character area with the individual designs using a wide range of building materials. Homes on the northern side of the road are only separated from it by grass verge and hedges with a pavement being located only on the southern side.



North side of Biggin Lane

8.61 The frontage of Bury Road is dominated by mature trees and hedges with many properties only visible through gaps for driveways. As a major route the road is relatively wide with pavements on both sides at the northern end replaced by grass verges on the eastern side as the road approaches Bury. Other than two pairs of semi-detached homes all properties are detached. A small number of homes date from the mid to late 19th century representing building type 2B. Westward House is a fine example of a Victorian grand house, building type 2E, set in a 2 acre plot just north of the junction with Biggin Lane. The Red House is a large villa of type 2B converted to a care home with a large modern block to the rear which introduces some employment use into the area.

8.62 The majority of properties on Bury Road are building types 3B and 3B with occasional older properties from type 2B. Large driveways, often with access gates, are a distinctive feature of this area. Close to the junction with Upwood Road is a small commercial cluster focused on a petrol station with a large open forecourt that introduces a small, incongruous cluster of bright colours and larger scale buildings into the area's townscape.

8.63 This is an established residential area where further development opportunities are very limited.

Development proposals should:

- Enrich the area by reinforcing its special qualities and acknowledging its strong, well treed character.
- Reflect the existing built form and relationship with the street.
- Promote high standards of design and support creativity in architectural detailing.
- Ensure adequate car parking to reduce the impact on the street scene of on-street parking.
- Protect and reinforce existing trees where they contribute to the character of the street scene.
- Promote improved pedestrian and cycle links to the Historic Centre and local services and facilities.

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Ramsey Character Area 11: Southern Green Fringe



Ramsey golf course provides a green setting to much of the east and south of Ramsey



High Lode watercourse flows through the whole area surrounded by open space

- 8.64** This large character area is dominated by open space which abuts the Fen Margin landscape character area to the east. It is almost entirely occupied by Ramsey Golf Course and as such is distinct from the surrounding more natural or agriculturally shaped landscape character area. There is also a small pocket of agricultural land linking the area into Bury Road. The Southern Green Fringe links Ramsey with Bury and is important in providing a landscape setting to the town, particularly when approached from the east. The Golf course crosses the B1040 presenting low hedges to this element of the streetscape backed by extensive areas of grass and mature trees.
- 8.65** A watercourse known as High Lode or Bury Brook is a key influence on the character of the area as well as mature tree lines and hedgerows which obscure views to housing, reduce the impact of traffic noise and further enforce the green character of the area. High Lode is a very distinctive feature of Ramsey connecting from south to north of the town between this Southern Green Fringe area, culverted underground through the Historic Centre and out in the open again at the High Lode Industrial character area. Building materials are limited within the area with grass, sand and water forming the majority of the surfacing.
- 8.66** This is a distinctive area with an open character providing the eastern landscape setting to both Ramsey and Bury.

Development proposals should:

- Protect important trees which function as a green backdrop to the street scene of many other character areas.
- Maintain the green, open character of the area.
- Maintain and enhance visual connections to key landmarks from the public rights of way that cross the area.
- Promote opportunities for the enhancement of Bury Brook (High Lode) and the extensive Ramsey golf course to provide increased opportunities for wildlife and nature conservation initiatives to enhance the area's biodiversity value.

Ramsey Character Area 12: Bury - Owls End area



Former RAF housing at Valiant Square has a regular layout with extensive grassed frontages and many mature trees



The mature trees such as those in Brookfield Way soften the view along many roads in Bury

8.67 Bury - Owls End area is predominantly residential with a limited range of local services including convenience shop, primary school and village hall all situated towards the northern end of this area around The Cross and Owls End itself. The junction of High Street, Warboys Road and Upwood Road forms an extensive area of road surface and parking dominating the immediate area of this entrance to the village. The Upwood Road junction is also wide but the contiguous development on the western side, along with the large scale building of the White Lion public house helps to blend the townscape into the adjoining character areas.



Bury Stores at The Cross

8.68 Bury - Owls End area retains three 16th-17th century listed timber framed cottages finished mostly in render with some brickwork. Roofs are thatched on all with a variety of heights and hipped sections making these focal points in the immediate street scene. These all represent building type 1B and have a black and white colour palette.



Julian's, Owls End originates from the early 17th century

8.69 The majority of homes in Bury date from the 1950s onward representing building type 3D and 3E with a very few interwar properties of type 3B. Older properties tend to be located around the northern part of the area. Homes are generally spaciouly laid out with hedges and trees prominent in many street frontages. Housing forms vary with a high proportion of detached houses but some semi-detached houses and bungalows being interspersed throughout the area. Densities vary across clusters of housing with a group of type 3D homes between Upwood Road and Tunkers Lane being particularly low density as is Redebourne Lane. Grass verges are rare in this character area with front gardens typically immediately adjoining the pavement. Most homes have parking or garages within their plot.

8.70 The southern end of Tunkers Lane forms a particularly distinctive element of the local street scene comprising a single track route that appears like a country lane despite being faced by homes the entirety of the northern side and leading in a further distinctive enclave of housing the former RAF housing around Valiant Square. This has a very regular layout and typical house types from



Tunkers Lane

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military bases across the district. The materials palette for Bury - Owls End area is dominated by brick with concrete pantile roofs being widely found. Colours vary extensively with pale, buff, red and brown bricks being found in local clusters.

8.71 The area will evolve further with the [Huntingdonshire Local Plan](#) allocating site RA7 for approximately 90 homes to the east of Valiant Square integrating 21st century design principles into the area. It is not included in the current character area but once completed will likely result in a boundary amendment.

8.72 This is an established residential area with some scope for further development.

Development proposals should:

- Protect and conserve the historic buildings located along High Street and Owls End.
- Protect and reinforce the variety of built forms, building materials, colour palettes and relationships with the street which characterise the evolution of individual sections of the villages.
- Promote high standards of design and support creativity in architectural detailing.
- Retain the mature trees and hedges which characterise many parts of the area and reinforce this through new planting.
- Protect grass verges where they exist and provide additional planting where space and services permit.
- Ensure adequate provision of car parking to reduce the impact on the street scene of on-street parking.
- Conserve the existing village character through protection of local services and facilities.
- Maintain and enhance physical and visual connections to the Southern Green Fringe character area.
- Support provision of renewable energy where visually appropriate.
- Support provision of facilities which encourage active modes of travel such as cycling and aid connections into services and facilities within Ramsey.

Ramsey Character Area 13: RAF Upwood



Development of new homes on the former RAF Upwood clinic started in 2019



RAF Upwood contains a wide range of former military buildings, mostly of utilitarian architecture, vandalism and decay are damaging the historic character of the site

8.73 RAF Upwood is located at the south western fringe of Bury on elevated land and forms an extensive character area. Fencing and dereliction distinguish the area from the adjoining village and there are only limited views into the airfield due to the screening effect of boundary vegetation. There are numerous Tree Preservation Orders on site. Due to the nature of the site's previous use, the area is heavily tarmacked with many redundant buildings falling under building type T8 with a material and colour palette of grey, red and buff brick, concrete render, brown steel cladding to roofs. To the west the airfield is visually open to the landscape of the Central Claylands. The site is included in the [Huntingdonshire Local Plan](#) as RA8 for a mixed use redevelopment for approximately 450 homes, 2ha of employment land and supporting community facilities. These will create diversity in design integrating 21st century design principles whilst working to retain key elements of the military character and history of the site within the design and be supported by green infrastructure that links into existing landscaping.

8.74 A distinct area of former RAF housing is found around Canberra Road in the south western section of the character area which is the only built up part of RAF Upwood actually situated in Upwood parish. This comprises a mixture of semi-detached and short terraces of homes and comprise building types 3C and 3D. The layout is very regular with consistent spacing between properties which are well set back from the road frontages with wide grass verges continuing mature trees being a strong characteristic of the area. The areas of semi-detached homes typically have parking bays contained within wide grass verges to the fronts of properties. Other homes are arranged in an Radburn-style layout fronting onto footpaths and grassed open space, supplemented with trees and public seating areas. Rear accesses are typically enclosed by high fencing and wheeled bins. Garaging for these homes is concentrated in a large strip to the north of the homes. Building materials throughout the area are dominated by red and brown brick with brown concrete pantile roofs. Adjacent to these homes is Upwoodhill House a substantial building set in a large open area but with limited visibility from Ramsey Road.



Canberra Road

8.75 The former RAF Clinic started redevelopment in 2019 as De Havilland Gardens with a mixture of semi-detached and detached homes predominantly in red brick with grey plain tile roofs set behind shallow front gardens.

8.76 The redundant airfield offers opportunities for significant redevelopment of this character area.

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Development proposals should:

- Ensure that development positively responds to the large scale opportunity available.
- Enriches the area by reflecting elements of the military history and character of the site.
- Enhances physical and visual connections to the immediately adjoining former RAF housing, the main community of Bury and to the adjoining Central Claylands landscape character area.
- Promote the retention of features of high significance to military history.
- Support provision of renewable energy where visually appropriate.
- Enhance the visual qualities of the area by incorporating a significant landscaping scheme including large scale tree planting.
- Promote high standards of design and support creativity in architectural detailing.
- Protect existing mature trees where they provide screening between different uses or add to the character of the area.
- Improve pedestrian and cycle links within the site, to Bury village and into Ramsey town centre where feasible.
- Support initiatives for the creation of additional services, community facilities, leisure and recreational opportunities within the area.

Ramsey Character Area 14: Bury - Holy Cross area



Hill Estate homes are laid out in a regular pattern, well spaced and set back from the road



Set high above Warboys Road Holy Cross Church dominates views into this part of the village

8.77 Holy Cross Church is separated from the main village by the High Lode Bury Brook) watercourse and parts of Ramsey golf course where it crosses the B1040. The rising landform heading eastwards places Holy Cross Church on a high point which allows long distance views over the Fen Margins landscape character area and the townscape of the remainder of Bury and southern parts of Ramsey. Holy Cross Church is grade I listed; parts date back to the 12th century with the mid-13th century rubblestone tower marking a focal point in the townscape particularly on the approach from the west. The large grassed churchyard is substantially raised above the height of the adjoining pavement with its retaining brick wall forming a dominant feature in the townscape.

8.78 Immediately around the church on both sides of High Street are a small number of large detached homes set well back from the road in extensive plots. The two storey Manor House is grade II listed, dating from around 1600, it was built of rubblestone, with part timber-framing and a plain tile roof. Other properties are mostly post 1950 representing building type 3D but of individual designs and well screened from the road frontage by high hedges and trees. A small group of cottages from building type 2A closely front the road next to the listed coursed stone Bury Bridge on the western edge of the character area.



View down to High Lode

8.79 East of Holy Cross Church, Meadow Lane and Hill Estate provide a cluster of residential properties. These are predominantly semi-detached in form and contain a high proportion of bungalows. Homes are typically well set back from the road with hedges fronting many pavements. Building types include 3A, 3B and 3D. Homes are finished in either red brick or rendered in cream or other pastel shades. The Glebe comprises entirely bungalows with substantial areas of grass and mature trees forming a central feature to the cul-de-sac. This area has a strong relationship with the surrounding landscape of the Fen Margin to the north and the Central Claylands to the south.

8.80 This area has limited opportunities for development, primarily extensions and redevelopment.

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Development proposals should:

- Maintain and enhance visual connections to the spire of Holy Cross Church.
- Reflect the existing materials and colour palette of predominantly yellow and gault brick and pale render.
- Reflect the existing built forms and relationship with the street.
- Protect and conserve the setting of Holy Cross Church and the Manor House.
- Protect existing trees where they form a backdrop to development and provide screening from the adjoining Fen margin Landscape Character Area.
- Maintain and improve where possible views to High Lode (Bury Brook) and the Southern Green Fringe character area.

9 Buckden Key Service Centre

9.1 Buckden is located along the A1 approximately 5 miles south of Huntingdon and 3 miles south of Brampton.

Landscape Character

9.2 Buckden village is situated on the eastern edge of the Southern Wolds Landscape Character Area, and the landscape around the village contains features associated with this character area, including gently undulating topography, large arable fields, trees, hedgerows and significant modern influences such as the A1 and associated development. Exceptions are the wooded stream which runs from the south-east corner of the village towards the water recycling centre along Leaden's Lane. Land to the east of the village lies on the edge of the Ouse Valley Landscape Character Area and there are views out across the valley, including views of gravel workings, wetland vegetation and Buckden marina from the eastern edge of the village.

9.3 The agricultural landscape to the south provides a rural fringe to the village which separates the village from the hamlet of Stirtloe and can be seen from Stirtloe Lane. Beyond Stirtloe Lane, the landscape is dominated by Stirtloe Park which is a designed landscape associated with Stirtloe House and is of high visual quality, containing mature specimen trees and copses. Ridge and furrow earthworks have been preserved within the parkland.

9.4 To the west of the A1 the fields are generally smaller, and are enclosed by hedgerows and trees. The smaller scale and the presence of vegetation gives the area a more intimate and varied character and this landscape is of inherently high quality.

Edges and Visual Prominence

9.5 The parish boundary extends eastwards to the River Great Ouse and includes Buckden Marina. The village itself is situated on higher ground, approximately 1.5 miles to the west of the river. The siting of the village was for both flooding and defensive reasons, and it has remained above the 20 metre contour. As a result, the church spire is prominent in views from a considerable distance and the village is particularly visible from the higher land to the west, including the approach on the B661.

9.6 The village is also visible from the A1, particularly when approaching from the south. The A1 forms an abrupt and busy western edge to the village and the gardens of houses within the historic core directly adjoin the southbound carriageway. To the south west, the village edge is defined by the rear gardens of modern housing and although vegetation within gardens provides a degree of screening, in general the modern edges are visible from surrounding roads and footpaths.

Townscape Character

9.7 The village has a nucleated form with a total of nine character areas have been identified for the village (Figure 9.1 and can be viewed on the [interactive map](#)). The historic core of the village, which is a designated conservation area, is centred around Buckden Towers (formerly Buckden Palace) with its high walls and gatehouse. The remaining Tudor style brick buildings of Buckden Towers are adjacent to St Mary's Church and set in open landscaped grounds. In combination, these features create a distinctive centre to the settlement which is of high architectural quality and has a strong sense of place. The historic core extends to the west of the church where the village edge is now defined by the A1. The former Great North Road (now the High Street) is lined by many Georgian brick buildings, including inns remaining from its days as a coaching stop.

9.8 Growth during the 19th century was limited as the expanding railway network bypassed the village depriving it of trade. However, some Victorian linear development took place along the roads leading out of the historic core. The village saw major development during the second half of the 20th century, with large residential estates built to the north, east and south of the historic core. Nevertheless, despite this Buckden has retained its nucleated form. 21st century development is expanding the village further south.

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- 9.9** Further south of the village beyond Stirtloe Lane lies Stirtloe House and Park, landscaped in an 18th century parkland style. To the north west is the small hamlet of Hardwick connected via a pedestrian underpass under the A1. Perry Road also forms a small linear development to the west of the A1. These areas and have a close association with the countryside and the landscape of the Southern Wolds.

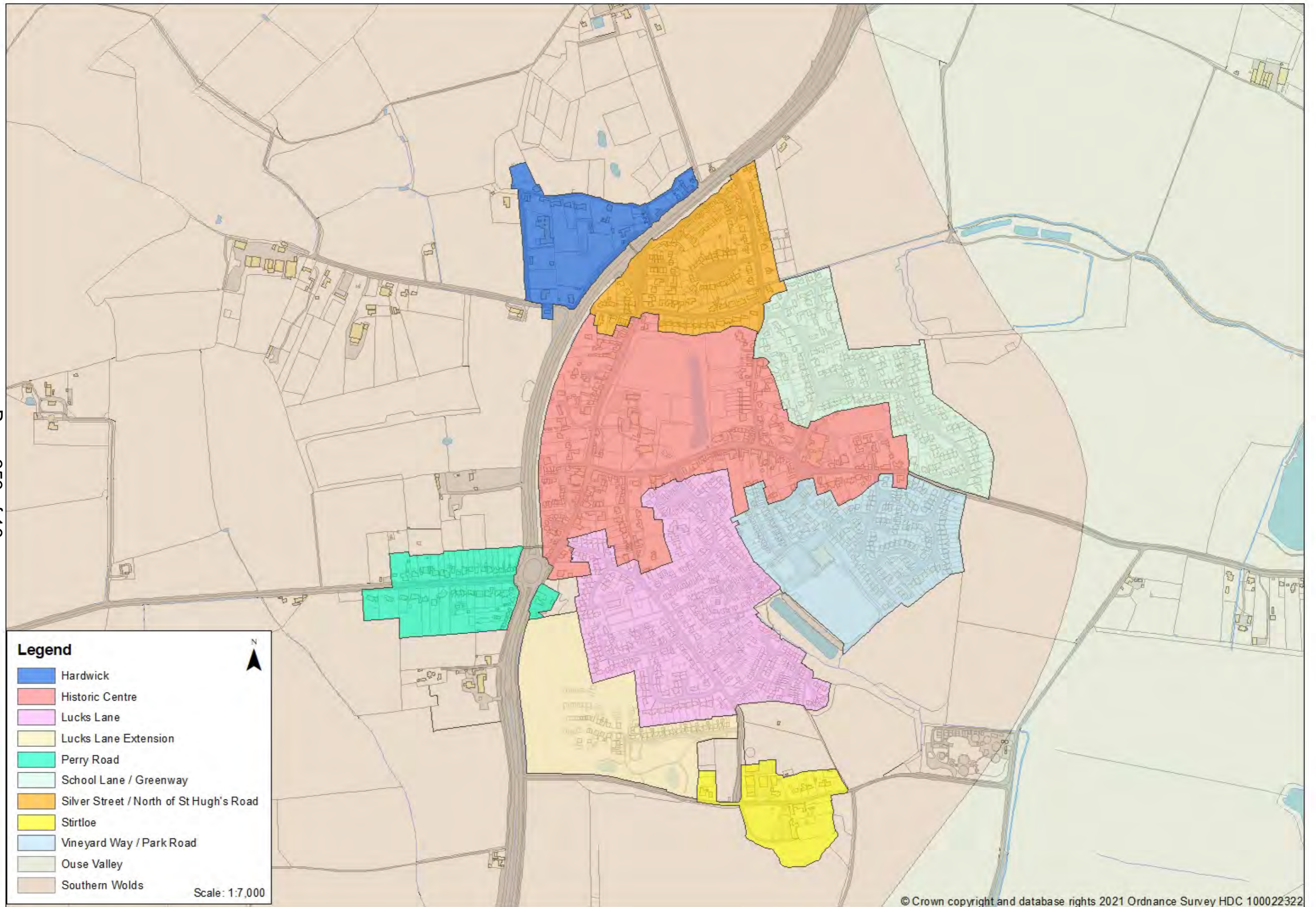


Figure 9.1 Buckden Character Areas

Key Features

Historic route	The High Street (formerly the Great North Road) and Church Street
Historic gateway	The High Street leading onto Church Street
Landmarks	Buckden Towers, St Mary's Church and spire, former coaching inns along the High Street and Stirtloe House
Memorable areas	Buckden Towers and grounds, St Mary's Church, the High Street
Key views	Views to the Ouse Valley to the east including Buckden Marina



Buckden Towers and St Mary's Church are key local landmarks and forms the centre of Buckden's rich historic centre.



View across the Ouse Valley Landscape Character Area from Stirtloe Lane. The open landscape to the east of the village frames the village and provides a distinct rural setting with public rights of way encouraging its enjoyment and connecting the village to neighbouring communities in Diddington and the Offords.



Buckden roundabout along the A1 forms a strong western edge to the village and separates Perry Road and Hardwick from the rest of the village with pedestrian access via two underpasses.



Aragon Close properties surrounding by open space and some tree planting. This is a common feature throughout the extensive residential aspects of the village although the design of houses vary

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Buckden Character Area 1: The Historic Centre



Buckden Towers



Georgian properties, especially those constructed of red brick, are a key feature of the historic centre creating a rich sense of place to the village.

9.10 The historic centre predominately follows the outline of the Buckden Conservation Area, focusing around Buckden Palace (Towers) and St Mary's Church and extending along the High Street, Church Street, Lucks Lane, Silver Street and Mill Road. The historic core is centred around Buckden Towers and St Mary's Church located at the junction of the High Street and Church Street which form the two principal roads in the village's street pattern. The importance of the route as a national highway between London and Edinburgh is shown in the width of the High Street. The decline of the coaching routes following the arrival of the railway network greatly impacted the village. As traffic volume increased along the Great North Road, an A1 bypass to the west of the village was installed with the Great North Road now forming the High Street with several shops and pubs.



The George and Old Forge, High Street

9.11 Buckden Towers (Palace) has a mixture of grade II, I and II* listed buildings within its grounds, the site is also a Scheduled Monument. It was the residence of successive Bishops of Lincoln from the 12th century to 1842. The palace was largely rebuilt during the 15th century comprising four storeys with a great hall, chapel and chamber. The grounds had an inner walled and moated enclosure, great tower, inner gatehouse and outbuildings. Parts were later demolished in the 19th century and a house built within the site in 1872. The Towers is now used by the Claretian Missionaries. The high red brick wall frames the street scene on one side and obscures some of the buildings from public view.

9.12 The adjoining St Mary's Church is grade I listed and is another focal point and local landmark (building type 6A). It was predominately built during the 15th century with later alterations. Its west tower and spire create a prominent visual feature on the village skyline. The historic centre has some tree planting, however, it is limited due to many properties located immediately off the road. The most densely located trees are within the grounds of St Mary's Church which are protected by a Tree Preservation Order. Surrounding the church are other buildings dating from Tudor times and are fine examples of 15th



Lion Hotel

century brickwork like 15a (The Manor House), 19 (Three Willows) 15 and 17 Church Street and the Lion Hotel with its impressive timber-framed hall and cross wing. These properties demonstrate characteristics of building type 1A.

- 9.13** The Great North Road has had an important impact on Buckden's historical development. The Ouse Valley has a rich abundance of vernacular thatched rendered cottages of building type 1B, dating from the 17th century, however, Buckden while located in close proximity to the Ouse Valley, has relatively few examples. These buildings were mostly replaced by Georgian architecture reflecting the prosperity the town experienced during the coaching era and connections to the Great North Road with many coaching inns and businesses forming during this period. Many of these commercial properties still exist and have a limited set back from the road encouraging trade. The area still forms the key point for local shops, services and facilities.



55-57 Church Street with coaching arches

- 9.14** As well as ecclesiastical and Tudor architecture, the character area has plentiful examples of listed buildings reflecting architectural interest and importance from across the historic development of the village. Georgian properties predominately used red brick with plain tile roofs, notable examples include York House, Valency House and Sycamore House. As the village expanded along its historic route and arterial roads, later Victorian properties mainly relied upon local gault bricks with slate roofs, notable examples include the Almshouses bordering Little Park in Church Street, Horseshoes, Vernon House, 44 Church Street and Buckden Methodist Church reflecting the style of Victorian Civic architecture (building types 2A, 2B, 2C, 2D and 7A). Other examples of Victorian civic architecture are the Buckden Day Nursery and Buckden Church of England Primary School located opposite a central green where Church Street, School Lane and Mill Road meet. Adjoining the Methodist Church are Burberry Homes, single storey accommodation built in 1974 reflecting the materiality of the Victorian architecture.

- 9.15** At the eastern extent of the character area along Mill Road there are several listed buildings including the grade II listed Low Farm, an early 19th century farmhouse of two storeys built from yellow gault brick with some early red brick and a plain tile roof. 20 Mill Road, an 18th century timber framed and plastered house is also grade II listed. An example of modern infill development along here is 23a Mill Road which responds positively to its surrounding context along Mill Road and the Barns. The character area has experienced other modern infill development reflecting building types 3D, 3E, 3F. These have generally complimented the historic nature of the character area in terms of scale, design and materiality. An example is Ivebury Close to the south of the character area which consists of 8 detached red brick homes with direct access from the High Street. Other more substantial areas of modern development such as Manor Gardens form the boundary with the Lucks Lane character area and mark a point of transition as does development north of St Hugh's Road.



23a and 23 Mill Road example infilling

- 9.16** The protection and enhancement of the historic centre and its strong sense of place should be a key conservation objective with limited opportunities existing for integration of high quality development.

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Development proposals should:

- Protect and conserve the historic buildings located along the High Street, Church Street, Lucks Lane, Silver Street and Mill Road.
- Enrich the character of the area by reinforcing and acknowledging its historic character.
- Promote high standards of design to enhance the historic character of the area.
- Protect the setting of Buckden Towers and St Mary's Church as local landmarks.
- Reflect the existing materials and colour palette of predominately local gault and red brick, plain clay tiles, rendering and slate.
- Support initiatives for the retention of existing or creation of additional services and community facilities.
- Conserve and reflect the intimate scale of the historic centre through the control of shopfront design and building renovations.
- Protect the existing mature trees where these contribute to the character of the street scene.
- Protect and conserve high quality architectural detailing to properties and the retention of original architectural features.
- Maintain and enhance physical and visual connections to key buildings and landscape views.
- Consider any potential impacts on the surrounding road network.

Buckden Character Area 2: Silver Street/ North of St Hugh's Road



St Hugh's Road spacious and green street scene



Beaufort Drive

9.17 To the north of the historic centre is the first of several residential character areas. The southern edge of the character area runs along St Hugh's Road, Silver Street on its eastern edge with the A1 forming a strong northern and western edge. Building types are mixed with mostly 3D present but there are some pockets of modern development such as Beaufort Drive and Wolsey Gardens and some infill development diversifying building types to 3E and 3F. Silver Street is mixed with 3D prevailing but there are some arts and crafts influenced housing (building type 3A). The character of the area is derived from its location and relationship with the A1 and the edges of the built village.

9.18 Properties along St Hugh's Road utilise weatherboarding and garages to the front elevation, there is clear distinction between public and private space by hedges and brick boundary walls typical of building type 3D. There have been some modern additions and alterations over time. Over the road is Taylors Lane, a small collection of properties of the same style which continues this character area to up to the edge of the A1. North of St Hugh's Road, Lincoln Close consists of approximately 30 properties of a red brick design either semi-detached or terraced with short front gardens. There is a central green space creating an attractive central feature and providing a sense of place.



Silver Street with modern additions

9.19 Properties along Silver Street are semi-detached with some detached and have some influences of arts and crafts style and are contrast the overall design and materiality of the area being white rendered with red roof tiles or consisting of precast concrete panels. Properties have low boundary hedges to the front separating them from the road and footpath. Homes on the eastern side adjoin allotment grounds. At the southern end of the character area is the Spinney, this is an attractive thatched roofed cottage with dormer windows and adjoining a pair of Edwardian houses. As Silver Street continues southwards, there is a point of transition between these homes and the School Lane/ Greenway character area.



Silver Street arts and crafts influenced housing

9.20 To the north and west of Lincoln Drive, there is development that dates from the early 2000s which extends the character area up to the boundaries of the road network. Wolsey Gardens and Beaufort Drive consist of a mixture of buff, red brick and white rendered properties with a variety of architectural detailing including decorative canopies, gables, dormer windows and alternative brick patterns over windows and doors (building type 3F). They are connected via a footpath which runs along the A1 and both nearby to the underpass which leads to Hardwick. Beaufort Drive utilises shared surfaces and shared car parking courts

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which are accessed underneath an archway between properties. Properties facing towards the A1 are screened from traffic sight and noise by tree planting while properties behind face onto a small green area separate from the adjoining Lincoln Drive by hedgerows.

- 9.21** Development proposals within the character area are limited with most opportunities for altering and extending existing properties.

Development proposals should:

- Ensure that new development responds positively to the specific opportunities available within the area.
- Reflect the existing built forms and relationship with the street in the immediate locality.
- Ensure extensions and alterations to existing properties are of an appropriate size and scale to the original dwelling and do not detract from the surrounding area.
- Reflect the dominant materials and colour palette within the immediate vicinity which range from red, buff and grey brick, weatherboarding and render.
- Maintain and enhance physical and visual connections to key buildings and open spaces and support permeability of the area.
- Protect the existing trees where these contribute to the character of the street scene and consider ways of increasing vegetation cover where space and service restrictions permit.
- Promote opportunities for enhancement of amenity green spaces to provide increased opportunities for recreation and nature conservation and to help provide distinctive local landmarks.
- Support provision of renewable energy where visually appropriate.

Buckden Character Area 3: School Lane/ Greenway



Aragon Close



Greenway

9.22 This character area is located to the east of the historic centre and on the northern side of Mill Road. Residential properties in this area typically consist of building type 3D and are typically low to medium density with properties in rectangular plots with a spacious layout and wide roads. A cul-de-sac layout dominates with School Lane/Greenway forming the arterial route through the character area with several small residential closes and roads diverging from it.

9.23 School Lane is categorised by chalet bungalows with large windows and steep roofs which are also found within Aragon Close. The style continues onto Greenway where there are also some single storey flat roofed bungalows. Homes are predominately semi-detached and constructed from grey brick with dark roof tiles with modest front gardens. Properties at the northern end of Greenway border the playing fields of Buckden Church of England Primary School. Towards the junction of Greenway with Mill Road the properties become larger and detached some with side garages which connect to the main roof line creating a distinctive sloping roofline, others have single and double garages to the front. These properties are made from buff brick and dark roof tiles. They have on-plot parking with large set backs from the road resulting in a mixture of large portions of front gardens being paved for vehicle parking and increased planting and vegetation cover.



Bishops Way detached home

9.24 There is a close association with the countryside in particular properties within Bishops Way, Aragon Close and Hoo Close which border the County Wildlife Site Settling Bed East of Silver Street. There are several green spaces and verges which in combination with the large set backs to properties and tree planting creates a continuous green and spacious feel to the area. One of the largest examples of this is at the point where Greenway splits from School Lane resulting in several green verges and spaces. This type and form of housing is present in Bishops Way and continues along Mill Road until it reaches the historic centre.

9.25 This is an established residential area with most opportunities being for extensions and alterations to existing properties.

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Development proposals should:

- Ensure that new development responds positively to the specific opportunities available within the area.
- Reflect the existing built forms and relationship with the street in the immediate locality.
- Ensure extensions and alterations to existing properties are of an appropriate size and scale to the original dwelling and do not detract from the surrounding area.
- Reflect the dominant materials and colour palette within the immediate vicinity.
- Protect the existing trees where these contribute to the character of the street scene and consider ways of increasing vegetation cover where space and service restrictions permit.
- Promote opportunities for enhancement of amenity green spaces to provide increased opportunities for recreation and nature conservation and to help provide distinctive local landmarks.
- Promote opportunities for the enhancement of areas of planting and the Settling Bed East of Silver Street County Wildlife Site to provide increased opportunities for wildlife and conservation.
- Support provision of renewable energy where visually appropriate.

Buckden Character Area 4: Vineyard Way/ Park Road



Vineyard Way



Buckden Village Hall is an one example of the many community services and leisure facilities within the character area

9.26 This is a mixed use character area located to the south of Mill Road consisting of residential properties, shops, community and leisure facilities. It has the greatest mix of uses outside of the historic centre. Building types are varied predominately consisting of 3D, pockets of 3E and 3F with 5D and 7B.

9.27 Along Hunts End there are several shops, a pharmacy and a supermarket and is located opposite the historic centre. To the south accessed via Burberry Road and Hunts End are a collection of leisure and sports facilities including a village hall, bowls club, community centre, library, tennis courts and playing fields. There is a public right of way that runs alongside the bowling green and connects to Cranfield Way to the south and Morris Close to the west both within the Lucks Lane character area which increases the permeability of the area. The playing field has a tree belt running along its boundaries and with dense tree planting between these areas there is an increased green and natural feel to the southern part of the character area and provides screening from development to the countryside.



Hunts End shops

9.28 A cul-de-sac layout dominates with Vineyard Way and Park Road forming the arterial roads joining back onto Mill Road with several smaller roads diverging from them. Falcon Close provides a connection between these two roads. Plots are rectangular but not as spacious as in the School Lane/ Greenway character area and there is less green space or grass verges. There are also smaller set backs from the road to properties creating a more compact feel. Properties that form the eastern built edge of the village along Park Road and Vineyard Way benefit from views out over the Ouse Valley.

9.29 These residential areas are typically low to medium density with significant variation in design, materials and layout. Along the key roads of Vineyard Way and Park Road, properties consist of a mixture of red, buff and grey brick, weatherboarding, rendering and tile hung tile frontages. There are modest front gardens allowing on plot parking, with garages either to the side or integrated which dominates the front elevation. There are examples of boundary walls and some garage courts such as in Lark End.

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9.30 While this forms the dominant style and character of the area, there are pockets of other designs. For example, the oldest properties within this character area are Monks Cottages near to Hunts End which date to the early/mid 20th century and consist of semi-detached properties built from buff brick. Also, Copes Close which consists of larger detached homes built in the late 1990s with a mixture of canopies, large frontal gables, integrated garages, side garages, bay windows, dormer windows and alternating brickwork. Finally, there is Hunts End Court which consists of a refurbished office building and several flats. This adds additional diversity in the housing stock of the village.



Monks Cottage

9.31 This is an established residential area with most opportunities being for extensions and alterations to existing properties and community/ leisure facilities.

Development proposals should:

- Ensure that new development responds positively to the specific opportunities available within the area.
- Reflect the existing built forms and relationship with the street in the immediate locality.
- Ensure extensions and alterations to existing properties are of an appropriate size and scale to the original dwelling and do not detract from the surrounding area.
- Reflect the dominant materials and colour palette within the immediate vicinity.
- Protect the existing trees where these contribute to the character of the street scene and consider ways of increasing vegetation cover where space and service restrictions permit.
- Promote opportunities for enhancement of amenity green spaces to provide increased opportunities for recreation and nature conservation and to help provide distinctive local landmarks.
- Retain and enhance where possible existing tree belts along the southern edge of the character area.
- Support initiatives for the creation of additional services and community facilities within the residential area possibly through conversion or redevelopment.
- Support and retain the current uses in the character area through renovation, refurbishment or extensions to buildings.
- Support provision of facilities which encourage active modes of transport.
- Support provision of renewable energy where visually appropriate.

Buckden Character Area 5: Lucks Lane



Springfield Close



Manor Gardens

9.32 Lucks Lane is located south of the historic centre. It is predominately residential but does contain several community services and facilities including a GP surgery and cemetery based along Lucks Lane. These residential areas are typically low to medium density with building types being 3D with some 3E and limited examples of 3F where some modern infill has taken place.

9.33 A cul-de-sac layout dominates with Lucks Lane being the key arterial road throughout the area linking to the historic centre with several smaller roads diverging from it including the Osiers, Mayfield, Springfield Close, Cranfield Way and Morris Close. There is a spacious and open feel to this character area due to large set backs from the road and front gardens and local areas of green space and verges with some tree and shrub planting.



Mayfield

9.34 The northern part of this character area marks a transitional point between historical development and modern 20th century development at Manor Gardens which branches off from Church Street. Properties are predominately two storey, however there are bungalows like those in Cranfield Way. Materials range from red, buff and grey brick, weatherboarding, tile cladding and brown pantile roofs. Further variations in design are seen in Morris Close and the Grove where Mock Tudor decorative panels and red brick have been used, these are typical of slightly later building designs used since the 1980s (building type 3E).



Cranfield Way bungalows

9.35 A public right of way connects from Cranfield Way and Morris Close to Hunts End within the Vineyard Way/ Park Road character area. This increases the permeability of the area and provides a key connection to additional community and leisure facilities found within the neighbouring character area. Here a tree belt runs along the rear boundaries of properties within Cranfield Way screening them from the countryside and from the nearby playing field to the north. This tree belt provides a strong southern edge to the character area.

9.36 Residential properties are generally well screened from the A1 from traffic noise and sight. Mayfield is the closest point and extensive tree planting separates these properties from the Shell petrol and filling station located next to the A1 roundabout. To the south of the character area is a 21st century development at Lucks Lane and marks another transitional point between 20th century house building and 21st century house building trends.

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9.37 Opportunities for future development is limited to extensions and alterations to existing properties.

Development proposals should:

- Ensure that new development responds positively to the specific opportunities available within the area.
- Reflect the existing built forms and relationship with the street in the immediate locality.
- Ensure extensions and alterations to existing properties are of an appropriate size and scale to the original dwelling and do not detract from the surrounding area.
- Reflect the dominant materials and colour palette within the immediate vicinity.
- Maintain and enhance physical and visual connections to key buildings and open spaces and support permeability of the area.
- Protect the existing trees where these contribute to the character of the street scene and consider ways of increasing vegetation cover where space and service restrictions permit.
- Promote opportunities for enhancement of amenity green spaces to provide increased opportunities for recreation and nature conservation and to help provide distinctive local landmarks.
- Support initiatives for the creation of additional services and community facilities within the residential area possibly through conversion or redevelopment.
- Retain the existing tree belts to the north of Cranfield Way.
- Support provision of renewable energy where visually appropriate.

Buckden Character Area 6: Lucks Lane Extension



Lucks Lane development is the most significant development within the village in recent years.



Further examples of house types within the Lucks Lane development.

9.38 This character area consists of a development on an L-shaped former agricultural field which will take the built limits of the village up to the confines of the road network (the A1 to the west and Stirtloe Lane to the south). Under construction as of 2021, this major development will provide the greatest concentration of design principles and trends of 21st century building (building type 3F). Lucks Lane will as a result have a different character and feel to the 20th century residential estates to the north justifying its own character area.

9.39 The area is accessed from a main vehicular access along Lucks Lane and a pedestrian access from Mayfield, connecting it to the core of the village. There is also pedestrian access to the north and south west corners of the site where it links to the footway along the A1. A pedestrian access route also runs to the western and southern side of the site creating greater permeability within the site and enabling enjoyment of landscaped areas. Significant landscape buffers have been approved to separate new properties from the sight, noise and pollution from the A1. Several attenuation ponds have been designed into the site, one creating a landscape gap between new properties and those along the Osiers. Others are located to the south of the site creating a significant green gap between the development and Stirtloe Lane.

9.40 The new residential development at Lucks Lane has a range of house types many featuring traditional detailing including bay windows, window shutters, roughcast render, some cream coloured window frames, porches, and chimneys. Materials include buff and red coloured bricks giving variety and interest to the street scene, and distributed to relate to the existing buildings on Springfield Close and The Osiers. This is different to the dominant building style in the village of properties from the 1960s and 1970s. However, Lucks Lane Extension will form a generally harmonious group of buildings with a distinctive identity as other residential areas within the village have managed. The development will also be slightly higher density than those seen in the Osiers, Lucks Lane and Springfield Close. These reflects the changing house building trends and styles that have evolved over time and adds another layer of interest to the village.



Another Lucks Lane house type

9.41 Development within this character area should be limited to extensions and alterations to existing properties.

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Development proposals should:

- Reflect the principles, materials and detailing in the agreed design code.
- Ensure extensions and alterations to existing properties are of an appropriate scale and design to the surrounding area.
- Maintain screening from traffic noise from the A1.
- Retain landscape gaps and buffers along Stirtloe Lane and to surrounding properties.
- Be high quality and consider impacts on the wider landscape setting.
- Maintain footpaths and landscaped areas and wherever possible promote opportunities for enhancement of amenity green spaces to provide increased opportunities for recreation and nature conservation and to help provide distinctive local landmarks.
- Support provision of renewable energy where visually appropriate.

Buckden Urban Character Area 7: Stirtloe



View from Stirtloe Lane demonstrating the quieter nature of this part of the village



Manor Farm

9.42 This is a small character area to the south of the main village and south of the Lucks Lane Extension character area. It is separate from the main village and as a result has a quiet nature but is connected via Lucks Lane and can access the A1 via Stirtloe Lane. There are a selection of residential properties and farm buildings located along Stirtloe Lane opposite Stirtloe House and Stirtloe Park. To the east is Buckden Sewage works and the high landscape quality of the Ouse Valley where public rights of way extend.

9.43 The key element of this character area is Stirtloe House and its former coach house and stables, all grade II listed, reflecting building type 2E. Stirtloe House is a late 18th century L-plan brick house of five bays with hipped slate roofs and end stacks. The house is accessed via a listed gate which dates to the middle of the 19th century with iron gate piers and fluted columns. The house was extended in the early 19th century and has several recessed hung sash windows with glazing bars. It is still used as a single house. Its former coach house and stables have been converted and are now known as Dower House. This is an early 18th century house with hayloft of two storeys, red brick with steeply pitched hipped slate roof. These properties and outbuildings are set behind a boundary wall (some of which is listed) dating to the early 18th century of Flemish bonded red brick.



Dower House outbuilding

9.44 The boundary wall provides a clear distinction between the grounds of Stirtloe House and the 19th century properties and farm buildings opposite, reflecting building type 2B and 4. Low Farm is a detached two storey property constructed of red brick and red concrete plain tiles to the roof. Within its grounds are a collection of farm buildings (building type 4) with several trees protected under a Tree Preservation Order on its boundary along Stirtloe Lane. The residential properties are a mixture of detached and semi-detached properties, some have had modern extensions.



Property opposite Stirtloe House

9.45 Manor Farm is an undesignated heritage asset to the west of the character area. It is an interesting Victorian property with distinctive architectural features including two front canted windows, red brick detailing used for decorative effect, a central front gable creating a central point in the roofline and symmetrical chimney stacks pointed front set within a spacious plot with a front boundary wall (building type 2B). It is a former farmhouse, being a surviving remnant of a larger farm complex.

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9.46 This is a small character area where there are some opportunities for extensions and alterations to buildings and potential infill development.

Development proposals should:

- Protect and conserve the historic buildings and walls located at Stirtloe and Dower House and undesignated heritage assets at Manor Farm.
- Protect the existing trees and vegetation as a green backdrop to development, particularly those protected by a tree preservation order.
- Reflect the existing materials and colour palette of red and buff brick and dark roof tiles.
- Promote high standards of design and architectural detailing to enhance the historic character of the area.
- Reduce landscape impacts particularly to the east to the Ouse Valley.
- Support and improve pedestrian access where necessary to the area and to the main village and vehicular access to the A1.
- Maintain and enhance where possible opportunities for public rights of way.

Buckden Urban Character Area 8: Perry Road



Perry Road street scene



Mix of property styles and sizes along Perry Road and its steady incline

9.47 This is a smaller and linear character area located to the west of the main village separated visually and physically by the A1. The linear development along Perry Road is accessed off the B661 from the A1 roundabout which leads to neighbouring parishes Grafham and Perry. There is pedestrian access via an underpass which connects properties to the services within main village. The character area has a collection of semi-detached and detached properties of one and two storeys demonstrating characteristics of building types 3B, 3D, 3E, 3F. The character area also includes the Shell Garage on the opposite side of the roundabout on the A1 as it has a shared character due to its location and relationship with the A1.

9.48 Properties are set back from the road with tree and hedge planting creating a green feel to the area and clearly separating public and private space. Properties are set within generous rectangular plots with rear gardens extending out into the open countryside. There is a broad mixture of designs and styles. The oldest properties in the character area are those facing on to the A1 which date from the early 20th century. Several more properties were built by the 1950s. They have a simple rectangular plan, red brick, render, decorative gables painted in black and white, with bay windows. Adding further diversity in design and appearance are several bungalows and chalet bungalows interspersed along Perry Road.



Great North Road property

9.49 The area has seen some modern infill development due to the generous size of original plots. These follow the prevailing form and layout of the area being set back from the road, having on plot parking and maintaining tree and hedge planting to the front of the property. Development has also extended along Perry Road into the open countryside but are generally well screened from the landscape through tree and hedge planting.

9.50 This is a sensitive area due to its connections to the transport network and the open countryside. Development opportunities are therefore limited.

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Development proposals should:

- Provide safe access onto the A1 and B661 and not adversely impact the highway network.
- Protect the existing trees and vegetation where they contribute to the street scene along Perry Road.
- Ensure extensions and alterations to existing properties are of an appropriate size and scale to the original dwelling and do not detract from the surrounding area.
- Be sympathetic to surrounding existing materials and colour palette.
- Promote high standards of design and architectural detailing.
- Reflect the existing layouts and relationship with the countryside.
- Support and improve vehicular and pedestrian access to the area and to the main village.
- Within the garage and petrol filling station support proposals for renewable energy and electric vehicle charging points where they are appropriate.
- Support provision of renewable energy where visually appropriate.

Buckden Urban Character Area 9: Hardwick



View from Hardwick Lane looking over the open countryside westwards



Hardwick Dene retirement home

9.51 Hardwick is a small hamlet located to the north-west of the main village. It is visually and physically separated from the main village by the A1. It is accessed via Taylors Lane with Hardwick Lane forming a loop around the small collection of properties and outbuildings. From Hardwick Lane there is an exit onto the A1 northwards to Brampton and Huntingdon. Apart from the eastern edge of the hamlet which faces onto the A1, it is located within the open countryside. Taylors Lane leads to several farms and a public rights of way to the nearby village of Grafham some 2 and a quarter miles away. An underpass for pedestrian access connects the hamlet to the main village. It hosts a mixture of large farmhouses, bungalows, detached properties and some terraces reflecting characteristics of building types 2A, 2B, 3D and 3E.

9.52 Historically, the majority of the character area was used as allotments with the earliest properties located along the northern track of Hardwick Lane. A small cluster of 19th century terraced properties are located on the north eastern corner of the character area facing onto the A1. These are of modest appearance and symmetrical design constructed of red brick and slate roofs. To the south of Hardwick is one of the older properties in the character area. 17 Taylors Lane is a grade II listed property dating from the middle of the 19th century. It was formerly three terraced properties but underwent conversion in the 1980s to form one large property.



Terraces along Hardwick Lane with A1 access

9.53 Hardwick Dene was built in the 1920s as a large single property of white render and red pantiles. It was converted to a retirement home in the 1990s. Several extensions and alterations have been added to the original building to support its use as a retirement home. It is set in large grounds with high hedges and mature trees. The hamlet has seen small scale additions over time demonstrating a mixture of styles and designs including bungalows and detached homes set in spacious grounds. All face onto Hardwick Lane or Taylors Lane with rear elevations looking towards a central natural green area with tree and hedges planted.

9.54 This is a small and extremely sensitive area due to its location in the open countryside and access from the A1. Therefore, development opportunities are limited.

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Development proposals should:

- Reduce harmful impacts on the landscape setting of the hamlet.
- Protect and increase where possible trees and vegetation where they contribute to the character of the hamlet and provide natural screen to the countryside.
- Ensure extensions and alterations to existing properties are of an appropriate size and scale to the original dwelling and do not detract from the surrounding area.
- Be sympathetic to surrounding existing materials and colour palette.
- Promote high standards of design and architectural detailing.
- Reflect the existing layouts and relationship with the countryside.
- Support and improve vehicular and pedestrian access to the area and to the main village.
- Consider parking arrangements and capacity.
- Provide safe access onto the A1 and not adversely impact the highway network.

10 Fenstanton Key Service Centre

- 10.1** Fenstanton is located on the southern edge of the Ouse Valley approximately 6 miles east of Huntingdon and 2 miles south of St Ives.

Landscape Setting

- 10.2** Fenstanton sits on the south eastern edge of the Ouse Valley Landscape Character Area and the village has strong physical and visual links with the Ouse Valley. This is particularly noticeable on the northern and western edges of the historic part of the settlement where some properties face out across the valley landscape. To the north of the village the landscape has been highly modified by flooding of former gravel extraction pits creating substantial lakes and county wildlife sites. The traditional Ouse Valley landscapes are of inherently high quality containing areas of pasture, water meadows and wetland vegetation with willow trees a strong feature. These provide a strong landscape setting for the village.
- 10.3** To the east of the village, in Fen Drayton parish, the Ouse Valley landscape is heavily influenced by horticulture. The character of the landscape to the south of the village is significantly different as the Ouse Valley Landscape Character Area gives way to the South East Claylands. This area is typified by large arable fields, blocks of woodland and gently undulating topography ultimately rising towards the south. In its immediate context the A1307 splits the village from its landscape setting to the south. However, the agricultural landscape to the south of the A1307 is relatively open affording long distance views across the South East Claylands contributing to the setting of the village when approached from the south.

Edges and Visual Prominence

- 10.4** The slightly elevated position of Fenstanton means that it has good visibility from and across the Ouse Valley with the church spire forming a prominent landmark in all directions. The soft western edge of the village is visually prominent. Cottages face out of the village and are visible from Low Road across the relatively open landscape around Hall Green with smaller fields and paddocks surrounded by hedgerows and trees. Hall Green Brook forms a distinct linear feature running north east - south west separating the immediate village setting from the larger fields beyond and extending to the River Great Ouse.
- 10.5** The north eastern edge of the village contains several small fields, playing fields and sports pitches and one larger arable field with tree planting extending north and then north west providing some screening from the river corridor for this part of the village. To the east of Headlands the village edge has limited vegetation along the watercourse providing some amount of softening of the boundary.
- 10.6** The A1307 forms a strong, artificial boundary to Fenstanton separating properties on Conington Road and Hilton Road from the main built up area of the village. This is further reinforced by structural planting associated with developments south of Cambridge Road. Land to the south of this forms an integral part of the wider agricultural landscape and retains a strongly rural character with a mixture of pasture, arable fields and orchards.

Townscape Character

- 10.7** Fenstanton was founded on an island of higher, free draining ground on the southern side of the Ouse Valley and the majority of the village lies above the 10m contour. It lies on the site of a former Romano British villa. The main road running east to west through the village, and which now forms the High Street, is on the line of a Roman road running from modern Colchester to Chester via Godmanchester. The medieval settlement was about half a mile north east of the High Street focused around St Peter and St Paul's Church with development spreading south from there to link to the ancient roads. Historic cottages around Church Lane form a distinctive historic core to this part of the village.
- 10.8** Over time, a series of village greens developed to the south west of the church linking it with the High Street and several of these greens still remain, despite modern infill development which has taken place in this part of the village over recent years. The boundaries of the conservation area to the west of the

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village reflect the evolution of the village core, incorporating part of the High Street and the greens leading up to the church, but excluding areas of more recent development. These recent developments have expanded the village considerably eastwards from the historic core which has more than doubled the size of the original village.

- 10.9** The unusual form of Fenstanton is reflected in eleven character areas (Figure 10.1 and can be viewed on the [interactive map](#)). The character of the village centre is defined largely by the High Street. Here, higher density development, including shops, houses, former coaching inns and small industrial premises line both sides of the High Street resulting in a strongly linear character. To the south of the High Street are Conington Road and Hilton Road, these are connected to the village via an underpass underneath the A1307 and have a close association with the countryside.
- 10.10** To the west of the village, the character is defined by large houses set within substantial gardens, and smaller cottages arranged around a series of greens. To the western edge of the village, a number of cottages front onto the adjacent landscape of Hall Green and can be viewed from Low Road. The A1307 currently forms a strong southern edge to the village. Substantial 21st century developments have taken place along Cambridge Road including the redevelopment of the former Dairy Crest factories which has provided improved permeability from the southern aspects of the village to the High Street and has enhanced its street scene.
- 10.11** The eastern side of the village is dominated by large residential estates built within the last 40 years. These estates, typical of many modern developments retain an overall green character derived from the series of small greens and established vegetation to front gardens. The area is not so well connected visually and physically with the rest of the village, although there are views to the church tower from some locations.

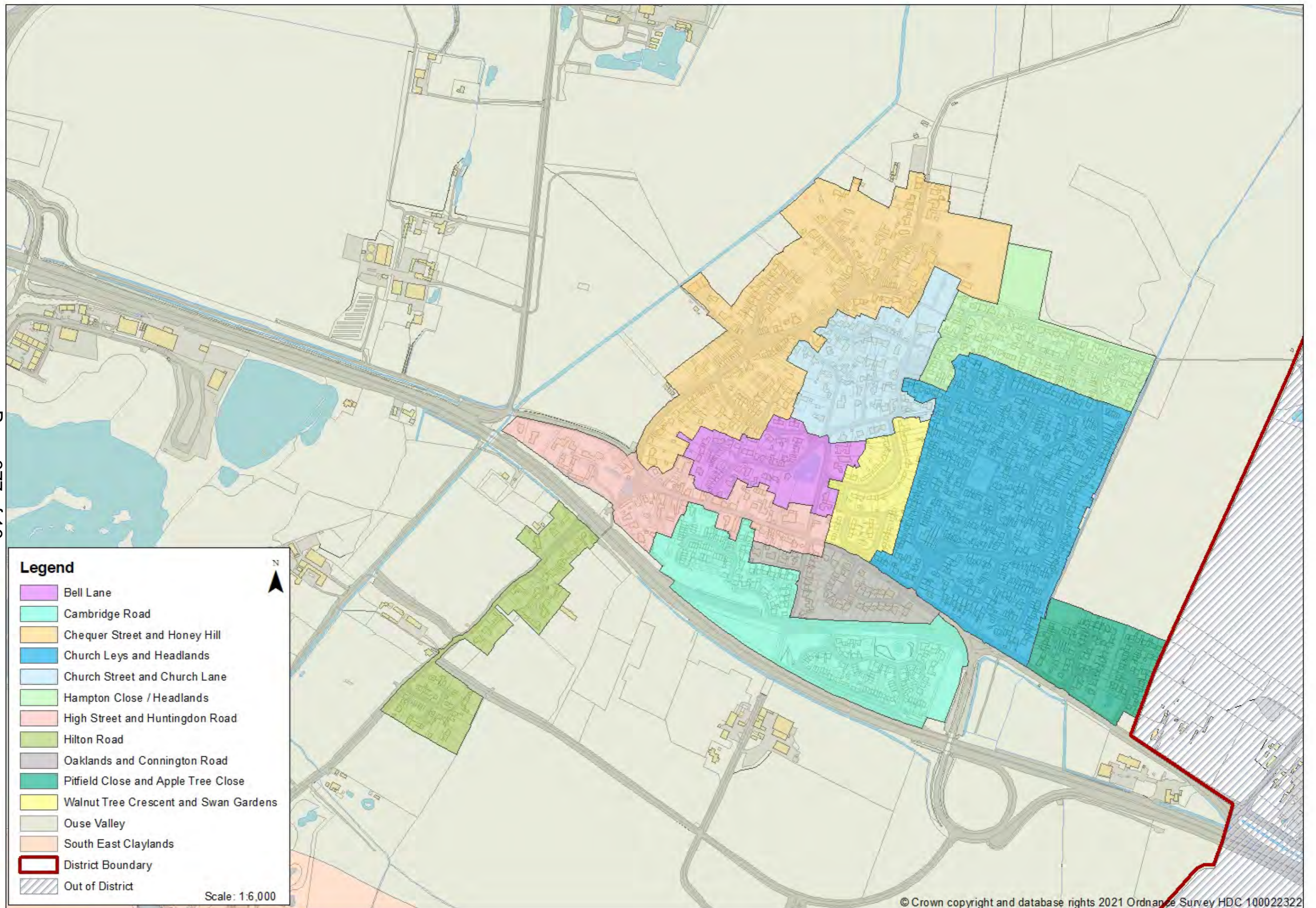


Figure 10.1 Fenstanton Character Areas

Key Features

Historic route	High Street and Huntingdon Road
Historic gateway	High Street and Huntingdon Road
Landmarks	St Peter and St Paul's Church and Clock Tower and lock-up
Memorable areas	Church Lane/ Street, St Peter and St Paul's Church and village greens
Key views	St Peter and St Paul's Church spire, views westwards over Hall Green Brook



The listed Clock Tower and Lock-UP forms a focal point to the village and a memorable approach into the village from Huntingdon Road



View from the north of the village along Cranesbrook. The village is influenced by the surrounding countryside



There are several cottages found within Fenstanton, some have thatched roofs



The village has undergone several modern additions, most recently the redevelopment of the former Daury Crest site to the south of the High Street

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Fenstanton Character Area 1: High Street and Huntingdon Road



The Clock Tower and Lock-Up forms a distinctive point in the village



The High Street has a more compact feel with limited set back from the road

10.12 The High Street and Huntingdon Road character area largely falls within the Fenstanton Conservation Area. The High Street has higher density development, including shops, houses, restaurants, pubs, former coaching inns, a surgery, pharmacy, nursery and small industrial premises which line both sides of the High Street and has a strongly linear character. It has a hard landscaped semi-urban environment with a high proportion of the village's 18th century buildings. The majority of buildings in this character area are red brick with plain tile roof followed closely by gault brick with slate roof and white and cream coloured rendering. Building types range from 1B, 2A, 2B, 2E, 3D and 7A.

10.13 Huntingdon Road in the west of the character area near to the Turnpike Bridge comprises low density detached housing set within large plots such as Vernon House with substantial tree and hedge planting. The properties here have a closer relationship to the surrounding countryside but form an important transitional point into the main village. A building of particular note here is the grade II* listed Grove House an early 18th century house of three storeys and square plan constructed from red brick and plain tile roofs. It has undergone a change of use from office to several flats. There are also several bungalows to the rear of Grove House but these are obscured from public view with vehicular access from Hilton Road which is gated. There are also a handful of bungalows characteristic of building type 3D along Huntingdon Road which demonstrate some 20th century infill development has taken place over time.



Grove House

10.14 A key feature on the approach into the village from Huntingdon Road is the former King William IV public house, a grade II listed property dating from the 17th century. It is two storeys constructed from soft red brick with a rear wall and is part timber framed. There is a modern single storey extension to the left hand gable. The significance of the building comes from its historic and aesthetic value, arising from its historic form, materials, features and location, as well as its historic use as a public house. It has gained planning approval to be converted to one residential property. Additionally, the Clock Tower and Lock-up is a key landmark. This is a visually prominent, grade II listed building on the High Street and located at the junction with Hilton Road. The building is located on a triangle of land with roads on all sides. This location is enhanced by a pond situated to the west of the Clock Tower and on the other side of Hilton Road. The combination of the pond, Clock Tower and the former pub produces a harmonious village setting at this point.

10.15 Hilton Road is a short road with a handful of properties. Some date from the 20th century (Hilton Court) and those adjoining the High Street have some of the ground floors used for non-residential purposes such as a Post Office. Nos. 4-6 Hilton Road is a grade II listed 17th century cottage which was formerly one property but changed over time into two. This is uncharacteristic of the rest of the character area due to its age but also that it is constructed from timber frames, rough cast and pantiled roofs. Hilton Road is split into two by the Fenstanton bypass which started construction 1979 and is now the A1307 with an underpass connecting the two parts. The rest of Hilton Road is detailed in a later character area.



Post Office

10.16 The eastern approach to the character area along the High Street is dominated by the visual prominence of the unlisted, 1930s Mock Tudor style of The Tudor Hotel. The Hotel's prominence is given by its white painted and black timber colouring and to the fact that the building is positioned partially facing the crossroad between Conington Road and Swan Road/High Street. Nos. 33 and 35 High Street are located opposite The Tudor House and together with the arched entrance, contribute considerably to the townscape of this part of the character area. The spacious grounds of The Tudor Hotel and Swan Cottage allow much greater tree and hedge planting contrasting with the denser development running along the High Street which has no set back and limited tree and hedge planting as a result.



Tudor Hotel

10.17 The redevelopment of the former Dairy Crest factory site south of the High Street is a key point of change along the High Street. This includes redeveloping aspects along the High Street with terraces facing onto the High Street that are of an appropriate scale and form with features and detailing found elsewhere within the village and as such enhances the street scene. The redevelopment of the whole site is detailed further in the Cambridge Road character area.

10.18 This is a characterful and historic area whose conservation is a priority. Development opportunities are limited to changes of use and small scale infill proposals or extensions and alterations to existing properties.

Development proposals should:

- Protect and conserve the historic buildings located along the High Street, Hilton Road and Huntingdon Road.
- Enrich the character of the area by reinforcing and acknowledging its historic character.
- Protect the setting of local landmarks such as the Clock Tower and the Tudor Hotel.
- Reflect the existing materials and colour palette of predominately red brick with plain tile roof, gault brick with slate roof and white and cream coloured rendering.
- Protect and conserve the high quality of architectural detailing to properties and the retention of original architectural features.
- Support initiatives for the retention of existing or creation of additional services and community facilities.
- Conserve and reflect the intimate scale of the High Street through the control of shopfront design and building renovations.
- Promote high standards of design and architectural detailing to enhance the historic character of the area.
- Protect the existing mature trees where these contribute to the character of the street scene.
- Maintain and enhance physical and visual connections to key buildings and landscape views.

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Fenstanton Character Area 2: Chequer Street and Honey Hill



Green space outside of the United Reform Church



40 and 42 Chequer Street demonstrating some of the variations in materials and styles found within the character area

10.19 This is a characterful area with the principal street being Chequer Street, however, there are several smaller streets and lanes that diverge from it. It is predominately residential but there are some community facilities such as Fenstanton and Hilton primary school, Fenstanton pre-school, Wooden Park, football ground and one or two small village shops.

10.20 Heading northwards along Chequer Street development is on the eastern side with properties closest to the junction with the High Street facing onto open countryside and Low Road; these are large and detached. Further along Chequer Street development is found on both sides creating a more enclosed feel. Honey Hill and junction with Chequer Street and Hall Green Lane is characterised by four small greens and there is more tree and hedgerow planting, this contrasts with the character of the more densely developed High Street, thus justifying its own character area. Apart from the small greens, the character at the north-west corner of the character area is also derived from the variation in road widths which in some places extends to between 15 and 20 metres. The widest point lies at the entrance to School Lane and Honey Hill. These sections of road accentuate the green 'island' areas and the character of this area.



Honey Hill cottages with green space

10.21 There is a diverse range of building types present ranging from 1B, 2A, 2B, 2C, 2E, 3A, 3B, 3D, 3E, 3F and 6B. As a result the range of materials found within the character area is broad. However, the majority of materials used are red brick with plain tile roof, gault brick with slate roof and white and cream rendering. There are some examples of thatch, a notable example being the earlier 17th century cottages which are found in greater quantity here rather than in the High Street. Examples of prominent buildings that stand out within the area are the grade II* listed 18th century Manor House opposite Tall's Lane and the United Reform Church which is a gothic revival building from the later part of the 19th century. Although of contrasting styles, the prominence of these two buildings on the north and south-east sides of the green at this point on Chequer Street creates a sense of balance within the street scene and serves to diversify the character of the area.

10.22 Some of the more recent additions to this area have reflected the character and design found here such as the terraced development along School Lane. The majority of buildings are two storeys, however there are some single storey bungalows found throughout. Mid-20th century development in Manor Drive, Chequer Close, Chequers Court and some infill development along Chequer Street has meant that some less characteristic styles of development have occurred, however, while from a design point of view they contrast, the large front gardens and the set back from the road is reflective of the more spacious feel the greens provide and provide opportunities for tree and hedgerow planting along these which also helps to tie these in with the wider character of the area. Trees behind Manor Drive are protected by a Tree Preservation Order providing a green edge to this part of the character area towards Hall Green Brook.



20th century infill on Church Street

10.23 Hall Green Lane extends in a north-westerly direction from Chequer Street to Hall Green Brook. It has mature hedgerows on either side forming a strong landscape feature. Hall Green Lane forms part of the pedestrian link between Fenstanton and Hall Green Cricket Ground to the north, the link also includes a public footpath and footbridge over Hall Green Brook. Honey Hill also extends this character area in a north-westerly direction towards Hen Green Brook, however this residential development means there is no public access to the countryside beyond.

10.24 Properties along The Fen have extended the built edge of Fenstanton into the countryside and provide points of transition into and out of the village from Chequer Street particularly in combination with the openness of the playing fields of the Fenstanton and Hilton primary school. A public right of way follows the boundary with the playing field and connects to the Fen in the north but also links back into School Lane.

10.25 The conservation of the area's historic fabric is a key priority, therefore development proposals should focus on changes of use or extensions and alterations to existing properties.

Development proposals should:

- Protect and conserve the historic buildings located along Chequer Street, Honey Hill and Tall's Lane.
- Enrich the character of the area by reinforcing and acknowledging its historic character.
- Conserve and maintain the village greens within this area.
- Reflect the existing materials and colour palette of predominately red brick with plain tile roof, gault brick with slate roof and white and cream coloured rendering.
- Protect and conserve the high quality of architectural detailing to properties and the retention of original architectural features.
- Support initiatives for the retention of existing or creation of additional services and community facilities.
- Maintain and enhance physical and visual connections to key buildings and landscape views.
- Protect the existing mature trees where these are protected by a Tree Preservation Order and/or contribute to the character of the street scene and consider ways of increasing vegetation cover where space and service restrictions permit.
- Retain and encourage further tree and hedgerow planting particularly as landscape buffers to developments that border with the open countryside.
- Maintain and enhance where possible opportunities for public rights of way.

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Fenstanton Character Area 3: Church Street and Church Lane



The Church of St Peter and St Paul



No.7 Church Lane with no. 5 behind. These are also known as Providence Parade (1836) and Stanley Cottage (1846) respectively

10.26 This character area consists of Church Street, Church Lane and Tall's Lane. It is characterised by narrow lanes and short range vistas creating an attractive and intimate village feel. There are few footpaths, particularly on the narrowest of lanes. The character area largely falls within the Fenstanton Conservation Area. There has been infill development and some redevelopment through the character area, generally such additions have been successfully integrated with their historic surroundings and the area's intimate feel. Building types range from 1B, 2A, 2B, 2C, 2E, 3D, 3E, 3F and 6A.

10.27 Church Street has an 'L' shaped alignment with the north of it dominated by a view of St Peter and St Paul's Church and edge of road development. It is important to respect the setting of the nearby Parish Church by ensuring that the open character is maintained. No. 11 Church Lane and no.7 Church Street provide good examples of buildings occupying end of vista locations. This part of Church Street running east to west is defined by a grass verge on the south side, whilst the north is dominated by front wall and mature trees some protected by a Tree Preservation Order. To the south of the character area is a crossroads where Church Street, Bell Lane, Tall's Lane and Swan Road converge.



Modern infill on Church Lane

10.28 Along Church Street is Bourdillon Close. It is only visible within the street scene when viewed from directly in front of the entrance to street. There are 6 large detached houses of building type 3E and situated between two listed buildings (no. 2 The Vicarage and no.6 Church Street). Both listed buildings are of gault brick and hipped slate roof construction set back behind landscaped frontages contributing to the rural quality of the area. This is an example of how modern infill development can be sensitively integrated into sensitive environments.



Bourdillon Close

10.29 The Church of St Peter and St Paul is a key local landmark and is visible from the west when approaching Fenstanton along Lower Road and from Fen Lane, a track located to the north. Although the church is located on rising ground, its prominence within the village landscape and to

the High Street and Clocktower has diminished over time as a result of modern developments. It is a grade I listed church dating to the early to mid 13 century, partially rebuilt in the mid-14th, 15th and early 16th centuries. It is constructed from barnack stone, pebble-rubble and clunch with a pantile-clad roof covering to nave and north slope of chancel, and clay tiles to south slope. It is of particular historic interest as the church contains the memorial to Lancelot 'Capability' Brown (1716 - 1783), the pre-eminent English landscape designer of the mid to late 18th century. The car park in front of the Church provides an important break in the streetscape especially in combination with the modern homes built along Hampton Close.

10.30 The conservation of the area's historic fabric and intimate nature is a key priority. Development proposals are limited to changes of use or extensions and alterations to existing properties.

Development proposals should:

- Protect and conserve the historic buildings located along Church Lane, Church Street and Tall's Lane.
- Enrich the character of the area by reinforcing and acknowledging its intimate and historic character.
- Reflect the existing materials and colour palette of predominately red brick with plain tile roof, gault brick with slate roof and white and cream coloured rendering.
- Protect and conserve the high quality of architectural detailing to properties and the retention of original architectural features coupled with promotion of high standards of design for new development.
- Maintain and enhance physical and visual connections to key buildings.
- Protect the existing mature trees especially those protected by a Tree Preservation Order and/or contribute to the character of the street scene and the setting of the conservation area.
- Improve where possible footpath provision to pedestrian safety within the narrow lanes.

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Fenstanton Character Area 4: Hampton Close/ Headlands



View along Cranesbrook, hedging screens the development from the wider countryside with linkages to the public rights of way and playing fields



Modern homes on Hampton Close facing onto a car park, green space and church which adds to their character

10.31 This is a residential character area located on the north eastern edge of the village to the east of the St Peter and St Paul Church. It was built in the early 2000s which has extended the built edge of the village but has also redeveloped parts of pre-existing development such as west of the Sallows and east of of the Church of St Peter and St Paul and car park. The development also includes the site of the former Rookery.

10.32 The 21st century design principles here contrast to the dominant building style of properties to the south. This character area provides a diverse range of house types within type 3F utilising 21st century design principles including shared surfaces, ensuring the design of corner properties creating a continuous building frontage to both streets and incorporating a variety of housing sizes and types. Many of these features and the design of properties within these areas are also reflected within the Cambridge Road character area in the southern part of the village.

10.33 Materials and colour palate throughout the area include predominately buff brick with some red brick, white render and grey and red roof tiles. Architectural detailing varies with some properties having canopies, gables, dormer windows and coachways with parking underneath. The set back from the road is shallow which provides a compact form of development and less opportunities for planting and greenery. Consequently some properties do not have on plot parking which has resulted in small parking courts.



Rendered property

10.34 Overall, the design of properties reflect the historic elements of the village found broadly within the Conservation Area in terms of scale, design and materiality. This is particularly found for those properties that face toward the listed St Peter and St Paul Church and its associated car parking which are located within the Conservation Area. This side of the character area is therefore more influenced by the historic elements of the village. To the east of the church, separated by a boundary wall, are the only listed buildings in the character area. These are Church

Barn (9 Hampton Close) and Church Farm Barn (11 Hampton Close), both grade II listed. These are semi-detached, formed from the conversion of a 17th century half-hipped roof, timber-framed barn and finished in dark stained timber boarding.

10.35 The character area borders the open countryside on two sides but tree planting along these borders screens the visual impact of housing from the wider landscape. Cranesbrook runs along the northern edge of the area. Public rights of way lead from Hampton Close enabling access to enjoy the countryside with a small car park located to the north of the development as well as a playing field and play equipment.



10.36 Development opportunities are limited but there may be some opportunities for extensions and alterations to properties.

9 and 11 Hampton Close

Development proposals should:

- Reflect the principles, materials and detailing in the agreed design code.
- Ensure extensions and alterations to existing properties are of an appropriate scale and design to the surrounding area.
- Be high quality and consider impacts on the wider landscape setting and nearby listed buildings and the conservation area as appropriate.
- Retain and protect the existing trees where these contribute to the character of the street scene and consider ways of increasing vegetation cover where space and service restrictions permit.
- Reduce landscape impacts particularly to the north and east of the character area.
- Maintain and enhance where possible opportunities for public rights of way and access to the countryside.
- Maintain and where possible add to the play equipment and playing field facilities as these are important areas for recreation locally.

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Fenstanton Character Area 5: Bell Lane



26 Bell Lane is one example of the historic nature of this character area



7a and 7b Bell Lane are examples of modern infill development

10.37 Bell Lane is located to the west of Church Street and includes several smaller roads such as Swan Road, Cherry Tree Walk and Orchard Gardens. Bell Lane has no footpaths and a narrow country lane feel. Trees and verges provide a green and sheltered feel with some properties obscured largely from view. The character area largely falls within the Fenstanton Conservation Area. Bell Lane extends southwards where it joins the High Street, at this point there are some modern short terraces with some infill development occurring over time. Building types are varied with 1B, 2A, 2B, 2E, 3A, 3D, 3E, and 3F.

10.38 The converted warehouse building, adjacent to no.22 Bell Lane forms an important element in the street scene and is a building of local interest. Some infill development has occurred reusing vacant and overgrown land. Some properties benefit from large set backs from the road accentuating the rural and leafy nature found throughout the character area. The character of Swan Road is different in that it is predominately straight and is dominated by a well landscaped area on its western side, which is separated by metal railings and forms part of the gardens to the 1900 grade II listed 'rustic Cottage' 'Mathyns' and is protected by a Tree Preservation Order.

10.39 Modern infill development has taken place over time, for example nos. 7a and 7b Bell Lane which is a semi-detached pair of houses constructed of traditional materials of buff brickwork, slate roof and sash windows. These are similar in appearance to a recently built pair of properties in the vicinity.

10.40 Accessed from Bell Lane are 20th century developments within Cherry Tree Walk and Orchard Gardens. These areas before development once compromised orchard and back gardens to properties on the road frontage. The area consists of properties from building types 3A and 3D. Cherry Tree Way consists of bungalows. These have a reasonable set back from the road, some have fencing providing a clear marker between public and private space. On the approach from Bell Lane are several green verges which provides a more open feel at this point. Orchard Gardens consists of a mix of properties including a rare example of building type 3A with a semi-detached pair of housing with double bay windows and central chimney stack. There are also examples of bungalows and two storey properties of buff and red brick. Here is a particularly enclosed space with tree and hedge planting form the adjoining character area.



Orchard Gardens interwar semis

10.41 The conservation of the area's historic fabric and intimate nature is a priority, modern additions and infill have demonstrated how development can be sensitively integrated.

Development proposals should:

- Protect and conserve the historic buildings located along Bell Lane.
- Enrich the character of the area by reinforcing and acknowledging its intimate and historic character.
- Reflect the existing materials and colour palette of predominately red brick, buff brick, plain tile roof, gault brick with slate roof and white and cream coloured rendering.
- Protect and conserve the high quality of architectural detailing to properties and the retention of original architectural features coupled with promotion of high standards of design for new development.
- Maintain and enhance physical and visual connections to key buildings.
- Protect the existing mature trees especially those protected by a Tree Preservation Order and/or contribute to the character of the street scene and setting of the conservation area.
- Improve where possible footpath provision to pedestrian safety within the narrow lanes.
- Ensure that new development responds positively to the specific opportunities available within the area.
- Ensure extensions and alterations to existing properties are of an appropriate size and scale to the original dwelling and do not detract from the surrounding area.

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Fenstanton Character Area 6: Walnut Tree Crescent and Swan Gardens



Walnut Tree Crescent



Swan Gardens short terraces

10.42 This is a small residential character area accessed via Church Street and Swan Road with pedestrian access from the High Street. They are slightly earlier though than properties within the Church Leys and Headlands character area.

10.43 Walnut Tree Crescent has a large central green with homes arranged around it, this provides a link to the pattern of development found along Chequer Street. The houses themselves are typical examples of two storey and single storey mid-20th century development and building type 3D. There have been several examples alterations the frontage of these properties by removing the concrete precast panels and replacing them with red brick to provide a more modern finish. Materials include red and buff brick, dark roof tiles and grey concrete precast panels. Properties have a short front garden with low boundary fences and hedges creating a clear distinction between public and private space.



Property where concrete panels have been replaced

10.44 A garage court is located to edge of the character area near Swan Road. Swan Gardens is a small loop road with two storey red brick short terraces on the outside with single storey bungalows of buff brick in the centre. This area is enclosed by tree planting between them and Cambridge Road with a walkway enabling access to the High Street.

10.45 This is an established residential area with only opportunities for extensions an alterations to properties remaining.

Development proposals should:

- Ensure that new development responds positively to the specific opportunities available within the area.
- Ensure extensions and alterations to existing properties are of an appropriate size and scale to the original dwelling and do not detract from the surrounding area.
- Be sympathetic to the materials and colour palette in the immediate vicinity.
- Promote high standards of design and architectural detailing.
- Do not harm the setting of the nearby conservation area.
- Protect the existing trees where these contribute to the character of the street scene and consider ways of increasing vegetation cover where space and service restrictions permit.
- Maintain and enhance pedestrian access and permeability to the High Street and other areas where community facilities are located.
- Support provision of renewable energy where visually appropriate.

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Fenstanton Character Area 7: Church Leys and Headlands



Two storey properties along Headlands with on plot parking



Modern infill development along Rookery Way

10.46 This is a large character area located to the north of the High Street and east of Church Street. It is predominately residential set within a cul-de-sac style with some local shops and services located in a small parade along Rookery Place. Residential properties vary in age but most date to the 1950s, 60s and 70s with some additions over time. As a result, the character area consists of predominately building type 3D with some 3E, 3F and 5D.

10.47 A cul-de-sac layout predominates with the principal roads within this sub area being Church Leys and Headlands. The former connects to Church Street to the west and the latter the High Street to the south. There are several smaller residential streets that diverge from these principal roads such as Rookery Place, Leechcroft, Four Acres, Little Moor, Dove Close, Lancelot Way, Scorney, Sallows, Tythe Piece and Simmer Piece. It has a strong eastern edge which follows a local water drain and track. The generous road layout and set back from the roads provides the area with a spacious feel.



Rookery Place shops

10.48 Properties demonstrate variations in design and materials but all share a consistent character. Throughout the area there is a mix of one and two storey properties with most streets having a mixture of the two. Properties are mostly semi-detached set in rectangular plots and at lower density than later examples of development. Garages are typically to the side creating space for on plot parking but some are to the front elevation with a flat roof. Some are located in separate garage courts. Some properties have canopies, others enclosed porches with several porches and extensions added over time. The dominant materials and colour palette are buff brick, grey brick, red brick, grey tiles and weatherboarding of varying colours.



Church Leys bungalows

10.49 Throughout the area, there are pockets of soft landscape, open and amenity space with tree planting which break up development and create a more open and peaceful character complementing the residential and community uses of the area. There is a centrally located play area called Metal Park which as well as open space has play equipment accessed via Rookery Way, Lancelot Way, Leechcroft and Four Acres.

10.50 This is a large area with opportunities for extensions and alterations to existing properties.

Development proposals should:

- Ensure that new development responds positively to the specific opportunities available within the area.
- Ensure extensions and alterations to existing properties are of an appropriate size and scale to the original dwelling and do not detract from the surrounding area.
- Be sympathetic to the materials and colour palette in the immediate vicinity.
- Promote high standards of design and architectural detailing.
- Protect the existing trees where these contribute to the character of the street scene and consider ways of increasing vegetation cover where space and service restrictions permit.
- Support initiatives for the creation of additional services and community facilities within the residential area possibly through conversion or redevelopment.
- Promote opportunities for enhancement of amenity green spaces to provide increased opportunities for recreation and nature conservation and to help provide distinctive local landmarks.
- Reduce landscape impacts particularly to the east of the character area.
- Maintain and enhance where possible opportunities for public rights of way.
- Maintain and enhance pedestrian access and permeability to the High Street and other areas where community facilities are located.
- Support provision of renewable energy where visually appropriate.

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Fenstanton Character Area 8: Oaklands and Connington Road



Oaklands with green space



Connington Road

10.51 This is a small residential character area located to the south of the High Street opposite Swan Gardens and adjoining the former Dairy Crest factory site. Properties date to the 1960s and 70s and demonstrate building type 3D with some infill development which has been integrated well into the area as well as several extensions and alterations to properties. The dominant materials and colour palette are buff brick, some red brick, grey tiles, dark front hanging tiles and weatherboarding.

10.52 Oaklands has a mixture of two storey semi-detached properties set in rectangular plots, although there are also chalet bungalows with large windows, steep roofs and prominent front and rear gables, some have dormer windows to their side elevation. These are found in greater quantities here than in the rest of the village. The two storey properties have garages that are typically to the side with flat roofs creating space for on plot parking and also the opportunity for first floor extensions. There is a fairly uniform amount of set back from the road which providing greater opportunities for planting, greenery and on plot parking. There is also a grassed area of open space which adds to the generally spacious character of the area. Most of the character area has a group Tree Preservation Order.



Oaklands chalet bungalow

10.53 Connington Road very similar housing to Oaklands consisting of two storey houses of buff, red brick and weatherboarding with a similar pattern of development. There are also some bungalows. There are some larger detached homes of red brick which add diversity to the street scene. This road takes on a slightly different character as it is more enclosed by fencing surrounding the adjoining redevelopment of the former Dairy Crest site. Therefore, the south of Connington Road provides a transitional point with modern development. There are verges and some areas of green space located along the road, which links through from the High Street to Cambridge Road.

10.54 Development opportunities are limited following recent additions to the character area, however there may be opportunities for alterations and extensions to existing properties.

Development proposals should:

- Ensure that new development responds positively to the specific opportunities available within the area.
- Ensure extensions and alterations to existing properties are of an appropriate size and scale to the original dwelling and do not detract from the surrounding area.
- Be sympathetic to the materials and colour palette in the immediate vicinity including buff and red brick, weatherboarding and dark hanging tiles.
- Promote high standards of design and architectural detailing.
- Protect the existing trees where these contribute to the character of the street scene and are protected by a Tree Preservation Order.
- Consider ways of increasing vegetation cover where space and service restrictions permit.
- Support provision of renewable energy where visually appropriate.

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Fenstanton Character Area 9: Pitfield Close and Apple Tree Close



Pitfield Close, large detached homes showing the variation in designs and styles within the development



Apple Tree Close properties facing onto amenity space, this also provides a substantial set back from Cambridge Road

- 10.55** This character area is located on the eastern edge of the village accessed via Cambridge Road with their frontage being set back from the road with tree planting and amenity space. It consists of residential development built from the 2000s within Pitfield Close and Apple Tree Close on the site of former poultry sheds. Due to its location and 21st century housing design representing building type 3F, the area has been split into its own character area.
- 10.56** Pitfield Close consists of two storey housing which is detached, semi detached and terraced. Architectural detailing includes stone and cill detail, string detail and bay windows, these are widespread alongside the use of integral garages. Homes have a mixture of gable designs and hipped roofs providing additional variety in design. In the north western corner of the area is a large play area surrounding by a tree belt providing an enclosed space for children to play as well as mitigating the landscape impact of the development.
- 10.57** The Apple Tree Close development is slightly later and has been influenced by the Pitfield Close development. It consists of predominantly detached properties with some semi-detached and terraced properties. The materials and colour palette of the area consists of simple buff brick and tile. There is typically less architectural detailing found here than in the adjoining Pitfield Close. The entirety of Apple Tree Close has a group Tree Preservation Order which, with the amenity space located along the road frontage, provides a green setting to the development. The eastern edge of the development runs up to the border with South Cambridgeshire District Council.
- 10.58** Development opportunities are limited, however there may be opportunities for alterations and extensions to existing properties.

Development proposals should:

- Ensure that new development responds positively to the specific opportunities available within the area.
- Ensure extensions and alterations to existing properties are of an appropriate size and scale to the original dwelling and do not detract from the surrounding area.
- Be sympathetic to the materials and colour palette in the immediate vicinity including buff and red brick and tiles.
- Promote high standards of design and architectural detailing.
- Protect the existing trees where these contribute to the character of the street scene and are protected by a Tree Preservation Order.
- Consider ways of increasing vegetation cover where space and service restrictions permit.
- Promote opportunities for enhancement of amenity green spaces to provide increased opportunities for recreation and nature conservation and to help provide distinctive local landmarks.
- Reduce landscape impacts particularly to the north and east of the character area.
- Support provision of renewable energy where visually appropriate.

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Fenstanton Character Area 10: Cambridge Road



Mix of house types along Crest Drive within The Park redevelopment of the former Dairy Crest factory



Park Close within The Crown development. There is extensive landscaping to the frontage including a pond providing a habitat for Great Crested Newts.

10.59 This character area is centred around Cambridge Road (excluding Oaklands) and the developments known as The Park and The Crown. It is undergoing the most change with these major developments demonstrating building type 3F. The materiality and style of properties are generally reflective of the historic core of the village. The substantial developments along Cambridge Road take on a different feel due to their contained nature within the road network and limited association with the wider open countryside as a result. They are a generally harmonious group of buildings with a distinctive identity.

10.60 The Park development is on the site of the former Dairy Crest factory located to the south of the High Street. The area is closely related to the High Street and Huntingdon Road character area as the redevelopment includes 17 High Street which was formerly used as offices for the factory. The site has been transformed with 88 properties (including 3 properties within 17 High Street), community and business space and public open space. Properties are varied and reflect the wider mix of design and styles in the area and the internal road layout follows a cul-de-sac style. The terrace facing onto the High Street is of a cohesive scale and form with features and detailing found elsewhere within the Fenstanton Conservation Area. The looser knit dproperties deeper into the site all share common characteristics, being gabled in form with similar fenestration and materials yet show subtle differences in detailing and orientation creating an engaging environment. There is pedestrian access to the High Street connecting residents to local shops and facilities.



The Park new build along the High Street

10.61 The second major development located to the south east of The Park is the residential development known The Crown which takes the built extent of the village up to the A1307. The development is consistent with the neighbouring development on the former Dairy Crest site but has further variations in house types such as apartments diversifying the housing stock of the village. The internal road layout also follows a cul-de-sac style. Larger homes are generally wide fronted and have an 'L' shaped footprint. The majority of homes have their main eaves running parallel with the road, occasional gables are presented for variety and interest, additionally homes that are 2½ storeys have rooms within the roofspace with dormer windows which coupled with occasional chimneys add interest to the roofscape when viewing the site as a whole.



Park Close property with a distinctive mix of colours and materials

- 10.62** There is a third potential development site within the vicinity. This is allocated as FS3 in the [Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036](#). Due to no work on site as at September 2021 it is outside of the character area but if brought forward will likely continue the 21st century building trends and styles in the area. The site is allocated for a mixed residential and community development of some 30 or so homes and extension of existing allotment grounds.
- 10.63** Cambridge Road has a clearly different feel due to the quantity of 21st century major development, however, this has broadly reflected the wider characteristics and historic fabric of the village. There is scope for further major development through FS3, however, other opportunities should be limited to alterations and extensions to properties and the maintenance of community facilities.

Development proposals should:

- Reflect the principles, materials and detailing in the agreed design codes.
- Ensure extensions and alterations to existing properties are of an appropriate scale and design to the surrounding area.
- Be high quality and consider impacts on the wider landscape setting and nearby listed buildings and the conservation area as appropriate.
- Maintain screening and provide additional noise mitigation measures from traffic noise from the A1307.
- Maintain footpaths and landscaped areas and wherever possible promote opportunities for enhancement of amenity green spaces to provide increased opportunities for recreation and nature conservation and to help provide distinctive local landmarks.
- Retain and protect the existing trees where these contribute to the character of the street scene and consider ways of increasing vegetation cover where space and service restrictions permit.
- Support initiatives for additional services and community facilities such as additional allotment grounds and village hall.
- Improve pedestrian and cycle routes to link to existing services and networks.

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Fenstanton Character Area 11: Hilton Road



Mixed properties along Hilton Road with planting



Pear Tree Close

10.64 Hilton Road is a linear character area located to the south of the main village separated by the A1307 (Cambridge Road). This part of Hilton Road was split from the main village in 1979 when construction began on the road. As a result, the character area feels detached as well as being physically detached from the rest of the village, there is however, pedestrian and cycleway access via an underpass enabling residents to access local shops and services. It has a rural feel due to its location with hedgerows running along the road. There are several access roads that disperse from Hilton Road to isolated properties and farm complexes. The character area lies within Ouse Valley Landscape Character Area near to where it transitions into the South East Claylands.

10.65 There is a mixture of building types reflecting the small additions within the area over time. Properties along Hilton Road are typically large and detached set within large plots, due to the generosity of original plots there as been some subdivision of these plots with some infill development taking place adding additional diversity to design, materiality, scale and form in this area. Building types are varied with 1A, 3A, 3D, 3E and 3F present.

10.66 There are several listed buildings including a former 16th century H-plan farmhouse which has subsequently been converted into two properties (Marston House and Evesham House). The properties have a rough-cast timber frame, plain tile roofs with some early crested ridge tiles which reflect building type 1A. It has been altered over time and its former associated farm buildings (which are also listed) have been converted to residential use. Development in depth from Hilton Road and behind Marston House and Evesham House has taken place along the Gables, a small cluster of large detached properties built in the 1980s from a mixture of red brick and render (building type 3E).



Marston House and Evesham House

10.67 The character area extends as far as Pear Tree Close which consists of a small cluster of 30 or so properties built demonstrating building type 3A. They are semi-detached pairs with a central chimney stack arranged regularly in long rectangular plots with modest front gardens. Materials include white render and dark roof tiles. Window and door placements are symmetrical and have a small circular window to the second floor. There has been some infill development over time with larger plots subdivided to form additional properties which due to variations in material and form are clearly distinguishable from original properties.



The Gables

10.68 Major development should be avoided due to its countryside setting and its separation from the main village. Therefore, development proposals should focus on the alterations and extension of existing properties.

Development proposals should:

- Reduce harmful impacts on the open countryside and protect the existing trees and vegetation where they contribute to the street scene.
- Protect and conserve the historic buildings in the area and carefully consider the impact of development on their setting.
- Ensure extensions and alterations to existing properties are of an appropriate size and scale to the original dwelling and do not detract from the surrounding area.
- Promote high standards of design and architectural detailing including the sympathetic use of existing materials and colour palette.
- Reflect the existing spacious layouts and relationship with the countryside.
- Support and improve pedestrian access to the area and to the main village.
- Support provision of renewable energy where visually appropriate.

11 Kimbolton Key Service Centre

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11 Kimbolton Key Service Centre

- 11.1** Kimbolton is located on the B660 and B645 approximately 3 miles west of Grafham Water and 7 miles north-west of St Neots.

Landscape Setting

- 11.2** Kimbolton lies in the valley of the River Kym with the older part of the village at the lowest point. The valley is concave with shallow basin sides which slope increasingly steeply to the north and south. The majority of the village lies within the Northern Wolds Landscape Character Area although parts to the east fall within the Southern Wolds. The landscape around the village displays features associated with both landscape characters. To the north and west the topography of relatively steep sided valleys with arable agriculture on the valley sides and pasture in the valley bottoms is typical of the Northern Wolds. To the east the landform becomes gentler as the Kym Valley flattens out and the landscape becomes more consistent with the Southern Wolds.
- 11.3** However, the landscape immediately around Kimbolton has its own distinctive character. The extensive parkland associated with Kimbolton Castle which surrounds the village to the east and south dominates views from the main road approach from the east and from the eastern end of the High Street. This parkland is also visible from the majority of the many public rights of way around the village and mature trees, particularly giant redwoods, are very prominent. The parkland and River Kym corridor landscapes which surround Kimbolton are both of high quality although different in character. The parkland with its carefully designed avenues, rides, trees, woodland, copses and lakes represents the remains of an 18th century designed landscape. The river corridor is also of high visual and ecological quality with relatively dense vegetation giving a strong sense of enclosure and tranquility.
- 11.4** Within the village the landscape of the River Kym valley becomes more evident as it passes through the built up area and alongside Tilbrook Road which forms the main approach from the west. In these areas the river is narrow and meandering and is lined with wetland trees including alder and willow. Some areas of traditional pastoral land use remain. This vegetation provides a high degree of segregation and screening to the residential estates to the north. To the north east and north west of the village the landform rises relatively steeply towards a local ridgeline which contains the village visually and provides part of the rural setting to the church and housing at Newtown.

Edges and Visual Prominence

- 11.5** The valley floor location of Kimbolton means that it is not visually prominent in views from the surrounding landscape or from roads approaching the village. The edges of the older part of the village are screened by vegetation in the park and along the river. Most of the edges of Newtown are screened by mature hedgerows although there are some abrupt edges along the B660 and Stow Road to the north.
- 11.6** The north western edge of Kimbolton comprises agricultural land and includes the floodplain of the River Kym which is delineated by trees and shrubs along the river banks. The area falls gently towards the village. Vegetation levels become more substantial on approach to the village along both the B645 and the B660 restricting views inwards. Land to the north of Kimbolton comprises arable farmland rising towards the north. The existing edge of the village is clearly defined by Stow Road with the southern side of the road edged by trees, hedges and rear gardens of properties in Aragon Place and along Stow Road.
- 11.7** The eastern side of Newtown slopes relatively steeply northeast up to Over Hills and Warren Hill where the local ridgeline contains the village. The northern part of this landscape is dominated by a single very large arable field with limited screening. Further south smaller fields situated to the east of the cemetery and the allotments benefit from a greater level of tree and hedgerow screening limiting short distance views with substantial vegetation screening the river itself. Mature trees within the cemetery form a visually prominent feature in the local landscape. The river corridor forms a green wedge through the village and helps to protect the integrity of its historic core.

- 11.8** The south eastern side of Kimbolton is dominated by the landscape of Kimbolton Park with long range views towards the north west from the B645 and the B660 through the playing fields and mature trees surrounding Kimbolton Castle. The edge of Kimbolton along the B660 sits closely within the river valley with the first indication of the village being the red brick boundary wall with a wide verge and mature trees bringing a sense of formality to this approach.
- 11.9** The south western side of the Castle grounds contain a mixture of school buildings, sports facilities and wooded grassland leading into open countryside rising significantly to the south west around Park Farm with a ridge of higher land running through woodland providing views across Kimbolton to St Andrew's Church spire and the river valley. The Butts playing fields provide an attractive area of open space at the western edge of the village across which there are long distance views over the rising agricultural landscape to the south west. The playing fields retain a parkland character and the northern and eastern boundaries contain significant vegetation which forms part of the green corridor along the River Kym.

Townscape Character

- 11.10** Kimbolton consists of two distinct parts to the north and south of the River Kym which flows through the centre of the village within a green corridor and acts as a green wedge between its old and new parts. As a whole, the village has 6 character areas (Figure 11.1 and can be viewed on the [interactive map](#)). Within the village the landscape of the River Kym valley becomes more evident as it passes through the urban area and alongside Tilbrook Road which forms the main approach from the west. Kimbolton's development has been strongly shaped by the natural landscape features which contributes strongly to the sense of place and distinctive character of the village.
- 11.11** The older part of the village lies to the south east and is characterised by the simple street pattern defined by High Street and East Street which are linked at either end and form the historic core to the village. The High Street is lined by highly distinctive Georgian fronted buildings including shops, houses and former inns to both sides framing views of the neo-classical gateway of Kimbolton School to the south eastern end, and St Andrews Church to the western end. This part of the village is surrounded to the east and south by parkland associated with Kimbolton Castle.
- 11.12** The area known as Newtown has developed on the rising land along the northern valley slopes of the River Kym. With the exception of a few older cottages, Newtown consists almost entirely of modern residential estates and includes the medical centre and primary school which serve the whole village. Two green links containing footpaths across the river connect the area to the village centre to the south east which provides a strong sense of place. The urban edge to the north west is clearly defined by existing housing beyond which the landform rises to a local ridgeline to the north.

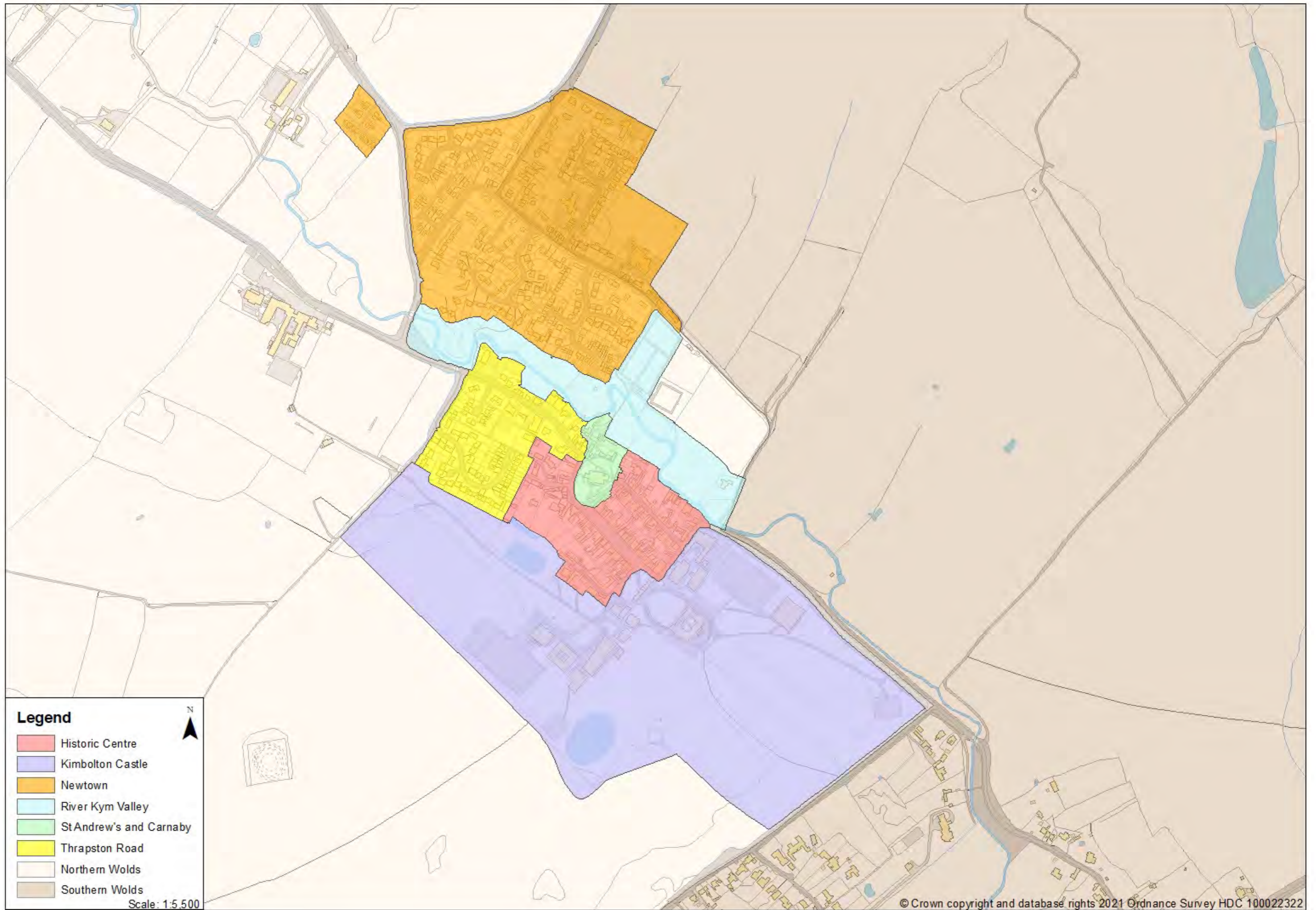


Figure 11.1 Kimbolton Character Areas

11 Kimbolton Key Service Centre

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Key Features

Historic route	High Street
Historic gateway	High Street
Landmarks	Kimbolton School and Castle
Memorable areas	The Parkland, the High Street and East Street
Key views	Views to Kimbolton Castle and of parkland surrounding the village to the east, south and west.



The wide High Street gives views to the entrance gates to Kimbolton Castle and Castle Green



The High Street contains a series of highly individual historic properties in a mix of commercial uses interspersed with homes



Sharp bends affects the eastern approach into the historic centre



Castle Green reveals views of the extensive parkland to the south and east of the village

Kimbolton Character Area 1: Kimbolton Castle



Kimbolton Castle and its grounds dominate the southern end of Kimbolton



The old brick wall and mature trees dominate the approach to Kimbolton along the B645

- 11.13** Kimbolton Castle and its parkland dominate the south eastern townscape and landscape of the village. Kimbolton Castle which is grade I listed was extensively remodelled in 1707-10 to give the house seen today which comprises four ranges around a courtyard. The ashlar faced walls have a very smooth appearance complementing the regular window arrangement with each side topped by an embattled parapet. Low square towers can be seen on the corners of the west and north elevations. The Gatehouse with its flanking pavilions is also grade I listed. It fronts onto Castle Green and forms a dominant feature in the townscape when viewed from the High Street.
- 11.14** The red brick boundary wall dominates the approach into Kimbolton from the south east along the B645. Set well back from the road the approach also benefits from wide grass verges and incorporates many mature trees providing an attractive approach into Kimbolton.
- 11.15** While the Castle dominates this character area it is strongly influenced by its educational use with modern school buildings and sports facilities situated within its extensive grounds. The grounds contain numerous mature trees, including a distinctive avenue of Wellingtonias remaining from the Victorian country house gardens which reinforces the historic nature of the parkland landscape in this area. The tree lined Duchess Walk forms a soft landscaped boundary to Kimbolton paralleling the south western edge of the village and providing a strong link between the townscape and the surrounding parkland landscape.
- 11.16** There are very limited development opportunities in this character area.



B645 frontage

Development proposals should:

- Enrich the area by reinforcing its special qualities and acknowledging its strong local character.
- Maintain and enhance physical and visual connections to key buildings and landscape views.
- Protect and conserve the heritage assets and their landscape setting.
- Maintain, and improve where possible, views to and from the Castle.
- Protect existing trees where they contribute to the high quality of the landscape setting of the Castle.
- Maintain the historic role of the parkland landscape.

11 Kimbolton Key Service Centre

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Kimbolton Character Area 2: The Historic Centre



The north western end of Kimbolton High Street contains a range of fine historic buildings, many refronted in the Georgian period and now finished with colourful render



East Street includes a mixture of timber framed and Georgian fronted properties with some retaining shop windows and archways indicating historic commercial uses

11.17 Kimbolton's Historic Centre comprises the wide High Street and the narrower East Street which was originally the service road running behind the more prestigious High Street properties. Properties are of two and three storeys and all of individual design creating significant interest in the townscape. Some 24 properties are listed reflecting the architectural and historic merit of this character area. Building types include 1A, 1B, 2B and 2D.

11.18 On the High Street the building frontages are continuous giving a sense of definition to the townscape. The wide street is heavily dominated by car parking to the detriment of the townscape. Buildings date from as far back as 1300 with a high proportion dating from the 16th and 17th centuries, many of which were refronted in the early 19th century in a neo-classical style. La Cote d'Or is a grade II* example of an early medieval town house of timber framed construction with an early 19th century street façade added including a distinctive large barrel shop window. Almost all buildings are painted and rendered with the wide variation in colours again adding significant interest to the townscape. Georgian styled sash windows dominate the upper floors of properties adding to a sense of coherence in the architectural detailing of the High Street. The High Street contains several current and former public houses, shops, cafes and other businesses adding to the vitality of the townscape.



La Cote d'Or

11.19 No. 40 High Street represents a typical example of Kimbolton High Street. Originally two 17th century ranges of buildings built at right angles to the street a single façade was added later. It comprises two storeys with attics set into a steeply pitched plain tile roof. The building is constructed in local brick then rendered and painted. The first floor demonstrates the sash windows frequently found along the High Street.



40 High Street

11.20 At the western end of the High Street facing the churchyard the road turns sharply north where the 18th century vicarage is set back from the road frontage. Grass Yard leads off this and contains a mixture of single and low two storey buildings with a footpath connecting between the Historic Centre and Castle Gardens within the Thrapston Road character area. This is a narrow lane with low brick built buildings generally fronting

directly onto the road. No. 2 Grass Yard is a grade II listed roughcast rendered 17th century cottage comprising a single storey plus attics reflecting the traditional construction of many buildings in the area prior to replacement of their façades.

11.21 East Street is significantly narrower with some breaks in the built frontage; car parking is concentrated along the north eastern side of the street. Properties are generally lower in scale than on the High Street. Listed buildings are clustered at the north-eastern and south-western sections of the street. Many properties are rendered, generally in white or cream, with plain tile roofing being a strong consistent feature in the streetscene along with windows having small panes of glass. Almost all properties are now residential although some retain features showing former commercial use, particularly with deep shop windows such as number 8. Most properties date from between the early 16th and the 19th centuries although there are a small number of 20th century infill developments although these have little impact on the overall quality of the streetscene.



East Street

11.22 There are very limited development opportunities within this area beyond changes of use.

Development proposals should:

- Enrich the area by reinforcing its special qualities and acknowledging its historic character.
- Support initiatives for the retention of existing or creation of additional services and community facilities.
- Conserve and reflect the intimate scale of the compact commercial centre on High Street.
- Maintain and enhance physical and visual connections to key buildings and landscape views.
- Reflect the existing materials, predominantly rendered walls and plain tile roofing, and soft colour palette.
- Protect and conserve the high quality of architectural detailing to properties and the retention of original architectural features coupled with promotion of high standards of design for new development.
- Reflect the existing built forms and relationship with the street in any new development.
- Protect and conserve the large number of buildings throughout the area.

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Kimbolton Character Area 3: St Andrew's and Carnaby



St Andrew's church spire and lychgate dominate the view to the north western end of the High Street



The junction of Thrapston Road with Carnaby leads to a distinctive cluster of historic cottages

11.23 St Andrew's Lane connects the northern ends of the High Street and East Street and has a close relationship with the Historic Centre character area with St Andrew's Church spire being visible throughout that area and the lychgate forming a focal point at the north-western end of the High Street. St Andrew's Church is mainly 14th century in external appearance and is grade I listed representing building type 6A. A mid-19th century listed gault and red brick wall surrounds most of the churchyard which includes a series of listed table tombs. A small number of residential properties face directly onto the churchyard with footpath accesses to the front. This unusual arrangement creates a very tranquil area within the townscape. Built in around 1800 no. 5 Church Yard is a two storey timber framed and plastered house with a plain tiled mansard roof which contributes positively to the streetscene in the immediate area. Properties broadly represent building type 1B. Materials and colours are highly varied although strongly coloured rendering is prominent.



3-5 Church Yard

11.24 Carnaby is a narrow street without separate pavements which continues north to provide a footpath link across the River Kym to Kimbolton cemetery situated at the eastern end of Newtown. Carnaby contains just five homes all of which are listed as being of historic interest. The earliest (no.4) dates from the 16th century with the newest (nos. 1 and 3) being from the early 19th century. Each property is of highly individual design with materials including timber framing, local red brick and roughcast plastering. Roofing presents a more unified picture with all being plain tile hung. These are reflective of building type 1B and 2A.



Pentargen House

11.25 There are very limited development opportunities in this character area.

Development proposals should:

- Enrich the area by reinforcing its special qualities and acknowledging its historic character.
- Maintain and enhance physical and visual connections to key buildings and landscape views.
- Reflect the existing materials, predominantly rendered walls and plain tile roofing, and soft colour palette.
- Protect and conserve the high quality of architectural detailing to properties and the retention of original architectural features coupled with promotion of high standards of design for new development.
- Support the retention of the tranquil nature of St Andrew's churchyard.

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Kimbolton Character Area 4: Thrapston Road



Tollfield is a distinctive cul de sac of spaciouly set semi-detached mid 20th century homes to the south of Thrapston Road built prior to much the Newtown expansion



Robnson's bus garage has been converted to include a local foodstore adding to the provision of local services and vitality along Thrapston Road

11.26 Thrapston Road has a mixed character reflecting its role as a historic route between Kimbolton and Northamptonshire. Buildings to the north side of the road take a linear form with development beyond this constrained by the River Kym. The north eastern end of Thrapston Road contains a small but very distinctive group of red brick terraced houses built directly onto the back of the pavement with bay windows and mock-Tudor panels and timber framing to the first floor decorating strong gables dating from the early 20th century and representing an example of building type 3A. Further west along the north side of Thrapston Road are several late 18th and 19th century listed cottages typically comprising two storeys plus attics with dormer windows being a common feature. Other building types include 1B, 2A and 4.



3-9 Thrapston Road

11.27 On the same side, Robinson's garage, incorporating a small supermarket, forms a dominant feature in the streetscape being set back behind a large forecourt. The final property is the former Methodist Chapel comprising building type 6B, now used as offices this is set well back from the road frontage with hardstanding to the front. The edge of the village is clearly defined as it is enclosed by the River Kym and a belt of woodland.

11.28 The southern side of Thrapston Road includes a cluster of civic buildings with a public hall, fire station and scout hut. Beyond these is Tollfield, a single cul-de-sac of semi-detached homes of type 3D, built immediately post WWII to a very symmetrical design with a distinctive semi-hexagonal bay window to the ground floor and steeply pitched brown tiled roofs. These are well set back from the road frontage and separated by side gardens.

11.29 The access road to Castle Gardens forms the edge of this character area and the village leading to an area of late 20th century housing of building type 3E built off a single cul-de-sac wrapping around the southern boundaries of Thrapston Road properties. Castle Gardens predominantly contains homes of pale or yellow brick, some painted in pastel shades, arranged in a mixture of detached and terraced forms. Garden depths are irregular with side and frontage parking being provided. The streetscene is softened by substantial tree and shrub planting in front gardens.



Castle Gardens

Development proposals should:

- Ensure that development responds positively to the specific opportunities available in the area.
- Maintain and enhance physical and visual connections to key buildings and views.
- Promote high standards of design and support creativity in architectural detailing.
- Maintain, and where possible improve, views to the River Kym and protect the accompanying woodland as a green backdrop to the village.
- Protect the surrounding areas of greenspace and woodland to the south and west of Castle Gardens which contribute to the character of the area.
- Support initiatives for the retention, expansion and creation of services and community facilities along Thrapston Road.

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Kimbolton Character Area 5: River Kym Valley



This footpath connects Carnaby to the cemetery at Newtown crossing the River Kym



The River Kym maintains natural banks with trees lining the river channel through the village

- 11.30** The River Kym Valley forms an integral component of Kimbolton by forming the northern boundary to the historic part of the village separating this from the Newtown character area. Trees follow the riverbanks all along the valley. The river meanders through a swathe of grassland with additional trees which contributes to the setting of built development to either side.
- 11.31** Within the village the only road connection across the River Kym Valley is the B660 Station Road at the north western end of the village with the river flowing under the road. Footpaths provide pedestrian bridges across the valley from Thrapston Road immediately west of the old Methodist chapel and from Carnaby to the cemetery in Newtown. On the northern side of the area the cemetery provides an extensive green space which, although much more formal in nature, relates well to the character of the river valley due to the dominance of the mature trees within it. The two cemetery lodges are listed; they are constructed of gault brick with red brick banding with unusual fishscale shaped roof tiles and represent building type 2C.

Development proposals should:

- Protect and conserve the River Kym and the grassland and trees of its valley and the landscape setting it provides to adjoining development.
- Provide increased opportunities for wildlife and nature conservation initiatives both along the river valley and in the cemetery to enhance the area's ecological value.
- Maintain and improve the pedestrian links across the river enhancing the connectivity between Newtown and the historic part of Kimbolton.

Kimbolton Character Area 6: Newtown



Mock Tudor detailing and brown pantile roofs are prevalent throughout Ashfield



Pale brick predominates in Aragon Place where mature trees add character to the area

11.32 Newtown Lane and the road called Newtown historically served Ashfield Cottage, a late 17th century listed farmhouse and some cottages and served as access to the cemetery remaining largely isolated until the early 1970s. Dukes Row is situated to the east of Ashfield and comprises a small group of mid-19th century cottages originally built to accommodate workers at Kimbolton Castle. Representing building type 2A, the cottages are built of buff brick with grey slate roofs but have very limited impact in the streetscene being situated south of properties facing onto the Newtown street frontage and well screened by trees.

11.33 Substantial growth in the Newtown area started in the 1970s mostly from the western end but also included construction of the primary school, building type 7B, which forms the north eastern boundary of the area. Amongst the earliest modern housing in the area is that on Aragon Place which contains large detached and semi-detached homes in generous plots with maturing trees. These properties represent the crossover period between mid and late 20th century housing, types 3D and 3E. Fronting Stow Road is a cluster of predominantly bungalows of type 3D. Maurice Close forms an enclave of mainly semi-detached homes built in yellow brick with pantile roofs in type 3E.

11.34 North of Newtown road, Hunters Way comprises mainly 1980s built homes. These are constructed predominantly in red brick with pantile roofs, representing type 3E. Mock-Tudor detailing is frequently used, especially on detached two storey properties. A group of semi-detached bungalows with brown window frames is situated at the northern end of Hunters Way. Front gardens and driveways directly abut the pavement throughout with no intervening grass verges. Homes are situated at a consistent set back from the pavement giving a regular appearance to the layout.



Hunters Way

11.35 South of Newtown road, Ashfield is a long cul-de-sac which comprises a similar group of 1980s built detached homes, type 3E, with mock-Tudor detailing being prevalent throughout. Low hedges frequently denote the boundary between front gardens and pavements, with both side and frontage on-plot parking being provided. The relationship to the street of houses is very varied on Ashfield with irregular plot depths and angles of property frontages to the street.

11.36 East of Dukes Row lies Constable Gardens which contains similar homes to those in Ashfield and Hunters Way although built slightly later. Both mock-Tudor detailing and rendered panels add variety. Constable Gardens contains a greater variety of housing with a mixture of detached, semi-detached and short terraced

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forms all being included. Front gardens are of variable depth depending on the disposition of plots relative to the road with many taken up at least in part for car parking. Accessed off Constable Leys is St Andrews Court which represents the only cluster of 21st century housing, type 3F, within the Newtown character area. The styling of St Andrews Court is very distinctive comprising flat fronted properties in a mixture of red or yellow brick and pale render. Accessed off a shared surface, the houses are built very close to the street frontage with only a few having front gardens.

- 11.37** Somewhat detached from the main part of the Newtown character area lies Montagu Gardens. Comprising 16 inter-war semi-detached properties this small sub-area has a very strong, distinctive character. Other than the two properties closest to the B660 which have both had side extensions built, these retain a very symmetrical appearance with flat fronts and hipped roofs. Constructed from yellow brick with concrete tiles the homes face onto a very narrow roadway from which they are separated by deep front gardens.
- 11.38** The southern edge of this character area directly abuts the River Kym Valley area which provides a green setting to properties, many of which have rear gardens adjoining the trees and grassland within the river valley. These contribute significantly to the backdrop of the housing whilst preventing views connecting the Newtown character area through to the Historic Centre.
- 11.39** On the edge of the character area are two site allocations: KB1 (West of Station Road) and KB2 (North of Station Road/Stowe Road). In combination these are allocated in the [Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036](#) for approximately 85 homes. KB1 has planning permission. KB2 is located on land that slopes down to the highway, therefore landscaping and the layout and density of proposals will need to respond to the topography of the land. Their development will result in changes to the boundary of the character area or may result in new character areas.
- 11.40** The area is likely to evolve through site allocations in the Local Plan on the edge of the character area, apart from these, development proposals are limited to extensions and alterations to existing properties.

Development proposals should:

- Ensure that new development responds positively to the specific opportunities available within the area.
- Ensure extensions and alterations to existing properties are of an appropriate size and scale to the original dwelling and do not detract from the surrounding area.
- Be sympathetic to the materials and colour palette in the immediate vicinity.
- Maintain and enhance physical and visual connections to key buildings and landscape views.
- Ensure the adequate provision of car parking to minimise the impact on the street scene of on-street parking.
- Protect and enhance the limited green space provision and provide additional street trees where space and service restrictions permit.
- Support proposals for renewable energy and active modes of transport.
- Maintain and enhance connectivity between the Newtown character area and the historic village centre.

12 Sawtry Key Service Centre

- 12.1** Sawtry is situated on the western edge of the Fen Margin Landscape Character Area midway between Peterborough and Huntingdon.

Landscape Setting

- 12.2** Sawtry is situated at the junction of the Fen Margin and the Central Claylands Landscape Character Areas. The village itself and land immediately to the south lies within the Fen Margin area and is influenced by the Fenland landscape. However, the A1(M) cuts through the landscape immediately to the east of Sawtry giving a sense of physical and visual separation from this wider context. To the south east, the landscape is flat, relatively open and typical of the Fen Margin and the views out across the open agricultural landscape of the Fen Margin.
- 12.3** The landscape surrounding the village on the western side lies within the Central Claylands Landscape Character Area. It has more undulating topography and contains open fields interspersed with ancient woodlands such as Aversley Wood. Immediately to the south west the landform rises up significantly towards the local ridgeline at High Holborn Hill. The Northern Wolds approach close to the western side of Sawtry and the relatively high hills within this visually contain the wider landscape.

Edges and Visual Prominence

- 12.4** Overall Sawtry is visually well contained to the east and west due to the nature of the surrounding landform and screening along highways. Unlike many villages in the district, All Saints parish church has no tower and there are no other prominent landmarks within the village to announce the presence of the village in the landscape.
- 12.5** The north western edge of Sawtry comprises land that rises steadily to the north west and is separated from the village by Sawtry Brook which forms a prominent linear feature in the landscape having been artificially straightened and deepened with trees and hedgerows along much of its length. To the north the fields are relatively large and there are long distance views across the agricultural landscape. To the east the land starts to rise forming a low ridge between the northern part of the village and the A1(M).
- 12.6** The eastern edge of the village is closely contained by the A1(M) where the planted road embankments and noise barriers along Bill Hall Way and the A1(M) screen the majority of views toward the village. The area contains a network of hedgerows and in part forms the setting of All Saints Church. The south eastern part of this area comprises rough grassland and is visually very well contained.
- 12.7** A open agricultural landscape forms the southern edge of Sawtry which is typical of the Fen Margin area. Again an artificially straightened watercourse runs close to existing properties forming the immediate edge with open views across the area from Coppingford Road and St Judith's Lane. To the south west of the village on the lower slopes of High Holborn Hill are allotments, a recreation ground and arable fields. The landform rises steeply from the edge of the village to form a locally prominent ridge line providing a strong sense of containment to the landscape and longer distance views. The landscape on the south western edge of the village comprises a mixture of arable and pastoral fields interspersed with some hedgerows.

Townscape Character

- 12.8** Archaeological evidence points to a settlement around Sawtry from pre-Roman times, including an Iron Age farmstead, Roman field systems complemented by a medieval village and church, and a possible civil war gun battery. The site of the medieval village, now protected as a Scheduled Monument, lies to the north east of the village. The reasons for abandonment of the medieval village are not clear, but for some reason, the settlement relocated to the west.

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- 12.9** The historic core of the village, which is defined by historic buildings along the High Street and at The Green, is designated a conservation area. Other notable historic buildings, including Manor House Farm, can be found to the southern edge of the village at Green End. The parish church is a modest Victorian building, situated on rising land to the eastern edge of the village. Within the historic core, Sawtry retains a strong village character, created by the arrangement of terraced brick cottages and town houses along the High Street and surrounding The Green. Within the historic core, Sawtry retains a strong village character, created by the arrangement of terraced brick cottages and town houses along the High Street and surrounding The Green. A number of roads within the village, for example Chapel End, have retained their distinctive rural character but in general, the character of the village is dominated by post 1950s development comprising a variety of architectural styles and materials.
- 12.10** Twelve character areas have been identified (Figure 12.1 and can be viewed on the [interactive map](#)). The village has expanded considerably over recent years though post war residential development. Large residential estates dominate the southern approaches to the village and development has extended to Sawtry Brook to the north west, and the rising landform of High Holborn Hill to the south west. School playing fields form large green spaces in the centre of the village and a small industrial estate has developed at its northern end.
- 12.11** Unlike other settlements on the Great North Road such as Buckden and Stilton, the coaching trade had relatively little impact on the form of the village and there are no coaching inns or Georgian town houses within the historic core. The present A1 (and the associated link road at Bill Hall Way) now provide a strong eastern edge to the village although areas of open land currently separate the urban edge from these roads. To east of the A1 is the Blackhorse Business Park.

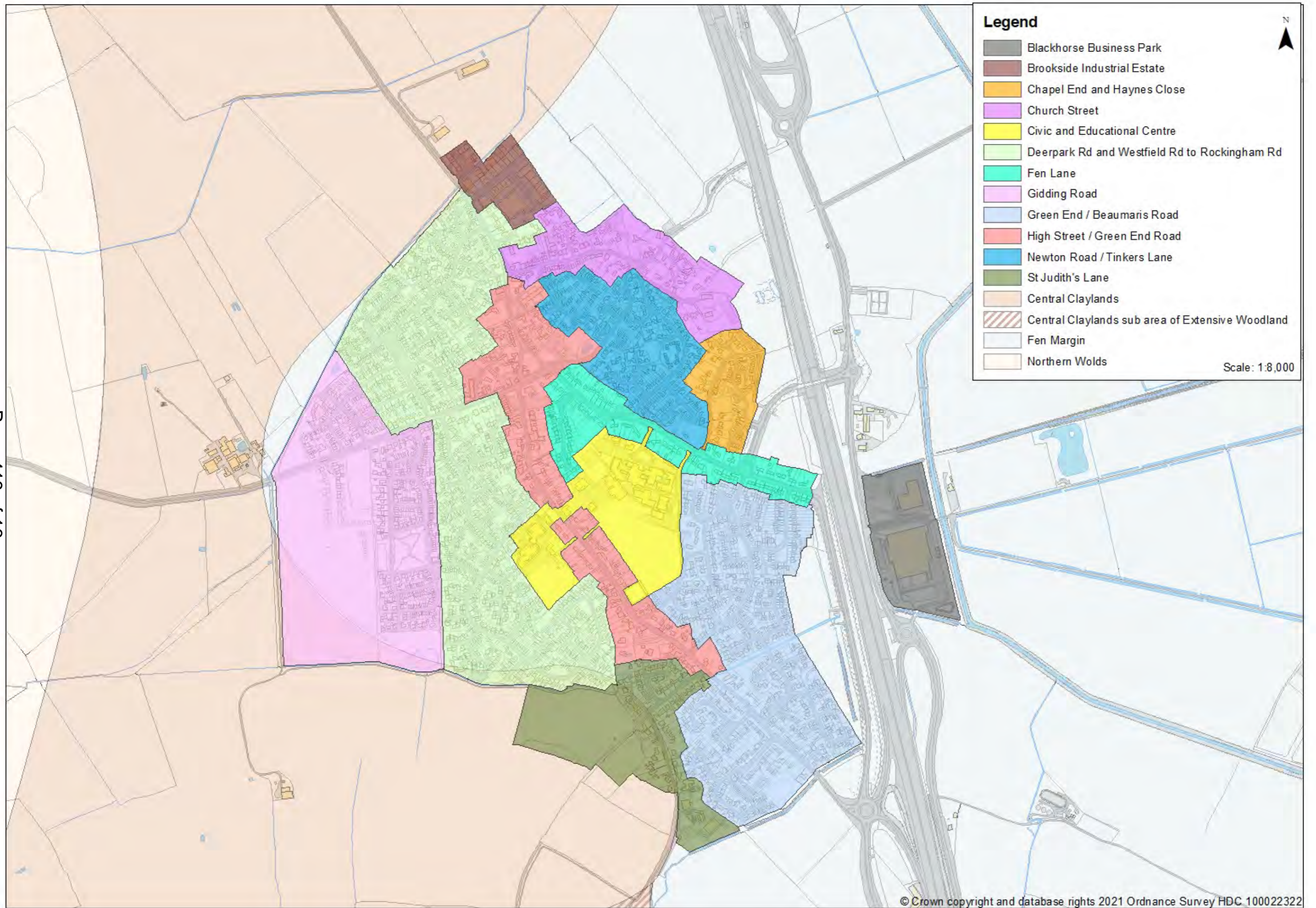


Figure 12.1 Sawtry Character Areas

Key Features

Historic route	The High Street, Green End Road
Historic gateway	Gidding Road, Green End Road
Landmarks	Manor House Farm, All Saints Church
Memorable areas	The Green, All Saints Church, St Judith's recreation ground
Key views	South towards High Holborn Hill and north-east over the Scheduled Monument



The Green forms a distinctive central point in the village



Sawtry experienced significant growth during the 20th century



View from the end of St Judiths Lane over the Central Claylands landscape character area which publicrights of way to Aversley Woods



All Saints Church

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Sawtry Character Area 1: High Street/Green End Road



The junction between Gidding Road, High Street, Green End Road, Tinkers Lane and Tinkers Lane form a distinctive village centre



Early to mid 20th century housing, typically semi-detached with generous front gardens are found along Green End Road

12.12 This character area includes the historic route into and out of the village and includes most of the village's Conservation Area designation. It extends along the key route through the village along Green End which becomes the High Street at the centrally located triangular green, the Sawtry Civic and Educational Centre character area splits this character area into two. Building types within the character area vary greatly with types 1B, 2A, 2B, 2D, 2E, 3A, 3B, 3D, 3E, 3F and 5D present. This reflects many additions made over time which have reflected varying materials, styles and designs creating an interesting historic route into the centre of the village.



Parade shops on Greenway

12.13 The main area is focused around The Green which forms a junction between Green End Road, Gidding Road, Fen Lane, Tinkers Lane and High Street forming its distinctive centre. It has a strong village character with a mix of house types, shops, services and facilities including a dentist, surgery, food shops, public house, takeaways, fire station, women's institute and working men's club. These are dispersed along the character area with a cluster of these found within a parade of units along Greenway, these are set back from the road allowing space for car parking and grassed areas, the land also rises up slightly here. The centre is however strongly influenced by roads, traffic and signage.

12.14 There is a more enclosed feel around The Green, some Victorian and Edwardian terraced properties have no set back from the pavement or short front gardens. This area also has the greatest concentration of the oldest buildings in the village and many of Sawtry's listed buildings. A notable example is the Greystone public house which faces onto The Green. This is a grade II listed building formerly a house but now a public house. It dates to the early 19th century, is limestone ashlar faced, with modern interlocking roof tiles and three modern dormer windows added. It is an example of building 2E. A listed 19th century single storey village-lock is located here highlighting this area's historical and social significance as the village centre.



Greystone public house

12.15 Tinkers Lane provides a contrast to this with its narrow village lane quality. A boundary wall and dense tree planting shields the listed no.1 Tinkers Lane from view and provides a green edge to the character area with the adjacent mid-20th century bungalow development on the other side of Tinkers Lane.

12.16 To the north of this area is the grade II listed Manor House. It was built in 1795 of local gault brick, flemish bond with paler bricks to the front wall and a plain tiled, mansard roof. It is set in large grounds behind a low boundary wall running along the footpath. Extensive tree planting screen it from view and add to the village like feel of the area. Opposite is Mellors Court which contrasts with the general character of the area as it is a 1970s building of 22 flats used as sheltered housing. It has a large set back from Glatton Road allowing space for parking. Its only access is via the historic centre hence its inclusion within the character area.

12.17 The area south of the Civic and Educational character area consists of a collection of properties dating to the early and mid 20th century along Green End. Most are semi-detached pairs with a central chimney stack arranged regularly in long rectangular plots with modest front gardens. Materials include white and pastel colour render and dark roof tiles. There has been some infill development utilising spare land over time. Many properties have spacious front gardens with low hedges which separate public and private space without enclosing the street scene.

12.18 Within this area are some community facilities such as a vets, garage, shops and the Bell Inn. The Bell Inn is a two-storey building, with a rendered and painted brick façade under a slate tiled roof with sash windows decorating the external elevations of the building. The pub also has an associated outbuilding to the rear as well as an enclosed pub garden. Properties within this area are generally set in larger irregular plots. No. 32 Green End (the White Cottage) is grade II listed and is a notable building on the street scene. It is a late 17th century/ early 18th century timber framed building which is rendered and has long straw thatch. It contrasts with the general pattern of development which has developed around it and is a local landmark on the approach into the village due to the openness of the school playing field located to the south of it.



The Bell Inn

12.19 This is a varied character area with scope to alter and extend existing properties with some limited opportunities for infill development.

Development proposals should:

- Protect and conserve the historic buildings within the character area and the Conservation Area designation.
- Enrich the character of the area by reinforcing and acknowledging its historic character and its central location within the village.
- Reflect the existing materials and colour palette of the immediate vicinity.
- Support initiatives for the retention of existing or creation of additional services and community facilities.
- Consider the impact on the street scene of shopfront design and building renovations.
- Promote high standards of design and architectural detailing to enhance the historic character of the area.
- Protect the existing mature trees where these contribute to the character of the street scene.
- Ensure extensions and alterations to existing properties are of an appropriate size and scale to the original dwelling and do not detract from the surrounding area.
- Maintain and enhance physical and visual connections to key buildings and open spaces and support permeability of the area.

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Sawtry Character Area 2: Civic and Educational Centre



Sawtry Village Academy



The Old School House now used by the Parish Council for meetings along Green End Road

- 12.20** The Sawtry Civic and Educational Area is a centrally based character area located on either side of Green End Road. It contains a mix of uses including Sawtry Village Academy and sports grounds, Sawtry Junior and Infant schools, library, children's nurseries, youth/community centre, leisure centre, sports courts and a bowling green. The concentration of educational and leisure uses as well as the modern school buildings and sports facilities situated in fairly large grounds to accommodate car parking and playing fields and equipment justify splitting this area into its own character area. Whilst the built edges of the village have expanded over time, the civic and educational uses in the centre of the village ties them and the growing population together.
- 12.21** The buildings within this character area predominantly demonstrate building type 7B and are set back from the immediate street scene so they do not overpower it. The street scene along Green End is heavily influenced by traffic, road signs and crossings. The Old School House is an example of type 7A and is a building of note within the street scene contrasting with the mix of residential houses and bungalows found along Green End Road. The Old School House is now used as a village hall and by the Parish Council.
- 12.22** Most of these facilities are accessed from Green End Road with Sawtry Village Academy (a secondary school and sixth form) being accessed from Fen Lane. The various school grounds and sports facilities provide a fairly open character with some areas of hardstanding for car parking and other areas of greenspace. It is a fairly well contained space with hedging and fencing in part due to safety as these facilities are located along a central route in and out of Sawtry and also due to the residential growth around them where boundary fences to residential properties have further enclosed these sites.
- 12.23** There are limited development opportunities in this character area, apart from small scale proposals for enhanced or new sports facilities and play equipment or additional school rooms.

Development proposals should:

- Ensure that development responds positively to the specific opportunities available to reinforce the educational and leisure uses in the area.
- Support and retain the current uses in the character area through renovation, refurbishment or extensions to buildings.
- Reflect appropriate architectural detailing, materials and colour palette in the design of new buildings.
- Protect the existing open space and grass verges that provide the spacious setting to development.
- Maintain and enhance where possible hedge planting along boundaries and along Green End Road.
- Support provision of renewable energy where visually appropriate.
- Support provision of facilities which encourage active modes of transport.

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Sawtry Character Area 3: Church Street



All Saints Church



Terraces along Church Street

12.24 This is a characterful and historically influenced area which wraps around the north eastern part of the village. Church Street is the principal street with several roads and lanes diverging from it. It has a distinctly more village like nature with several narrow lanes and significant amounts of tree planting within the area and along its edge to screen the visual impact of the A1(M) to the east. Also, the Sawtry moat and shrunken medieval village Scheduled Monument lies to the north of the character area and contributes to the area's setting and historic significance as it was historically the village centre before it was relocated to the west (see the High Street/ Green End Road character area).

12.25 Church Street is a residential area with properties from various ages, they are predominately two storeys but there are several bungalows. There are several older properties, Victorian and Edwardian properties demonstrating building types 1B, 2A and 2B. There has been infill development over time which has been sensitively integrated by broadly reflecting the style and materials of existing buildings which has reinforced the area's character. These reflect building types 3D, 3E and 3F. Warren Croft is an example of modern in-depth development from Church Street further diversifying the housing found within the character area.



Warren Croft

12.26 Church Street continues up to a small junction with Tort Hill, Tinkers Lane and Church Causeway. At this point properties on the south side of Church Street have a much shorter set back from the road while those on the northern side have very deep set backs creating a varied and open feel. Tort Hill extends into the countryside with only a handful of properties. Rectory Close is another example of modern in-depth development from Tort Hill which has infilled the land north of the Rectory and the Old Rectory. It has several large detached properties set in large plots, generous open space and double garages. A footpath connects to Church Causeway.



Tort Hill

12.27 Church Causeway has high hedges and dense planting which obscure many homes from public view and contribute to the area's green character. Also on Church Causeway is the Old Rectory, a mid-Victorian property with many original features (building type 2E). It has a driveway with trees and vegetation obscuring it from public view.

12.28 A key landmark of this area is the grade II listed All Saints Church located at the end of Church Causeway. It is situated on fairly high ground making it noticeable across the village. All Saints Church is the only one still standing of the three original parish churches within Sawtry. The existing Church is a fairly new church built on the site of the original All Saints Church in 1879/80. At this time the other parish church, St Andrews was also demolished but not rebuilt. There are windows and memorials from St Andrews in the church and its construction incorporates 13th century material such as reused coursed limestone with parapetted plain tiled roofs. This demonstrates building type 6A. There are two public rights of way leading out onto the site of the Scheduled Monument.

12.29 This is a sensitive area whose historic and countryside setting are key considerations.

Development proposals should:

- Protect and conserve the setting of All Saints Church and other designated heritage assets such as the Conservation Area and Schedule Monument.
- Enrich the character of the area by reinforcing and acknowledging its historic character
- Mitigate harm to the countryside particularly to the north and eastern edges of the character area.
- Ensure that new development responds positively to the specific opportunities available within the area.
- Ensure extensions and alterations to existing properties are of an appropriate size and scale to the original dwelling and do not detract from the surrounding area.
- Be sympathetic to the materials and colour palette in the immediate vicinity.
- Protect the existing areas of open space and tree planting which contribute to the character of the area and those that assist in screening the noise and visual prominence of the A1(M).
- Maintain and enhance where possible opportunities for public rights of way.

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Sawtry Character Area 4: Chapel End and Haynes Close



Chapel End terraces



Detached homes within Haynes Close with open space

12.30 This is a small but character area located to the south of the Church Street character area on the eastern edge of the village. It consists of two roads Chapel End and Haynes Close which are connected via a walkway. It has a closer association in feel to Church Causeway located to the north and has limited permeability to the Newtown Road/ Tinkers Lane character area.

12.31 In the east of the character area is Chapel End, a narrow country lane without a footpath. It has a collection of mixed-aged housing typically large and detached. 25 Chapel End is a grade II listed late 17th century cottage of timber frame part exposed, on brick plinth with long straw thatch. As well as detached homes are Victorian terraces of building type 2A which add additional variety to the character area.

12.32 Recent additions and extensions have been made to Chapel End including extending existing properties within their spacious plots. Infill development has also taken place, for example between 8 and 18 Chapel End with new dwellings which have a mix of traditional and contemporary design features including external side chimneys on both properties which is also reflected on existing dwellings in their vicinity. More contemporary features include partial cladding to the front elevation with the use of render and contemporary fenestration.



Chapel End modern house

12.33 To the east of Chapel End and connected via a walkway is a cluster of modern development in Haynes Close completed in 2019 located between St Andrews Way and Chapel End. The homes are building type 3F with a mixture of large detached homes, terraces and semi-detached homes. Some terraces turn with the road to create a continuous frontage. The landscaping throughout the area reinforces a village like nature with areas of green space with a dense tree belt forming a boundary with St Andrews Way and two ponds surrounded by vegetation and trees. This also assists in screening the area from the nearby A1(M).



Walkway between Chapel End and Haynes Close

12.34 Development opportunities are limited following recent additions to the character area, however there may be opportunities for alterations and extensions to existing properties.

Development proposals should:

- Protect and conserve the setting of designated heritage assets in the area.
- Enrich the character of the area by reinforcing and acknowledging its historic character.
- Mitigate harm to the countryside particularly to the north and eastern edges of the character area.
- Ensure that new development responds positively to the specific opportunities available within the area.
- Ensure extensions and alterations to existing properties are of an appropriate size and scale to the original dwelling and do not detract from the surrounding area.
- Be sympathetic to the materials and colour palette in the immediate vicinity.
- Protect the existing mature trees and hedges where these contribute to the character of the area.
- Protect the existing areas of open space and tree planting which contribute to the character of the area and those that assist in screening the noise and visual prominence of the A1(M).

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Sawtry Character Area 5: Newton Road/Tinkers Lane



Newtown Road



Manor Close

12.35 This character area is located to the south of Church Street and Church Causeway and north of Fen Lane. It consists of predominantly infill developments since the 1980s but there are areas of older development. Development is mixed with building types 3D, 3E and 3F present.

12.36 Due to pockets of infill development, varying designs and architectural detailing can be found throughout the character area. Annesley Close is an example of this with its steep roof lines incorporating integrated garages with velux windows. Another is the mock Tudor detailing found along Newtown Road particularly on its northern end closest to Church Causeway. There are few other examples of such housing within the village. Other detached modern homes are found in infill development along Tinkers Lane. Materials throughout the character area are varied with red, buff and grey brick, mock Tudor detailing, dark and red roof tiles and white render.



Tinkers Lane

12.37 A cul-de-sac style is present with varying set backs from the road with a range boundary treatments such as low boundary walls and hedges. There are also some small verges which contribute to the character of the area however, the character area has a more compact feel than other residential character areas within the village. The exception to this is in the east of the character area at Chapel End and Haynes Close which are sensitively located on the edge of the village.

12.38 Densities vary, with areas of lower density housing such as clusters of higher density terraced housing such as in Annesley Close and the Granary and semi-detached properties within Park Road. As such, plots sizes vary throughout the area with generally larger detached homes on more varied shaped than areas of semi-detached and terraced housing.



Park Road

12.39 There are limited opportunities for further major development with remaining opportunities for extensions and alterations to existing properties.

Development proposals should:

- Ensure that new development responds positively to the specific opportunities available within the area.
- Ensure extensions and alterations to existing properties are of an appropriate size and scale to the original dwelling and do not detract from the surrounding area.
- Be sympathetic to the materials and colour palette in the immediate vicinity.
- Support provision of renewable energy where visually appropriate.
- Where necessary, consider and not cause harm to the character of a listed building or the nearby Conservation Area or their setting.
- Protect the existing trees where these contribute to the character of the street scene and consider ways of increasing vegetation cover where space and service restrictions permit.
- Promote opportunities for enhancement of amenity green spaces to provide increased opportunities for recreation and nature conservation and to help provide distinctive local landmarks.
- Maintain and enhance physical connections to nearby shops and community facilities and support permeability of the area.
- Retain, maintain and enhance where possible tree and hedge planting, particularly along the A1(M) and to the wider open countryside.

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Sawtry Character Area 6: Fen Lane



Semi-detached weatherboarded homes along Fen Lane located on raised ground



Maltings Lane is accessed from Fen Lane and provides diversity in housing design and types

12.40 This is a linear character area located to the north east of the High Street/Green End character area and adjoins the Sawtry Civic and Educational character area. It extends eastwards towards the built edge of the village up to Bill Hall Way and connections to the A1(M).

12.41 Its character is defined by its relationship to Fen Lane and the low density semi-detached (with some detached) properties dating from the 1920s. The Maltings is the only example of in depth development within the character area. Building types include 3B, 3D and 3E. The character area is residential but there is also a day care and butchers. The spacious nature of plots means there have been opportunities for some infill development. While of varying designs the layout and relationship with the road and wider area have been incorporated and buff brick frequently used.

12.42 Properties along Fen Lane are typically semi-detached and mixed between single storey and two storey properties. Materials include red brick, white and pastel render and weatherboarding. Some rendered properties have alternating brickwork design on the edges of the property adding further diversity. Properties are set within long rectangular plots with those on the northern side of Fen Lane having particularly spacious front gardens. There are several verges and hedges. Properties that border Sawtry Village Academy are on raised ground with low fencing clearly marking out public and private space. These factors provide the character area with a green feel with increased opportunities for tree and hedge planting.



Pastel rendered properties

12.43 The Maltings consists of 28 properties built in the late 1990s, most are detached. It has a more enclosed feel due to spacing and size of plots. There is a fairly central green space. The design of these properties contrasts with those along Fen Lane as they have gables to front elevations, bay windows, porches, side or integrated garages and some dormer windows. The colour palette is varied but consists of a set pattern of a main brick colour (buff or red brick) or white render and then alternating brickwork within to contrast.

12.44 This is an established residential area with opportunities for extensions and alterations to exiting properties.

Development proposals should:

- Ensure that new development responds positively to the specific opportunities available within the area.
- Ensure extensions and alterations to existing properties are of an appropriate size and scale to the original dwelling and do not detract from the surrounding area.
- Be sympathetic to the materials and colour palette in the immediate vicinity.
- Support provision of renewable energy where visually appropriate.
- Protect the existing trees where these contribute to the character of the street scene and consider ways of increasing vegetation cover where space and service restrictions permit.
- Promote opportunities for enhancement of amenity green spaces to provide increased opportunities for recreation and nature conservation and to help provide distinctive local landmarks.
- Maintain and enhance physical connections to nearby shops and community facilities and support permeability of the area.

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Sawtry Character Area 7: Deerpark Road and Westfield Road to Rockingham Road



Deerpark Road with its spacious layout, green spaces and lower density housing



Rockingham Way with Green End in the background

12.45 The village has grown significantly as a result of residential development post the second world war. This area is roughly 'L' shaped and is bordered by 21st century development to the west, the Civic Centre and the High Street/Green End Road area to the east. Its southern most edge looks over St Judith's Field. It consists of development south and north of Gidding Road. The majority of the housing in the character area dates to 1960s and 1970s, however there have been pockets of infill development and expansion in the 1980s and 1990s and later minor single infill developments. The most notable of these include the Briars and north along Deerpark Road which has extended the built environment of this character area to Glatton Road in the east with some properties facing onto the road. Opposite these along Glatton road a several bungalows and Chapman Grove, a small modern development of detached homes.



Later house type on Deerpark Road

12.46 Properties demonstrate variations in design and materials but all share a consistent character representing building type 3D, with a pocket of 3E around the Briars. While not all built at the same time, properties demonstrate variations in design and materials that share a consistent character. This provides the character area with many varying architectural styles creating various points of interest. There are several arterial roads (Deerpark Road, Westfield Road, Middlemoor Road and Rockingham Road) with many small residential roads, streets and lanes diverging.

12.47 Throughout the character area there is a mix of property types including two storey, bungalows, chalet style bungalows and a handful of 2.5/3 storey properties within Windsor Road. Some roads are exclusively bungalows and chalet style bungalows such as Mill View, Abbey Close and Glebe Road. These are dispersed throughout the area providing greater variety in the housing stock of the village. The dominant materials and colour palette are buff brick, grey brick, red brick, grey tiles and weatherboarding of varying colours. Plots are generally regular in shape with varying sized front gardens, on-plot parking and garages (there are some garage blocks for those properties without one). Later development is less regimented with plot sizes varying, however, materials are typically less varied consisting of predominately brick.



Windsor Road

12.48 Some properties have low boundary walls clearly marking out public and private space, while others have large front gardens which merge with public space and verges creating an open feel and increasing opportunities for tree planting as well as places for children to play. Jubilee Walk is also an example of a walkway between residential streets increasing the permeability of the area. These break up development and create a more open and peaceful character complementing the residential use.

12.49 Properties within Bramble End, Monks Way and Rockingham Way have a greater relationship with the Central Claylands landscape. Properties benefit from views out across the countryside and across St Judith's Field and being of single storey have a limited impact on the rising wider countryside and High Holborn Hill.



Monks Way

12.50 There are limited infill opportunities remaining with greater opportunities to alter or extend existing properties.

Development proposals should:

- Ensure that new development responds positively to the specific opportunities available within the area.
- Ensure extensions and alterations to existing properties are of an appropriate size and scale to the original dwelling and do not detract from the surrounding area.
- Be sympathetic to the materials and colour palette in the immediate vicinity.
- Protect the existing trees where these contribute to the character of the street scene and consider ways of increasing vegetation cover where space and service restrictions permit.
- Promote opportunities for enhancement of amenity green spaces to provide increased opportunities for recreation and nature conservation and to help provide distinctive local landmarks.
- Maintain and enhance physical and visual connections to key buildings and open spaces and support permeability of the area.
- Support provision of renewable energy where visually appropriate.

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Sawtry Character Area 8: Gidding Road



Rowell Way development has a central play space with houses looking onto it creating a strong focal point to the development



Jackson Walk detached house

12.51 This character area is located on the western side of the village along Gidding Road. It includes most of the largescale 21st century extensions to the village. They can be split into three developments (in chronological order): Rowell Way, Bowlands Place and Judith Gardens. As these are major developments the design and construction of each provide a consistent character within them and a strong sense of place. All developments demonstrate building type 3F and are predominantly two storey houses, there are some single storey properties and maisonettes dispersed throughout to provide diversity in the housing provided.

12.52 The oldest buildings within the character area are Mill Cottage and the Old Mill located on the south side of Gidding Road enclosed by Rowell Way and Judith Gardens. The Old Mill provides a notable local landmark in this part of the village and the white exterior of Mill Cottage contrasts with the 21st century development it is surrounded by. The site to the west has potential for redevelopment since the closure of a motor vehicle garage on the site.



Mill Cottage and the Old Mill

12.53 The first major addition was Rowell Way built in the early 2010s. It has a central play area and allotment grounds providing a distinctive green and open centre with the Rowell Way spine road looping through the site. The development is typified by a variety of materials including red brick with render to key facades or focal buildings. Houses are mixed with lower density detached villas and higher density semi-detached and terraced properties set within a mews. These provide a variety of parking opportunities with a mix of planting and seating. Building setbacks and varying roof angles add variety in the character and openness of the development. There is pedestrian access to Windsor Road in the adjoining Deerpark Road and Westfield Road to Rockingham Road character area, this access point also links to a public right of way path which heads south along the site's borders to wider countryside routes. To the south of the houses along Woollard

Walk is a Primary Newt Habitat which creates an environment which is rich in biodiversity whilst providing a new home for the Great Crested Newts which inhabited the site. These properties are also mostly bungalows which limits the visual impact of the development.

12.54 The second is Bowlands Place, a development on a triangular site bounded to the east by existing residential properties, to the west and north-west by Sawtry Brook and to the south by Gidding Road where Parrot Drive and Jackson Avenue link from. The south-western corner is marked by the Glebe Farm complex. No. 56 Gidding Road is an existing property which the development now encloses. There is open space located along the boundary with Sawtry Brook including an attenuation bund and hedging which provides a transition to the countryside. This development also demonstrates building type 3F but has been inspired by the wider colour palette, materiality and architectural styles within the village. Materials include buff brown facing brickwork, dark tiles to roofs and some white render adding variety.



Woolward Walk bungalows

12.55 The third is Judith Gardens located to the south of Gidding Road adjoining the Rowell Way development to the east, under construction as of September 2021. It transitions into/from the countryside to the west and south where there is an extensive tract of public open space. Lower density housing is proposed along the western boundary to soften the impact of the new development on the surrounding countryside. The individual house types exhibit formal, arts and crafts, cottage vernacular design, which will include decorative brickwork around windows, stone gable features and decorative brick banding. Home will be finished mainly in brick or render. An equipped play area is proposed in the centre of the development. Soft landscaping within the scheme identifies that trees, shrubs, grasses and wildflowers will be provided within the site to enhance its visual appearance and ecological potential. Proposed street trees and trees within parking courts will provide visual interest and character to the development. There will be a range of boundary treatments including metal estate railings, low level timber fencing and post and wire fencing.



Judith Gardens house type

12.56 Development is relatively new or ongoing so further proposals are limited to alterations and extensions of existing properties that reinforce the character and sense of place these developments provide.

Development proposals should:

- Reflect the principles, materials and detailing in the agreed design codes.
- Ensure extensions and alterations to existing properties are of an appropriate scale and design to the surrounding area.
- Be high quality and consider impacts on the wider landscape setting.
- Promote opportunities for the introduction and maintenance of tree and hedge planting where it contributes to the street scene and where they form important screens to the wider surrounding countryside.
- Maintain footpaths and landscaped areas and wherever possible promote opportunities for enhancement of amenity green spaces and equipped play areas to provide increased opportunities for recreation and nature conservation and to help provide distinctive local landmarks.
- Support initiatives for additional or enhanced services and community facilities such as allotment grounds.
- Maintain and enhance where possible opportunities for public rights of way.
- Support provision of renewable energy where visually appropriate.

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Sawtry Character Area 9: St Judith's Lane



St Judith's recreation ground



St Judith's Lane streetscene

12.57 This is a small character area located on the south western edge of the village accessed from Green End Road. It is heavily influenced by the open countryside and the rising topography and the Central Claylands landscape. Uses within this area are mixed with mixed residential properties along St Judith's Lane, Scotney Way and Holborn View; Hill View residential care home; a farm and riding school; community facilities; and recreational opportunities such as St Judith's Field and allotment grounds.



Scotney Way

12.58 St Judith's Field is a public recreation ground with play equipment, play park, and picnic tables with an associated car parking and dog training facilities. The land increases significantly with allotment grounds adjoining it and a car park. A stream runs along its northern boundary with residential properties along Rockingham Way, the impact of these properties are reduced as they are single storey. This is also seen in Holborn View, a very small development of bungalows along the edge adjoining the playing field and car park. A public right of way extends from the car park toward Aversley Wood (a site of special scientific interest) past High Holborn Hill.

12.59 Properties are mixed aged and vary in type between bungalows, chalet bungalows and two storey houses, some have been altered and extended over time. Scotney Way is solely bungalows apart from the grade II listed no. 15 which is a late 17th century cottage with access only via Scotney Way. They are generally more sparsely and at lower density, particularly where St Judith's Lane turns southward heading toward the countryside. Building types range from 1A, 1B, 3D, 3E, 3F and 4 as a result of some infill development over time. The oldest properties within the character area are the grade II* Manor Farmhouse located to the very south of the character area within an large irregularly shaped plot. The farmhouse dates to the late 16th century, is of timber-framed construction with plaster rendering, red brick, thatch and plain tiles. It also has a listed barn. Another is no. 38 St Judith's Lane (St Bosworth's House), a grade II listed late 17th century cottage of timber frame, plaster rendered and thatch with a late 20th century extension.



St Bosworth's House

12.60 Hill View residential care home has 16 rooms with car parking to the front behind a low boundary wall. Originally a bungalow it was expanded and converted into a care home in 1995. It has a distinctive circular front room adding interest to the streetscene. Hedgerows add to the natural feel of this area. St Judith's Lane continues southwards toward Archers Wood a Cambridgeshire Wildlife Site and to the Scheduled Monument of the former Sawtry Abbey.

12.61 This is a sensitive area with a strong connection to the surrounding countryside.

Development proposals should:

- Reduce harmful impacts on the landscape setting of the area.
- Protect the existing trees and vegetation where they contribute to the area's character.
- Ensure extensions and alterations to existing properties are of an appropriate size and scale to the original dwelling and do not detract from the surrounding area.
- Be sympathetic to surrounding existing materials and colour palette.
- Promote high standards of design and architectural detailing.
- Not cause harm to the character of a listed building or its setting.
- Reflect the existing spacious layouts and relationship with the countryside.
- Support and enhance where possible community facilities and recreational opportunities such as St Judith's Field and allotments.
- Maintain and enhance where possible opportunities for public rights of way and access points to nearby Aversley Wood and around the village.

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Sawtry Character Area 10: Green End/ Beaumaris Road



Aversley Road



Gloucester Road

12.62 This is an 'L' shaped residential character located to the south of Fen Lane. It consists of housing from the 1960s and 1970s, mostly found in the area closest to Fen Lane with substantial development throughout the 1980s and 1990s. It is split into two areas by a drainage channel which also has some tree planting. Along the eastern edge of the character area is a tree belt and open space which provide screening and buffers to the A1(M). Properties along the southern edge of the character area around Aversley Road, Buckingham Way and Cotton Close have a close association with the Central Claylands landscape.

12.63 There is variation in designs and materials but overall the area shares a consistent character. Buildings types include 3D, 3E and some 3F. A cul-de-sac layout predominates with main roads including Beaumaris Road, Gloucester Road, Ermine Way and Aversley Road. Along these many small residential roads, streets and lanes diverge. Properties are mixed with most being two stories (detached, semi-detached and terraced), although there are bungalows found throughout, some roads such as Chesham Road are exclusively bungalows. The dominant materials and colour palette are buff brick, grey brick, red brick, grey tiles and weatherboarding of varying colours. Some homes have recessed entrances and archway.



Beaumaris Road

12.64 The northern parts of the character area have a more regular layout to plots and are also some of the oldest within the area such as those on Ermine Way. Housing within Ermine Way, Moyne Road and Cavendish Close consist of a series of semi-detached properties with terraces within the Leys. Later development has more irregular plots. A higher proportion of detached houses are located such as within Aversley Road and along Buckingham Way and Gloucester Road.



Ermine Way and green space

12.65 Set backs are enough to allow for on plot parking and provide a semi-spacious feel throughout with opportunities for additional planting and shrubbery. There are some examples of boundary markers such as fencing and hedging but most do not which reinforces a sense of semi-spaciousness. Garages are either integrated or to the side. Where on plot parking is not possible, there are several garage courts. There are several areas of green space such as in Gloucester Road, Ermine Way and Beaumaris Way as well as verges throughout. These add to the character of the area and help to break up residential development.

12.66 There are limited infill opportunities remaining with greater opportunities to alter or extend existing properties.

Development proposals should:

- Consider how small scale infill or redevelopment opportunities can add diversity in design and positively balance their surroundings.
- Ensure extensions and alterations to existing properties are of an appropriate size and scale to the original dwelling and do not detract from the surrounding area.
- Be sympathetic to the materials and colour palette in the immediate vicinity.
- Ensure that new development responds positively to the specific opportunities available within the area.
- Protect the existing trees where these contribute to the character of the street scene and consider ways of increasing vegetation cover where space and service restrictions permit.
- Promote opportunities for enhancement of amenity green spaces to provide increased opportunities for recreation and nature conservation and to help provide distinctive local landmarks.
- Maintain and enhance physical and visual connections to key buildings and open spaces and support permeability of the area.
- Protect the existing areas of open space and tree planting which contribute to the character of the area and those that assist in screening the noise and visual prominence of the A1(M).
- Support provision of renewable energy where visually appropriate.

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Sawtry Character Area 11: Brookside Industrial Estate



Brookside Industrial Estate general arrangement with terraced units



Co-Op food store along Glatton Road

- 12.67** This is a small character area located to the north of the village along Glatton Road. Brookside Industrial Estate is an Established Employment Area within the [Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036](#) and provides the village and surrounding communities with local employment opportunities. Sawtry Brook runs through the area separating a small cluster of buildings with access from Glatton Road. The character area includes the Co-Op food store. While outside the Established Employment Area, the form of the building relates more to this character area than the surrounding residential properties to the south and west. There are views out across the Fen Margin landscape character area to the east and north.
- 12.68** The character area is rectangular with buildings on the north side of Brookside grouped into blocks of terraces and arranged in rows with car parking in between. Those to the south of Brookside are arranged around a larger central industrial unit. Most units have some set back from the footpath which provides some greenery to the area. There is limited tree planting within the industrial area, instead it is dominated by roads, security fencing, car parking and storage areas. The boundary of the Co-Op food store along Glatton Road has a low fence and planting. The food store represents building type 5D. Industrial buildings uses vary from warehousing, workshops, factories and some office space. The industrial buildings have flat roofs and are constructed from red brick and white rendering/ cladding demonstrating building type 5B. The food store also has a flat roof and uses brick and metal panelling with green advertisements located on the shop frontage and a free standing sign at the access from Glatton Road.
- 12.69** This area of employment is well established, there is capacity for extensions, change of use to other appropriate land uses or the renovation of vacant properties.

Development proposals should:

- Reinforce the use of the area as one of Sawtry's employment locations.
- Reflect the colour palette of surrounding properties whilst endeavouring to enhance the visual qualities of the area by inclusion of greater architectural detailing.
- Ensure signage is in an appropriate location and does not impact road safety.
- Reduce the visual dominance of cars by promoting enhanced boundary landscaping and planting.
- Incorporate renewable energy options and electric vehicle charging points where they are appropriate.
- Support proposals where they encourage active modes of transport.
- Maintain and reinforce the tree and landscape planting to screen the area from the wider countryside.
- Ensure they do not have a detrimental impact on resident amenity.

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Sawtry Character Area 12: Blackhorse Business Park



Nordic House



Large factory/industrial unit to the north of Nordic House

- 12.70** This is a small character area located to the east of the village separated by the A1(M) and the B1043 (Old Great North Road). Blackhorse Business Park is also an Established Employment Area within the [Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036](#) and supports the village and surrounding communities with local employment opportunities. Playing fields are located to the east of the area. The open agricultural landscape surrounding the character area is clearly visible from the elevated A1(M) and is the beginning of the Fen Margin Landscape Character Area.
- 12.71** The area consists of two large modern industrial factory buildings one north of Straight Drove (an 'L' shaped building of brick and cladding) and one south known as Nordic House which has a rectangular form and an approximate overall height of 12.6m. They were constructed in the 2000s and demonstrate building types 5B. They are both set within landscaped grounds, fencing and with substantial amounts of car parking. The eastern boundary follows the Middle Level Catchwater drain forming a clear boundary edge. Along here is significant planting which screens the impact of development and its operations from the wider countryside. Plant screening is also apparent along the area's western and southern edges following the transport network.
- 12.72** Development proposals within the identified character area area limited to change of use, however, there is capacity for expansion as demonstrated by recent planning permissions to the north of this character area. The impact on the wider countryside and safe access are key considerations.

Development proposals should:

- Reinforce the use of the area as one of Sawtry's employment locations.
- Promote high standards of design and support creativity in architectural detailing.
- Reflect the materials of and colour palette of immediately surrounding buildings.
- Maintain and reinforce the planting and landscaping around car parking areas to minimise their visual dominance.
- Retain and maintain existing tree and hedge planting, particularly along the A1(M) and to the wider open countryside.
- Investigate and mitigate any potential impacts to local wildlife and water courses/ drains.
- Support provision of renewable energy where visually appropriate and potentially electric vehicle charging points.
- Support provision of facilities which encourage active modes of transport.
- Carefully consider their visual impact on the Fen Margin landscape character area in determining the potential for any expansion of the Blackhorse Business Park to the north.

13 Somersham Key Service Centre

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13 Somersham Key Service Centre

- 13.1** Somersham is located in the eastern part of Huntingdonshire approximately four miles north east of St Ives at the edge of the Fens.

Landscape Setting

- 13.2** Somersham is situated within the Fen Margin Landscape Character Area. Its mosaic of flooded gravel extraction workings, orchards, arable and pastoral agricultural land is typical of this character area. The arable farmland to the western side of the village is more elevated, rising north from St Ives Road. This landscape forms part of the setting to the village when approached or viewed from the west although much of the main built up area is screened by hedges, allotments, woodland and the mature trees in the grounds of the Rectory.
- 13.3** The landscape of the water meadows to the south of the village is of high visual quality and the pattern of ditches, hedgebanks, willow trees and small pastoral fields combine to create a tranquil rural landscape. To the south of the village is Ponds Closes a scheduled monument on the site of the former Bishop of Ely's Palace and Somersham Park which includes a large farm complex. Development along the northern edge of the water meadows has shaped the landscape particularly when viewed from the Pathfinder long distance walk which approaches the village from the south. The landscape to the east of the village consists of gravel and sand extraction and the Somersham Local Nature Reserve.

Edges and Visual Prominence

- 13.4** Somersham's low lying position means that it is not visually prominent in long distance views from the north, south or east. Ribbon development and existing vegetation also obscure views of the village as it is approached from both Colne and Chatteris. From the north, the edge of the village is partially obscured by an old railway embankment with the woodlands and lake associated with the Somersham Local Nature Reserve forming the immediate landscape setting to the eastern side. This provides the village with a soft eastern edge and a transitional point to the surrounding countryside as well as recreational and leisure opportunities for residents.
- 13.5** The southern edge of the village is only openly visible from the Pathfinder long distance footpath, and the village is viewed most clearly from the higher ground to the west, particularly from the approach on the B1086. From here, the farmland on the western side of the village forms its landscape setting and the church tower provides a notable landmark in views from this direction.

Townscape Character

- 13.6** Somersham has a long history and its name is probably derived from a Roman 'Summer Camp' nearby. The Manor was already in existence in AD 991 when it was given to the Bishops of Ely who used it as a palace until 1600. Due to its landscape setting, the village is relatively well contained visually.
- 13.7** Somersham has eleven character areas (Figure 13.1 and can be viewed on the [interactive map](#)). One of these, the Historic Core of the village is located along two principal streets, High Street and Church Street which form a cross at the centre of the village. The site of the Bishops Palace is located to the southern edge of the village closely related to the church of St John the Baptist.
- 13.8** The High Street, which forms the east-west arms of the cross, is lined by buildings to both sides and the junction with Church Street, formerly the site of the medieval market place, is marked by a small pavilion and clock tower. Over the last 60 years, the village has expanded considerably as a result of modern residential development mostly to the north and some to the south of the original settlement which has more than doubled its size. There have also been several infill and redevelopment opportunities predominately along the High Street and Chatteris Road. Some ribbon development has extended eastwards

along Chatteris Road with Colnefields forming an isolated cluster of homes well screened from public viewing points. The West Newlands Industrial Estate on the western edge of the village provides some further employment opportunities along St Ives Road.

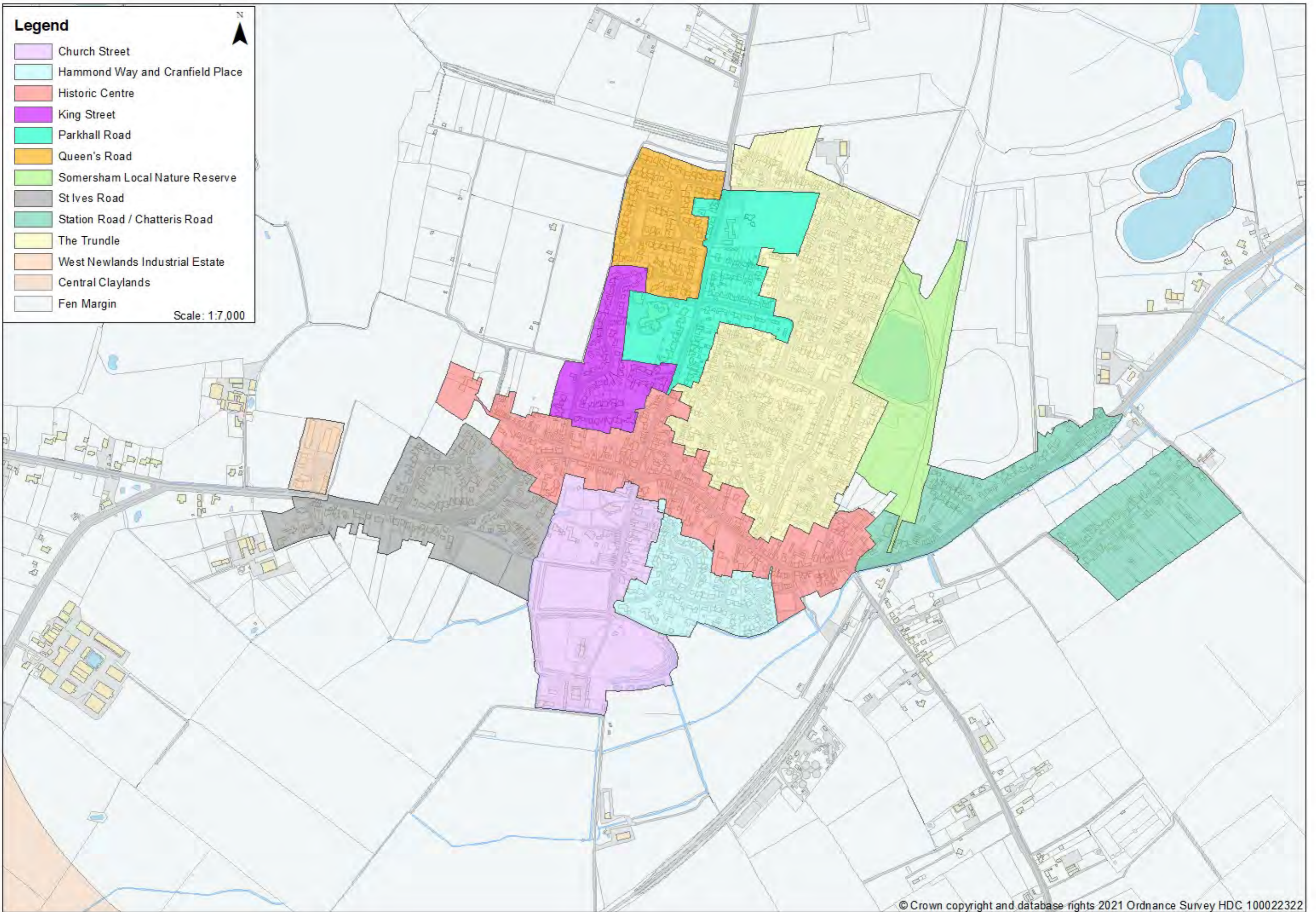


Figure 13.1 Somersham Character Areas

13 Somersham Key Service Centre

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Key Features

Historic route	High Street and Church Street
Historic gateway	High Street
Landmarks	The Cross, St John the Baptist's Church
Memorable areas	Somersham Local Nature Reserve, allotment grounds, Church Street, the Crossing
Key views	Views south of the village and Somersham Local Nature Reserve



The High Street has consists of a variety of buildings of differing style, patterns and form with some wagon archways linking back to the historic backland uses of the historic centre



St John the Baptist Church is a key local and historic landmark



Middle 20th century residential development expanded the village northwards considerably



Somersham Local Nature Reserve includes part of a disused railway line and provides an attractive and green eastern edge to the village

Somersham Character Area 1: The Historic Centre



59-65 High Street demonstrating a continuous built form and variety of scale of development within the Historic Centre



The Cross

13.9 The Historic Centre provides Somersham with a strong village character with a mix of house types, shops, services and facilities including Whitehall School, salons, hairdressers, shops, food shops, workshops, warehouses, a petrol filling station, a bowls club, a public house and takeaways. The village morphology of Somersham is based on the cruciform shape of the High Street, Church Street and Parkhall Road. The roads meet at the Cross, this is an important open space in the village. The main building material is gault brick (with slate roofs), but there are some red brick buildings too with plain clay tile roofs. Building types within the character area vary greatly with types 1A, 1B, 2A, 2B, 2D, 2E, 3D, 3E and 3F present as well as some industrial buildings and outbuildings (building type 5A) and a non-conformist Chapel (building type 6B).

13.10 The High Street extends northwards along Rectory Lane and some way along Parkhall Road. Development within the High Street, Parkhall Road and the north side of Rectory Lane is closely built up with the area around the Cross being especially dense. The High Street is characterised by back of pavement building, mostly in gault brick under slate roofs set in long and rectangular plots. There is limited foliage along the High Street due to the pattern of development.

13.11 Key features of Somersham's built heritage are the number of coach arches or wagon ways that are still in existence to give access to backland and outbuildings. Most of the arches that are still in use are along the High Street to the east of the Cross. These single storey buildings are important to the character of the Historic Centre and are an indication of the historical development of the village which relates to its agricultural past. The majority of the architecture along the High Street consists of Victorian villas and terraces, an exception is the Old Tithe Barn and Low Barn, a grade II listed timber framed double aisled barn with weather boarded frontage and plain tile roof built in 1600. There are also several surviving outbuildings, some have been converted while others are in need of renovation.



Old Tithe Barn and Low Barn

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13.12 Continuing east the road opens up at the Cross where the High Street meets Parkhall Road and Church Street. The openness of this area is important to the character the village as the shelter encourages people to stay a while and enjoy the space. The area around the Cross accommodates a high proportion of Somersham's listed buildings, the most notable group being the Rose and Crown Public House, and nos. 101, 103 and 105 High Street.



Rose and Crown PH

13.13 Moving away from the Cross, the area is characterised by the contrast between large properties, some of which are set back from the road, with smaller, gault brick, semi-detached and terraced housing. For example no. 44 High Street sits in substantial grounds and its landscaped frontage contributes significantly to the street scene and forms a natural barrier between the property and the adjacent Centurian Hall.

13.14 Towards the far eastern end of the High Street the area changes again. The building line is less regular, with properties on the north side of the High Street being on raised plots. There have been some modern redevelopment and infill developments namely Willow Rise and Somersham Court. The redevelopment of the warehouse at the former gas works as Somersham Court has improved the character of this part of the Historic Centre and the entry into the village from the east and has provided even further architectural variation (building type 3F).



Willow Rise

13.15 North of the High Street is Rectory Lane which consists of several Victorian terraces (for example Sheppard's Terrace) and later additions including bungalows and 21st century infill development. The properties along here are located away from the main thoroughfare when entering Somersham from the west. There is an intimate feel to this part of the character area due to the lack of set back from the road between properties and limited front gardens. At the far western edge is the grade II listed Somersham House and Bramston. These were formerly one building known as the Rectory, a large early 19th century house in established grounds, constructed from gault brick under a slate roof with a well landscaped frontage which screens the house from the street. Rectory Lane extends westwards into the countryside with greater vegetation and hedgerows, as a result it is an area of transition between the village and the surrounding countryside. Chapel Field Lane leads from Rectory Lane out towards the small holdings and allotments on the outskirts of the village. The trees and hedgerows in this area give a strongly defined edge between the looser urban feel and the countryside beyond.

13.16 Parkhall Road forms the northern arm of the crossroads at the centre of the village. The road extends northwards into the Fen landscape but the part of the road included within the historic centre is up to Grange Road. The road has a mixture of buildings from different eras along it including Victorian semis representing building type 2B and some modern infill developments. This has resulted in a more noticeable modern feel to this part of the character area especially as northwards extensive 20th century housing development has taken place. Therefore this is a transitional point in the village. There are also two listed buildings (both grade II): nos. 21 and 23 are early 18th century red brick houses with a plain tiled and cement tiled roofs formerly Manor Hall (rebuilt in circa 1720 and subsequently subdivided); the other is the Wesleyan Chapel, which is on the west side of the road and constructed from gault brick with a slate roof.



Victorian house with archway on the High Street

13.17 The Historic Centre has retained many aspects of its original Victorian features and supports many village service and facilities, therefore its conservation is a key priority. Development should focus on small scale proposals that seek to conserve and enhance the townscape where possible.

Development proposals should:

- Protect and conserve the historic buildings located along the High Street, Rectory Lane and Parkhall Road.
- Enrich the character of the area by reinforcing and acknowledging its historic character.
- Conserve and reflect the the historic centre through the control of shopfront design and building renovations.
- Support initiatives to reuse derelict or run down looking outbuildings and structures to enhance the street scene and the setting of any heritage assets.
- Reflect the existing materials and colour palette of predominately gault and slate roofs and red brick and plain clay tiles.
- Support initiatives for the retention of existing or creation of additional services and community facilities.
- Promote high standards of design and architectural detailing to enhance the historic character of the area and conservation area.
- Promote opportunities for the introduction and maintenance of tree and hedge planting where it contributes to the street scene and where they form important screens to the wider surrounding countryside.

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Somersham Character Area 2: Church Street



St John the Baptist's Church



Pond Closes Scheduled Ancient Monument

13.18 South of the High Street and the Cross is Church Street and Pinfold Lane. This is a small but characterful area which closely relates to the Historic Centre with several important local services and facilities but has taken on a different feel as it transitions between the busy High Street and the countryside to the south. Church Street starts at the Cross and continues southwards to Somersham Park and Ponds Closes the site of the former Bishop's Palace (a scheduled monument). Views are restricted due to dense tree and vegetation growth. At the end of Church Street the village opens up to the surrounding countryside with views across the Fen Margin. Building types are varied with types 2A, 2B, 3D, 3E, 3F, 6A and 7A present.



Modern infill

13.19 The linear form of development along Church Street is further characterised by frontage development on the east side and by the row of terraced properties on the west side after Pinfold Lane. Nos. 21 and 23 are mid 19th century grade II listed buildings of gault brick under slate roofs. They have a central arch, which reinforces the typical feature found in the adjoining Historic Centre character area. Pinfold Lane consists of a semi-detached pair of properties which reflect the terraced form of the wider area, however, further along, there are several large detached modern properties in spacious grounds set back from the Lane with extensive planting.

13.20 St John the Baptist's Church is a key landmark, its spire is visible across the village. It is grade I listed and dates back to the 13th century. Built of rubble with Barnack limestone dressings, the north and south porches were added in the 14th and 15th centuries with a restoration of the Church completed in 1883. The surrounding graveyard creates an open feel with a boundary wall enclosing the space. Next to the Church is the grade II 18th century former school and school house which is constructed from red brick and now used as a private residence and business.

13.21 As well as the Church, the character area has a local library and surgery. Both have some surrounding car parking which breaks up the street scene and the regular building line of Victorian semis and terraced housing. Both services are located in modern buildings or buildings that have been extended to accommodate their use but reflect the wider style of the village and gault bricks common to the area.



Library

- 13.22** There has been some modern infill development which has been sensitively integrated and reflects the materiality and form of surrounding properties. Most of these are located further south along Church Street where there was less historic development and greater scope for development. Several of these more modern properties are very well screened from view and can be accessed from a track off from Church Street.
- 13.23** Somersham Park, accessed from the southernmost end of Church Street, was once a derelict farmhouse that has now been restored. It is an example of an early 19th century farmhouse on a double pile plan. The well landscaped Palace Yard, combined with the Pond Closes, gives rise to an informal parkland setting. This is in direct contrast to the built up streets that form the centre of the historic centre. To the south of Palace Yard is Park Farm, with good views through to the open countryside beyond the village. Park Farm is an assemblage of old and new farm buildings linked to Church Street by a single access road through Palace Yard. A footpath beside Pond Closes is located just north of the Bishop's Palace with views through Park Farm to the countryside beyond.
- 13.24** This is a characterful area whose character transitions from one being more reflective of the adjoining Historic Centre to a more rural setting as it moves southwards. There may be opportunities for small scale infill development and extensions and alterations to existing properties, however the character and heritage of the area are key aspects to consider.

Development proposals should:

- Protect and conserve the setting of St John the Baptist's Church and other designated heritage assets along Church Street and on the site of the former Bishop's Palace.
- Enrich the character of the area by reinforcing and acknowledging its historic character.
- Ensure that new development responds positively to the specific opportunities available within the area.
- Ensure extensions and alterations to existing properties are of an appropriate size and scale to the original dwelling and do not detract from the surrounding area.
- Be sympathetic to the materials and colour palette in the immediate vicinity, particularly gault and red brick.
- Reduce the visual dominance of cars through increased planting and improved boundary treatments to existing car parks.
- Protect the existing areas of open space and tree planting which contribute to the character of the area.
- Support initiatives for the creation of additional services and community facilities possibly through conversion or redevelopment.
- Maintain and enhance where possible opportunities for public rights of way.

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Somersham Character Area 3: Hammond Way and Cranfield Place



Hammond Way



Cranfield Place

13.25 This is a small character area located to the east of Church Street consisting of several streets of residential properties. Hammond Way is the central street which separates from Church Street and connects through via Cranfield Place to the High Street. Whiston Close and Crane Close are smaller residential streets that diverge from Hammond Way. These were built throughout the 1980s and 1990s and reflect typical housebuilding trends of the time (building type 3E). The southern boundary of the character area is an established hedge which forms a key screen from residential development to the open countryside to the south. This forms an strong natural edge to this side of the village.

13.26 Properties along Hammond Close, Whiston Close and Crane Close are fairly large detached properties set in rectangular/ square plots. There are variations in design and architectural detailing creating a varied street scene. Properties are predominantly two storeys but there are some single storey properties. A key design feature of these properties is mock Tudor panelling. Also, properties have generous front gardens and a high proportion of double garages and double on plot car parking spaces. This creates a more open feel and with many trees and shrubs providing a soft aspect to the street frontages.



Hammond Way

13.27 Cranfield Place has a visibly different design and feel with buff brick and more homogenous design to properties with a mixture of canopies, bay windows and some double bay windows. Properties are two storeys and detached. The set back from the road is shallower creating a more compact feel to this part of the character area. Land to the front and side of properties is either grassed or gravelled which has reduced the occurrence of planting.

13.28 This is an established residential area, development proposals are limited to minor alterations or extensions to existing properties.

Development proposals should:

- Retain and enhance where possible tree and hedge planting along Hammond Way and Cranfield Place, particularly to the south of the area where it borders the countryside.
- Ensure extensions and alterations to existing properties are of an appropriate size and scale to the original dwelling and do not detract from the surrounding area.
- Be sympathetic to surrounding existing materials and colour palette.
- Promote high standards of design and architectural detailing.
- Support provision of renewable energy where visually appropriate.

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Somersham Character Area 4: St Ives Road



Bungalows along St Ives Road



Mock Tudor design within the Pasture

13.29 This is a linear character area focused around St Ives Road which runs from the countryside into the village forming the High Street. It is mostly residential properties although there is also a car dealership. Properties are mixed in age dating from the early 20th century onwards and predominantly detached (although there is small cluster of terraced houses) set in rectangular plots with some set back from the road creating a little separation. Properties are architecturally varied with a mixture of single storey and two storey properties which range from building types 3B, 3D, 3E and 3F.

13.30 The oldest properties are immediately along St Ives Road and West End. West End is an older cluster of homes built in the 1920s/1930s accessed from St Ives Road and which along its rear boundary borders Pinfold Lane separated by a drain and vegetation. These properties demonstrate building type 3B. They are semi-detached pairs with a central chimney stack arranged regularly in long rectangular plots with modest front gardens. Materials include white render and dark roof tiles. Window and door placements are symmetrical and have a small circular window to the first floor. There has been some infill development utilising spare land such 15a West End which is a large detached property constructed from buff brick and contrasts the general style found along the road. To the west is Somersham Football Club and associated pavilion building, the site is allocated for housing development subject to the successful relocation of the sports facility.



West End

13.31 Another example of in depth development off from St Ives Road is the Pasture built in the 1990s (building type 3E). Properties are large detached with a consistent character although there are variations in the materials and style used to add diversity. Materials range from red, buff and grey brick, dark roof tiles, some pan tiles to the front elevations and Mock Tudor detailing. Some properties have dormer windows, others porches and canopies. There is on plot parking with most properties having double garages to the side and boundary walls especially where properties are located on a bend in the road layout.

13.32 The area is likely to evolve further with the [Huntingdonshire Local Plan](#) allocating several sites within this character area (SM2, SM3 and SM4) for development. These are predominantly for residential use but also a care facility. These will add further diversity in design integrating 21st century design principles amongst this already mixed area. These are not included in the current character area but once details on what may be delivered are approved and completed will likely result in a boundary amendment. There must be careful consideration on how these larger additions integrate with the neighbouring residential properties, provide safe access and their relationship with nearby heritage assets and the wider countryside.

13.33 The Local Plan has identified areas of larger development, however, there are also opportunities for some infill development and extensions and alterations to existing properties.

Development proposals should:

- Consider how small scale infill development opportunities can positively balance their surroundings and be sensitively integrated.
- Ensure safe and appropriate access from St Ives Road.
- Be sympathetic to the materials and colour palette in the immediate vicinity.
- Ensure that new development responds positively to the specific opportunities available within the area.
- Ensure extensions and alterations to existing properties are of an appropriate size and scale to the original dwelling and do not detract from the surrounding area.
- Be high quality and consider impacts on the wider landscape setting and nearby heritage assets as appropriate.
- Encourage tree and hedgerow planting particularly as landscape buffers to developments that border with the open countryside.
- Support proposals where they encourage active modes of transport and improve opportunities for walking and cycling through footpaths and cycleways to the main village.
- Support provision of renewable energy where visually appropriate.

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Somersham Character Area 5: West Newlands Industrial Estate



There is a generally spacious setting with planting throughout the industrial estate



Unit within the West Newlands Industrial Estate constructed from a mixture of buff brick and cladding

- 13.34** This is a small character area located to the west of the village along St Ives Road. West Newlands Industrial Estate is an Established Employment Area within the [Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036](#) and provides the village and surrounding communities with local employment opportunities. It also adjoins land to the west allocated for a mixed use development of residential and care home uses (SM1). While adjoining the St Ives Road character area, West Newlands has been split into its own small character area because of the difference in land use and building types present.
- 13.35** The industrial estate was built in the early 1980s. Subsequent extensions and change of uses have been made to several units over time. Buildings fall within type 5B and are a mixture of styles, either single or two stories, used as offices, workshops and for storage. Materials include buff brick, metal cladding, corrugated steel to roofs and white painted bricks and render. There are small pockets of car parking associated with each unit separated by either vegetation or fencing. There is a continuous line of hedges and vegetation running along its western, northern and eastern boundaries which provide a landscape buffer to the wider open countryside and adjacent residential properties. The planting continues along the frontage of the site with a break for access from St Ives Road. Within the estate there is a central pond with planting around it creating an attractive central feature.
- 13.36** There is some capacity for new units, extensions, change of use to other appropriate land uses or the renovation of units, however, such development must carefully consider access and landscape impacts.

Development proposals should:

- Reinforce the use of the area as an employment location for Somersham and the surrounding area.
- Reflect the materials and colour palette of the area including buff brick, metal cladding, corrugated steel to roofs and white painted bricks and render.
- Be sensitively designed to limit visual impacts on the surrounding countryside and consider any potential impacts on the surrounding road network.
- Incorporate renewable energy options where they are appropriate and electric vehicle charging points.
- Support proposals where they encourage active modes of transport and improve opportunities for walking and cycling through footpaths and cycleways to the main village.
- Encourage and retain tree and hedge planting within the industrial estate and along its boundaries.

Somersham Character Area 6: Parkhall Road



Somersham Victory Hall



Coronation Avenue

13.37 This character area is based around Parkhall Road and consists of a mixture of residential properties and community services such as Somersham Primary School, Somersham Victory Hall, tennis courts, skatepark, recreational ground and sports field. Housing is mixed with additions and in depth development added over time. Building types are therefore mixed ranging from 2B, 3B, 3D, 3E, 3F and 7C.

13.38 Along Parkhall Road properties are mixed with many obscured from view via hedges and tree planting. Low boundary walls are also common which also help to distinguish public and private space as well as provide residents with some screening from the traffic along Parkhall Road. They are mixed in style, design and age but most were built by the 1970s with some alterations over time. There are some interwar style housing with double bay windows and open archway porches, bungalows, and Edwardian properties which provide a link to the influences of the Historic Centre.



Earlier property along Parkhall Road

13.39 Properties within Coronation Avenue and Norwood Road date to the 1950s with homes built in semi-detached pairs arranged in symmetrical rectangular plots. Their design consists of a mixture of roughcast-rendered and painted cream or pastel coloured brickwork or concrete precast panels. They have substantial front gardens with some boundary fences or hedges to the public footway.

13.40 The northern part of the character area consist of Somersham Victory Hall, the Norwood Building and Scouts Hut as well as Norwood Playing Field, skatepark, tennis courts and pavilions. The building works on the Victory Hall started in 1986/87 and completed in 1991, it serves as a venue hire for events and as such is an important social and community hub for the village.

13.41 Development opportunities are limited to extensions and alterations to existing properties.

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Development proposals should:

- Ensure extensions and alterations to existing properties are of an appropriate size and scale to the original dwelling and do not detract from the surrounding area.
- Be sympathetic to surrounding existing materials and colour palette.
- Promote high standards of design and architectural detailing.
- Protect the existing areas of open space and tree planting which contribute to the character of the area.
- Support initiatives for the creation of additional services and community facilities possibly through conversion or redevelopment.
- Incorporate renewable energy options where they are visually appropriate.

Somersham Character Area 7: The Trundle



The Trundle



Premier Express on the corner of Shortland Terraces

13.42 This is a large residential character area consisting of a mixture of housing types built throughout the 1960s, 70s and 80s with some modern infill (building types 3D, 3E and 3F). It is located to the east of Parkhall Road and adjoins the Historic Centre to the south, Somersham Nature Reserve to the east and the Fen Margin Landscape Character Area to the north. While not all homes were built at the same time, properties demonstrate variations in design and materials but all share a consistent character.

13.43 The principal roads are the Trundle, Grange Road and Feoffees Road. Throughout the area, there are pockets of soft landscape and open space with tree planting which break up development and creates a more open and peaceful character complementing the residential and community uses. Norwood Road has the largest central green space with properties set around it. Additionally, the eastern edge of the area runs alongside the Somersham Nature Reserve with some streets having pedestrian access to it.

13.44 The Trundle is a main road running through this area linking through to Norwood Road and several other residential streets such as Robert Avenue, Ibbott Crescent, Harvey Drive and Loftsteads. Properties are mostly two storeys and semi-detached set rectangular plots, although there are pockets of single storey properties throughout some with large windows and dormer windows (for example Norwood Road, Feoffes Road and The Trundle). Garages are typically to the side with flat roofs creating space for on plot parking and also the opportunity for first floor extensions. The dominant materials and colour palette are buff brick, grey brick, some red brick, grey tiles, white render weatherboarding. A striking property is no.6 Shorthand Terrace which is three storeys with a steeply pitched roof to the main building and to a side extension creating a distinctive feature. The ground floor is used as a local shop. Another notable building is Windsor Court an 'L' shaped building painted white with red/brown window frames and panels. It consists of retirement housing built in 1970.



Windsor Court

13.45 Windsor Gardens located off Foeffes Road is a later addition to the character area built in the late 1980s/early 1990s. Properties include short terraces, semi-detached and detached houses with shallow pitched roofs constructed from sand coloured brick and dark roof tiles. There are also several blocks of which accommodate four maisonettes each making it a higher density area. The blocks consist of two rectangular buildings connected by a central entry way. There are a handful of bungalows as well adding greater diversity to types of the properties available here. There are large areas of green space too.



Windsor Gardens maisonettes

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13.46 This is a large area with opportunities for extensions and alterations to existing properties and the potential for some infill development.

Development proposals should:

- Ensure extensions and alterations to existing properties are of an appropriate size and scale to the original dwelling and do not detract from the surrounding area.
- Be sympathetic to the materials and colour palette in the immediate vicinity but which predominately consist of buff brick, grey brick, some red brick, grey tiles, white render weatherboarding.
- Ensure that new development responds positively to the specific opportunities available within the area.
- Support provision of renewable energy where visually appropriate.
- Consider how small scale infill or redevelopment opportunities can add diversity in design and positively balance their surroundings.
- Protect the existing trees where these contribute to the character of the street scene and consider ways of increasing vegetation cover where space and service restrictions permit.
- Support initiatives for the creation of additional services and community facilities within the residential area possibly through conversion or redevelopment.
- Promote opportunities for enhancement of amenity green spaces to provide increased opportunities for recreation and nature conservation and to help provide distinctive local landmarks.
- Maintain and enhance where possible opportunities for public rights of way and access points to nearby Somersham Nature Reserve.

Somersham Character Area 8: Queens Road



Queens Road chalet bungalows



Queens Road chalet bungalows with mature trees and greenspace

- 13.47** This is a small rectangular character area located in the north western corner of the village to the west of Parkhall Road. It consists of bungalow and chalet bungalow development dating from the 1960s and 1970s which reflect building type 3D. Rear gardens and hedges provide a clear boundary to the area where a public right of way runs along the western and northern edges of the character area with access from Bishops Way providing a link to the countryside.
- 13.48** It includes Queens Road, Manor Close, Bishops Close, Squire Close and Butts Close. The majority of the properties have steeply pitched roofs, a central chimney and large windows and are made from buff brick and dark roof tiles. Most have single garages with flat roofs located on the side elevation or garages that are integral to the property.
- 13.49** Properties have on-plot parking with reasonable set backs from the road resulting in increased vegetation and planting as well as some front gardens being paved for vehicle parking. On the corners of these streets and in front of many homes are substantial pockets of open space with trees planted throughout creating a green and pleasant feel to this lower density residential area and extenuating the spaciousness of development.
- 13.50** Development opportunities are limited to extensions and alterations to existing properties.

Development proposals should:

- Ensure extensions and alterations to existing properties are of an appropriate size and scale to the original dwelling and do not detract from the surrounding area.
- Be sympathetic to surrounding existing materials and colour palette of buff brick and dark roof tiles.
- Ensure that new development responds positively to the specific opportunities available within the area.
- Support provision of renewable energy where visually appropriate.
- Promote opportunities for enhancement of amenity green spaces to provide increased opportunities for recreation and nature conservation and to help provide distinctive local landmarks.
- Reinforce and encourage tree and hedgerow planting particularly as landscape buffers between properties and the countryside.
- Maintain and enhance where possible opportunities for public rights of way.

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Somersham Character Area 9: King Street



Style of housing found along King Street and White Hall Close. This is an example from White Hall Close



Meridian Close

- 13.51** This is a roughly 'L' shaped character area located to the west of Parkhall Road north of the Historic Centre and south of the Queens Road character area and are located to the south and west of Somersham Primary School. The principal road is King Street but the area also includes some smaller residential streets such as White Hall Close and Meridian Close. The properties located here are some of the later editions to the village built from the 1980s through to 2000s.
- 13.52** Properties are predominantly two storeys but there are some single storey ones with a mixture of gabled roof, steep gabled roofs and hipped roofs. They are typically detached, set in fairly large plots with pockets of green space creating an open feel with tree planting. Some trees within Meridian Close are protected by a Tree Preservation Order. Materials include buff and red brick, red pantiles and rendered façades. There have been extensions and alterations to properties over time.
- 13.53** There is a public access route to the allotments and outwards into the open countryside. A key right of way leads from King Street along the back of these properties leading into the allotments but also continues north and connects to Parkhall Road at the northern most extent of the built edge of the village.
- 13.54** Development opportunities are limited to extensions and alterations to existing properties.

Development proposals should:

- Ensure extensions and alterations to existing properties are of an appropriate size and scale to the original dwelling and do not detract from the surrounding area.
- Be sympathetic to surrounding existing materials and colour palette of red and buff brick, red pantiles, white rendering.
- Promote high standards of design and architectural detailing.
- Protect the existing trees where these contribute to the character of the street scene and consider ways of increasing vegetation cover where space and service restrictions permit.
- Maintain and enhance where possible opportunities for public rights of way and access points to the allotment grounds and countryside.
- Support provision of renewable energy where visually appropriate.

Somersham Character Area 10: Somersham Local Nature Reserve



Lake within the Somersham Nature Reserve with a tree belt screening the impact of residential development in the background



Disused railway path to Somersham Nature Reserve

- 13.55** The line of the Great Northern and Great Eastern Joint Railway formed a strong edge to the eastern side of the village where the built form stopped apart from isolated clusters of properties such as Banks Avenue and Colnefields. The character area adjoins the far eastern edge of the Historic Centre and extends northwards into the Fen landscape along the boundary of the Trundle character area.
- 13.56** The site of the dismantled railway line is now a County Wildlife Site, known as Somersham Local Nature Reserve. It forms a soft edge to the village and has a mixture of natural features including a lake, wooded areas and open landscape. This mix has created an attractive area for leisure activities including walking and fishing. The site is also used for the grazing of horses and there are ponds with views across to the village. The substantial tree planting is focused along the edge of residential development and reduces the potential impact of such development on the open countryside. It also provides a scenic and biodiversity rich habitat for wildlife.
- 13.57** There are several pedestrian accesses to the Local Nature Reserve, including from Station Approach to the south; and Robert Avenue, Feoffees Road and Ibbott Crescent to the west.
- 13.58** The different character of this area enhances that of the Historic Centre and the designated Conservation Area as a whole by being a welcome contrast to the built up section of the village and is an indicator of the village's agricultural past. Therefore, the conservation of the Local Nature Reserve and its importance in the village and its residents as a source of enjoyment and leisure are key priorities.

Development proposals should:

- Promote opportunities for the enhancement of the Local Nature Reserve to provide increased opportunities for wildlife and nature conservation.
- Consider new pedestrian access points that link the Local Nature Reserve more effectively with the surrounding residential estates.
- Protect the existing wooded areas and mature trees and support replacement planting.
- Maintain the integrity of the tree screen around the Local Nature Reserve's boundaries.
- Consider opportunities to enhance the footpath network within the Local Nature Reserve.

13 Somersham Key Service Centre

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Somersham Character Area 11: Station Road/ Chatteris Road



Station Approach modern infill terraced development



Bank Avenue

13.59 This is another predominately linear character area which is consistent with Character Area 4 St Ives Road. Together they frame the village on the western and eastern sides with predominantly residential development fading out into the countryside creating transitional points upon arrival and exit of the village.

13.60 This is a mixed area with many properties built in the 1920s with some infill development over time; as a result building types range from 3B, 3D, 3E and 3F. Properties have a strong connection to the surrounding countryside with some bordering Somersham Nature Reserve. Along the rear boundary of properties located on the northern side of Chatteris Road there is a dense tree line which shields them from the wider countryside and creates a green and natural feel. For properties located on the southern side of Chatteris Road, Cranbrook Drain runs along their rear gardens meaning plots are of irregular size.

13.61 Bank Avenue is a small cluster of properties built in the 1920s and provides some in depth development. Properties have white render with red brick detailing on the corner of properties and dark roof tiles. Properties are semi-detached set within regular plots and with limited fencing or hedges creating an open feel and little distinction between public and private space. Some properties along Chatteris Road also reflect this style. Some small scale infill has taken place, most notably 10a Bank Avenue which is has a slightly larger footprint and is a detached property, mirroring this, a further detached infill property has been approved between nos. 8 and 9 Bank Avenue.

13.62 Colnefields is an isolated cluster of properties with two points of access from Chatteris Road. Properties were mainly built in the 1920s and 1930s and consist of a mixture of two storey and single storey properties which have been altered and extended over time. They are obscured from view from Chatteris Road.



Colnefields

13.63 Redevelopment of the eastern end of Station Approach to a mix of 15 houses and flats arranged within terraced units with gated access to a rear car parking area for residents was approved in 2006. They reflect building type 3F. They are elevated due to the configuration of the historic highway arising from the former railway and station yard which connects to Chatteris Road (B1050). Their terraced design creates a continuous built frontage which follows a slight bend in the road. To the west of these and between Somersham Telephone Exchange, two further modern properties have been constructed continuing the building line from the historic centre outwards.

- 13.64** Further development is allocated within the [Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036](#) under site allocation SM5 (North of the Bank) in this vicinity. The allocation seeks lower density design with landscaping towards the north and west of the site reflecting the transition to open countryside and proximity to the Local Nature Reserve respectively. It also identifies the development should provide a comprehensive package of community benefits including enhancements to the local rights of way network, access to the Local Nature Reserve to the north-west and cycleway improvements. The site adjoins a bus depot to which a robust landscape screen should be provided.
- 13.65** This is a varied character area with scope to alter and extend existing properties with some remaining opportunities for infill development. Larger development proposals must consider how safe access can be achieved from Chatteris Road and how landscape and countryside impacts can be reduced and mitigated.

Development proposals should:

- Consider how small scale infill development opportunities can positively balance their surroundings and be sensitively integrated.
- Ensure extensions and alterations to existing properties are of an appropriate size and scale to the original dwelling and do not detract from the surrounding area.
- Be sympathetic to the materials and colour palette in the immediate vicinity.
- Ensure that new development responds positively to the specific opportunities available within the area.
- Ensure safe and appropriate access from Chatteris Road and Station Approach.
- Protect the existing trees where these contribute to the character of the street scene and consider ways of increasing vegetation cover where space and service restrictions permit.
- Retain and encourage further tree and hedgerow planting particularly as landscape buffers to developments that border with the open countryside and Somersham Nature Reserve.
- Maintain and enhance where possible opportunities for public rights of way and access points to nearby Somersham Nature Reserve.
- Support proposals where they encourage active modes of transport and improve opportunities for walking and cycling through footpaths and cycleways to the main village.

14 Warboys Key Service Centre

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14 Warboys Key Service Centre

- 14.1** Warboys is located approximately five miles south east of Ramsey served by the A141 connecting the village to Huntingdon and Chatteris.

Landscape Setting

- 14.2** Warboys is situated at the junction of the Central Claylands and the Fen Margin Landscape Character Areas. To the south and west of the village, the landscape of the claylands is relatively open and comprises gently undulating low hills, large arable fields and long distance views. To the north east and east the landscape falls toward the Fen Margin and there are distant views east to the Fens beyond.
- 14.3** The countryside surrounding Warboys is typical of much productive agricultural land across the district and is an attractive and important part of the setting of the village. There are frequent open views across this surrounding landscape from village edges and approach routes which give parts of the village a strongly rural feel. Warboys Wood to the north west of the village is a significant local landscape feature.

Edges and Visual Prominence

- 14.4** Warboys' elevated position on a ridge makes it clearly visible in views from the north, and the church spire is a notable landmark from all directions for many miles. The western edge of the village is marked by mature hedgerows and trees are characteristic of the field enclosures which feature in the area and screen existing buildings at the urban edge (with the exception of the church) when approaching along Ramsey Road. This vegetation also screens the majority of views of the village when approaching along the Pathfinder long distance footpath from the south west although the church, manor house and associated farm buildings are visible.
- 14.5** To the north, views of the urban edge are partially filtered by vegetation although existing housing is visible on the skyline from both Ramsey Road and public footpaths to the north. Modern residential development to the west of Station Road has partially infilled the land between Old Mill Avenue and Station Road. The A141 bypass to the east creates a strong vegetated edge to the village. The southern edge of the village is less well screened by vegetation and housing, particularly to the south east, is clearly visible in views from the B1040 and the A141. The northern edge is dominated by extensive post war housing development and more recent residential development characterises the southern/ south eastern edge of the village. Further residential development has seen the built edges of the village change further.

Townscape Character

- 14.6** Warboys has eleven character areas (Figure 14.1 and can be viewed on the [interactive map](#)). Warboys was already established at the Domesday survey of 1087AD, when its name meant "look out wood". The village largely developed between the 25 and 30m contours at the fork in the main road from St Ives to Ramsey. The village extended south along Church Road, north along Ramsey Road and east along High Street. Eastward expansion was fuelled in the 19th century by the draining of the Fens, the railway and the development of the local brick industry. Warboys station was on the Ramsey to Somersham line, just over a mile to the north of the village although the line closed in 1964.
- 14.7** Despite expansion, the historic core can still be clearly identified. The junction of Church Road and High Street is marked by a Victorian clock tower. The parish church of St Mary Magdalene is situated on Church Road to the south west of the village. The High Street remains the commercial centre for the village and industry is concentrated well outside the village at the Warboys Airfield Industrial Estate. The wide High Street, which is lined by both houses and shops, gives the centre of the village a market town character which is enhanced by the Victorian clock tower, Baptist Church and the Weir which provide distinctive local landmarks. The area around the church and manor house with mature vegetation and historic buildings retains a village character.

- 14.8** Extensive post war housing estates now dominate the northern edge of the village and smaller, more recent residential development has occurred to the southern and south eastern edges of the village. Modern residential development to the west of Station Road has partially infilled the land between Old Mill Avenue and Station Road.

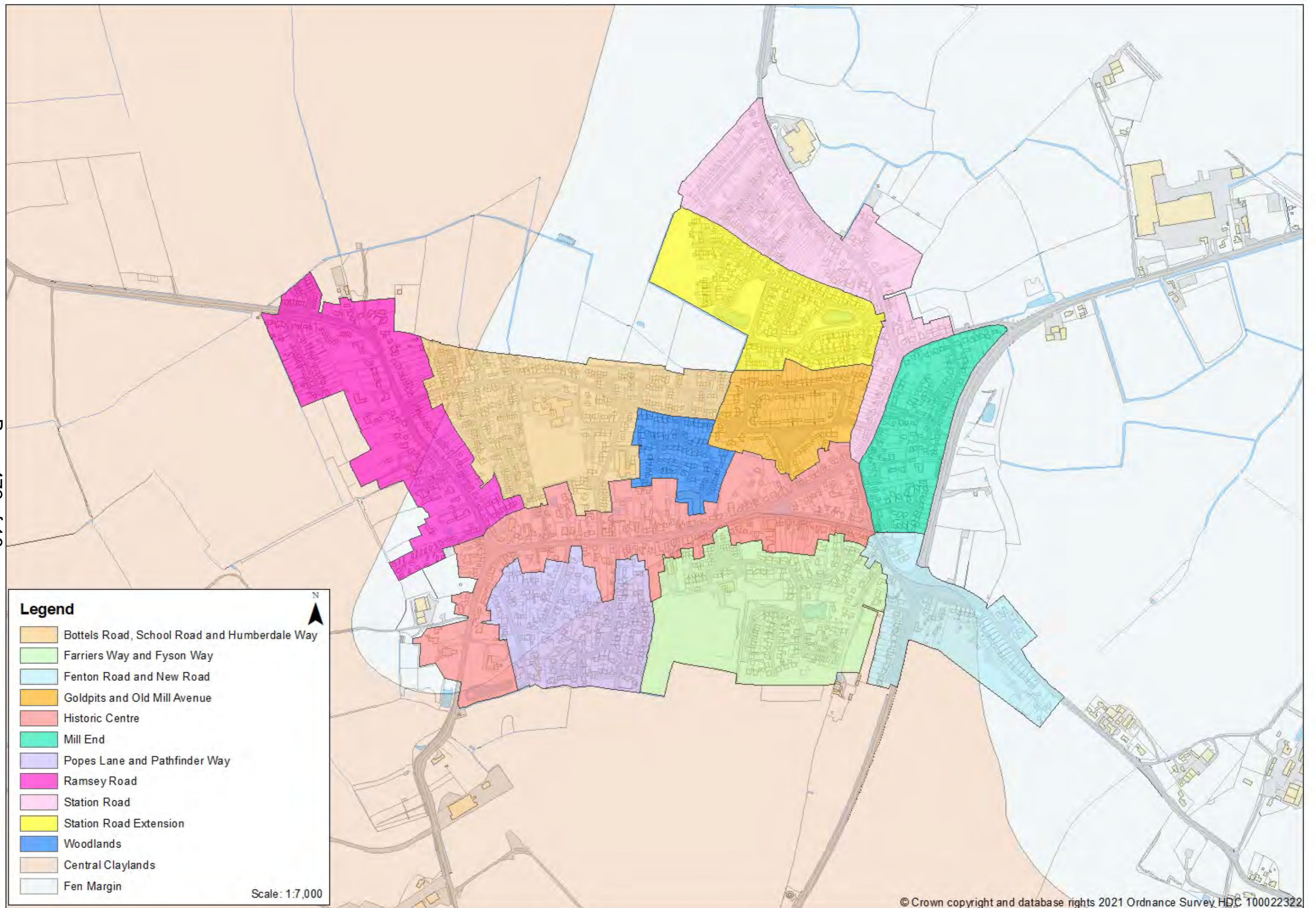


Figure 14.1 Warboys Character Areas

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Key Features

Historic route	Church Road, Ramsey Road and High Street
Historic gateway	High Street
Landmarks	Clock Tower, the Weir, Grace Baptist Church, Church of St Mary Magdalene
Memorable areas	The Weir, and the High Street
Key views	Views north across the Fen Margin towards Warboys Wood, views to the west and south across the Central Claylands.



The Clock Tower creates a memorable area at the point where Ramsey Road, Church Road and the High Street converge



The Weir is a local focal point



Warboys has retained many features of its Victorian townscape which contributes to the character of the village and has influenced later building styles



Warboys has experienced significant recent growth which has further diversified the housing types and style of the village

Warboys Character Area 1: The Historic Centre



Church of St Mary Magdalene



Clock Tower with garage and Church Road in the background

14.9 The historic centre predominately follows the boundary of the Conservation Area. It has a linear form running north, south and east along Ramsey Road, Church Road and the High Street respectively. Much of the character of the area is derived from the integrity of the mainly Victorian townscape, villas and semi-detached houses. The historic centre is not uniform and hosts a variety of building types ranging from 2A, 2B, 6A, 6B, 7A, 7B. Warboys White bricks (creamy pale yellow gault brick), are the main facing material of the village. Bricks of even tone but not entirely uniform colour or texture were chosen for the fronts of the buildings. Roofs are mostly of slate with some examples of peg-tiles, especially on the older buildings. Just a couple of examples of thatch survive, including the water reed roof of the White Hart.



Victorian villa - 90 High Street

14.10 Development along the High Street is more dense compared to Church Road and Ramsey Road where development is spread out reflecting the relationship on the edge of the village and with the surrounding countryside. There is also a large play area and recreation field on the west side of Church Road just before all three roads meet adding even greater diversity in uses within the historic centre.



The White Hart

14.11 St Mary Magdalene's Church is located at the southern most point of the historic centre. It is a grade I listed church with its oldest elements dating back to the middle of the 13th century. It is constructed from flint and stone rubble with Barnack stone dressings; it has an octagonal broach spire and is set within large grounds behind a boundary wall along Ramsey Road. In close proximity to the church are several other listed buildings: 13 Church Road (Rosa's Cottage) is a grade II listed late 18th or early 19th century cottage built of gault brick with a steeply pitched pantiled roof; 28 Church Street is a grade II* listed red brick Manor House dating from the 17th century with a listed outbuilding too; and 21 Church Street (Moat House) dates from around 1830 and is a former two storey rectory with an orangery set within spacious grounds. Adjacent to 28

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Church Street is Manor Farm. The farm forms site allocation WB2 (Manor Farm buildings) for approximately 10 dwellings in the [Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036](#) which would add greater in depth development on the west side of Church Road and would form an extension to this character area.

14.12 Along the High Street, buildings are quite regular and formal in style with most standing close to the pavement with little or no front garden. The most confined aspect of the character area is based at the junction between the High Street, Church Road and Ramsey Road where properties rise directly from the pavement edge. Some buildings contrast with the general pattern, for example, the buff brick Methodist Chapel which was relocated from Great Raveley in the 1930s and the mid 17th century White Hart public house with its thatched mansard roof.



13 Church Road (Rosa's Cottage)

14.13 On the north side of the High Street, there are small trees evenly spaced on the grass verge along most of its length with occasional wooden benches. Larger and more dense tree coverage exists moving eastwards towards the Weir where properties have a greater separation from the road. The trees positively frame many mainly larger more formal properties.

14.14 The historic centre hosts the majority of the shops, services and facilities found in the village, particularly for day to day uses. Many shops occupy the ground floor of properties and provide the historic centre with active frontages and varying features as a result of shop front designs. Other facilities include a children's nursery, library, public houses, restaurants, cafes, hairdressers, workshops, and Warboys White Hart Bowling Club.

14.15 The historic centre has several local landmarks and focal points. One is the grade II listed Clock Tower located at the point where Ramsey Road, Church Road and the High Street meet. This a commemorative clocktower built in 1887 for the Golden Jubilee of Queen Victoria in a gothic revival style of red brick and Warboys white brick with stone dressings. There are also three stages of pyramidal roof of Welsh slate. Another is the Weir, a central amenity area which provides an attractive area for wildlife, habitats and enjoyment. In combination with the Clocktower at the other end of the linear High Street, they create a strong sense of place. The third is the Grace Baptist Church. The current Church was built in 1831 and modified in the late 19th century and is believed to have carried out baptisms in the Weir opposite. This is undesignated but of significant local historic interest and positively contributes to the street scene.



Grace Baptist Church

14.16 The historic centre has retained many aspects of its original Victorian townscape, its conservation is a key priority. Therefore, development should focus on small scale proposals that seek to conserve and enhance the townscape where possible.

Development proposals should:

- Protect and conserve the historic buildings located along the High Street, Church Road and Ramsey Road.
- Enrich the character of the area by reinforcing and acknowledging its historic character.
- Protect the setting of the Clock Tower, the Weir and the Grace Baptist Church as local landmarks.
- Reflect the existing materials and colour palette of predominately 'Warboys White' bricks (creamy pale yellow gault brick) and slate for roofs.
- Support initiatives for the retention of existing or creation of additional services and community facilities.
- Conserve and reflect the the historic centre through the control of shopfront design and building renovations.
- Promote high standards of design and architectural detailing to enhance the historic character of the area and conservation area.
- Promote opportunities for the enhancement of tree planting and general planting particularly around the Weir to retain and increase opportunities for wildlife and nature conservation.
- Maintain and where possible promote opportunities for enhancement of open space and recreational facilities.

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Warboys Character Area 2: Ramsey Road



Northern end of Ramsey Road with a mix of properties and hedging



Jubilee Avenue

14.17 This is a small and architecturally varied character area to the north of the historic centre along Ramsey Road. The north and west of the character area have a strong relationship with the open countryside adding to the spacious feel of the area. To the west is the Central Claylands Landscape Character Area.

14.18 Development along Ramsey Road is mixed with two storey and single storey properties and some dating to the 19th century. Their style and influences are varied with modern infills and later additions over subsequent years reflecting building types 2A, 3B, 3D, 3E and 3F. Tree planting and the change of road levels obscures some properties from view. In depth development along Garrett Drive has a central green and the design reflects the features of the adjoining historic centre resulting in the development being sensitively integrated.



Victorian properties along Ramsey Road

14.19 There is also a small cluster of park homes known as The Paddock Mobile Home Park located to the west of Ramsey Road. These add to the depth and diversity in design in this character area.

14.20 An extension to this character area is allocated under WB1 for approximately 45 dwellings in the [Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036](#). The site once developed would add greater in depth development on the west side of Ramsey Road.

14.21 This character area includes Jubilee Avenue, an early example of 20th century development to occur within the village exemplifying building type 3B. Properties are semi-detached with shallow pitched roofs, have limited red brick panels and are roughcast-rendered and painted cream or pastel shades with shallow front gardens with few examples of boundary fences or hedges to the public footway. An established hedgerow to the rear of Jubilee Avenue provides a visual buffer from these properties and the open countryside reducing their visual prominence.

14.22 Wiggs Close is the newest addition to the character area reflecting building type 3F. While of 21st century design, their design shares common characteristics being gabled in form with similar fenestration and traditional materials (buff brick and slate coloured roof tiles), yet show subtle differences in detailing and orientation to add points of variation and interest. The development echoes the properties on the south side of Ramsey Road by providing a strong linear built frontage to the site that is set back a good



Wiggs Close

distance (approx. 14m) from the highway and behind a planted frontage. This reinforces the frontage pattern of development in the area and retains a sense of spaciousness which is a characteristic of this part of the village.

- 14.23** There are limited opportunities for major development and infill development, with greater opportunities for alterations and extensions to existing properties. Proposals particularly to the west of the character area should consider their landscape impacts on the wider countryside.

Development proposals should:

- Reflect the existing spacious layouts, particularly along the frontage of properties along Ramsey Road.
- Ensure extensions and alterations to existing properties are of an appropriate size and scale to the original dwelling and do not detract from the surrounding area.
- Be sympathetic to surrounding existing materials and colour palette.
- Promote high standards of design and architectural detailing.
- Support provision of renewable energy where visually appropriate.

- Protect the existing trees and vegetation where they contribute to the street scene and in particular those protected by a Tree Preservation Order.
- Reduce landscape impacts particularly to the north and west of the character area.

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Warboys Character Area 3: Bottels Road, School Road and Humberdale Way



Detached homes along Humberdale Way, some have been extended and altered with new weatherboards



Flaxen Walk terraces with shared green space to the front

14.24 This is a large character area located to the north of the High Street and consists of a mixture of community facilities and residential development occurring during the middle of the 20th century. Warboys Community Primary School and playing fields was opened in 1972 with additions made in 1976, 1989 and 1994. The school and its grounds are a key feature in the area and break up residential development to the north of the High Street and to neighbouring character areas. The building types here are 3D and 7B with residential development being in fairly regular rectangular plots.

14.25 Bottels Road to the west runs along the boundary with the Ramsey Road character area. Bottels Road consists of residential properties arranged in groups of several terraces in narrow rectangular plots. Knowles Avenue and Garner Avenue continue this form of development. Throughout there are areas of garage development and car parking. The style of housing reflects building type 3D with a mixture of buff brick, red brick, weatherboarding, hanging tiles and dark roof tiles. Some properties have front porches with the front door set to the side with a triangular roof. This feature is continued in other properties in their garage roofs. Others have flat roofed porches and garages. There is an inconsistent amount of set back between properties and the road. This creates variation in the street scene and areas of open space and areas of extensive tree and hedge planting. Properties with larger set backs have on plot parking and longer driveways, whereas those that have a short set back utilise separate areas of car parking and garages.



Knowles Avenue

14.26 Humberdale Way is a lengthy road running along the northern part of the character area with several short roads leading from it arranged on either side with a central view out across the Fen Margin Landscape Character Area. Development along here and within First Avenue, Second Avenue and Third Avenue is similar to the Bottels Road sub area but is more consistent in terms of the materials, style and layout of properties. These properties comprise red brick with shallow pitched roofs and often have paved driveways and side garages. Along Humberdale Way, properties are opposite a primary school and arranged in semi-detached pairs, these properties have white weather boarding to the front, on plot parking and flat roofed porches to the front elevation.



School Road bungalows

14.27 Further along Humberdale Way is Flaxen Walk. To the front of properties are several communal open spaces, with walkways running in between blocks of properties. There are several areas of parking including a large car park leading onto footpaths which run along to the east and west of the village. This provides residents with an accessible link with the surrounding landscape. One of the rights of way here runs through the Fen Margin landscape and through to new development off Station Road connecting through to Coronation Avenue at the northern most point of the village.

14.28 School Road is the central route through the character area and connects directly from the historic centre. To the west is Warboys Community Primary School and playing fields accessed via footpaths. On the western side of School Road, bungalows form the predominant style with two storey development behind. The bungalows are symmetrical and have a uniform distance between them and the public footpath with no boundary markers between the two creating a sense of openness. There is also uniform tree planting throughout creating a green and pleasant feel. On the eastern side of School Road there is two storey development. The eastern side also has De Ramsey Court, this is a large building consisting of some 33 flats built in the late 1970s. It provides retirement housing for the over 55s diversifying the types of housing the character area offers.



De Ramsey Court

14.29 This is an established residential area with most development opportunities being for extensions and alterations to existing properties.

Development proposals should:

- Ensure extensions and alterations to existing properties are of an appropriate size and scale to the original dwelling and do not detract from the surrounding area.
- Be sympathetic to the materials and colour palette in the immediate vicinity but consisting of buff brick, red brick, weatherboarding, hanging tiles and dark roof tiles.
- Ensure that new development responds positively to the specific opportunities available within the area.
- Reduce the visual dominance of cars through increased planting and improved boundary treatments to existing car parking and garage areas.
- Protect the existing areas of greenspace and tree planting which contribute to the character of the area.
- Support initiatives for the creation of additional services and community facilities within the residential area possibly through conversion or redevelopment.
- Maintain and where possible promote opportunities for enhancement of open space and recreational facilities.
- Maintain and enhance where possible opportunities for public rights of way.
- Maintain and improve the network of pedestrian footpaths to support active modes of travel within and through the area.
- Ensure that development responds positively to the specific opportunities available to reinforce the educational, health, retail and recreational uses in the area.
- Support provision of renewable energy where visually appropriate.

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Warboys Character Area 4: Woodlands



Detached properties along Humberdale Way



Woodlands

14.30 This is a small centrally located residential character area accessed via Humberdale Way. Properties are slightly later dating to the 1980s/1990s so demonstrate building type 3E along Meadow Way, Field Close, Woodlands and Spinney Close with several along Humberdale Way. These include a mixture of houses and flats such as Ashleigh Court.

14.31 Houses are predominantly detached with on plot parking and an integrated garage. There is variation in the colour of bricks used with red, buff and grey bricks used creating variation in the street scene with some mock Tudor detailing, pastel rendering and paint work. There are variations in design with some bay windows, canopies, gables, integrated garages and detached garages as well as some single storey development integrated into these developments. Development has a more enclosed feel with short front gardens providing limited space for greenery. This contrasts with the more open form of development found in earlier developments to the north, east and west.

14.32 To the south of the character area is Ashleigh Court, this is a large building consisting of some 34 flats and reflects the building materials and style of the surrounding development. It provides retirement housing for the over 55s diversifying the types of housing the character area offers. A car park is accessed from Woodlands, there is also access via the High Street so that residents can utilise the services and shops available within the Historic Centre.

14.33 This is an established residential area with most development opportunities being for extensions and alterations to existing properties.



Ashleigh Court

Development proposals should:

- Ensure extensions and alterations to existing properties are of an appropriate size and scale to the original dwelling and do not detract from the surrounding area.
- Be sympathetic to the materials and colour palette of red, buff and grey bricks, Mock Tudor detailing, pastel rendering and paint work.
- Ensure that new development responds positively to the specific opportunities available within the area.
- Retain and protect existing vegetation cover where these contribute to the character of the street scene and consider ways of increasing vegetation cover where space and service restrictions permit.
- Support permeability and connections to village services.
- Support provision of renewable energy where visually appropriate.

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Warboys Character Area 5: Goldpits and Old Mill Avenue



Semi-detached grey brick with weatherboarding along Goldpits



Stotfold Green

- 14.34** This is a small character area located to the east of Bottels Road and Humberdale Way focused around the Goldpits and Old Mill Avenue and also Stotfold Green. Where Humberdale Way ends and Goldpits starts, there is a clear transition in housing design, layout and greenspace which while still reflecting building type 3D has a different character thus justifying its own character area.
- 14.35** Properties are lower density and arranged in more spacious rectangular plots. Goldpits properties are arranged in semi-detached pairs with pastel coloured render on the front elevation, large windows, grey brick and tiles with flat roofed garages to the side. In contrast, properties along Old Mill Avenue are typically constructed from red brick and grey tiles with side flat roofed porches and garages in separate blocks. There is also a much more consistent set back from the road which creates a strong green feel and open space to this area. Due to the spaciousness of plots, extensions can be accommodated as has some infill development which has been sensitively integrated with the area (building type 3F).
- 14.36** The area includes Stotfold Green, a large piece of open space with a mixture of one and two storey residential properties located around all sides. The properties within this area have a more pronounced separation between public and private space with some boundary walls, fences and hedgerows separating them.
- 14.37** This is an established residential area with most development opportunities being for extensions and alterations to existing properties.

Development proposals should:

- Ensure extensions and alterations to existing properties are of an appropriate size and scale to the original dwelling and do not detract from the surrounding area.
- Be sympathetic to the materials and colour palette of grey brick, red brick and dark roof tiles.
- Ensure that new development responds positively to the specific opportunities available within the area.
- Protect the existing areas of greenspace and tree planting which contribute to the character of the area.
- Maintain and where possible promote opportunities for enhancement of open space and recreational facilities.
- Support provision of renewable energy where visually appropriate.

Warboys Character Area 6: Popes Lane and Pathfinder Way



Popes Lane Victorian semi-detached homes



Late 20th century infill development on the corner between Popes Lane and Lea Brooks Close

14.38 This character area is located to the south of the Historic Centre on the western side of the recreation ground and sport and social club. It is predominantly residential with some community facilities including a doctor's surgery. The two principal roads of Popes Lane and Pathfinder Way link from the High Street.

14.39 The oldest part is Popes Lane which connects the High Street through to Ramsey Road and leads onto Beech Close. The mixture of property ages have resulted in a varied streetscene with a mixture of designs, materials and ages. Building types vary from 2A, 3B, 3D and 3E. Properties are typically two storeys but there some bungalows and the set back to properties is not consistent which creates various degrees of openness to the character area. Materials include traditional Warboys White bricks, sand and red brickwork, slate roofs and concrete pantiles. Typically the more recent additions to the area have greater set backs with on plot parking and front gardens with older properties having little or no set back. Pope's Lane becomes Beech Close with further residential development and the Moat House doctor's surgery adding a community facility into this predominantly residential area. The surgery and its parking area is screened from the open landscape and surrounding properties by tree and hedge planting.



Moat House surgery

14.40 Throckmorton is an early example of infilling between Pope's Lane and the historic centre. This is a small street consisting of semi-detached properties and which have a distinctive design of white render to one half of the elevations and dark tiles to the remaining half reflective of building type 3D. They have on plot parking creating a larger set back from the road which creates a more open feel and greater opportunities for tree and hedge planting.



Throckmorton

14.41 There are examples of subsequent development along Lea Brooks Close which utilise mock Tudor panelling typically used in 1980s housebuilding design (building type 3E). There is pedestrian access through to further 1980s development along Pathfinder Way. This is a considerable addition to this sub area and reinforces a cul-de-sac form of development with several smaller clusters of development off shooting from it such as Wellington Close, Lancaster Way and Stirling Close. These follow typical building patterns of the late 1990s and early 2000s with substantial detached properties dominating constructed in a mixture of red and buff brick with darker bricks used above windows and doors to add variation, mock Tudor panelling, on plot parking and modest front gardens (building type 3E and 3F). Lancaster Way properties have rear

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gardens that back onto the sports and recreational ground. An extension to this area is allocated in the [Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036](#) through site allocation WB3 (South of Stirling Close) for 50 homes.

14.42 This is an established residential area with most opportunities being for extensions and alterations to existing properties.

Development proposals should:

- Ensure extensions and alterations to existing properties are of an appropriate size and scale to the original dwelling and do not detract from the surrounding area.
- Be sympathetic to surrounding existing materials and colour palette of 'Warboys White' bricks (creamy pale yellow gault brick), sand and red brickwork, slate roofs and pan tiles.
- Promote high standards of design and architectural detailing.
- Support initiatives for the creation of additional services and community facilities.
- Support provision of renewable energy where visually appropriate.
- Maintain and where possible promote opportunities for enhancement of open space, play areas and recreational facilities.
- Maintain and improve the network of pedestrian footpaths to support active modes of travel within and through the area connecting to community facilities and to the High Street.
- Maintain and where possible improve tree and hedgerow planting within residential areas and along boundaries with the wider landscape.

Warboys Character Area 7: Farriers Way and Fyson Way



Forge Way bungalows and green space



Landscaped approach to 21st century development along Fyson Way

14.43 This character area is also located to the south of the Historic Centre and is predominantly residential with some community facilities including the recreation ground and sport and social club. The principal road is Farrier's Way which has been extended via 21st century development into Fyson Way.

14.44 It has two access points, Forge Way and Madecroft, both connecting to the High Street. Development along these roads date to the middle of the 20th century and is typically low to medium density. Properties are arranged in either terraces of three single storey properties or in semi-detached pairs. Properties along both roads utilise a mixture of buff brick, weatherboarding and dark roof tiles (building type 3D). Garages form a key part of the front elevation and some are attached to the neighbouring garage creating large gaps in between residential properties. There is a clear distinction between public and private space with front driveways paved and established hedges and green areas. This creates a continuous green and more spacious feel to these roads. Forge Way has access to the sports and recreation field.

14.45 Later development connects these two roads. Farrier's Way consists of large two storey detached properties from the early 2000s (building type 3F). Properties are a mixture of buff brick, and hanging tiles to the frontage, red pantiles to the roof. Typical features include a front porch, side garages and bay or canted windows. They have on plot parking creating with a mixture of set backs from the road which create an open feel and provide greater opportunities for tree and hedge planting. Properties within The Smithy continue this development pattern although some properties have garages to the rear of the property and canted windows to side elevations creating active gable ends. There is pedestrian only access from The Smithy to Madecroft.



The Smithy

14.46 The most recent addition is Furrows Way, south of The Smithy and Farrier's Way. It continues the established 21st design principles in the area. The development provides planting along its southern boundary where it adjoins the open countryside. There is additional planting to the north, east and west providing a green setting to the development and minimising impacts on surrounding properties and adjoining community recreation facilities. A large attenuation pond provides an attractive landscape feature and provides a greater amount of separation to properties on Farrier's Way creating a transitional point. A footpath will also connect from the site across the playing fields to Farrier's Way increasing the permeability of the area.

14 Warboys Key Service Centre

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14.47 To the east of the Furrows is Bencroft Lane, a small road of mixed age residential development with further development committed reflecting 21st design principles (building type 3F). The road has substantial tree coverage and spacious feel as a result of large set backs and some properties set within large plots.

14.48 This is an established residential area with opportunities for extensions and alterations to existing properties. There are few opportunities remaining for major or infill development.



Bencroft Lane

Development proposals should:

- Ensure extensions and alterations to existing properties are of an appropriate size and scale to the original dwelling and do not detract from the surrounding area.
- Be sympathetic to surrounding existing materials and colour palette of buff brick, red brick, pan tiles, weatherboarding and dark roof tiles.
- Promote high standards of design and architectural detailing.
- Support initiatives for the creation of additional services and community facilities within the residential area possibly through conversion or redevelopment.
- Maintain and where possible promote opportunities for enhancement of open space, play areas and recreational facilities.
- Maintain and improve the network of pedestrian footpaths to support active modes of travel within and through the area to nearby services and recreational facilities.
- Maintain and where possible improve tree and hedgerow planting within residential areas and along boundaries with the wider landscape, particularly where properties are in close proximity to the A141.
- Support provision of renewable energy where visually appropriate.

Warboys Character Area 8: Station Road



Station Road



Station Road interwar semi-detached properties

- 14.49** This character area is located to the north of Warboys and looks out over the Fen Margin Landscape Character Area towards Warboys Woods and Wistow Fen. It is a residential character area adjacent to a large factory unit. The boundary of the character area falls along Station Road but also includes properties on the northern side of Station Road toward Heath Road.
- 14.50** It was a distinct and largely separate element of the village before the commencement of development off Station Road which has resulted in the green wedge separating this character area from the centre of the village being largely filled in. The character area hosts a variety of building types and styles and is still strongly linked to the surrounding countryside. Development is concentrated on the south side of Station Road, however, some properties are located around the northern side at the junction with Heath Road.
- 14.51** The oldest development is concentrated in a linear form along Station Road with a mixture of terraced, semi-detached and detached properties in long rectangular plots. They are narrow terraced properties which date to the 19th century and reflect building type 2A with a mixture of brick and white render and slate roofs with a small set back from the road which creates a wider and greener streetscape. Subsequent properties are generally set within more spacious plots and vary in styles reflecting building types 2B, 3B, 3D, 3E and 3F. This variety is primarily as a result of infill development over time, one of the more substantial developments along Station Road is Ash Close, a small cluster of large detached plots built in the early 2000s reflecting building type 3F.
- 14.52** Properties behind the linear development along Station Road are typically denser, for example Orchard Close which consists of a mixture of one and two storey properties arranged in groups of terraces, pairs of semi-detached and detached properties built from the 1970s with infill development occurring subsequently (building types 3D and 3E). There is a central playground which breaks up the arrangement of properties and provides open space and recreational space for children and families.



Orchard Close playground

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14.53 Coronation Avenue is at the northern most extent of the character area. Properties within Coronation Avenue reflect building types 3B and 3D and have a simple rectangular semi-detached plan form in a rectilinear street pattern. They are constructed of red brick with plain tile roofs and have off street parking and reasonable front gardens some of which have been gravelled or paved over to provide more car parking. The street has several fairly dominant hedges which obscure several properties from view and create a clear distinction between public and private space. An established hedgerow runs along the rear gardens of properties on the north side of Coronation Avenue which provides a visual buffer to reduce their visual prominence in the adjoining countryside.



Coronation Avenue

14.54 This is an established residential area which extends into the open countryside, with limited opportunities for major development and scope for extensions and alterations to existing properties.

Development proposals should:

- Ensure extensions and alterations to existing properties are of an appropriate size and scale to the original dwelling and do not detract from the surrounding area.
- Be sympathetic to surrounding existing materials and colour palette.
- Promote high standards of design and architectural detailing.
- Protect the existing trees, hedges and vegetation where they contribute to the street scene.
- Reduce landscape impacts particularly to the north and east of the character area.
- Support initiatives for the creation of additional services and community facilities within the residential area possibly through conversion or redevelopment.
- Maintain and where possible promote opportunities for enhancement of open space and recreational facilities.
- Support provision of renewable energy where visually appropriate.

Warboys Character Area 9: Station Road Extension



Homes within phase 1 of development along Collings Close facing onto a balancing pond



Example of terraced development along Saxon Close within phase 2 of development

- 14.55** The area is relatively flat and adjoins other residential character areas to the south, north and east however, while adjoining these areas, there is limited connectivity and permeability between them. This character area has good permeability within itself but vehicular access can only be gained off Station Road. Building type found within this character area is 3F.
- 14.56** The eastern boundary of the character area comprises a mixture of gardens of properties in Coronation Avenue, Orchard Close, Ash Close and Station Road with the remainder of the boundary extending to Station Road. Its location in between two distinct character areas and the fact it represents design principles and trends of 21st century building thus justifies it being its own character area. Its western boundary adjoins the open countryside categorised within the Fen Margin Landscape Character Area which includes Warboys Wood and Wistow Fen.
- 14.57** The first phase of development immediately adjoins Station Road and along its southern edge the rear gardens of Old Mill Avenue. Its central route, Mahaddie Way runs through the site with an attenuation pond and landscape features creating a focal point and assists in creating a sense of place. Its position also provides a transitional point between the older forms of development it adjoins and 21st century design principles.
- 14.58** A second phase adjoins Mahaddie Way and the gardens of Coronation Avenue, Orchard Close and Ash Close. This phase does not extent as far south so a green wedge between it and the properties along the northern edge of the main village remains (to Flaxen Walk). The layout of the area and landscaping measures on the western edge of the site serves to enhance existing landscape and nature conservation features and provides a gentle transition to the open countryside. It also retains an existing public right of way which runs from Humberdale Way through the site connecting to Coronation Avenue. The mix of dwelling types within both phases are consistent to one another comprising of 1 up to 5 bedroomed properties ranging between 2 and 2.5 storeys.
- 14.59** Development within this character area is limited to minor alterations and extensions to existing properties with consideration on its sensitive position between the open countryside and development to the north, south and east.



Mahaddie Way

Development proposals should:

- Reflect the principles, materials and architectural detailing of the agreed design code.
- Ensure extensions and alterations to existing properties are of an appropriate scale and design to the surrounding area.
- Retain landscape gaps and buffers along the western boundary to the open countryside.
- Maintain footpaths, public rights of way and landscaped areas and wherever possible promote opportunities for their enhancement.
- Where possible promote opportunities for the enhancement of amenity green spaces to provide increased opportunities for recreation and nature conservation and to help provide distinctive local landmarks.
- Support provision of renewable energy where visually appropriate.

Warboys Character Area 10: Mill End



The Royal Oak Public House and car park



Padgetts Close

14.60 This is a small oval shaped character area located to the east of the village. It has clear boundaries and is physically contained due to it being bounded on its eastern edge by the A141, Station Road on its western edge, Mill Green/ Fenton Road to the south and Heath Road to the north. This, and its closeness to the A141, creates a different feel and relationship to the wider open countryside than with the rest of the village boundaries as a significant tree belt runs along the A141 which acts as buffer from traffic sight and noise.

14.61 The area is primarily residential but a dental practice and the Royal Oak Public House and car park on the junction between Station Road, the High Street and Mill Green provide some community facilities. There is a green feel to the character area with properties having irregular depth set backs from the road allowing for some substantial planting. This also increases the sense of space between properties. There are several clusters of tree preservation orders amongst residential properties which reinforce this.

14.62 The oldest part of the character area comprises the properties facing onto Station Road and Mill Green which are generally either terraced or spacious detached properties set within large rectangular grounds and are a mix of one and two storey properties (building types 2A, 2B and 2D). These properties are reflective of the adjacent historic centre. The character area has two listed buildings, both are grade II listed and are late 18th century one storey with attic cottages constructed from gault brick, Warboys White brick and colour washed brick, dormer windows and a mansard roof with steely pitched roofs.

14.63 The character area retained its linear development along road frontages until the latter part of the 20th century. During the 1980s and 1990s, there was substantial residential development to the rear of properties along Station Road and Mill Green infilling the land between them and the A141. A cul-de-sac layout dominates within this element of the character area with several arterial roads joining back onto Station Road, Mill Green and Heath Road. Properties are typically medium density designed with mock Tudor decorative panels and red brick, a design used commonly used in the 1980s (building type 3E), for example those within Pasture Close and Padgetts Close. There is some diversity in design and building heights within the residential expansion. For example within Wilthorne there are some bungalows and properties constructed of plainer presenting buff brick or white render with pantiles on the roof.



Pasture Close

14.64 There are very limited opportunities apart from the extension and alteration of existing properties.

Development proposals should:

- Reflect the dominant materials and colour palette within the immediate vicinity
- Ensure extensions and alterations to existing properties are of an appropriate size and scale to the original dwelling and do not detract from the surrounding area.
- Promote high standards of design and architectural detailing and where appropriate retain original architectural features.
- Protect the existing trees, hedges and vegetation where they contribute to the street scene, particularly those with a Tree Preservation Order.
- Maintain and encourage further planting along the A141 to retain the existing buffer to traffic sight and noise.
- Support provision of renewable energy where visually appropriate.
- Support initiatives for the creation of additional services and community facilities within the residential area possibly through conversion or redevelopment.

Warboys Character Area 11: Fenton Road and New Road



Fenton Road semi-detached properties with extensive front gardens



New Road

- 14.65** This character area is located on the south eastern edge of the village along Fenton Road and New Road. The character of the area is derived from the relationship of properties to the highway network and the close association with the wider countryside. As such this is a sensitively located character area.
- 14.66** Fenton Road provides a transitional point into the countryside where it continues past the roundabout where the A141 and B1090 (Fenton Road) meet. To the west of the roundabout properties along Fenton Road relate more strongly to the materials and style of the Historic Centre with some terraced housing (building type 2A) of gault brick. Properties typically have little set back from the road.
- 14.67** On the eastern side of the roundabout where Fenton Road extends into the countryside, there is ribbon development comprised of 1920s semi-detached houses (building type 3B). These have extensive front gardens with comparatively smaller back gardens which assists in separating them from the road. These properties have a plain symmetrical design with pastel pebble dash rendering. To the east of the roundabout are allotment gardens. Further along Fenton Road are later examples of housing from the 1960s and 70s as found throughout the village.
- 14.68** New Road consists of 13 properties, mostly detached, of building type 3D. Materials and colour palette vary with red and buff brick, rendering and some hanging tiles and weatherboarding to front elevations. A hedge runs along the front of these properties screening somewhat the impact of the A141.
- 14.69** This is a highly sensitive area due to its relationship with the highway network and the countryside. Development proposals are limited to extensions and alterations to existing properties where appropriate.

Development proposals should:

- Reduce harmful impacts on the countryside.
- Protect and increase where possible trees and vegetation where they contribute to the character of the area and provide a natural screen to the countryside and increase residential amenity from the highway network.
- Ensure extensions and alterations to existing properties are of an appropriate size and scale to the original dwelling and do not detract from the surrounding area.
- Be sympathetic to surrounding existing materials and colour palette.
- Promote high standards of design and architectural detailing.
- Reflect the existing layouts and relationship with the countryside.
- Support and improve vehicular and pedestrian access to the area and to the main village.
- Consider parking arrangements and capacity.
- Provide safe access onto the A141 and B1090 and not adversely impact the highway network.

15 Yaxley Key Service Centre

- 15.1** Yaxley is located in the north of Huntingdonshire immediately south of recent development at the Hamptons in Peterborough and some three miles from the city centre.

Landscape Setting

- 15.2** Yaxley is situated on a south facing slope rising above the northern edge of the Fen Margin Landscape Character Area. The village has strong historic and visual links with the wider fen landscape which characterises the southern edges of the village. There are expansive views south and south east across this open agricultural landscape from the residential areas in the south of the village. This link between the village and the surrounding landscape is reinforced in views toward the village from fens where the spire of St Peter's Church provides a notable landmark defining the western edge of the village.
- 15.3** To the north of the village the landscape is dominated by modern and ongoing development at the Hamptons within Peterborough on the former brickworks areas. It includes a country park which creates a degree of separation between Yaxley and the Hamptons. From the north western edge of the village there are glimpsed views to the higher ground and woodlands of the Central Claylands Landscape Character Area.

Edges and Visual Prominence

- 15.4** Yaxley is very prominent in views from the south given its ridgeline setting which gives clear views up to development along Main Street and Church Street in particular. Much of the southern edge of the village is softened by trees and hedging although rooftops can clearly be seen revealing the presence of the village.
- 15.5** The eastern part of Yaxley is cut through by the East Coast mainline railway which forms a distinct linear feature in the landscape with substantial planting, particularly on the eastern side of the railway. Beyond this sits the Broadway and Eagle Business Parks which present distinct edges to the village. Similarly, the northern edges of Yaxley are dominated by straight edges of residential estates directly adjoining fields and water bodies within the Hampton Country Park between them and recent development within Peterborough at the Hamptons.
- 15.6** The north western edges of Yaxley are shaped by the harsh line of the A15 (London Road). The south western edges are much softer with substantial mature trees reducing the visual impact of the buildings on the adjoining landscape. Open views from Church Street and Waterslade Lane across the immediate landscape provide a high quality setting to the church and to a number of large residential properties along the road.

Townscape Character

- 15.7** Residential development lines both sides of the B1091 corridor (Broadway) although the majority of older housing lies to the south of the road on slopes overlooking the lowland landscape of the Fen Margin to the east and south east. The B1091 (Broadway) links Yaxley with the A15 (London Road) to the west of the village and with the village of Farcet to the north east. The East Coast mainline railway defines the residential edge of the village to the east although land immediately east of the railway is dominated by industrial and employment development associated with the Broadway and Eagle Business Parks.
- 15.8** St Peter's Church provides a notable landmark in views from within the village and from footpath locations to the south and south west of the village edge. It is located on the site of the early medieval village which is partially visible as earthworks to the north west of the church and is on the south western edge of the current village. Over time, the village developed to the south and east along both sides of Main Street creating a distinctive historic core along the southern edge of the village which broadly follows the five-metre contour and which is still very much apparent. The original village core remains largely intact where there is a stronger physical and visual relationship with the agricultural landscape of the Fen Margin. The linear arrangement of historic buildings along Main Street and Church Street creates a strong sense of place

15 Yaxley Key Service Centre

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which is more intimate in scale than the post war residential estates to the north. The historic land uses and agricultural past of the village are also apparent in the shape of plots facing onto Main Street and extending down to Yards End Dyke.

- 15.9** Yaxley has sixteen character areas (Figure 15.1 and can be viewed on the [interactive map](#)). Yaxley has seen considerable growth and change through post war residential and industrial development. This development has had a major impact on the character of the village which is now dominated by residential estates and the influences of heavy traffic along the B1091 (Broadway). The central areas of the village are, therefore, strongly suburban in character, those to the north of the village have no visual links to the fen landscape which dominates the southern edges of the village. The area to the east of the railway is industrial in character with the Broadway and Eagle Business Parks located here with large buildings in active use, external storage and parking areas. These areas provide important local employment opportunities.

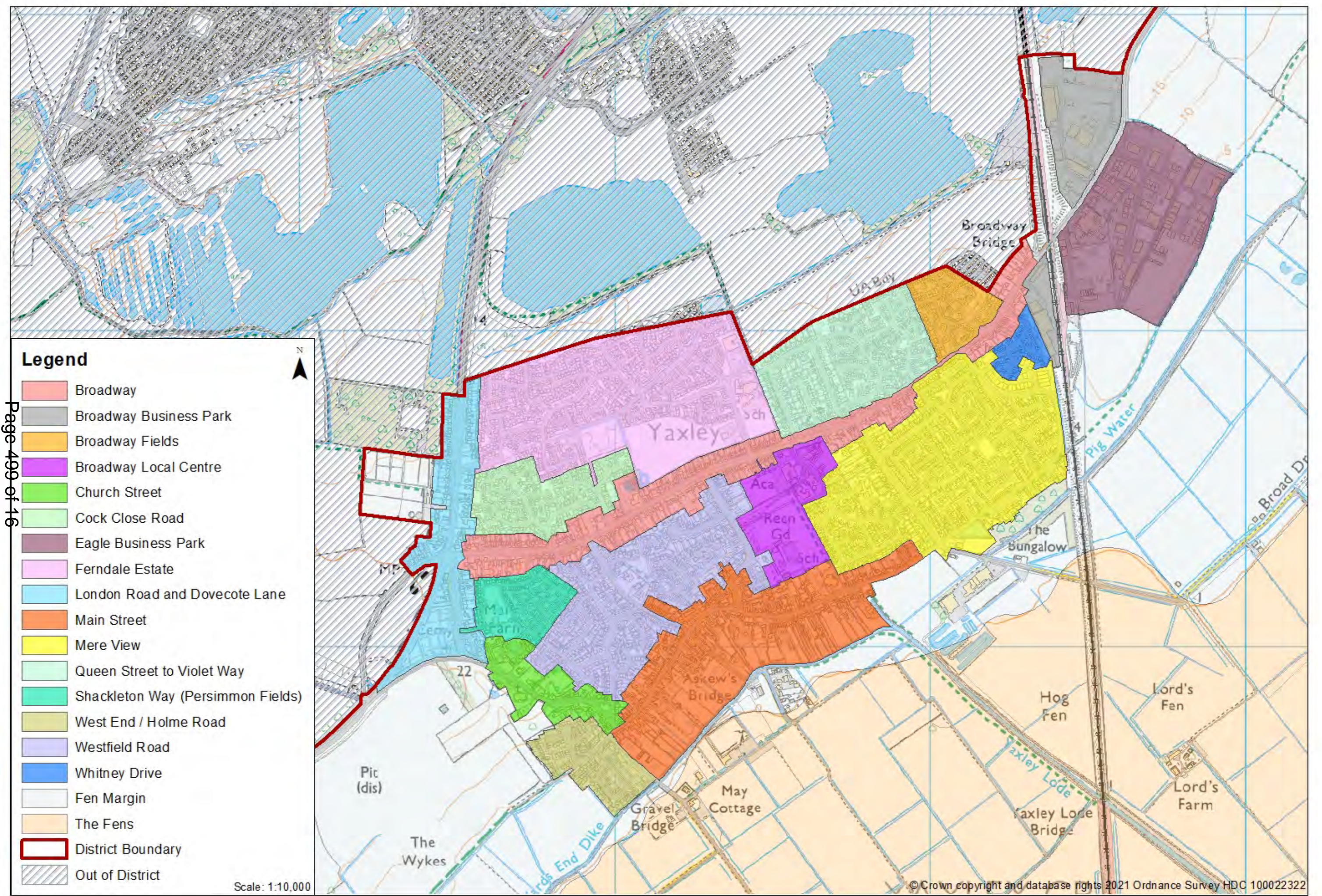


Figure 15.1 Yaxley Character Areas

Key Features

Historic route	Church Street/Main Street
Historic gateway	Church Street/Main Street
Landmarks	St Peter's Church
Memorable areas	The Green, Main Street
Key views	South over the fen landscape and north toward Hampton Country Park



Main Street hosts the majority of listed buildings within Yaxley and is most closely associated with its Fens and agricultural heritage. Infill, redevelopments and additions over time have created an architecturally varied street scene.



The Fens landscape has strongly influenced the heritage and character of the village, particularly to the south. Views out across the Fens landscape can be enjoyed from Church Street and Main Street with public rights of way.



Yaxley has undergone considerable expansion over the last 25 years with some developments influenced by the abundance of arts and crafts and interwar housing found along key routes (e.g. Main Street, London Road and Broadway).



Yaxley has two Established Employment Areas, one of which is the Eagle Business Park with phase 2 of the park underway providing employment opportunities for Yaxley residents and those in nearby communities.

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Yaxley Character Area 1: Main Street



The Green is a historically significant area along Main Street



197 Main Street is an example of a thatched vernacular cottage

15.10 Main Street has largely retained a village like feel and character. The character area is linear in form with Main Street running parallel to Yards End Dyke, a tributary of the River Nene. The community developed principally as a farming community with close ties to the Fens. Main Street has retained this connection much more so than the suburban character of the village to the north.

15.11 The vast majority of Yaxley's listed buildings and historic environment are located within this character area which has evolved over time. It also hosts the second largest range of uses outside of the Broadway Local Centre character area. The uses within the area include places of worship, public houses, shops, a parish hall, a fire and rescue station, restaurants, a dentist, offices and residential properties.



Three Horseshoes pub

15.12 This character area also provides the greatest variety of buildings types ranging from 1B, 2A, 2B, 2E, 3B, 3D, 3E, 3F, 6B and 7A. As such there is a mixture of building materials present including stone, brick, timber framing and rendering with traditional roofing materials such as slate and thatch. This is largely attributed to Yaxley's location on the southern periphery of the Peterborough brick-fields making brick a key material in the village. Local brick production started in the 16th century with large-sale manufacture commencing at the nearby Norman Cross and Beeby's Works in the Victorian age resulting in many properties that date to the 19th and early 20th century being constructed from local materials.

15.13 At the junction between Church Street and Main Street development is noticeably denser with a strongly linear character and a hard landscaped semi-urban environment with development on both sides although the footpaths are generally quite wide so there is a limited sense of enclosure. Properties opposite the junction form a strong terminal feature to long distance views across the Fens. Infill opportunities over time have reduced remaining views outside across the Fens landscape.

15.14 Main Street hosts some vernacular buildings dating to the 17th and 18th centuries which are dispersed throughout the character area representing building type 1B. The character area contains many examples of Victorian and Edwardian homes and institutional, educational and non-conformist buildings including the existing Parish Hall, Methodist Church and St Bartholomew's, some of these structures have since been listed. There were several public houses however only The Duck and Drake and The Three Horseshoes are still operational. The Royal Oak is a grade II listed property which has since been converted into a house.



Victorian fire station building with a modern addition

15.15 The character area also has a triangular village green between Main Street, Middletons and The Green. It has two listed structures on it including the Victorian village pump and early 20th century post box. Neighbouring this is a larger island located between Main Street, The Green and Middletons Road. On its western apex, a building known as Red Front House forms a significant terminal building as the road forks and rises slightly between Main Street and Middletons Road. Here there are several examples of Victorian terraces and cottages. The open space in front of properties and increased tree and general planting in this part of the character area provide a particularly attractive village environment.

15.16 To the rear of properties on the southern side of Main Street, there are some long narrow strips of land which stretch toward Yards End Dyke. Some are overgrown and some have outbuildings and storage sheds. These narrow land parcels create the distinct break between the built environment of the village and the natural environment of the Fens. These land parcels represent the historic land tenure consequent on the necessities of subsistence and agriculture, coupled with the need to have a frontage onto Main Street. This historic form has largely been retained and has shaped the nature and evolution of the village. These parcels, particularly those that are vacant, offer the opportunity for some minor scale redevelopment which can enhance the conservation area and be positively integrated with the surrounding area, an example is Needham Court. Another opportunity to do this is on site allocation YX1 in the [Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036](#) which has since gained planning approval for nine properties.



View out across the Fens landscape from Main Street

15.17 From Holme Lane and Askew's Lane public rights of way follow Yards End Dyke and lead to isolated properties and outbuildings as well as a football ground and allotments.

15.18 Throughout the character area, there are abundant examples of 20th and 21st century infill development. Many have replicated key features found throughout the conservation area such as the materials, colour palette, dormer windows and the style and form of properties, however, some earlier examples from the middle of the 20th century have not integrated such features as successfully. As the character area extends northwards along Main Street, larger quantities of such development can be found alongside some Victorian terraces forming a transitional point with the wider suburban expansion the village underwent during the mid 20th century onwards. These are retained along Main Street as they reflect and continue the linear nature of the character area and a similar land ownership pattern extending to Yards End Dyke. At the very eastern edge of Main Street, development ceases on the southern side of Main Street providing views out over the flat fenland landscape to those properties on the northern side. This is important as these are the most extensive view of the Fens from Main Street and give a rural setting to this part of the village core.



161-163 sympathetic modern infill development

15.19 This is a characterful and historic area whose conservation is a priority. Development opportunities are limited to changes of use, small scale infill proposals, extensions and alterations to existing properties.

Development proposals should:

- Protect and conserve the historic buildings located along Main Street and Middletons Road.
- Enrich the character of the area by reinforcing and acknowledging its historic character, in particular its connections to its agricultural and Fenland heritage.
- Reflect the existing materials and colour palette of predominately brick and stone in particular those that can be sourced locally.
- Support initiatives for the retention of existing or creation of additional services and community facilities.
- Conserve and reflect the features and characteristics of Main Street through the control of shopfront design and building renovations.
- Promote high standards of design and architectural detailing to enhance the historic character of the area and conservation area.
- Maintain and where possible promote opportunities for enhancement of open space and recreational facilities.
- Protect the existing mature trees and planting where these contribute to the character of the street scene.
- Conserve and maintain the village greens and open space within this area.
- Maintain and enhance physical and visual connections to key buildings and landscape views, particularly those over the Fen landscape.
- Not increase the amount of water that enters the Yards End Dyke drainage channel or encroach on the required 20m maintenance wide access strip to it. A flood risk assessment and drainage management plan will be required to assess this.
- Provide safe access onto Main Street, where access is particularly narrow it may be appropriate to demolish existing home(s) within the site area.
- Maintain and enhance where possible opportunities for public rights of way.

Yaxley Character Area 2: Church Street



View of the Church spire and wall along Church Street. Tree planting contributes heavily to the character of this area



Terraced development on raised ground along Church Street

15.20 Church Street is located to the north west of Main Street and has a much more open and rural feel than Main Street with established hedgerows. Properties are generally located on its western side when travelling toward Main Street where the road also slightly descends resulting in some properties being raised from the roadside. These properties have views out across agricultural fields and the natural landscape with St Peter's Church forming a dominant landmark.

15.21 The character area has several listed buildings with building types varying from 2A, 2B, 2E, 3B, 3D, 3E, 3F and 6A. Within Yaxley the greatest concentration of stone is found around St Peter's Church (a grade I listed building) whose walls are constructed from roughly coursed rubble limestone and Barnack stone ashlar. This is due to the village's close location to the Nene Valley which contains the main concentration of historic stone buildings in Huntingdonshire.

15.22 Church Street is set in a slight cutting and is bordered by a grassy bank which contributes to its rural feel with established trees and hedgerows which almost completely obscure some properties. Most properties along here date from the 18th and 19th centuries and are set in substantial grounds with walling, railings and hedgerows along the street frontage. Examples include Manor Farm, the Vicarage, Church Farm and The Laurels. These are not of uniform age or materials but in combination provide a rich street scene. Of these, only Manor Farm is listed and is stone built with a Collyweston stone slate roof. Its farmyard had a traditional courtyard built of stone which has since been converted to residential use with further detached homes built around the central pond in a similar style. Some infill development has taken place along Church Street which has generally been sensitively integrated.



15 and 15a Church street sympathetic infill development

15.23 There is a right of way connection from Church Street to Vicarage Way across some natural grassland complementing the surrounding built environment and providing amenity space for residents. Continuing this theme is Laurel Close, a series of 20th century houses arranged around a central greenspace with planting. This widens the street scene on the approach to Main Street.

15.24 This is a sensitive area with landscape and heritage being key considerations.

Development proposals should:

- Protect and conserve the historic buildings located along Church Street.
- Enrich the character of the area by reinforcing and acknowledging its historic character, in particular its connections to its agricultural and Fenland heritage.
- Reflect the existing materials and colour palette of predominately brick and stone in particular those that can be sourced locally.
- Promote high standards of design and architectural detailing to enhance the historic character of the area and conservation area.
- Protect the existing mature trees and hedgerows where these contribute to the character of the street scene.
- Conserve and maintain the village greens and open space within this area.
- Maintain and enhance physical and visual connections to key buildings and landscape views, particularly those over the Fen landscape.
- Promote opportunities for enhancement of amenity green spaces to provide increased opportunities for recreation and nature conservation and to help provide distinctive local landmarks.

Yaxley Character Area 3: West End/ Holme Road



Wykes Road



Cookson Close central greenspace with homes around it

- 15.25** This is a small character area located to the south west corner of the village adjoining Main Street and with a strong relationship with the fen landscape. West End links to Main Street to the east. The properties found within West End are arranged around two main roads: Wykes Close and Cookson Close. The character area also includes a small area of industrial and employment uses facing Holme Road to the south of Main Street and adjoining the rear boundary of properties along Cookson Walk.
- 15.26** Properties along Wykes Close representing building type 3D constructed of brown brick with hanging tiles and weatherboarding used as decorative cladding. There are a mixture of two storey homes and bungalows with a reasonable set back to the road enabling pockets of green space throughout. Garages are typically to the side or in garage courts. Where building heights are lower, the distinctive landmark of St Peter's Church can be seen.
- 15.27** Properties within Cookson Close and Abbots Road date to the 1980s/90s and demonstrate building type 3E. They are typically larger detached homes with some semi-detached and terraced homes providing variety. Many are constructed from red brick with dark roof tiles while other properties include a greater mix of red, buff and brown brick, mock Tudor panelling and rendering. They have on plot garages and fewer areas of green space throughout but instead have a central green area around Cookson Walk providing a strong focal point.
- 15.28** The industrial workshops facing Holme Road are mostly single storey constructed from brick with some cladding. They are separated via metal fencing from Holme Road, trees and planting within the rear gardens of adjoining properties providing some screening from these industrial uses. There is a considerable amount of hardstanding for parking. The building type these buildings most closely relate to is type 5B.
- 15.29** At the end of West End there is a public right of way enabling routes out across the countryside. The southern most corner of the area running to the east and west follows that of the drainage channel of Yards End Dyke. The right of way leads onto Holme Road over Gravel Bridge and northwards to the allotment ground and football ground. Holme Road carries on in a south easterly direction where sporadic homes, farm buildings and industrial buildings are located throughout the fen landscape.
- 15.30** This is a sensitive area due to its location on the edge of the village and the closer association it has with the fenland landscape. Development proposals are therefore limited to extensions and alterations to existing properties.

Development proposals should:

- Enhance screening and adequately mitigate amenity issues arising from proposals within the industrial uses along Holme Road.
- Encourage and retain tree and hedge planting on the boundary edges of the area to reduce the impact on the wider countryside in particular the Great Fen Landscape and Visual Setting and long distance views to the south.
- Maintain and enhance physical and visual connections to key buildings and landscape views, particularly those over the Fen landscape.
- Not increase the amount of water that enters the Yards End Dyke drainage channel.
- Ensure extensions and alterations to existing properties are of an appropriate size and scale to the original dwelling and do not detract from the surrounding area.
- Be sympathetic to the materials and colour palette including red and buff brick, dark roof tiles and where possible provide increased architectural detailing.
- Protect the existing trees where these contribute to the character of the street scene and consider ways of increasing vegetation cover where space and service restrictions permit.
- Promote opportunities for enhancement of amenity green spaces to provide increased opportunities for recreation.
- Maintain and enhance where possible opportunities for public rights of way out across the Fens.

Yaxley Character Area 4: London Road and Dovecote Lane



Semi-detached properties along London Road



At the point where London Road, Broadway and Dovecote Lane meet are a series of traffic lights and the road widens

15.31 This is a linear character area focused around London Road (A15). It extends northwards towards Peterborough and to the Norman Cross roundabout to the southwest. The open countryside lies to the west. Buildings in this character area are predominantly residential with a filling station and cemetery and chapel located to the south. The character area is dominated by the road and its associated signage and traffic lights. Residential development is located on either side of London Road and is of mixed ages, there is some in depth development. Building types in this character area are therefore mixed ranging from 3A, 3B, 3D, 3E and 3F.

15.32 Examples of interwar housing (building type 3B) are common with a few arts and crafts style properties (type 3A). Many are designed with double bay windows with rendered or tile hung panels which are defining features for this development type. They are also either detached or in semi-detached pairs with a central chimney stack in rectangular plots with generous front and rear garden space creating a low to medium density form of housing.



2 London Road

15.33 Later forms of development have replicated the rectangular plots and medium density form and range from two storey detached properties to semi-detached, chalet style and single storey properties. Infill development during the latter part of the 20th century and into the 21st have further diversified the housing in this area. Examples of modern additions can be found on the site of the former Anglian Water pumping station on London Road at the junction with the Broadway. These properties have reflected the wider style of the area as well as positively reused a disused site.

15.34 Development is generally well separated from the road with a footpath running on the eastern side of the road and generous front gardens which are mostly paved and serve as on plot parking. Hedges and trees form an important visual separation from the road as well as provide a green feel to the area. On the western side, a verge separates properties from the road with an access route from the A15 to these properties, an example is Folly Close.



New builds on the former Anglian Water station

15.35 At the southern end of the character area on land between the fork in the road layout between London Road and Waterslade Road is a chapel and cemetery. North on Waterslade Road is Dovecote Lane. Heading north on Dovecote Lane, there is a junction back onto London Road and also access onto Broadway, green spaces provide

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additional separation from this busy junction. Dovecote Lane demonstrates a more peaceful nature than that of London Road as a result of the cemetery grounds, however it shares its general pattern of development with its northern most part connecting to the junction with London Road which justifies extending the character area to include this part. It also hosts building types 3B, 3D, 3E and 3F. The Yaxley Cemetery Chapel located at the very south of the area at the junction with Waterslade Road/Church Street and Dovecote Lane dates to the 1880s (building type 7A) and is set in a large grounds behind a fence with tree planting largely obscuring it from view providing a more tranquil feel.

15.36 This is a sensitive area due to its connections to the transport network and the open countryside. Development opportunities are limited but include small scale infill development and extensions and alterations to existing properties.

Development proposals should:

- Provide safe access onto London Road (A15) and not adversely impact the highway network.
- Protect the existing trees and vegetation where they contribute to the street scene and reinforce the separation of traffic noise and visual impact on residential amenity.
- Ensure extensions and alterations to existing properties are of an appropriate size and scale to the original dwelling and do not detract from the surrounding area.
- Be sympathetic to surrounding existing materials and colour palette.
- Support provision of renewable energy where visually appropriate.
- Promote high standards of design and architectural detailing.
- Provide screening and tree/hedge planting to mitigate the impact on development on the wider countryside.
- Respect the quieter nature at Waterslade Road/Church Street and Dovecote Lane area.

Yaxley Character Area 5: Broadway



Variation in housing design and styles found along Broadway including bungalows



Mixed terraces along Broadway

15.37 This is a linear character area with its western edge extending from the junction with London Road (A15) and up to the East Coast mainline railway at its eastern edge. It includes development immediately fronting Broadway (B1091) which is continuously developed with occasionally breaks in the street scene. Building types are varied ranging from types 2A, 3A, 3B, 3D, 3E and 3F. While the housing types are not solely found within this part of the village, their relationship and character is greatly influenced by their proximity to Broadway. This is a busy road with high levels of traffic moving through this area.

15.38 Development is predominantly residential and is some of the oldest outside of Main Street with numerous examples of interwar housing and arts and crafts housing as well as Victorian/Edwardian terraced housing. Plot sizes are fairly regular with rectangular plots, the terraced housing has the most extreme example of very narrow and long plots with little degree of separation from the footpaths along Broadway. The later more suburban styles of properties are more spacious with a larger set back from the road and grouped in semi-detached pairs providing more medium density housing and space for on plot parking behind a mixture of low hedges and low boundary walls and fencing. Infill development over the latter half of the 20th century and into the 21st century have diversified the housing types. Throughout the area there is a mixture of detached, semi-detached and terraced properties mostly of two storeys but some bungalows. Materials in this area vary with red and buff brickwork, render and rough cast render and some mock Tudor panelling. Design features include single and double bay windows, central chimney stacks on semi-detached properties and shallow pitched roofs.



Modern extension to property

15.39 Other uses within this area include a filling station, shops, offices, children's nurseries, hairdressers, clubhouse, bowling green and the Farmers Public House. Some shops and offices operate from the ground floor of residential properties. The mixture of building types and their operational requirements such as car parking areas and signage provide variations in the street scene. Those not operating from a residential type property are most closely related to building type 7B.



The Farmers public house

15.40 The street scene is dominated by the road, signage and traffic lights. There is some planting throughout providing some greenery and screening to residential properties. The largest green space within this area is located between Broadway and Speechly

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Road opposite the Broadway Shopping Centre where traffic lights and a crossing point is located. This island is a mixture of grass and pavement with areas to sit with tree planting. This provides a somewhat calmer space within this generally busy area as well as a break in the street scene.

15.41 This is sensitive area due to the busy B1091. Development proposals are therefore limited with highways safety being a key consideration.

Development proposals should:

- Provide safe access onto Broadway (B1091) and not adversely impact the highways network.
- Protect the existing trees and vegetation where they contribute to the street scene and reinforce the separation of traffic noise and visual impact on residential amenity.
- Ensure extensions and alterations to existing properties are of an appropriate size and scale to the original dwelling and do not detract from the surrounding area.
- Be sympathetic to surrounding existing materials and colour palette.
- Increase resident amenity by incorporating screening and physical separation between new properties and road potentially through boundary walls/fencing and hedge planting.
- Promote high standards of design and architectural detailing.
- Support initiatives for the retention of existing services and community facilities.
- Ensure signage does not adversely impact highways safety.
- Ensure that shopfront designs are appropriate within the street scene.
- Protect existing planting where it contributes to the street scene.
- Support provision of renewable energy where visually appropriate.

Yaxley Character Area 6: Broadway Local Centre



Broadway Shopping Centre



Recreational grounds within this area which are centrally located within the village with numerous points of access for residents

15.42 Broadway Local Centre is a centrally located character area on the south side of Broadway and adjoins extensive areas of residential development to the south and east. After Main Street it has the most diverse range of uses that are important to local residents for day to day living and employment. The community facilities and services found here include the Broadway Shopping Centre, a library, William de Yaxley Primary School, Yaxley health centre and recreation grounds with synthetic turf pitches. These fall within building types 5D and 7B. Due to the range of uses and the need for open and play space as well as car parking, the character area has a generally open feel to it albeit there is also extensive amounts of fencing and boundary markers differentiating the various operational requirements of each facility.

15.43 The Broadway Shopping Centre in Malting Square opened in the mid-1960s. It is a covered area consisting of 19 units occupied by local and national operators for shops, takeaways, convenience stores and banking machines with residential flats over some premises. Extensions over time have increased the capacity of the shopping centre and have assisted in reinforcing the street frontage with large areas of glazing to the frontage that add interest and provide an active frontage. Around the centre is hardstanding used for car parking, a low boundary wall provides some separation between Malting Square and the street scene. An additional building to the south also provides shops, services and flats within this area. Both buildings are constructed of red brick and have a variety of building heights.



Green grocers

15.44 The William de Yaxley Primary School is a large single storey building set behind fencing. It has large amounts of open space around it with access from Lansdowne Road. Playing fields are located to the west and adjoin the larger public recreational ground located within this character area. The recreational ground is a large centrally located piece of open space with access from Lansdowne Road and from Main Street to the south. It has synthetic turf pitches and playing equipment. A children's nursery is also located within the grounds. Trees are planted along its boundaries and within the grounds, many are protected with tree preservation orders.

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15.45 The Health Centre is a large building with the majority at single-storey and an octagonal form for as the two-storey element. The existing building is unconventional in appearance. There is a small car park within the curtilage to the front with hedging and planting along its access from Lansdowne Road adding greenery and softening the impact of the facility with the adjoining residential properties. An additional care facility has recently been built to the west of the existing Health Centre facing onto the recreation grounds.



Health Centre

15.46 This an important area for Yaxley residents, there is scope for extensions to existing services and facilities to create additional school rooms, consultation rooms and small retail units as well as proposals that enhance the existing provision in this area.

Development proposals should:

- Ensure that development responds positively to the specific opportunities available to reinforce the educational, health, retail and recreational uses in the area.
- Support and retain the current uses in the character area through renovation, refurbishment or extensions to buildings.
- Reflect appropriate architectural detailing, materials and colour palette in the design of new buildings and provide where possible active frontages.
- Ensure that there is adequate car parking provided with any extension to the health centre and shopping centre.
- Consider and mitigate any potential harmful increase in vehicular movements from Broadway (B1091) and on the wider local transport and highway network.
- Protect the existing open space and grass verges that provide the spacious setting to development.
- Maintain and enhance where possible hedge planting along boundaries and along Lansdowne Road to reduce harm to resident amenity.
- Support provision of renewable energy where visually appropriate and potentially electric vehicle charging points.
- Support provision of facilities which encourage active modes of transport and increased permeability within the area and adjoining residential area.
- Provide appropriate non-illuminated signage to protect neighbouring resident amenity and highway safety.
- Avoid the loss of trees and planting where these contribute to the street scene and recreation ground, particularly those protected by a Tree Preservation Order.

Yaxley Character Area 7: Shackleton Way (Persimmon Fields)



A mixture of homes along Shackleton Way looking toward the green and play space



A larger detached home with some decorative weatherboarding looking onto greenspace

- 15.47** This is a small character area accessed via Broadway with a footpath from Dovecote Lane. To the east it abuts rear gardens of properties along Field Rise and Vicarage Way and to the west it abuts gardens of properties along Dovecote Lane. While surrounded by earlier development, it has been split out into this character area due to the contrast in style and the clear difference in character within the area. Its principal road is Shackleton Way, however the area was developed under the name Persimmon Fields.
- 15.48** Shackleton Way is a major infill development with properties arranged around a loop road. It contains 125 homes demonstrating building type 3F. The main materials and colour palette of the area consist of red and buff brick, render, grey and red roof tiles with some coloured weatherboarding. Housing is typically denser with most arranged in a series of short terraces with several examples of flats built over garages and coach house style over access routes to rear parking courts. The development consists of a mix of 2-5 bedroomed properties with detached properties located around the periphery of the site looking over the greenspace.
- 15.49** The greenspace incorporates a village green with a public walk way linking though it to Dovecote Lane. It also has a pond and play area and is a key area of open space for residents. Its location on the western site of the character area also provides a stronger link to the character of the adjoining conservation area and the residential development at Manor Farm.
- 15.50** Development opportunities are limited to extensions and alterations to existing properties.

Development proposals should:

- Ensure extensions and alterations to existing properties are of an appropriate size and scale to the original dwelling and do not detract from the surrounding area.
- Be sympathetic to surrounding existing materials and colour palette of buff or red brick and grey or red roof tiles.
- Ensure that new development responds positively to the specific opportunities available within the area.
- Promote opportunities for enhancement of amenity green spaces to provide increased opportunities for recreation and nature conservation and to help provide distinctive local landmarks.
- Maintain and enhance physical and visual connections to key buildings.

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Yaxley Character Area 8: Westfield Road



Vicarage Way bungalows



Raised properties with a considerable set back from Westfield Road creating a wide street scene

15.51 This is a residential character area located to the west of the Broadway Local Centre and south of Broadway. To the south and west it borders the Main Street and Church Street character areas. The majority of development within this character area dates to the 1970s and 80s with some earlier terraced and interwar properties found at the northern ends of Chapel Street and Middletons Road. Therefore, building types are somewhat mixed with 3B predominating but with some 2A, 3B, 3E and 3F. Uses within the area are mainly residential complemented by several care facilities.

15.52 Throughout the area there is a mix of two storey and single storey properties, however there is a much greater proportion of bungalows found within this character area than any other within Yaxley. Lee Road and Stonehouse Road are examples of streets mostly consisting of bungalows. This has reduced the visual impact of 20th century development on the historic built and landscape features as heading north along Westfield Road the gradient of the road slopes upwards. Therefore, the area is more closely related to the conservation area, Main Street and Church Street to the south and west. The influence of these can be seen in Vicarage Way for example where the spire of St Peter's Church shows in between and above the existing building line. This is reinforced by a footpath connecting Vicarage Way and Church Street.

15.53 The area has several individual and blanket tree preservation orders, most examples are found along Chapel Street and Blenheim Way. These in combination with other planting provides a green and natural feel to the area complementing the residential and care uses of the area. Some properties are obscured or partially obscured from view.

15.54 Hillcrest Avenue is a collection of semi-detached homes of simple red brick design with a central green providing a tranquil setting. Properties have a large set back from the road enabling on plot parking accentuating the sense of space. They also have a mixture of low boundary walls and low hedges which clearly mark out public and private space and add additional greenery to this residential road.



Hill Crest Avenue

15.55 Materials within the area include buff, red and grey brickwork, red and dark roof tiles with some examples of coloured weatherboarding and textured materials to provide variation to front elevations. Design details include gabled roofs, smaller gables to front elevations, canopies and small porches. Some properties have been altered

and extended. Some boundary features and planting within front gardens clearly define public and private space and provide some greenery and planting to the street scene. This set back also provides a more spacious and wider street scene complementing the residential nature of the area.

15.56 While the general layout and form of the area is consistent, there are several exceptions which contrast this, namely Snowhills on Blenheim Road/ Middletons Road and Spinney House along Chapel Street. Both are over 55s retirement housing. Snowhills consists of 41 one bedroom flats built in 1981 while Spinney House has 14 one and two bedroom flats for over 55's built in 2011.



Spinney House

15.57 Development opportunities are limited to extensions and alterations to existing properties.

Development proposals should:

- Ensure extensions and alterations to existing properties are of an appropriate size and scale to the original dwelling and do not detract from the surrounding area.
- Be sympathetic to the materials and colour palette of buff, red and grey brickwork, red and dark roof tiles.
- Promote high standards of design and architectural detailing.
- Support provision of renewable energy where visually appropriate.
- Protect the existing mature trees and hedgerows (in particular those protected by a Tree Preservation Order) where these contribute to the character of the street scene and consider ways of increasing vegetation cover where space and service restrictions permit.
- Enhance and increase where possible pedestrian walkways and the permeability of the area and to local facilities and services.
- Promote opportunities for enhancement of amenity green spaces to provide increased opportunities for recreation and nature conservation and to help provide distinctive local landmarks.
- Maintain and enhance physical and visual connections to key buildings.

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Yaxley Character Area 9: Mere View



Windsor Road has a collection of properties including some dating to the early part of the 20th century



Ashbridge Walk is one example of properties facing onto amenity space

15.58 This is a large character area located to the east of the Broadway Local Centre area and south of Broadway. Mere View wraps around the eastern and southern sides of the character area. Only properties in the south of the character area have a close physical or visual connection to the Fenland landscape and the traditional agricultural heritage associated with the south of the village.

15.59 It consists of development from the 1950s, 60s and 70s with a handful of interwar properties at the northern end of Windsor Road (building type 3B). Therefore, the building type found in greatest abundance is type 3D. Some of the earlier properties to be built in this area are along Dundee Crest and Lancaster Way toward Broadway. Formerly Dundee House had been located here but was demolished to enable development of predominantly chalet bungalows. These bungalows have access via Broadway however have been included within this character area as they relate more closely to the development to the south. Minor infill development and expansions to these areas have seen further diversification in house types with building types 3E and 3F also found sporadically throughout this area such as at Lancaster Court. Generally these have been sensitively integrated.



Lancaster Way chalet bungalows

15.60 Development is typically more uniform in terms of plot sizes and property design than those built later. Roads are also designed with central spine road such as Landsdowne Road, Lancaster Way, Mere View and Windsor Road with smaller residential roads diverging from them. The area consists of predominantly two storey properties with a handful of bungalows. Homes are a mixture of semi-detached and detached, most set in rectangular plots apart from corner properties where slightly more irregular plots have been created to utilise space. Many have small square porches to the front with garages typically to the side creating space for on plot parking. These provide opportunities for some extensions. Some parking is located in separate garage courts. The space for on plot parking and the consistent set back from the roads provides these areas with a relatively spacious feel and greater opportunities for planting and green space. Some properties such as those along Lancaster Way have very steep rooflines similar to chalet style bungalows adding some diversity to the area. The dominant materials and colour palette are buff brick, grey brick, red brick, grey tiles and some rendering and weatherboarding.



Landsdowne Road

15.61 There are pockets of open and green space throughout the character area. The area within Lancaster Way and Mereside has various small footpaths breaking up the streetscape where houses are laid out in a Radburn style pattern representing building type 3C. Examples include Ashbridge Walk, Orchard Walk, Silverwood Walk and Silverwood Walk. Within this area is also a play area with pedestrian access linking to surrounding residential areas along Peartree Walk and Highfield Walk. These serve to break up this extensive residential area and form important areas of open and play space as well a green setting in some points. In these areas, the front elevation faces other houses with a central amenity space and footpath between them which can make distinguishing between public and private space difficult. Their rear gardens and fences dominate the street scene to the back where there is vehicular access to these properties.

15.62 Also within this character area are examples of other land uses important to the local community such as the Olive Mede care home, Yaxley Scout and Guide Centre and Mere View industrial area. The Mere View industrial area consists of 22 or so units used for light industrial factories, workshops, offices and shops. The buildings along Mere View are terraced and give a more residential impression being constructed from brick, render and UPVC windows (building type 5B). They have distinctive flat roofs. These have some set back from the footpath with some trees which provide some greenery to the area and increases the separation with neighbouring residential properties. The grassed area at Hillside Walk provides increased separation between the industrial area and residential properties. The rear garden fences of properties opposite the industrial area also provide visual separation. Within the industrial area, there are several blocks to the rear where more traditional industrial units are located with shallow pitched roofs and constructed from a mixture of brick and corrugated metal. Here there is limited tree planting, instead it is dominated by hard surfacing, car parking and storage areas.



Mere View industrial units

15.63 There are limited infill opportunities remaining with greater opportunities to alter or extend existing properties or for redevelopment.

Development proposals should:

- Ensure extensions and alterations to existing properties are of an appropriate size and scale to the original dwelling and do not detract from the surrounding area.
- Be sympathetic to the materials and colour palette in the immediate vicinity.
- Promote high standards of design and architectural detailing.
- Protect the existing trees where these contribute to the character of the street scene and consider ways of increasing vegetation cover where space and service restrictions permit.
- Enhance and increase where possible pedestrian footpaths and the permeability of the area.
- Promote opportunities for enhancement of amenity green spaces to provide increased opportunities for recreation and nature conservation and to help provide distinctive local landmarks.
- Support provision of renewable energy where visually appropriate.
- Enhance screening and adequately mitigate amenity issues arising from proposals within the Mere View industrial area.

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Yaxley Character Area 10: Cock Close Road



Tree planting between Cock Close Road and the Ferndale Estate separate them but a walkway connects them



Properties with steeply pitched roofs on Pheasant Way

- 15.64** This character area is located to the north of Broadway and south of the 21st century Ferndale Estate. It consists of housing built in the 1970s and 80s around the principal route of Cock Close Road. All road names are different types of bird: Pheasant Way, Owl End Walk, Nightingale Drive, Partridge Close and Kingfisher Close.
- 15.65** Housing is mixed with most being either detached or terraced with some semi-detached. Materials are somewhat varied with grey and red brick used with dark roof tiles. Some have weatherboarding to front elevations adding variety. Some properties have very steeply pitched roofs adding local distinctiveness. These homes also have dormer windows giving additional external features as well as making extra roof space. There is a handful of three storey properties.
- 15.66** The layout of development within the area is less regimented than earlier examples of housing, plots are of a more varied size with verges and wide road layouts which in addition to the variation of front garden space create a fairly spacious street scene with planting and greenery. Also, the area has a network of footpaths connecting streets to one another including access to the Ferndale Estate via Brunel Drive and to community facilities and greenspace such as Queen's Park recreation ground and playing pitches.
- 15.67** Development opportunities are limited with the greatest opportunities being for alterations or extensions existing properties.

Development proposals should:

- Ensure extensions and alterations to existing properties are of an appropriate size and scale to the original dwelling and do not detract from the surrounding area.
- Be sympathetic to surrounding materials and colour palette of buff or red brick and dark roof tiles.
- Ensure that new development responds positively to the specific opportunities available within the area.
- Promote opportunities for enhancement of amenity green spaces to provide increased opportunities for recreation and nature conservation and to help provide distinctive local landmarks.
- Protect the existing trees and planting where these contribute to the character of the street scene.
- Maintain and enhance where possible walkways connecting to other residential areas and areas where community services and facilities are located.

Yaxley Urban Character Area 11: Ferndale Estate



Mixed housing types, colours and materials along Ferndale Road. Trees and hedges form a key element of the character of this area



Telford Drive has several examples of houses influenced by arts and crafts and interwar style

15.68 The Ferndale Estate is a large character area located to the north of Broadway. It was built during the early 2000s on the site of the former Co-Op Farm. This area extends northwards to the boundary with Peterborough City Council and in the north east corner have crossed the boundary. Only those elements that fall within Huntingdonshire District Council are included in this assessment.

15.69 The building type found within this area is 3F with a cul-de-sac layout predominating resulting in a more irregular pattern of plot layout and sizes than in earlier forms of development. The principal road throughout the area is Ferndale with access to the west from London Road via Brunel Way and to the south from Broadway via Daimer Avenue. Street names are grouped into the themes of automobiles and engineering, for example Ford Close, Royce Close, Morris Court and Edison Drive.

15.70 The land uses within the area are mixed. To accompany the approximately 600 or so homes, there is a superstore and Fourfields Community Primary School. These complement the neighbouring residential use and provide additional services to support the growth of Yaxley. Both are located on the eastern side of the development accessed via a roundabout on Daimer Avenue. These demonstrate building type 5D and 7C and add diversity to the materials and colours. The school is a collection of single storey buildings, play equipment and play space while the superstore has a substantial car park set behind some boundary planting. The developments north of Broadway also provide various play areas and amenity spaces for residents. The largest is Queen's Park recreation ground with a pavilion and several playing pitches. Adjoining this is also a substantial grouping of tree planting providing a natural and green setting and a break amongst the extensive residential development in this area. Throughout the area, trees and hedges form a key element of the street scene.



Co-Operative on Bentley Avenue

15.71 Housing is typically large detached family homes with on plot parking and either low boundary walls or hedges clearly separating public and private space. The materials and colour palette vary from red and buff brick, pantiles, grey tiles, some mock Tudor panel designs and rendering. Some have attempted to reflect the interwar and arts and crafts style rooflines and characteristics into their design to provide a sense of place and linkage to the earlier examples of development found on Broadway. This provides diversity to the housing stock within the area and local landmarks. The road layout is in a cul-de-sac style with connections made to earlier development to increase permeability and integrate these developments.

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15.72 Development proposals are limited to extensions and alterations to existing properties.

Development proposals should:

- Reflect the principles, materials and detailing in the agreed design codes.
- Ensure extensions and alterations to existing properties are of an appropriate scale and design to the surrounding area.
- Maintain footpaths and landscaped areas and wherever possible promote opportunities for enhancement of amenity green spaces to provide increased opportunities for recreation and nature conservation and to help provide distinctive local landmarks.
- Retain and protect the existing trees where these contribute to the character of the street scene and consider ways of increasing vegetation cover where space and service restrictions permit.
- Support initiatives for additional services and community facilities.
- Support and enhance pedestrian and cycle routes to link to existing services and networks throughout the village.
- Support initiatives that provide public rights of way or routes to the Hampton Country Park to the north of Yaxley.
- Incorporate renewable energy options where they are visually appropriate.
- Ensure signage is in an appropriate location and does not impact road safety.

Yaxley Character Area 12: Queen Street to Violet Way



Speechly Road properties with green space fronting onto Broadway



Freesia Way

15.73 This is a residential character area located to the north of Broadway and east of the Ferndale Estate. A small convenience shop is located on the corner of Queen Street and Broadway. It has two sub areas and is closely linked with the Broadway Fields character area to the east.

15.74 The first sub area is focused around the older Queen Street and Crane Avenue. These properties were built first in the early 1970s and have a very regimented pattern to their development with all plots being rectangular and homes semi-detached. Materials and colour palette consist of a red or buff brick or a combination of different coloured brick or brick and coloured render. Two storeys predominate with some bungalows, all have gabled roofs. Several properties have been altered or extended over time. Queen Street is horseshoe shape with Crane Avenue located within it. There is a walkway at the north western corner of the character area connecting to the Ferndale Estate and Fourfields Primary School.



Queen Street

15.75 In the south of the character area is Speechly Road which consists of a series of four terraced groups with access to Crane Avenue in the middle. These overlook amenity space and tree planting providing additional set back and screening from Broadway. To the east of Speechly Road is a modern redevelopment on the site of the former Ashton House (demolished in 2008). This redevelopment has provided 13 new homes on the site, four of which face directly onto Broadway (as these have a greater relationship with Broadway they have been included within the Broadway character area). These while of modern design and materials, have been influenced by the style of surrounding development incorporating gabled roofs, a combination of brick and render to the external appearance of the properties and most being semi-detached.

15.76 These homes are located at the point where the two sub areas meet, with Laburnum Avenue to the north of them linking through from Queen Street. The second sub area is an extension to Queen Street, to north via Crocus Way and to the south by Laburnum Way both linking to Freesia Way and then Violet Way built in the 1980s. These properties are less regimented in terms of their plot layout and how they are arranged, most are style semi-detached or terraced with very limited examples of detached homes. The plots are typically smaller and narrower resulting in this area being at a higher density.



Larch Close

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The materials used are similar to those within the first sub area, however there is some additional detailing in brickwork and more variation in housing types. Laburnum has two block of flats which add some diversity to the types of homes in the area.

15.77 Play space with views northwards to Hampton Country Park and the ongoing development of the Hamptons in Peterborough. There are other amenity spaces such as Lilac Walk with houses arranged around in looking in on the space. Throughout the area are walkways connecting roads to one another and increasing permeability to nearby community services and facilities.

15.78 Development proposals are limited to extensions and alterations to existing properties.

Development proposals should:

- Ensure extensions and alterations to existing properties are of an appropriate size and scale to the original dwelling and do not detract from the surrounding area.
- Be sympathetic to surrounding existing materials and colour palette found within the immediate vicinity.
- Ensure that new development responds positively to the specific opportunities available within the area.
- Promote opportunities for enhancement of amenity green spaces to provide increased opportunities for recreation and nature conservation and to help provide distinctive local landmarks.
- Maintain and enhance physical and visual connections to key buildings.
- Support provision of renewable energy where visually appropriate.
- Maintain and enhance where possible walkways connecting to other residential areas and areas where community services and facilities are located.

Yaxley Character Area 13: Broadway Fields



Within Broadway Fields are several examples of flatted development adding diversity in design and scale throughout, this example is along Violet Way



Foxglove Way arches round a greenspace with play equipment and tree planting

15.79 This is a small character area located north of Broadway extending Violet Way. It is an residential extension of Violet Way built in the 2000s as Broadway Fields. The area is a cohesive consisting wholly of building type 3F. Some of the development crosses over the boundary with Peterborough City Council, only those elements that fall within Huntingdonshire District Council are included in this assessment.

15.80 Although it is connected to the Queen Street to Violet Way character area and continuing on the theme of plants for road names, the development is considerably different from the adjoining area, thus justifying its own character area. This is seen in the materiality, style and layout of properties which include higher density flatted development (up to three storeys), terraced properties providing a stronger link to the older types of housing found along Broadway and Main Street as well as examples of properties located on bends in the road to 'turn' creating a continuous building frontage and flats over garages or coach ways with access to parking courts. Several properties also have additional architectural features such as dormer windows which provides a further link to the historic buildings found along Main Street.

15.81 The development has several play spaces, these are along Foxglove Way, Daffodil Court and Rose Court with the first being the largest. These are key areas areas most properties are short terraces with limited space at the front apart from some hedge planting which contribute to the street scene by providing some green all year round. The limited front space also limits on plot parking resulting in some on street parking but the majority of parking spaces are found in parking courts throughout the development located behind properties.



Violet Way short terraces

15.82 Development proposals are limited to extensions and alterations to existing properties.

Development proposals should:

- Ensure extensions and alterations to existing properties are of an appropriate size and scale to the original dwelling and do not detract from the surrounding area.
- Be sympathetic to surrounding existing materials and colour palette of white render, buff/brown or red brick and red or grey roof tiles.
- Ensure that new development responds positively to the specific opportunities available within the area.
- Promote opportunities for enhancement of amenity green spaces to provide increased opportunities for recreation and nature conservation and to help provide distinctive local landmarks.
- Maintain and enhance physical and visual connections to key buildings.
- Support provision of renewable energy where visually appropriate.

Yaxley Character Area 14: Whitney Drive



Terraces within Whitney Drive overlooking a central green space and areas of parking



Variation in design and materials along Whitney Drive

- 15.83** Whitney Drive is on the site of the former Snowcap mushroom site is a further example of later infill development. It is an irregular shaped piece of land located on the far eastern edge of the village adjoining the Clark Drain site (Broadway Business Park area) to the north and Mereside industrial area within the Mere View character area. The ground falls gently towards the south of the site and rises up steeply to Broadway in the northwest. The area is accessed off a single point of access from Broadway.
- 15.84** It consists of a cohesive group of properties, almost all of which are two storey properties ranging from 1-4 bedrooms. The scheme has a palette of materials which include red and buff bricks, render, and red and grey tiles. Most properties are short terraced, with some detached and semi-detached. The redevelopment of the area has improved its appearance through changes in the road alignment, the use of double fronted houses and enhanced elevation treatment alongside extensive landscaped areas associated with the public open space to the east. The site was completed in 2018.
- 15.85** This is a cohesive development with opportunities only remaining for alterations or extensions to existing properties.

Development proposals should:

- Ensure extensions and alterations to existing properties are of an appropriate size and scale to the original dwelling and do not detract from the surrounding area.
- Be sympathetic to surrounding existing materials and colour palette of red and buff bricks, render, and red and grey tiles.
- Ensure that new development responds positively to the specific opportunities available within the area.
- Promote opportunities for enhancement of amenity green spaces to provide increased opportunities for recreation and nature conservation and to help provide distinctive local landmarks.
- Support provision of renewable energy where visually appropriate.

15 Yaxley Key Service Centre

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Yaxley Character Area 15: Broadway Business Park



Broadway Business Park



Further units within the Broadway Business Park

- 15.86** The character area includes the Broadway Business Park as well as a small industrial area on a triangular site on the other side of Broadway and the railway line in operation as Clark Drains.
- 15.87** The Broadway Business Park is an Established Employment Area in the [Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036](#). It is located to the east of the railway line and the northern side of the B1091 opposite the Eagle Business Park. Its northern boundary runs along the boundary with Peterborough City Council. It hosts several large units occupied by warehousing and industrial businesses. There are two access points from the B1091, one route links to the northern part of the park to Station Bridge, another links to a route along the front of the business park to a large car parking area. There is some separation from the site and the road via roadside verges and metal fencing running along the frontage of the site. At the entrances to the area there are several adverts and signage.
- 15.88** Buildings date to the middle of the 20th century with some additional units built over time, all demonstrate building type 5B. Most are large expansive buildings of steel framed construction, clad with buff and red brickwork and plastic coated profiled sheeting. Most roofs are low pitched, there are some flat roofs and curved roofs adding diversity throughout. The area is dominated with large buildings and expansive areas of hard standing to accommodate car and truck parking as well as metal fencing. There are limited soft landscaping features within the business park and car parking areas, most planting is present along the eastern edge and to the south eastern corner of the area where it is closest to the railway line. Other planting can be seen along its northern and north eastern boundary assisting in obscuring its impact on the wider countryside. This is important to mitigate any potential harmful impacts on the Great Fen Landscape and Visual Setting Boundary as identified in the [Local Plan to 2036 policies map](#).
- 15.89** The site operated by Clark Drain has been grouped within this character area as it most closely relates in terms of land uses and structures to those within the Broadway Business Park. The site has one large industrial building and various operational structures such as silos throughout the site. It is mostly hard surfaced for lorry parking and storage with security fencing around the site. It is accessed via the B1091 on a slight decline and border residential development to the south and west.
- 15.90** There is some capacity for new units, extensions, change of use to other appropriate land uses and the renovation of units.



Clark Drain site

Development proposals should:

- Reinforce the use of the area as one of Yaxley's employment locations.
- Be sensitively designed to limit visual impacts on the surrounding countryside in particular the Great Fen Landscape and Visual Setting.
- Consider and mitigate any potential impacts on the B1091 and wider highways network.
- Promote high standards of design and support creativity in architectural detailing within the business park.
- Reduce the impact on nearby residential amenity in terms of sight, light, noise, pollution and odour.
- Encourage and retain tree and hedge planting within the business park and along its boundaries.
- Reduce the visual dominance of cars by promoting enhanced boundary landscaping and planting.
- Support proposals where they encourage active modes of transport and improve opportunities for walking and cycling through footpaths and cycleways to the main village.
- Incorporate renewable energy options where they are appropriate and electric vehicle charging points.
- Ensure signage is in an appropriate location and does not impact road safety.

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Yaxley Character Area 16: Eagle Business Park



Peregrine Court within the Eagle Business Park



Enterprise Court within the Eagle Business Park

15.91 This character area includes the land identified as an Established Employment Area in the [Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036](#) as well as land adjoining it that has planning approval to extend the business park. It is located on the south side of the B0191 opposite the Broadway Business Park and is also on the eastern side of the railway line. The area can be split into two sub areas, the first incorporates the existing and expanding Eagle Business Park as well as the smaller Discovery Business Park, the other sub group is located to the south west which provides further redevelopment opportunities.

15.92 Phase 1 of the business park gained planning approval in 2001 and built the majority of units over the subsequent five years located along Imperial Way, Falcon Way and including Venture Court and Enterprise Court. The uses included here are light and heavy industrial including small factory type units, medium sized factory units and stand alone buildings for individual occupiers. Following the occupation of these units and the establishment of the business park, a phase 2 gained planning approval in 2017 for an extension of the business park of some 7.44ha (equating to 20 plots) on land to the south east up to a drainage channel. The uses approved are the same as those within phase 1 with additional storage and warehousing. Access is via the existing business park through the commercial area with the B1091 serving the business park to the north. Reserved matters are still being approved for various parcels within the phase 2 element of the business park, however many units are now occupied, for example those within Peregrine Court, Harrier Court and Heron Court. All units within the Eagle Business Park demonstrate building type 5B. Landscaping is essential to reduce the prominence of the development in particular in respect to the Great Fen Landscape and Visual Setting Boundary as identified in the [Local Plan to 2036 policies map](#).



Falcon Way

15.93 Adjacent to the Eagle Business Park is the small Discovery Business Park. This was the redevelopment of brownfield land for four buildings of the same uses but including some trade counters arranged in a horseshoe formation providing for 12 units. It is located immediately along the B1091 with a separate vehicular access to the larger Eagle Business Park. Again the buildings reflect building type 5B constructed of steel frames with composite panelled elevations roofs. Grey is the dominate colour with signage coordinated in terms of colour and location with the front elevations of buildings. The buildings at the front of the site have mono pitch roofs that are lower on the outer edge. The entrances of these buildings face Broadway and add interest and detailing to the end gables that present to the main road. Some units have incorporated solar panels.



Discovery Business Park

- 15.94** To the west of the Eagle and Discovery Business Parks is the potential for major redevelopment. It includes the Local Plan site allocation YX2 (Yax Pak) which has been derelict for some years and was used for mushroom production and the manufacture of mushroom compost. The remainder of the site was occupied by Sylvan as a Mushroom Research Laboratories and production centre. The site has now been cleared. The inclusion of the Sylvan land (north eastern sector of the overall site) provides the opportunity to provide improved access to the whole of the land and provide a more comprehensive redevelopment of the area. The site is sensitive to increased surface water/ treated effluent discharges, therefore appropriate flood and drainage assessments will be required to support any development proposals.
- 15.95** There are still some opportunities for redevelopment within this employment area, impacts on the landscape and the highway network are key considerations. Within the built and approved employment area the scope of development proposals is limited to change of uses, changes and alterations to buildings.

Development proposals should:

- Reinforce the use of the area as one of Yaxley's employment locations.
- Ensure that any infill opportunities or amendments to units are consistent with the design of the wider business park.
- Consider and mitigate any potential impacts on the B1091 and wider highways network.
- For further extensions to the business area permeability and access routes should be sought where possible.
- For the redevelopment of Yax Pak and any wider area of land adjoining the Local Plan allocation, a flood risk and drainage management plan will be required.
- Promote high standards of design and support creativity in architectural detailing.
- Encourage and retain tree and hedge planting within the business park and along its boundaries to reduce its impact on the wider countryside in particular the Great Fen Landscape and Visual Setting and long distance views to the south.
- Reduce the visual dominance of cars by promoting enhanced boundary landscaping and planting.
- Support proposals where they encourage active modes of transport and improve opportunities for walking and cycling through footpaths and cycleways to the main village.
- Incorporate renewable energy options where they are appropriate such as solar panels and potentially electric vehicle charging points.
- Ensure signage is in an appropriate location and does not impact road safety.

16 Appendix 1

16.1 The following detailed methodology is intended to support parish councils and local community groups primarily when preparing a neighbourhood plan, however it can also be used by a wider range of people and for a wider range of purposes. The methodology consists of five key stages with the steps and outputs (the green boxes) within each stage summarised in Figure 16.1 and detailed over the next few pages. It also details the outputs that should be produced at the end of each stage as these will direct the next stage of work. The methodology provides flexibility so that depending on the scope and focus of the assessment, the depth and breadth of assessment at each step can be tailored to the individual project.

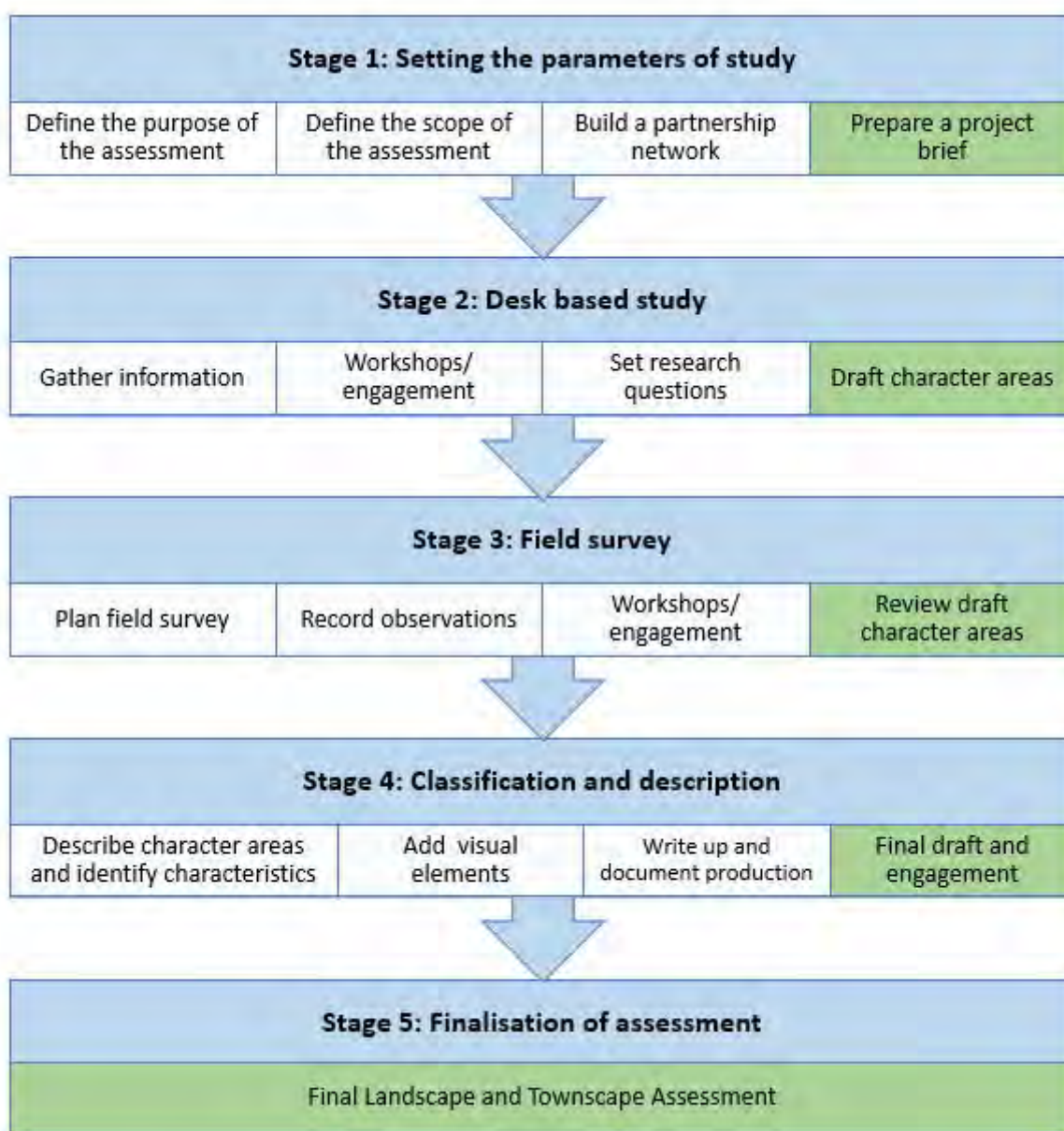


Figure 16.1 Summary of the key stages, steps and outputs of undertaking a landscape and townscape character

Stage 1: Setting the parameters of study

This stage consists of the following steps:

- Define the purpose of the assessment
- Define the scope of the project
- Build a partnership network

At the end of this stage, the following output should be delivered:

- Prepare a project brief

Step 1: Define the purpose of the assessment

- 16.2** Having a clear direction and aim for the assessment is fundamental for it to run smoothly. It is a good idea to start this process with a group of core individuals who will be the key people carrying out and managing the assessment. A consensus can be reached with varying thoughts and opinions considered.
- 16.3** In setting a purpose, consider what the assessment is seeking to achieve. For example, is it to support landscape and design policies for a neighbourhood plan, or is it looking particularly at heritage assets or landscape?
- 16.4** From this, consider what other supporting documents or documents that the assessment could complement. These could include:
- The local planning authority's development plan including the local plan or area action plans
 - Any development management documents or supplementary planning documents/ guidance
 - Conservation area statements and assessments
 - Any neighbouring parish/town council neighbourhood plans
 - Other parish council projects or parish plans
- 16.5** Identifying these will help set the context to the study and offer a guide to what documentation is already available that can be utilised to save time and resources.
- 16.6** It is important to keep in mind that your assessment should be looking to guide future development proposals in your settlement in much greater detail than policies in the Local Plan.

Step 2: Define the scope of the project

- 16.7** Once the purpose and wider context of the assessment is known, define the scope of the assessment. To do this, within the core group tasked with producing the assessment, consider the following questions as early as possible in the process:
- What is the emphasis of the assessment?
 - What skills and specialisms are available to those undertaking the assessment?
 - What will the geographic extent be?
 - What level of detail is sought?
 - Will further assistance be needed?
 - What information has already been published?

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- 16.8** It is important to be realistic at this stage. Practical elements like what resources, timescales and people power are available and needed should be considered. This is key to do as early in the process as possible to ensure the project runs smoothly and that volunteers do not get fatigued with the process or take on too much work. It is also an opportunity to recruit people to the project if people power is identified as being an issue.
- 16.9** There is not a set amount of time that can or should be spent on any of the stages or steps within this methodology as this will vary group to group and project to project. It is most important that the evidence is robust and the assessment thorough.
- 16.10** Taking into consideration the local resources and scale of the assessment, a rough timeline of when to achieve certain milestones should be devised. This is to ensure the project has an end date and stays to a reasonable time. If the document is being prepared as part of a neighbourhood plan, then there may be some outside pressure in terms of timelines to get aspects of the assessment done, these should be considered here too. If forming part of a neighbourhood plan evidence base, additional considerations around consultation events and what aspects of the neighbourhood plan the assessment will feed into should also be taken into account so that the undertaking of the assessment is placed within its full context and to avoid unnecessary delays.

Step 3: Build a partnership network

16.11 Following the identification of parameters to the assessment and its scope, links with local community networks will need to be made as early as possible. Often the most important groups will be your parish council or your local residents' or community association. You should discuss the assessment process with these groups and ensure they are committed to taking the project forward. A diverse range of groups should also be included to accurately reflect the whole community. The wider you consult, the broader your support will be. The best way to ensure everyone is aware of the project is a leaflet drop to every home and put information on any local websites/ social media platforms. Groups within a community to involve can include:

- Local residents
- Farmers and landowners
- Local businesses
- Local churches and faith groups
- Local environmental organisations
- Local sports clubs and interest groups
- Neighbourhood watch groups
- The Local Authority

Output: Prepare a project brief

At this stage, a project brief should be prepared. This should be a document setting out what the purpose and scope of the assessment will be. It should also include what resources, budget and projected timescales are required.

This document should be circulated to all those involved in the project. A brief bulletin or note on any parish or village website or in a parish newsletter could be published setting out the key points and timelines for the rest of the community.

Stage 2: Desk based study

This stage consists of the following steps:

- Gather information
- Workshops/ engagement
- Set research questions

At the end of this stage, the following output should be delivered:

- Draft landscape and townscape character areas

Step 1: Gather information

16.12 It is important that plenty of time is dedicated to this stage. Do not rush this part of the process as having a thorough understanding of the documented local area and context in addition to the local knowledge available is crucial when going into the field work stage. It also adds robustness to the conclusions of the assessment. A wide range of resources can be used at this stage to provide both high level and detailed level assessments of the area, including:

- Maps
- Historical and geographical texts and records
- Local libraries and archives
- Local knowledge
- Photographs
- Parish/ Town Council records
- Church records and institutional records
- Planning permissions and history
- Other landscape and townscape studies
- Conservation area statements and assessments
- Building types from the Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape SPD

16.13 It is important to get the local community involved at this stage. Ask for resources, there may be members of the community who have private collections of old OS maps, photos and memoirs that can provide added value and insight into the meaning and direction of how the area has evolved over time. The more involvement there is from the local community, a better understanding of what is needed in the area and what is important to the local community can be achieved thus adding extra value to the assessment. Try to cross check information from individuals to enhance accuracy.

16.14 The data and information gathered at this stage is useful in developing an initial understanding of the form and character of the settlement, its relationship with the immediate landscape edge and the wider landscape setting.

Step 2: Workshops/ engagement

16.15 While data is being collected, it is useful at this stage to set up workshops, perhaps in the community centre or village hall. Treat this as an opportunity to get all individuals working on the assessment together and look at what has changed within the area and spark discussion and insight to how and why the landscape and townscape has evolved over time and where it might be heading. Refer to any information that has been collected to date and maybe identify areas where further research would be beneficial.

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- 16.16** At these workshops, it would be useful to split the group into several smaller groups for discussion and thought mapping. Each group could have a large-scale map of the area (mapping services are available from HDC upon request) and annotate it using post-it notes, highlighters etc. to identify the indicative character areas, key changes and record ideas. To get the discussion going aspects to consider can include:
- What are the key landscape features?
 - What shape and direction has the settlement developed in?
 - What traditional industries are there?
 - How can character areas be distinguished?
 - What are the key buildings and styles?
 - What drivers and pressures has the settlement and surrounding landscape faced over time and how have they shaped them?
 - What can be done to manage these drivers and pressures? For example, what planning, conservation, landscape management and enhancement priorities are there?
- 16.17** The gathering information step and workshops should now be starting to highlight what character areas are present in the settlement. These can be broad areas outlined on a map, with bullet points of key features and characteristics. To assist in separating character areas, you can use the identified building types in the Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape SPD as a starting point.

Step 3: Set research questions

- 16.18** Afterwards, consider what research questions could be set to assist in further directing research and field study. This will also help in ensuring that the aims of the project are met and helps guide the assessment by bringing meaning to the findings as the information gathered can be shaped to answer specific questions. When creating these research questions consider what information has already been collected and what further information will be needed through the field survey. Consider how these questions and the information gained can be categorised and analysed.
- 16.19** It is recommended the assessment takes a holistic look assessing the following strands and how they relate to one another:
- Natural environment
 - Built environment
 - Cultural assets and perceptions
- 16.20** Consider what themes you wish to assess within each of these, for example within the landscape strand you can assess character, form, function, setting, topography and vegetation. For the buildings strand you can assess materials, layout, scale, density, form, integral green space, screening and land use. For the cultural assets and perceptions strand you can assess views, accessibility and permeability, historic assets, cultural and social assets. These are suggestions to help you get started; there may be more you wish to research or specific ones depending on the nature, scope and purpose of the assessment.
- 16.21** The workshop should provide some direction on these research questions. However when they have been drafted, it may be worthwhile holding an additional workshop so that the whole group and or wider community can review them before going out on field surveys. It also keeps the local community involved in the process and shows their input is shaping the assessment.
- 16.22** To assist in assessing these strands and themes, a series of example research questions have been devised in the below table. These can be adapted and added to depending on the focus and scope of each assessment.

Landscape

- How does the area relate to the wider countryside? Has it features in common with the surrounding landscape?
- Is the area part of a larger landscape feature such as a ridge or field pattern that is characteristic of the wider area?
- What is the current use of the area?
- What function does the area serve in the wider landscape? For example, is it part of the countryside setting of a built-up area, or does it bring views of the countryside landscape into a settlement?

Topography

- Is the area situated within a distinct topographical feature such as a river valley or hill?
- Is the area flat, sloping or undulating?
- Are there any permanent or seasonal watercourses or ponds within or on the boundaries of the area?
- How does the topography affect the area's sense of enclosure or openness?
- Can the whole area be seen as one entity or are there parts of it hidden behind higher land or built structures?

Vegetation

- Are there individual trees within the area which make a significant contribution to the appearance of the locality?
- Are there indications of historic planting such as historic hedgerows, specimen trees or formal planting?
- Does existing vegetation include locally characteristic, native species?
- What natural habitats are provided by existing vegetation?

Townscape

- Is it contained within well-defined boundaries?
- What is the current use of the area?
- What function does the area serve in the wider townscape? For example, is it part of an area of similar developments or does it provide a contrast?

Structures

- If the screening includes walls or fencing, is it typical of the landscape and/ or townscape character area? is it important to the area's historic character?
- What examples of green space or public space are there? How do they sit within the townscape?
- Are there any individual structures which stand out as significantly contributing or detracting from the character of the area?
- What contribution do these make to the landscape or townscape? Do they enhance or detract from its quality and character?
- How do the height, materials, style and uses of nearby buildings relate to the area?
- Do nearby buildings and structures display features that are typical of the townscape character area?
- Is there a clear pattern or structure to the surrounding buildings and streets?

Views and vistas

- Does the area provide an interesting or significant skyline?
- Do the views to/ from the area include historic assets whose setting needs to be safeguarded?
- Does the area terminate a view or vista within the townscape?

Accessibility and permeability

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- What physical access links the area to existing facilities and communities? Are there any obstacles which hinder access?
- What level of physical connectivity does the landscape and/or townscape character area benefit from?
- What physical access connections does the site or area currently have?

Historical, cultural and social assets

- Do vehicles, moving or parked, have an impact on the ambience of the area?
- What are the activity levels like in the area? Is the area busy? Are there clusters of particular activities?
- Is the area associated with particular cultural uses? For example, does it contain a museum or cemetery?
- Are there features which may provoke memories? For example, does the area include an old school or hospital?
- Are there any known associations with famous people or events?
- Is the area of high archaeological potential?
- Are there known designated or undesignated historic assets within the area? How do these contribute to the character of the area?

Light and noise

- What are the existing levels of artificial illumination in the area?

Output: Draft landscape and townscape character areas

Following the desk based research and community engagement, a list of draft landscape and townscape character areas should have been identified with a list of key characteristics and features. These can be loosely drawn on a map. These areas can then be tested and assessed further during the field survey. You may find that some boundaries need to be changed, additional character areas identified, or some should have sub-character areas whereby they share similar characteristics/ features but are also distinct.

Stage 3: Field survey

This stage consists of the following steps:

- Plan the field survey
- Record observations
- Workshops/ engagement

At the end of this stage, the following output should be delivered:

- Review draft landscape and townscape character areas

Step 1: Plan the field survey

16.23 Following the identification of the draft landscape and townscape character areas and research questions, planning the field survey to assess these needs to be undertaken. When planning the field survey, consider the following:

- Where and how far will the survey go?
- How long do you expect it to take?
- How many people will do this?
- Providing guidance on how and what to assess to ensure consistency in the conclusions made if going out in several groups
- Taking photos and drawing on maps

16.24 It is useful to go out on site visits in at least pairs. This allows for discussion and different insights to be identified. It also allows for greater discussion after the field surveys on what was seen and experienced.

Step 2: Record observations

16.25 To record information and observations, you can use the field survey template on the next page as a guide to the survey. This will help to provide more consistency between assessments if done by multiple groups of people. It has scope to be adapted to the specific requirements of the study, particularly if there is a strong local knowledge base or if additional information comes to light.

16.26 In addition to completing the field survey form, ensure that photographs and possibly sketches are made throughout. These can be used later in the final document.



Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape Character Area Assessment Field Survey

The assessor should be familiar with any survey guidance and follow any relevant health and safety guidance. Remember to take photos and maps to assist in the identification and assessment process.

Character Area:

Assessor(s):

Date of survey:

NATURAL ENVIRONMENT STRAND

Think about the character, form, function and setting of the local landscape, how it interacts with the edge of the townscape and with the wider landscape setting, topography and vegetation.

BUILT ENVIRONMENT STRAND

Think about the structures, materials, layout, scale, density, form, green spaces, screening and land uses within the townscape.

CULTURAL ASSETS AND PERCEPTIONS STRAND

Think about the views into and out of the settlement, the accessibility and movability within the built form and what historic, cultural and social assets there are.

16.27 Once out on the field survey, keep the following in mind (in addition to the research questions):

- How do design features create a broader sense of place?
- Are there certain streets/areas that have a different design and feel about them that make them distinct from other streets/ areas?
- How do the landscape and townscape edges respond to each other and has this impacted the location and direction of development?
- Are there particular areas that can be improved? Start to think about design principles or what development proposals should seek to do to conserve or enhance an area.

16.28 In terms of analysing information, consider how hard copies of field surveys will be stored and who can access these to enable them to be referred to later. Also consider how they will be analysed and by whom. When starting to analyse the observations, it may be useful to start identifying key themes or categorise by strand so trends across the character areas can be more easily identified. Think about how coding and using different colours can be used to illustrate similarities and differences more easily. These findings should also be recorded electronically to enable them to be shared easily with group members.

16.29 At this point, the additional information and insights from the field survey will start to answer the research questions previously identified in combination with any previously gathered data. Further analysis of the results should be undertaken to tie in with the desk based study and conclude:

- what the key features and characteristics of the area is
- the interaction and relationships between the landscape, landscape edge and townscape
- how the area has changed over time

16.30 You may be able to start developing ideas on design principles and guiding principles for future development. These could be identified as 'development proposals should' principles whereby a proposal made within that character area should demonstrate how it responds to those principles.

Step 3: Workshops/ engagement

16.31 At these workshops, discuss the findings of the field surveys. Here it would be useful to have already categorised the findings into strands and themes to aid more structured, focused discussions. These workshops are an opportunity for wider discussion and thought generation on what drivers and pressures have shaped the landscape and townscape of the settlement, what sort of policies can be pursued in a neighbourhood plan, and if further survey or secondary data research is required to fill in any gaps. It also keeps the group and wider community actively involved in the process and checking whether the assessment is answering the scope and purpose first defined. From here the final character areas should be becoming more set.

Output: Review draft landscape and townscape character areas

The additional information gained from the field survey should spark a review of the original list of landscape and townscape areas. The field survey may have highlighted the boundaries of some of these should be changed. It may be apparent that some character areas should be merged or split up, or there may even be some sub character areas identified within character areas. There may be need for further secondary research.

Stage 4: Classification and description

This stage consists of the following steps:

- Describe character areas and identify their key characteristics
- Add visual elements
- Write up and document production

At the end of this stage, the following output should be delivered:

- Final draft and engagement

Step 1: Describe character areas and identify their key characteristics

16.32 Following the desk based study and the field survey, the final set of character areas should be identified alongside a description of what they are and a list of each of their key characteristics. Here you need to flesh out the information with the evidence from the secondary research and field survey to draw together a full draft of text to put in the final assessment.

16.33 To structure the text within each character area, you could split the text into the three strands and include subheadings relating to the themes assessed. If you are seeking to identify development management principles or 'development proposals should' principles, these may form a nice conclusion to the character area. These can be a series of bullet points that can be used to guide planning proposals and support neighbourhood plan policies, opportunity areas or site allocations. This will provide applicants/ agents/ landowners/ developers with a sound starting point from which to shape development proposals on a site and understand its relationship to its setting and locally distinctive features. These are beneficial for successful integration of a development scheme into the surrounding landscape and/ or townscape. It also provides a link between the assessment and any neighbourhood plan policies which can then be used to implement these principles.

Step 2: Add visual elements

16.34 Following the written text of each character area, adding some graphics and visuals is a key part to bringing the assessment to life and illustrating the characteristics that define them. These visuals can include:

- Character area maps
- Historic maps
- Photographs taken from the field survey and historic photographs
- Illustrations and diagrams of architecture, townscape or views
- Aerial photograph with key views indicated, landmarks, key roads etc.

16.35 Deciding on what visual aids are most appropriate is something to discuss as a group and may be dependent on the skills and resources available. In any assessment, photographs and a map of character areas must be provided in order for readers to engage and best use the assessment.

16.36 These graphics and visuals should tie in with the supporting text and help to bolster the assessment. For example, if a character area had an example of Tudor architecture and a historic market town layout, then a photograph of the market square and an example building from the period would be appropriate.

Step 3: Write up and document production

16.37 Once the draft text and visuals have been put together, final edits and polishing of the document need to be undertaken. It is a good idea to have a dedicated proof-reader in the group, possibly someone who has not undertaken any of the written aspects. This approach will highlight anything that does not quite make sense or flow well and ensure consistency in the level of detail, terminology and formatting throughout.

Output: Final draft and engagement

The key output here is the final draft version of the assessment. Having a final consultation on this final draft is optional but it may be a good idea to have a final engagement opportunity with the local community, particularly if there are any aspects of the assessment that the group feel could be bolstered.

Stage 5: Finalisation of assessment

This stage, the final output is:

- Final Landscape and Townscape Assessment

Output: Final Landscape and Townscape Assessment

Following the final edits, polishing and any engagement felt necessary, you will have a final Landscape and Townscape Assessment of your settlement. Well done for getting to this stage, don't forget to celebrate this milestone!

This document can now form part of a local evidence base for a neighbourhood plan, be of local interest and be used in the shaping of development proposals and policies in the local area.

17 Glossary

Huntingdonshire District Council | Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape Supplementary Planning Document: Consultation Draft 2021

17 Glossary

Accessibility	The ability of people to move around an area and reach places and facilities, including older and disabled people, those with young children and those carrying luggage or shopping.
Active frontage	The front of a buildings with openings onto the space that generate activity and engagement between the building interior and the space outside, particularly entrances.
Amenity	A positive element or elements that contribute to the overall character or enjoyment of an area. For example, open land, trees, historic buildings and the inter-relationship between them, or less tangible factors such as tranquillity.
Ancient or veteran tree	Tree which, because of its age, size and condition, is of exceptional biodiversity, cultural or heritage value. All ancient trees are veteran trees. Not all veteran trees are old enough to be ancient, but are old relative to other trees of the same species. Very few trees of any species reach the ancient life-stage.
Ancient woodland	An area that has been wooded continuously since at least 1600 AD. It includes ancient semi-natural woodland and plantations on ancient woodland sites (PAWS).
Archaeological interest	There will be archaeological interest in a heritage asset if it holds, or potentially holds, evidence of past human activity worthy of expert investigation at some point.
Architecture	The style in which a building is designed and constructed particularly with reference to specific time period or place.
Biodiversity	All aspects of biological diversity.
Building line	Extent of building frontages at the edge of a block or site.
Details	The craftsmanship, building techniques, decoration, styles and lighting of a building or structure.
Density	The amount of development on a given piece of land.
Design code	A set of illustrated design requirements that provide specific, detailed parameters for the physical development of a site or area. The graphic and written components of the code should build upon a design vision, such as a masterplan or other design and development framework for a site or area.
Design Guide	A document providing guidance on how development can be carried out in accordance with good design practice, often produced by a local authority.
Edge	The boundary between two areas or features; this may be natural or man-made.
Enclosure	The use of buildings, structures or boundary features to create a sense of containment.
European site	This includes candidate Special Areas of Conservation, Sites of Community Importance, Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas, and is defined in regulation 8 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010.
Façade	The front or face of a building.
Fasia	a) a flat board, usually of wood, covering the ends of rafters. b) a plain strip with name etc. over a shop front.

Gable	Triangular upper part of a wall at the end of a ridged roof.
Gault clay	Clay producing buff and pastel shaded hues, used for bricks and roof tiles.
Gateway	A building, site or landscape feature which symbolises an entrance or arrival point to a specific location.
Geodiversity	The range of rocks, minerals, fossils, soils and landforms.
Green corridor	Uninterrupted network of natural features within an urban area that acts as a linkage for wildlife, and potentially for people.
Green infrastructure	The network of green spaces such as parks, playing fields, allotments and cemeteries; these may have public access or be private spaces. Traditionally including water features such as rivers and lakes these are increasingly referred to as blue infrastructure.
Green space buffer	An area of vegetation or open space that provides visual and/ or physical enclosure or creates a distinct break between contrasting land use areas.
Habitat site	Any site which would be included within the definition at regulation 8 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 for the purpose of those regulations, including candidate Special Areas of Conservation, Sites of Community Importance, Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas and any relevant Marine Sites.
Heritage assets	A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. It includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).
Historic environment	All aspects of the environment resulting from the interaction between people and places through time, including all surviving physical remains of past human activity, whether visible, buried or submerged, and landscaped and planted or managed flora.
Infrastructure	A collective term for services such as roads, electricity, sewerage, water, education and health facilities.
International, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity	All international sites (Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas, and Ramsar sites), national sites (Sites of Special Scientific Interest) and locally designated sites including Local Wildlife Sites.
Key views	Views within the town or village to landmarks and memorable areas and views out which are important in linking the town or village to its landscape setting.
Land use	The broad functions land is used for such as industrial, residential or commercial.
Landmarks	Significant buildings or physical features usually including churches, memorials, squares and individual buildings of particular architectural or historic importance.
Landscape	The character and appearance of land including its shape, form, natural features, biodiversity and colours and the way these components are combined.

17 Glossary

Huntingdonshire District Council | Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape Supplementary Planning Document: Consultation Draft 2021

Landscape Character Assessment	An assessment to identify different landscape areas which have a distinct character based on a recognisable pattern of elements, including combinations of geology, landform, soils, vegetation, land use and human settlement.
Legibility	The ability to navigate through a built environment through means such as good connectivity and easily identifiable landmarks.
Listed building	One that is registered on the statutory List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest.
Massing	The arrangement and shape of individual buildings or structures or combinations of them.
Materials	The texture, colour, pattern and durability of materials and how they are used.
Memorable areas	Areas of well defined character and a clear sense of place often including historic centres, market squares, parks and river landscapes.
Mix	The range of uses present within a given piece of land.
Nodes	Distinct points within the structure of a settlement usually forming a junction or crossing point for paths, roads and/ or rivers or places of particular physical importance.
Obtrusive light	Light pollution that includes the brightening of the night sky (sky glow), uncomfortably bright light (glare) and light spilled beyond the area being lit (light intrusion).
Open space	All open space of public value, including not just land, but also areas of water (such as rivers, canals, lakes and reservoirs) which offer important opportunities for sport and recreation and can act as a visual amenity.
Pantile	Roofing tile of curved S-shaped or corrugated section.
Permeability	a) the extent to which the built environment allows ease of access from place to place though the number, convenience and visibility of routes through the urban fabric. b) the degree to which a landscape surface (whether 'hard' or 'soft') permits water to pass through it.
Playing field	The whole of a site which encompasses at least one playing pitch as defined in the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.
Pollution	Anything that affects the quality of land, air, water or soils, which might lead to an adverse impact on human health, the natural environment or general amenity. Pollution can arise from a range of emissions, including smoke, fumes, gases, dust, steam, odour, noise and light.
Primary routes	The main roads and railway lines running through and around the town or village.
Public rights of way	The network of footpaths on which access on foot is legally protected and bridleways to which access on foot, cycle and horseback is legally protected.
Priority habitats and species	Species and Habitats of Principal Importance included in the England Biodiversity List published by the Secretary of State under section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006.
Ramsar sites	Wetlands of international importance, designated under the 1971 Ramsar Convention.
Render	To cover a material (stone or brick) with a coat of plaster.

Roof pitch	Angle at which rafters form an apex from the supporting walls.
Roofscape	View resulting from a blend of roof pitches, sizes and heights within the built environment.
Scale	The combination of the height of a building or structure and its massing in relation to other buildings and spaces around it; massing reflects the arrangement, volume and shape of a building or group of buildings.
Screen planting	Planting to conceal development.
Secondary routes	The network of minor roads, streets and lanes running through and around the town or village.
Setting	The context in which something sits.
Setting of a heritage asset	The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.
Skyline	The outline of land and buildings against the sky.
Special Areas of Conservation	Areas defined by regulation 3 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 which have been given special protection as important conservation sites.
Special Protection Areas	Areas classified under regulation 15 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 which have been identified as being of international importance for the breeding, feeding, wintering or the migration of rare and vulnerable species of birds.
Site of Special Scientific Interest	Sites designated by Natural England under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.
Streetscene	The appearance of all of the elements of a street, including the carriageway, pavement, street furniture, planting, and the buildings or structures along its edges, particularly the composition of buildings on each side of the street.
Streetscape	The view or scene of streets; this may be shaped by factors such as buildings, open spaces, street furniture, lighting and paving and may vary according to the time of day.
Sustainable Drainage Systems (SUDS)	These cover a range of approaches to surface water drainage management including source control measures such as rainwater recycling, infiltration devices to allow water to soak into the ground, vegetated features that hold and drain water downhill mimicking natural drainage patterns, filter drains and porous pavements to allow rainwater and run-off to infiltrate into permeable material below ground and provide storage if needed and basins and ponds to hold excess water after rain and allow controlled discharge that avoids flooding.
Sustainable transport modes	Any efficient, safe and accessible means of transport with overall low impact on the environment, including walking and cycling, low and ultra low emission vehicles, car sharing and public transport.
Tranquillity	A state of calmness associated with peaceful quiet environments.
Tree Preservation Order (TPO)	An order made and confirmed by a local planning authority to protect trees from lopping, topping or felling without prior written consent.

17 Glossary

Huntingdonshire District Council | Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape Supplementary Planning Document: Consultation Draft 2021

Urban area	The main built-up area of the town or village as defined in the Development Strategy of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036.
Urban grain	The pattern of how streets, spaces and buildings are arranged within a town or village; it may be described fine or coarse, formal or informal, linear or blocky.
Urban green space	An area of open land within the settlement usually used as a park, cemetery, playing field or amenity land.
Verge	Grass edging of a road
Vernacular	The typical way in which buildings or structures are made in a particular place, making use of local styles, techniques and materials.
Vista	Long narrow views framed between trees or built units, usually ending in a focal point.
Wildlife corridor	Areas of habitat connecting wildlife populations.
Weatherboarding	Overlapping horizontal boards used to clad a wall.



Methodology for local communities to assess landscape and townscape character

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

To accompany the Landscape and Townscape Supplementary Planning Document: Consultation
Draft 2021

SEPTEMBER 2021

Planning Policy Team – local.plan@huntingdonshire.gov.uk

Introduction

This methodology is for local communities who wish to produce their own landscape and townscape character assessment for their particular settlement. Such assessments are primarily used to support a neighbourhood plan and can be used as an evidence document to support policies relating to design, conservation, heritage and landscape.

The following methodology has been adapted from guidance produced by:

- Historic England '[Understanding Place: Historic Area Assessments](#)' (April 2017)
- Natural England '[An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment](#)' (October 2014)
- Landscape Institute's '[Townscape Character Assessment: Technical Information Note 05/2017](#)' (April 2018)

For Huntingdonshire specifically, a Landscape and Townscape Assessment SPD was adopted in 2007. This has been revised and expanded in the Landscape and Townscape SPD: Consultation Draft 2021. It will assist in the implementation of policies within the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 as well as be a valuable resource for neighbourhood planning.

Before undertaking the methodology within this paper, it is recommended the revised SPD is read as this provides a guide on the layout, content and structure of such an assessment and provides detailed guidance relating to:

- Understanding character (chapter 2) which sets out the key principles and consideration of landscape and townscape character and how these are related to one another. Within this chapter is a section on building types where common types of structures, materials, uses and styles of building found across Huntingdonshire with photos.
- Landscape character areas (chapter 3) which detail the nine landscape character areas found within Huntingdonshire.
- Townscape assessments for the spatial planning areas and key service centres of Huntingdonshire, these can be found in chapters 5-15.

An [interactive map](#) has been produced to accompany the revised SPD and provide further support for those wishing to undertake a landscape and townscape character assessment. A user guide for it has also been produced. The map shows:

- Landscape character areas
- Character areas for settlements within spatial planning areas and key service centres
- Heritage assets – conservations areas, listed buildings, scheduled monuments and historic parks and gardens
- Nature sites including internally, nationally and locally designated sites and ancient woodland
- Green infrastructure priority areas and projects
- Agricultural land class

Other key documents to review while undertaking a landscape and character assessment are the Huntingdonshire Design Guide (2017) and the relevant Conservation Area statement (if applicable). These should also be used when assessing character particularly when considering design elements and historical appraisals of an area.

Assessing Character

Landscape character can be defined as the distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements in the landscape that make one area different from another. The approach encompasses physical landscape factors such as geology and ecology, cultural factors such as archaeology and settlement patterns, and perceptual factors such as tranquillity. Landscape character areas reflect a unique combination of these factors in a discrete geographical area; this local distinctiveness contributes to the special character and sense of place of a community or area.

A landscape character area assessment identifies and describes variations in the character of the landscape recognising the combination of factors that make an individual landscape distinctive. Not all areas within a landscape character area exhibit all the characteristics of that area and it is common for some parts to have few distinctive features often due to changes in land use. The proximity of the built environment often affects the condition of the landscape, particularly on the edges of the built environment where pressures are greatest.

Townscape is defined by the Landscape Institute as 'the landscape within the built-up area, including the buildings, the relationship between them, the different types of urban open spaces, including green spaces and the relationship between buildings and open spaces'. Townscape character identifies the distinct and recognisable pattern of features that occur consistently in a particular area. Townscape character areas vary significantly in size but each has a distinct and recognisable identity. These provide a basis for promoting the integration of sensitively designed buildings and spaces which reflect the distinctive traits of the surrounding area.

It is helpful to think of townscape as an evolution of the natural landscape, both bring with them cultural influences and perceptions that have shaped how people interact and perceive the natural and built environment. These are continually changing, some areas at a faster rate than others. Each townscape and its unique interaction with its surrounding landscape bring varying opportunities for development, enhancement and preservation. Some of these factors have been summarised in Figure 1 and listed below:

Factors of key importance for landscape are consideration of:

- the existing landscape character within and around the area/site reflecting landform, soils and geology, land cover, water features and the pattern of built and natural features
- the visual character of the landscape and views to, from and across the area/site
- opportunities to strengthen visual and physical linkages between the area/site and its surroundings, including opportunities for linkage of natural habitat

Factors of key importance for townscape are consideration of:

- the character of key features such as land use, layout, density, plot size, massing and permeability the presence of local landmarks, memorable places, cultural assets and vistas historic street patterns
- vernacular architectural styles, materials, design and detailing that provide local distinctiveness
- the character of boundary treatments such as walls, hedges and hedgerows
- the character of open spaces and their relationship to built development

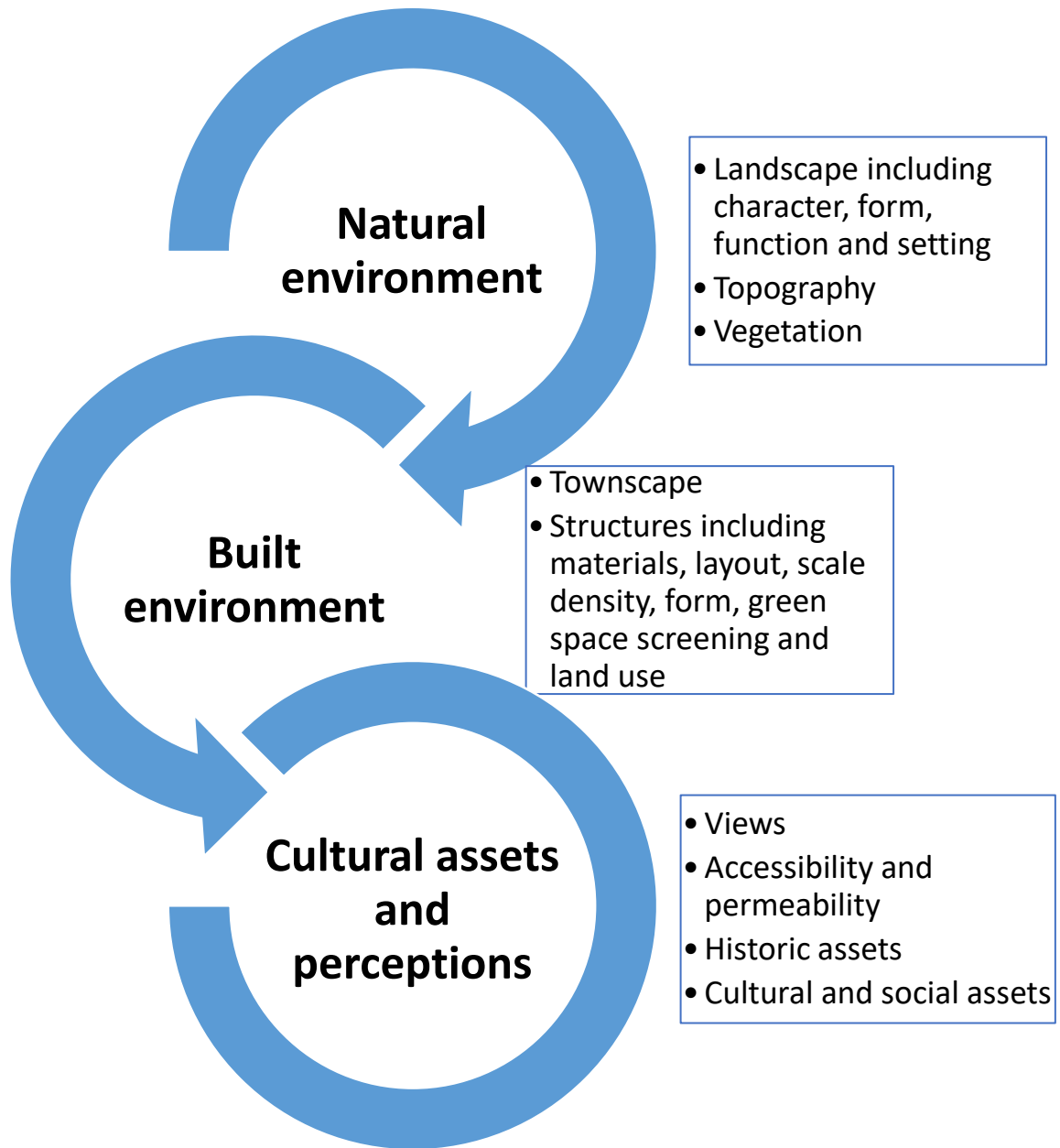


Figure 1: Key considerations of landscape and townscape character

Methodology to assess landscape and townscape character

The following detailed methodology is intended to support parish councils and local community groups primarily when preparing a neighbourhood plan, however it can also be used by a wider range of people and for a wider range of purposes. The methodology consists of five key stages with the steps and outputs (the green boxes) within each stage summarised in Figure 16.1 and detailed over the next few pages. It also details the outputs that should be produced at the end of each stage as these will direct the next stage of work. The methodology provides flexibility so that depending on the scope and focus of the assessment, the depth and breadth of assessment at each step can be tailored to the individual project.

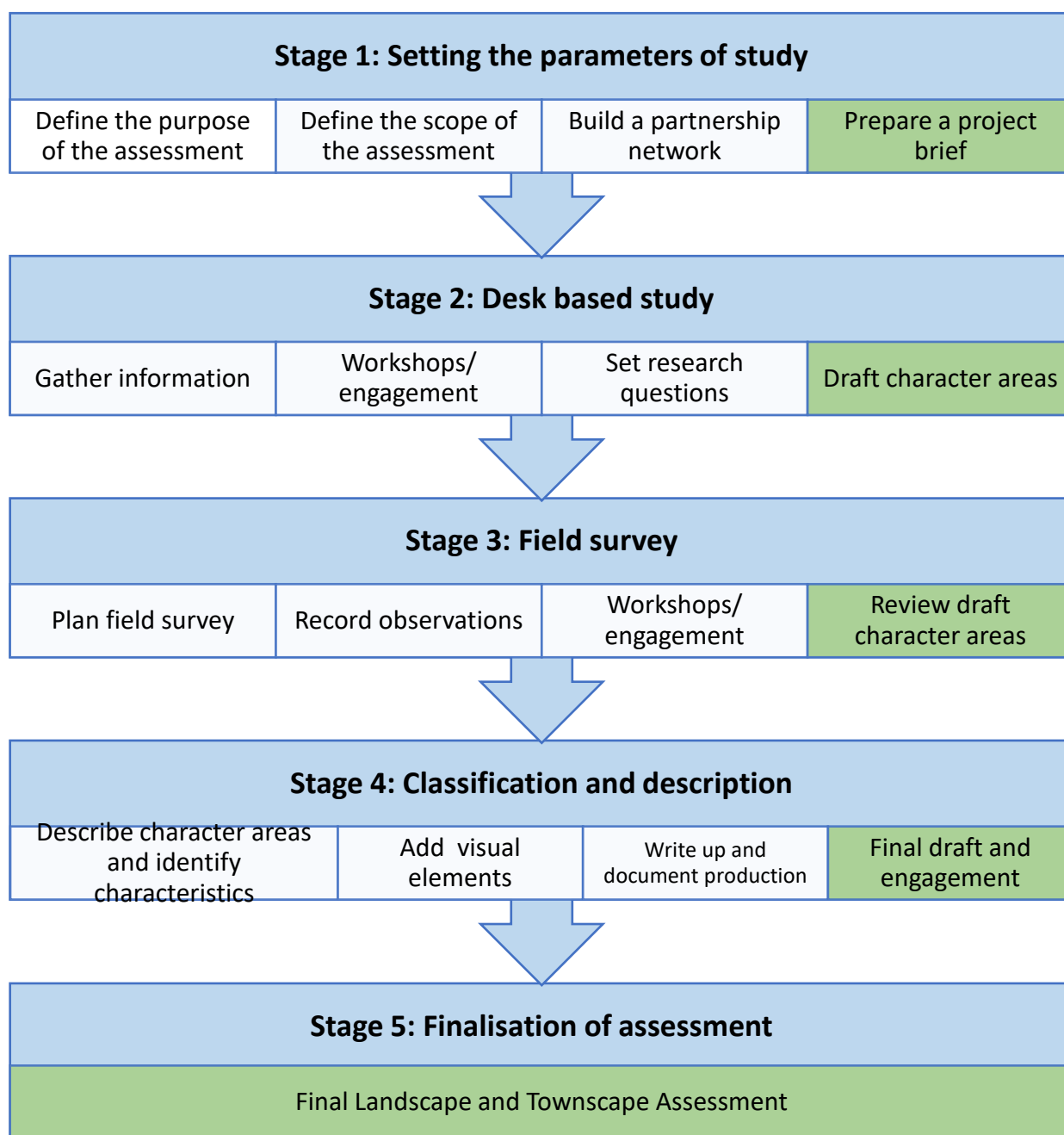


Figure 2: Summary of the key stages, steps and outputs of undertaking a landscape and townscape character assessment

Stage 1: Setting the parameters of study

This stage consists of the following steps:

- Define the purpose of the assessment
- Define the scope of the project
- Build a partnership network

At the end of this stage, the following output should be delivered:

- Prepare a project brief

Step 1: Define the purpose of the assessment

Having a clear direction and aim for the assessment is fundamental for it to run smoothly. It is a good idea to start this process with a group of core individuals who will be the key people carrying out and managing the assessment. A consensus can be reached with varying thoughts and opinions considered.

In setting a purpose, consider what the assessment is seeking to achieve. For example, is it to support landscape and design policies for a neighbourhood plan, or is it looking particularly at heritage assets or landscape?

From this, consider what other supporting documents or documents that the assessment could complement. These could include:

- The local planning authority's development plan including the local plan or area action plans
- Any development management documents or supplementary planning documents/guidance
- Conservation area statements and assessments
- Any neighbouring parish/town council neighbourhood plans
- Other parish council projects or parish plans

Identifying these will help set the context to the study and offer a guide to what documentation is already available that can be utilised to save time and resources.

It is important to keep in mind that your assessment should be looking to guide future development proposals in your settlement in much greater detail than policies in the Local Plan.

Step 2: Define the scope of the project

Once the purpose and wider context of the assessment is known, define the scope of the assessment. To do this, within the core group tasked with producing the assessment, consider the following questions as early as possible in the process:

- What is the emphasis of the assessment?
- What skills and specialisms are available to those undertaking the assessment?
- What will the geographic extent be?
- What level of detail is sought?
- Will further assistance be needed?
- What information has already been published?

It is important to be realistic at this stage. Practical elements like what resources, timescales and people power are available and needed should be considered. This is key to do as early in the process as possible to ensure the project runs smoothly and that volunteers do not get fatigued with the process or take on too much work. It is also an opportunity to recruit people to the project if people power is identified as being an issue.

There is not a set amount of time that can or should be spent on any of the stages or steps within this methodology as this will vary group to group and project to project. It is most important that the evidence is robust and the assessment thorough.

Taking into consideration the local resources and scale of the assessment, a rough timeline of when to achieve certain milestones should be devised. This is to ensure the project has an end date and stays to a reasonable time. If the document is being prepared as part of a neighbourhood plan, then there may be some outside pressure in terms of timelines to get aspects of the assessment done, these should be considered here too. If forming part of a neighbourhood plan evidence base, additional considerations around consultation events and what aspects of the neighbourhood plan the assessment will feed into should also be taken into account so that the undertaking of the assessment is placed within its full context and to avoid unnecessary delays.

Step 3: Build a partnership network

Following the identification of parameters to the assessment and its scope, links with local community networks will need to be made as early as possible. Often the most important groups will be your parish council or your local residents' or community association. You should discuss the assessment process with these groups and ensure they are committed to taking the project forward. A diverse range of groups should also be included to accurately reflect the whole community. The wider you consult, the broader your support will be. The best way to ensure everyone is aware of the project is a leaflet drop to every home and put information on any local websites/ social media platforms. Groups within a community to involve can include:

- Local residents
- Farmers and landowners
- Local businesses
- Local churches and faith groups
- Local environmental organisations
- Local sports clubs and interest groups
- Neighbourhood watch groups
- The Local Authority

Output: Prepare a project brief

At this stage, a project brief should be prepared. This should be a document setting out what the purpose and scope of the assessment will be. It should also include what resources, budget and projected timescales are required.

This document should be circulated to all those involved in the project. A brief bulletin or note on any parish or village website or in a parish newsletter could be published setting out the key points and timelines for the rest of the community.

Stage 2: Desk based study

This stage consists of the following steps:

- Gather information
- Workshops/ engagement
- Set research questions

At the end of this stage, the following output should be delivered:

- Draft landscape and townscape character areas

Step 1: Gather information

It is important that plenty of time is dedicated to this stage. Do not rush this part of the process as having a thorough understanding of the documented local area and context in addition to the local knowledge available is crucial when going into the field work stage. It also adds robustness to the conclusions of the assessment. A wide range of resources can be used at this stage to provide both high level and detailed level assessments of the area, including:

- Maps
- Historical and geographical texts and records
- Local libraries and archives
- Local knowledge
- Photographs
- Parish/ Town Council records
- Church records and institutional records
- Planning permissions and history
- Other landscape and townscape studies
- Conservation area statements and assessments
- Building types from the Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape SPD

It is important to get the local community involved at this stage. Ask for resources, there may be members of the community who have private collections of old OS maps, photos and memoirs that can provide added value and insight into the meaning and direction of how the area has evolved over time. The more involvement there is from the local community, a better understanding of what

is needed in the area and what is important to the local community can be achieved thus adding extra value to the assessment. Try to cross check information from individuals to enhance accuracy.

The data and information gathered at this stage is useful in developing an initial understanding of the form and character of the settlement, its relationship with the immediate landscape edge and the wider landscape setting.

Step 2: Workshops/ engagement

At these workshops, it would be useful to split the group into several smaller groups for discussion and thought mapping. Each group could have a large-scale map of the area (mapping services are available from HDC upon request) and annotate it using post-it notes, highlighters etc. to identify the indicative character areas, key changes and record ideas. To get the discussion going aspects to consider can include:

- What are the key landscape features?
- What shape and direction has the settlement developed in?
- What traditional industries are there?
- How can character areas be distinguished?
- What are the key buildings and styles?
- What drivers and pressures has the settlement and surrounding landscape faced over time and how have they shaped them?
- What can be done to manage these drivers and pressures? For example, what planning, conservation, landscape management and enhancement priorities are there?

The gathering information step and workshops should now be starting to highlight what character areas are present in the settlement. These can be broad areas outlined on a map, with bullet points of key features and characteristics. To assist in separating character areas, you can use the identified building types in the Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape SPD as a starting point.

Step 3: Set research questions

Afterwards, consider what research questions could be set to assist in further directing research and field study. This will also help in ensuring that the aims of the project are met and helps guide the assessment by bringing meaning to the findings as the information gathered can be shaped to answer specific questions. When creating these research questions consider what information has already been collected and what further information will be needed through the field survey. Consider how these questions and the information gained can be categorised and analysed.

It is recommended the assessment takes a holistic look assessing the following strands and how they relate to one another:

- Natural environment
- Built environment
- Cultural assets and perceptions

Consider what themes you wish to assess within each of these, for example within the landscape strand you can assess character, form, function, setting, topography and vegetation. For the buildings strand you can assess materials, layout, scale, density, form, integral green space, screening and land use. For the cultural assets and perceptions strand you can assess views, accessibility and permeability, historic assets, cultural and social assets. These are suggestions to

help you get started; there may be more you wish to research or specific ones depending on the nature, scope and purpose of the assessment.

The workshop should provide some direction on these research questions. However when they have been drafted, it may be worthwhile holding an additional workshop so that the whole group and or wider community can review them before going out on field surveys. It also keeps the local community involved in the process and shows their input is shaping the assessment.

To assist in assessing these strands and themes, a series of example research questions have been devised in the below table. These can be adapted and added to depending on the focus and scope of each assessment.

Landscape
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does the area relate to the wider countryside? Has it features in common with the surrounding landscape? • Is the area part of a larger landscape feature such as a ridge or field pattern that is characteristic of the wider area? • What is the current use of the area? • What function does the area serve in the wider landscape? For example, is it part of the countryside setting of a built-up area, or does it bring views of the countryside landscape into a settlement?
Topography
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the area situated within a distinct topographical feature such as a river valley or hill? • Is the area flat, sloping or undulating? • Are there any permanent or seasonal watercourses or ponds within or on the boundaries of the area? • How does the topography affect the area's sense of enclosure or openness? • Can the whole area be seen as one entity or are there parts of it hidden behind higher land or built structures?
Vegetation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are there individual trees within the area which make a significant contribution to the appearance of the locality? • Are there indications of historic planting such as historic hedgerows, specimen trees or formal planting? • Does existing vegetation include locally characteristic, native species? • What natural habitats are provided by existing vegetation?
Townscape
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is it contained within well-defined boundaries? • What is the current use of the area? • What function does the area serve in the wider townscape? For example, is it part of an area of similar developments or does it provide a contrast?
Structures
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the screening includes walls or fencing, is it typical of the landscape and/ or townscape character area? is it important to the area's historic character? • What examples of green space or public space are there? How do they sit within the townscape?

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are there any individual structures which stand out as significantly contributing or detracting from the character of the area? • What contribution do these make to the landscape or townscape? Do they enhance or detract from its quality and character? • How do the height, materials, style and uses of nearby buildings relate to the area? • Do nearby buildings and structures display features that are typical of the townscape character area? • Is there a clear pattern or structure to the surrounding buildings and streets?
<p>Views and vistas</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the area provide an interesting or significant skyline? • Do the views to/ from the area include historic assets whose setting needs to be safeguarded? • Does the area terminate a view or vista within the townscape?
<p>Accessibility and permeability</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What physical access links the area to existing facilities and communities? Are there any obstacles which hinder access? • What level of physical connectivity does the landscape and/or townscape character area benefit from? • What physical access connections does the site or area currently have?
<p>Historical, cultural and social assets</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do vehicles, moving or parked, have an impact on the ambience of the area? • What are the activity levels like in the area? Is the area busy? Are there clusters of particular activities? • Is the area associated with particular cultural uses? For example, does it contain a museum or cemetery? • Are there features which may provoke memories? For example, does the area include an old school or hospital? • Are there any known associations with famous people or events? • Is the area of high archaeological potential? • Are there known designated or undesignated historic assets within the area? How do these contribute to the character of the area?
<p>Light and noise</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the existing levels of artificial illumination in the area?

Output: Draft landscape and townscape character areas

Following the desk based research and community engagement, a list of draft landscape and townscape character areas should have been identified with a list of key characteristics and features. These can be loosely drawn on a map. These areas can then be tested and assessed further during the field survey. You may find that some boundaries need to be changed, additional character areas identified, or some should have sub-character areas whereby they share similar characteristics/ features but are also distinct.

Stage 3: Field survey

This stage consists of the following steps:

- Plan the field survey
- Record observations
- Workshops/ engagement

At the end of this stage, the following output should be delivered:

- Review draft landscape and townscape character areas

Step 1: Plan the field survey

Following the identification of the draft landscape and townscape character areas and research questions, planning the field survey to assess these needs to be undertaken. When planning the field survey, consider the following:

- Where and how far will the survey go?
- How long do you expect it to take?
- How many people will do this?
- Providing guidance on how and what to assess to ensure consistency in the conclusions made if going out in several groups
- Taking photos and drawing on maps

It is useful to go out on site visits in at least pairs. This allows for discussion and different insights to be identified. It also allows for greater discussion after the field surveys on what was seen and experienced.

Step 2: Record observations

To record information and observations, you can use the field survey template on the next page as a guide to the survey. This will help to provide more consistency between assessments if done by multiple groups of people. It has scope to be adapted to the specific requirements of the study, particularly if there is a strong local knowledge base or if additional information comes to light.

In addition to completing the field survey form, ensure that photographs and possibly sketches are made throughout. These can be used later in the final document.



Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape Character Area Assessment Field Survey

The assessor should be familiar with any survey guidance and follow any relevant health and safety guidance. Remember to take photos and maps to assist in the identification and assessment process.

Character Area:

Assessor(s):

Date of survey:

NATURAL ENVIRONMENT STRAND

Think about the character, form, function and setting of the local landscape, how it interacts with the edge of the townscape and with the wider landscape setting, topography and vegetation.

BUILT ENVIRONMENT STRAND

Think about the structures, materials, layout, scale, density, form, green spaces, screening and land uses within the townscape.

CULTURAL ASSETS AND PERCEPTIONS STRAND

Think about the views into and out of the settlement, the accessibility and movability within the built form and what historic, cultural and social assets there are.

Once out on the field survey, keep the following in mind (in addition to the research questions):

- How do design features create a broader sense of place?
- Are there certain streets/areas that have a different design and feel about them that make them distinct from other streets/ areas?
- How do the landscape and townscape edges respond to each other and has this impacted the location and direction of development?
- Are there particular areas that can be improved? Start to think about design principles or what development proposals should seek to do to conserve or enhance an area.

In terms of analysing information, consider how hard copies of field surveys will be stored and who can access these to enable them to be referred to later. Also consider how they will be analysed and by whom. When starting to analyse the observations, it may be useful to start identifying key themes or categorise by strand so trends across the character areas can be more easily identified. Think about how coding and using different colours can be used to illustrate similarities and differences more easily. These findings should also be recorded electronically to enable them to be shared easily with group members.

At this point, the additional information and insights from the field survey will start to answer the research questions previously identified in combination with any previously gathered data. Further analysis of the results should be undertaken to tie in with the desk based study and conclude:

- what the key features and characteristics of the area is
- the interaction and relationships between the landscape, landscape edge and townscape
- how the area has changed over time

Step 3: Workshops/ engagement

At these workshops, discuss the findings of the field surveys. Here it would be useful to have already categorised the findings into strands and themes to aid more structured, focused discussions. These workshops are an opportunity for wider discussion and thought generation on what drivers and pressures have shaped the landscape and townscape of the settlement, what sort of policies can be pursued in a neighbourhood plan, and if further survey or secondary data research is required to fill in any gaps. It also keeps the group and wider community actively involved in the process and checking whether the assessment is answering the scope and purpose first defined. From here the final character areas should be becoming more set.

Output: Review draft landscape and townscape character areas

The additional information gained from the field survey should spark a review of the original list of landscape and townscape areas. The field survey may have highlighted the boundaries of some of these should be changed. It may be apparent that some character areas should be merged or split up, or there may even be some sub character areas identified within character areas. There may be need for further secondary research.

Stage 4: Classification and description

This stage consists of the following steps:

- Describe character areas and identify their key characteristics
- Add visual elements
- Write up and document production

At the end of this stage, the following output should be delivered:

- Final draft and engagement

Step 1: Describe character areas and identify their key characteristics

Following the desk based study and the field survey, the final set of character areas should be identified alongside a description of what they are and a list of each of their key characteristics. Here you need to flesh out the information with the evidence from the secondary research and field survey to draw together a full draft of text to put in the final assessment.

To structure the text within each character area, you could split the text into the three strands and include subheadings relating to the themes assessed. If you are seeking to identify development management principles or 'development proposals should' principles, these may form a nice conclusion to the character area. These can be a series of bullet points that can be used to guide planning proposals and support neighbourhood plan policies, opportunity areas or site allocations. This will provide applicants/ agents/landowners/ developers with a sound starting point from which to shape development proposals on a site and understand its relationship to its setting and locally distinctive features. These are beneficial for successful integration of a development scheme into the surrounding landscape and/ or townscape. It also provides a link between the assessment and any neighbourhood plan policies which can then be used to implement these principles.

Step 2: Add visual elements

Following the written text of each character area, adding some graphics and visuals is a key part to bringing the assessment to life and illustrating the characteristics that define them. These visuals can include:

- Character area maps
- Historic maps
- Photographs taken from the field survey and historic photographs
- Illustrations and diagrams of architecture, townscape or views
- Aerial photograph with key views indicated, landmarks, key roads etc.

Deciding on what visual aids are most appropriate is something to discuss as a group and may be dependent on the skills and resources available. In any assessment, photographs and a map of character areas must be provided in order for readers to engage and best use the assessment.

These graphics and visuals should tie in with the supporting text and help to bolster the assessment. For example, if a character area had an example of Tudor architecture and a historic market town layout, then a photograph of the market square and an example building from the period would be appropriate.

Step 3: Write up and document production

Once the draft text and visuals have been put together, final edits and polishing of the document need to be undertaken. It is a good idea to have a dedicated proof-reader in the group, possibly someone who has not undertaken any of the written aspects. This approach will highlight anything that does not quite make sense or flow well and ensure consistency in the level of detail, terminology and formatting throughout.

Output: Final draft and engagement

The key output here is the final draft version of the assessment. Having a final consultation on this final draft is optional but it may be a good idea to have a final engagement opportunity with the local community, particularly if there are any aspects of the assessment that the group feel could be bolstered.

Stage 5: Finalisation of assessment

This stage, the final output is:

- Final Landscape and Townscape Assessment

Output: Final Landscape and Townscape Assessment

Following the final edits, polishing and any engagement felt necessary, you will have a final Landscape and Townscape Assessment of your settlement. Well done for getting to this stage, don't forget to celebrate this milestone!

This document can now form part of a local evidence base for a neighbourhood plan, be of local interest and be used in the shaping of development proposals and policies in the local area.



Interactive map user guidance

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

To accompany the Landscape and Townscape Supplementary Planning Document: Consultation
Draft 2021

SEPTEMBER 2021

Planning Policy Team – local.plan@huntingdonshire.gov.uk

Introduction

The Landscape and Townscape Supplementary Planning Document: Consultation Draft 2021 is accompanied by an [interactive map](#). The map enables residents, agents and planning officers to better navigate and access the information and apply the guidance within the revised SPD. Maps have also been included within the revised SPD.

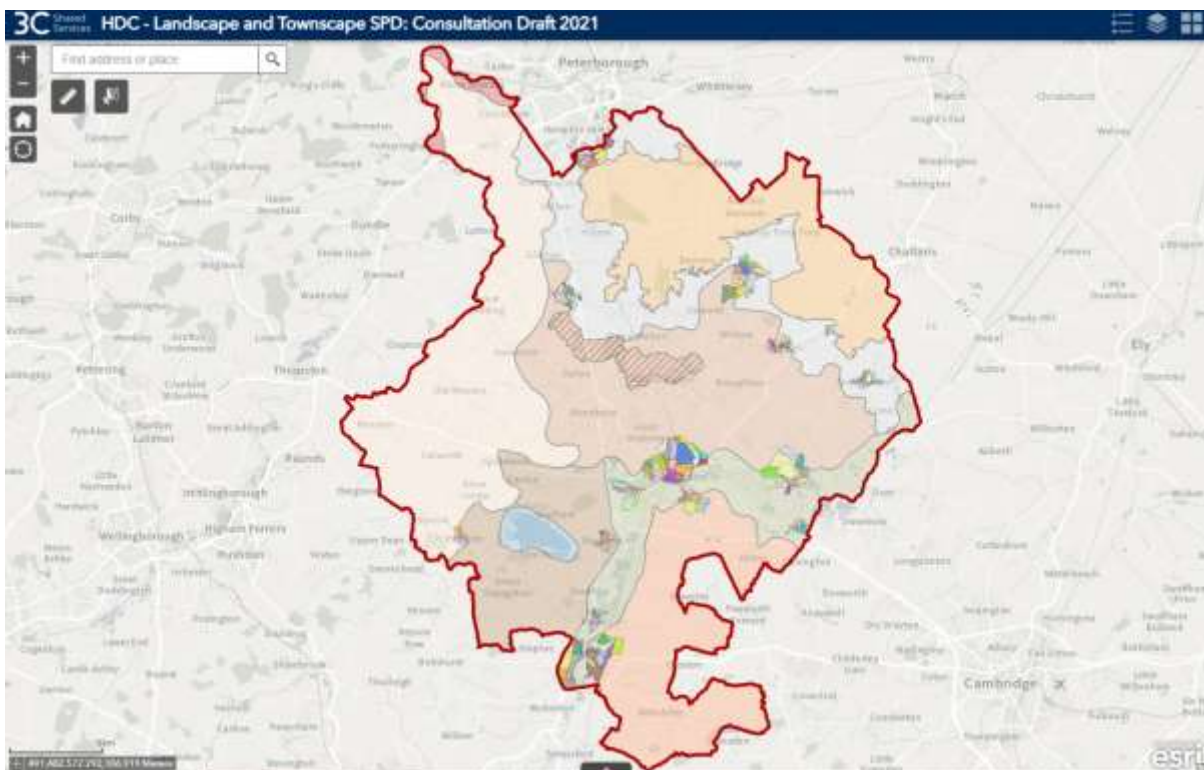
This user guide has been produced to walk through the features and capabilities of the interactive map.

This is on a web-based mapping portal which runs in an internet browser such as Internet Explorer, Chrome and Edge.

The data found within the interactive map includes:

- Landscape character areas
- Character areas for settlements within spatial planning areas and key service centres
- Heritage assets – conservations area, listed buildings, scheduled monuments and historic parks and gardens
- Nature – including internationally, national and locally designated sites and ancient woodland
- Green infrastructure priority areas and projects
- Agricultural land class

When you open the map, it will look like this:



Features and capabilities

There are several tools available to review, query, and interpret map data. A walk through of these is provided in the subsequent pages and cover the following:

- Address search/locations search
- Navigation tools
- Overview map
- Map legend
- Layer list
- Basemap gallery
- Coordinates
- Identify/Info tool
- Measure tool
- Select tool

Address search/locations search





In the top left corner of the map you will find the address search tool.



Type a place name or address into the text box. As you type, the search bar will list suggestions. To search, press Enter on the keyboard or press on the magnifying glass icon. This will zoom to the address in the search bar.

Navigation tools

In the top left corner of the map you will find the map navigation tools which allow you to zoom in or out, revert to default map extent and zoom to your location:

- Click  to zoom in or scroll up with mouse wheel
- Click  to zoom out or scroll down with mouse wheel
- Click  to revert to the original extent of map on start-up
- Click  to zoom to your location

Overview map

The Overview map displays the current extent of the map within the context of a larger area and updates whenever the map extent changes. The current extent of the map is represented in the overview map as a grey rectangle that can be dragged to modify the extent of the current view.



The overview tool is available at the bottom right corner of the map. You can expand or fold the tool by clicking on the arrow circled in red:



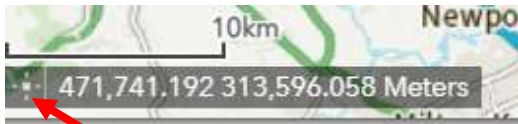
When the tool is expanded, you can also maximize or minimize it:



Coordinates

The Coordinate tool displays x- and y-coordinate values on the map. With the default coordinate system of the web map, the coordinate values change dynamically when the mouse pointer moves to locations on the map.

Coordinate Tool is available at the bottom left corner of the map.



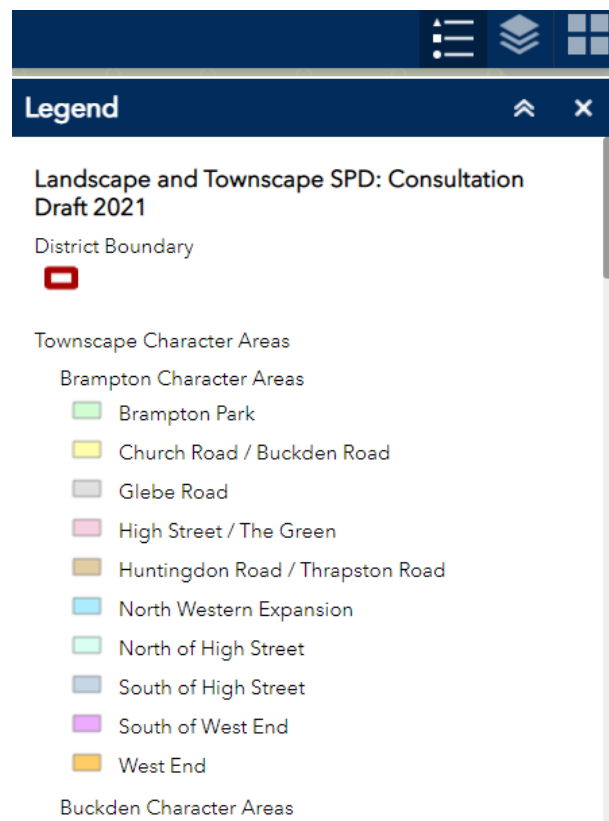
Click the **Enable clicking the map to get coordinates** button to enable clicking the map to get coordinates. You can add a point to the map, highlight the coordinates, and make a copy of the coordinates.

Note: you may need to maximize browser window to view **Enable clicking the map to get coordinates** button

Map legend



Click the Legend icon to open the map legend. This will display the symbology for current checked layers which should be visible in the map. Features that are not checked will not be displayed in the Legend.

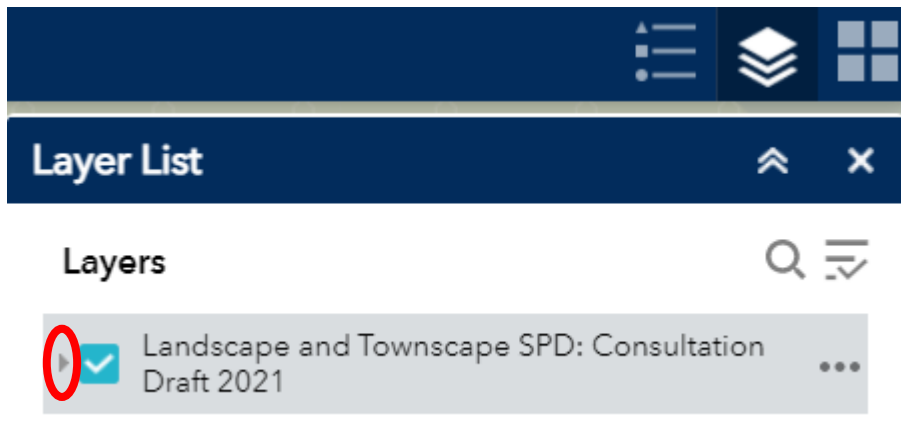


Layer list

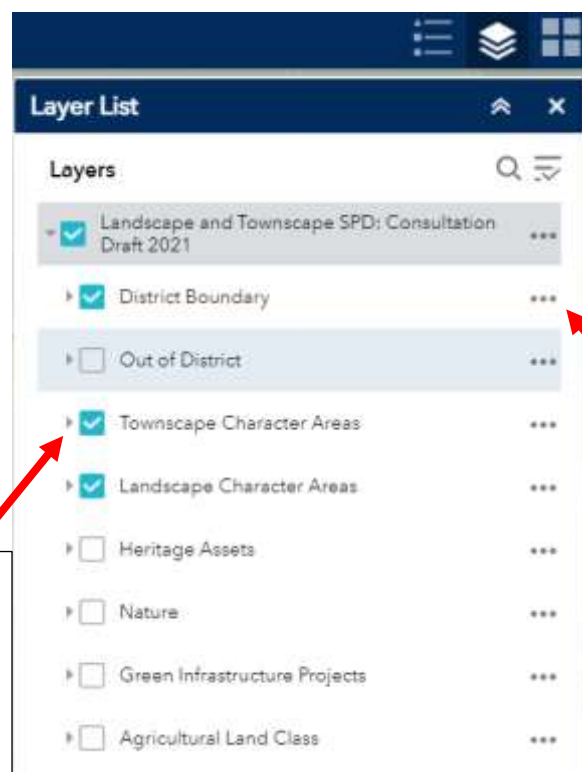


Click the Layer List icon to open the map Layer List. This will display the list of layers currently available in the map.

Click on the arrow to the left of the group layer 'Landscape and Townscape SPD 2021' (circled in red) to view individual layers in groups:



Layers which are checked will display in the map. Layers which appear grey will not display at the current zoom level. You must increase zoom level to view these items in the map.



To see the layers within each layer, click the arrow. Once on the desired layer, click the arrow next to that layer and its legend will appear

You can view the attribute table for the layer by clicking here

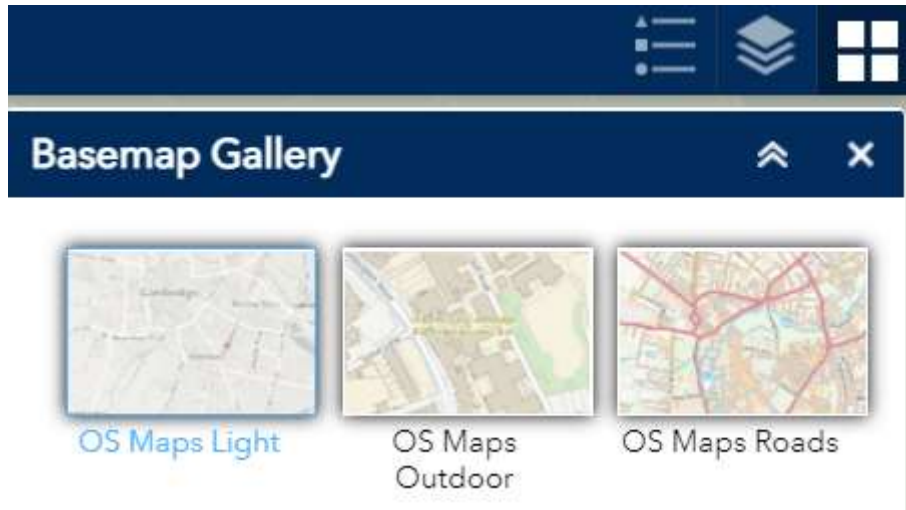
Note: Both the group layer and the individual layer contained within the group layer must be checked for individual layer to be visible in map.

Basemap gallery



Click the Basemap Gallery icon to open the Basemap Gallery.

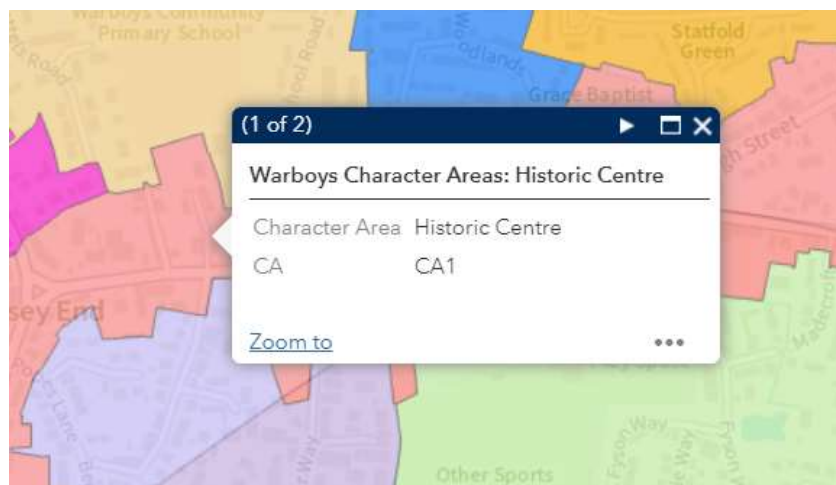
This will display the selection of basemaps available in the current map application. This allows you to select one from the gallery as the basemap for your map.



Identify/Info tool

In the map you can click on any feature to display a pop-up with attribute information.

Attribute information about a feature can be obtained by clicking the cursor on the feature in the map window. If there are several visible layers at the same location, the pop up will display this like in the example below (1 of X). The results for each layer can be scrolled through by clicking the sideways arrow button.

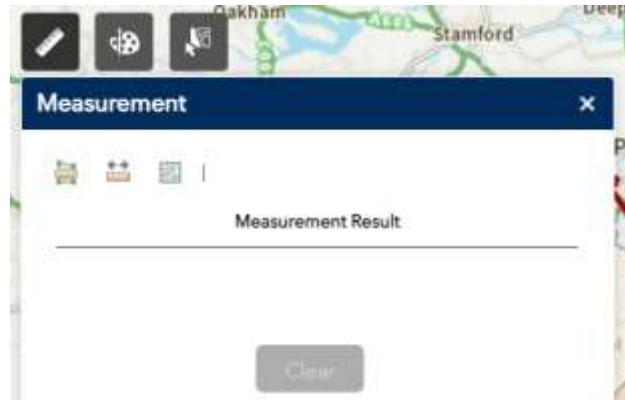


You can open an attribute table that contains that feature by clicking the three dots in the bottom right hand corner of the display box.

Measure tool



Click on the Measurement icon to open the measurement tool.



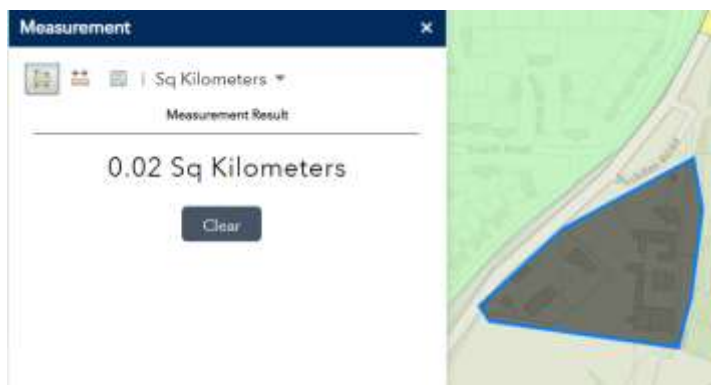
Measure area:



The area measurement tool allows you to draw your required area by clicking the cursor freehand. The units for the results can be changed using the dropdown list.

Steps to measure area:

- When icon is highlighted, click anywhere on map to measure area
- Use drop down menu to the right of measurement icons to select units
- Click on map once to start drawing area
- Continue to click on map to outline the area you wish to measure
- Double click mouse to finish drawing line
- Measurement results will display in measurement results window
- Select Clear to clear results window



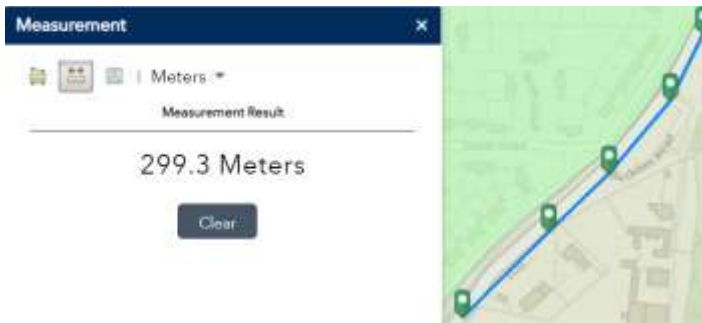
Measure distance




The distance measurement tool allows you to draw a line to measure distances. The feature can be drawn freehand and the units selected from the dropdown list.

Steps to measure distance:

- When icon is highlighted, click anywhere on map to measure distance
- Use drop down menu to the right of measurement icons to select units
- Click on map once to start drawing line segments
- Continue to click on map to outline the area you wish to measure
- Double click mouse to finish drawing the line
- Measurement results will display in the measurement results window
- Select Clear to clear results window



Location

The location measurement tool  allows you to return the coordinates for a point by clicking on a point on the map in the units chosen from the dropdown list.


Steps to get Location coordinates:

- When icon is highlighted, click anywhere on map to retrieve coordinates
- Use drop down menu to the right of measurement icons to select units
- Coordinate results will display in measurement results window
- Select Clear to clear results window

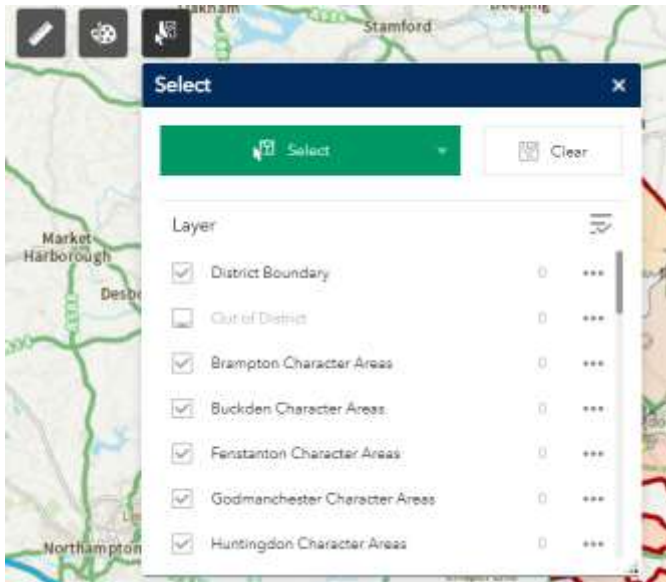


The coordinates will be returned for a point by clicking on a point on the map in the units chosen from the dropdown list.



Select tool

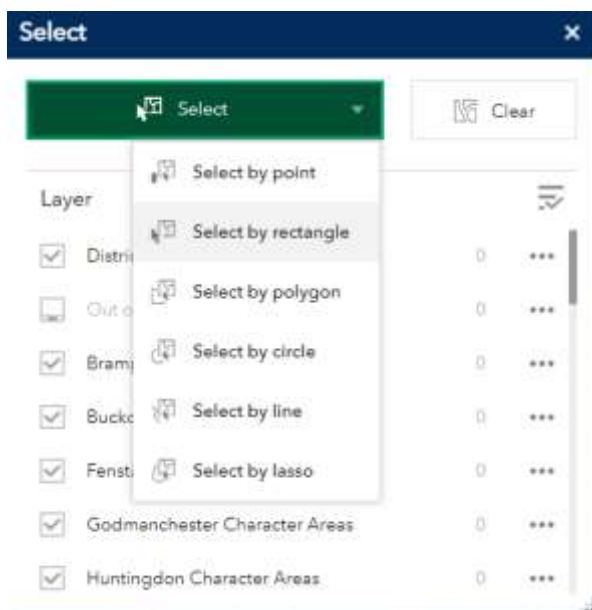
The Select tool  enables you to interactively select features on the map and take actions on the selected features.

Click on the Select icon to open select tool



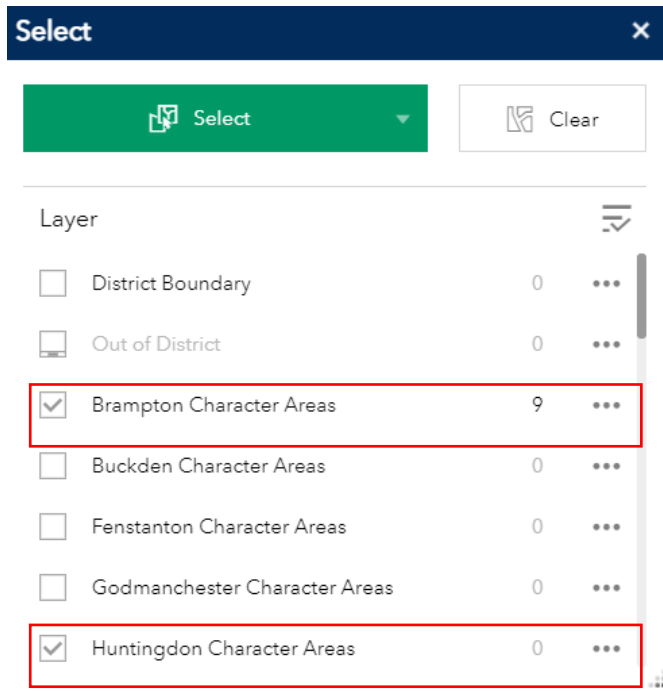
Steps to draw:

- Select Tool: Click on the Select icon  to open Select tool
- Click the select button  and choose a selection mode to begin selecting features on the map

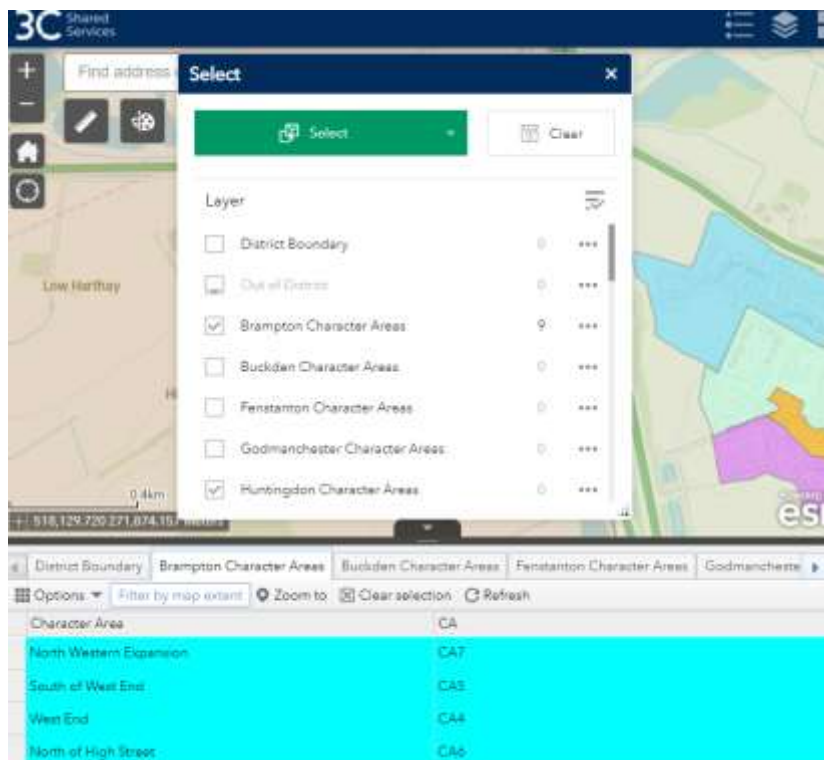


- Click on the map to begin selecting features

- Number of features selected will be displayed by selection layer in the selection window. In the below image, the layers outlined in red have been selected. In order to select a layer, it needs to be turned on in the Layer list.



- In selection window click the layer you wish to view to see list of selected features. To view the selected features in an attribute table, click the three dots to the right of the layer. There will also be an option to clear the selection.



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COMMENTS FROM OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (CUSTOMERS AND PARTNERSHIPS)

LANSCAPE AND TOWNSCAPE SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT

- 4.1 The panel discussed the Landscape and Townscape Supplementary Planning Document at its meeting on 6th October 2021.
- 4.2 Councillor Grice praised the Officers for a commendable piece of work which would form a great reference for the future.
- 4.3 Councillor Dew reflected that the 2007 document greatly needed updating as the world has changed significantly since it's adoption. He praised the document as essential in keeping the suite of the Council's planning documents up to date. It was also noted that it is important to engage with town and parish councils on this subject to allow them a platform to build on for the future.
- 4.4 Councillors also praised the focus on townscapes within the document as they felt this was more in keeping with the local area and crucial for proposed and future developments.
- 4.5 Following a question from Councillor Butler over town centre parking in Ramsey, the Planning Policy Team Leader reassured that the suggestion is to introduce landscaping to the town centre in order to reduce the visible impact of town centre parking not to restrict the parking itself.
- 4.6 Councillor Sanderson questioned what the most effective way to provide natural screenings for existing developments would be. He was advised that whilst the report primarily focuses on new developments, town and parish councils are encouraged to work with the district council to provide planting screens on council owned land to reduce the impact of existing developments.
- 4.7 The report was wholeheartedly endorsed by Councillor Corney, who also questioned how the document would be communicated with local councils and public for the consultation. The panel heard that the document would be available electronically and that it would be interactive to allow residents and councils to focus on specific geographic areas.
- 4.8 The panel also heard that the public consultation is to be increased to eight weeks from the statutory four weeks as the council recognises the size of the document and aims to allow sufficient time for residents and local councils to digest and comment upon the proposals.
- 4.9 The Panel welcomed the report and encourage the Cabinet to endorse the recommendations contained within the report.

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Key Decision - Yes

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Title/Subject Matter:	Environment Principles
Meeting/Date:	Overview and Scrutiny Customer and Partnerships – 7 October 2021 Cabinet – 14 October 2021 Council – 15 th December 2021
Executive Portfolio:	Cllr R Fuller Executive Leader, Chairman of the Cabinet Executive Councillor for Housing and Economic Growth
Report by:	Joanne Lancaster, Managing Director Neil Sloper, Assistant Director (Recovery) Clara Kerr, Strategic Growth Manager
Ward(s) affected:	All

Executive Summary:

This report sets out a proposal for the Council's environmental principles and key considerations to support the renewal of Huntingdonshire's Strategy for Environment. These principles will also inform the delivery of the Corporate Plan and shape our ambitions for the District, informing the strategies we adopt.

The aspiration is of a net zero carbon Huntingdonshire by 2040 to be delivered through sustainable place making. This will be achieved through strong economic growth with strong environmental principles, good design of our homes and infrastructure, health and biodiversity net gain at the core of our agenda to ensure our residents thrive now, and in the future.

The principles are those developed as part of the Oxfordshire Cambridgeshire (OxCam) Arc reflecting that Huntingdonshire is well positioned with partner organisations to maximise the benefits of an environmentally positive recovery. This also links closely to the Council's Economic Growth Strategy – Ready for Recovery.

The environmental principles proposed for the District Council and its activities:

- To target net zero carbon at a district level by 2040

- To protect, enhance and restore, existing nature areas (green space) and create new ones (where it is viable to do so).
- To pursue the ambitions of 'A green Future: Our 25 year Plan to Improve the Environment' and that new development should be designed with a view to minimising and mitigating the effects of Climate Change.
- Ensuring existing and new communities see real benefits in their well-being from living in Huntingdonshire.
- Using natural resources wisely.

Recommendation(s):

The Committee is **RECOMMENDED to agree:**

- A) the adoption of the aspiration of a net carbon zero Huntingdonshire by 2040.
- B) the adoption of the OxCam Arc environmental principles
- C) that the environmental principles form the basis upon which to inform the renewal of Huntingdonshire's Strategy for the Environment, centred on achieving an environmentally positive recovery.

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To adopt a set of environmental principles for Huntingdonshire District Council (HDC) and its activities that align with those developed as part of the Oxfordshire – Cambridgeshire Arc (OxCam Arc).
- 1.2 The adoption of these principles will support the renewal of Huntingdonshire's Strategy for the Environment, shaping our ambitions for the District and informing the delivery of the Corporate Plan centred on achieving an environmentally positive recovery.
- 1.3 To present the aspiration of a Net Zero Carbon Huntingdonshire by 2040 delivered through sustainable place making.

2. CONTEXT

2.1 Government Policy

The UK Government amended the **Climate Change Act 2018** in 2019 by introducing a target of at least a 100% reduction in the net UK carbon account (i.e., reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, compared to 1990 levels) by 2050. This is otherwise known as the 'Net Zero' target.

The **Government's 25 year Plan to Improve the Environment – A Green Future** published in 2018 sets out long term targets and approach to protecting and enhancing natural landscapes and habitats in England for the generation – its goals are:

- cleaner air and water
- plants and animals which are thriving
- a cleaner, greener country for us all.

The forthcoming **Environment Bill 2019-21 and 2021-22** has completed the Committee Stage, Report Stage and Third Reading in the House of Commons. The bill has now proceeded to the House of Lords and in June 2021 it was confirmed that requirements would be set for biodiversity net gain for new nationally significant infrastructure projects in England. There is no clear timescale for a bill at this stage as it is subject to mutual agreement of the House of Lords and Parliament before it can achieve Royal ascent and become law, originally it was anticipated that this would be Autumn 2021.

The main purposes of the bill are:

- Transform our environmental governance once we leave the EU by putting environmental principles into law; introducing legally binding targets; and establishing a new Office for Environmental Protection.
- Increase local powers to tackle sources of air pollution.
- Protect nature and improve biodiversity by working with developers.

- Extend producer responsibility, ensure a consistent approach to recycling, introduce deposit return schemes, and introduce charges for specified single use plastic items.
- Secure long-term, resilient water and wastewater services, including through powers to direct water companies to work together to meet current and future demand.

2.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF - 2021)

This included a number of amendments and updates relating to climate change mitigation for new development including reference to UK signing up to “17 Global Goals for Sustainable Development in the period to 2030. These address social progress, economic well-being and environmental protection.”

2.3 Oxfordshire - Cambridgeshire Arc

The OxCam Arc is a globally significant area between Oxford, Milton Keynes and Cambridge. It is formed of 5 counties: Oxfordshire, Bedfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Northamptonshire and Cambridgeshire.

Huntingdonshire District Council is a key partner in the Arc because it supports the ambition of building a better economic, social and environmental future for the area with high-quality, well-connected and sustainable communities.

In developing ambitions for the Arc HDC was involved in a working group of all partners to devise a set of Arc environmental principles. All partner agencies have been asked to adopt the principles while recognising the primacy of Council’s Development Plans:

- Targeting net zero carbon at a district level by 2040
- Protect, restore, enhance and create new nature areas and natural capital assets
- Be an exemplar for environmentally sustainable development, in line with the ambitions set out in the government’s 25-year plan. We will aim to go beyond the minimum legislated requirements for development.
- Ensure that existing and new communities see real benefit from living in the Arc.
- Using natural resources wisely.

2.4 Huntingdonshire’s Local Plan

In May 2019 the **Huntingdonshire Local Plan 2036** (HLP2036) was adopted setting out 8 key policies which better shape our future environment for the benefit of nature and the reduction of carbon emissions.

Climate change is recognised as a key issue for due to changing household size and the challenge of obtaining affordable properties. The development strategy aims to meet the NPPF's challenge to respond to expected climate change by concentrating most of the new development

in locations where people can choose to walk or cycle to local services, can create sufficient demand to make public transport services viable and are away from areas of greatest flood risk to protect against the increased frequency, extent and impact of flooding associated with climate change.

Cambridgeshire Flood and Water Supplementary Planning Document (2017) adopted across all Cambridgeshire Authorities details guidance for applicants on managing flood risk and the water environment in and around new developments within Cambridgeshire ensuring development appropriately located, well designed, managed and take account of the impacts of climate change.

The **Huntingdonshire Design Guide (2017)** Supplementary Planning Document addresses the need for good design and recognises landscaping is part of the solution to challenges from climate change to declining health and well-being.

2.5 Huntingdonshire District Council Activities

Pride of Place was established as a guiding principle for Huntingdonshire in 2018, with continuous development of good quality services, improving them to be more sustainable with good financial management.

HDC is guardian of 1,534 hectares of green space, 42.8 hectares of woodlands and a managed tree canopy of 400 hectares the Council protects and manages the natural environment every day. Over £2.5m of investment has been assigned to our open spaces over the next few years.

Considerable work has been undertaken in all services to deliver the activity and projects that enhance our environment and respond to the challenges presented by climate change (Appendix 1 – Executive Member Statement – Environment, Appendix 2 - Nature and Biodiversity in Huntingdonshire).

2.6 Key Governance Risk

HDC has consistently identified and responded to Environmental Sustainability as an Annual Governance Risk termed **Environmental Pressures and Sustainability Challenges** – *specifically based on the long-term sustainability and attraction of our area*. This is detailed in Appendix 3 – Annual Governance Statement Environmental Risk. This corporate risk has informed the work of the Council's services to ensure a sustainable and affordable approach to climate change was in place.

3. REPORT

3.1 Strategy for the Environment

The Council has long recognised the key environmental issues impacting the district, with a commitment to Pride of Place. The focus has been of

actions to address the impact of our changing climate such as reducing our own carbon emissions by over 1,000 tones between 2018 and 2022 or planting over five and a half Wembley stadiums of pictorial meadows to increase biodiversity. These are set out in Appendix 1 – Executive Member Statement – Environment, and Appendix 2 - Nature and Biodiversity in Huntingdonshire.

The Council has a duty to ensure we promote an environmentally positive recovery in Huntingdonshire following the impacts of COVID 19 and to limit the negative impacts of climate change. We also have a duty to deliver sustainable place making. This will be achieved through strong economic growth with strong environmental principles, good design of our homes and infrastructure, health and biodiversity net gain at the core to ensure our residents thrive now, and in the future.

Clear environmental principles now will support the Council to renew its Strategy for the Environment and its role in an environmentally positive recovery for Huntingdonshire as we move beyond the crisis presented to our communities through Covid-19.

HDC has direct control of only a tiny proportion of all the carbon emissions within Huntingdonshire, but we can adopt a key role to influence the district, demonstrating good practice whilst setting policies and strategies to influence businesses and communities to tackle climate change whilst enabling sustainable living and growth.

3.2 Environmental Principles

It is proposed that HDC adopt a core set of environmental principles as the foundation of this approach and that this is tied to those of our key partners, engaged in the delivery of the same outcomes. HDC has been a key partner in the development of the environmental principles for the OxCam Arc, it is therefore proposed that these are also adopted by the Council.

- Targeting net zero carbon at a district level by 2040
- Protect, restore, enhance and create new nature areas and natural capital assets
- Be an exemplar for environmentally sustainable development, in line with the ambitions set out in the government's 25-year plan. We will aim to go beyond the minimum legislated requirements for development.
- Ensure that existing and new communities see real benefit from living in the Arc.
- Using natural resources wisely.

The aspiration is of a net zero carbon Huntingdonshire by 2040 to be delivered through sustainable place making. This will be achieved through strong economic growth with strong environmental principles, good design of our homes and infrastructure, health and biodiversity net gain at the core of our agenda to ensure our residents thrive now, and in the future.

4. KEY IMPACTS / RISKS

- 4.1 The annual governance risk is highlighted in Appendix 3.
- 4.2 Agreed environmental principles will facilitate and focus the renewal of an environmental strategy. These principles will balance strong economic growth with strong environmental principles, good design of our homes and infrastructure, health and biodiversity net gain at the core of our agenda to ensure our residents thrive now, and in the future.
- 4.3 In adopting the principles co-created with the OxCam Arc, the Council will ensure maximum benefit from alignment with this globally recognised area of economic opportunity central to the UK's future economic growth and prosperity in an environmentally sustainable and enhancing way for Huntingdonshire.

5. WHAT ACTIONS WILL BE TAKEN

- 5.1 Subject to the adoption of the environmental principles, a proposal to progress a refresh of the Council's strategy for environment will be progressed.
- 5.2 This refresh will include:
- Establishing a new baseline of the Council's own impact on the environment through its activities including a gap analysis of where these are actively monitored.
 - Clear identification of the issues impacting Huntingdonshire and actions our communities and businesses can take to achieve our aspiration of carbon zero by 2040.
 - Independent and expert advice able to advise robust methodology for calculating impacts and options for monitoring these so that the Council can embed this within its activities.
 - Inclusive engagement with businesses and our communities is essential, time will be taken to listen and prioritise the environmental issues of those living, working and visiting Huntingdonshire along with the changes they might most like to see. This will ensure the strategy and resulting action plan options are well informed, as well as well researched.
- 5.3 It is anticipated that a draft strategy will be produced within 12 months to allow the elements above to be completed with sufficient rigor.
- 5.4 After the adoption of the strategy, an action plan will follow to support the aspiration of net zero carbon Huntingdonshire by 2040. This will seek to demonstrate our own actions leading by example and encourage our businesses and communities to make positive choices for the environment that have been identified as those that will benefit Huntingdonshire the most.

6. LINK TO THE CORPORATE PLAN

6.1 The corporate plan sets out a vision that:

We want to support a safe and healthy environment for the people of Huntingdonshire

- **For people** – to make Huntingdonshire a better place to live, improve health and well-being
- **For place** – to make Huntingdonshire a better place to work and invest

The Council has strategic priorities to:

- create, protect and enhance our safe clean built and green environment
- to support infrastructure to enable growth and investment

The Council's stated ambition is to adapt to the challenges we are facing and involve our residents and local businesses.

7. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

7.1 To kick start positive recovery, it is proposed that resources be diverted this year to initiate the renewal of the environment strategy, to pull the work together for maximum benefit. A strategy for the environment which re-baselines carbon impact and biodiversity will enable even more positive actions to minimise the environmental impact of our own operations, maximise our positive impact on the environment and influence our partners, businesses and communities to do more.

7.2 The development and co-ordination of an Environment Strategy to implementation and initial delivery of outcomes across the Council is anticipated to take 12 months. To accelerate this, subject to the adoption of the proposed environmental principles, it is proposed that resources and work is brought forward into this year, highlighting the importance of an environmentally positive recovery in Huntingdonshire.

7.3 The funding will support a dedicated officer with additional budget for any additional specialist research if required. This will deliver a refreshed and co-ordinated environment strategy, targeted and evidenced based, outcomes agreed with a monitoring system for carbon reduction and enhancements to nature.

8. HEALTH IMPLICATIONS

8.1 The Council's Healthy Open Spaces Strategy and 10 year action plan established in 2020 identified:

- 90% of our community believe parks, play areas and open spaces improve their mental health and well-being
- 78% actively visit them for this purpose
- 64% of our community say parks and open spaces are essential to their quality of life.

The environmental principles will continue to support this commitment to encourage a healthy and active community.

9. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDED DECISIONS

- 9.1 It is proposed that the District Council formally adopt a simple and clear set of principles to establish a clear Climate Change Vision, Strategy and Action Plan for Huntingdonshire. An environment strategy with aspiration of a carbon neutral Huntingdonshire by 2040 will support an even more focused approach in response to the challenges Huntingdonshire faces and the aspirations of our communities and businesses in respect of climate change.
- 9.2 Adopting principles that align the Council with Arc will be beneficial in terms of supporting a green recovery and enhancing and protecting nature whilst reducing the carbon emissions of the district.
- 9.3 The Environment Strategy will accelerate progress in the green recovery engaging with our communities across the themes proposed capitalising on the opportunities presented within the forthcoming Environment Bill.

10. LIST OF APPENDICES INCLUDED

- 10.1 Appendix 1 - Nature and Bio Diversity in Huntingdonshire – Summary 2021
- 10.2 Appendix 2 - Portfolio Environment Statement – 2021
- 10.3 Appendix 3 – Annual governance Risk - Environment

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Huntingdonshire District Council - Healthy Open Spaces Strategy
<https://applications.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/moderngov/documents/s111005/Appendix%202020-%20HDC%20Healthy%20Open%20Spaces%20Strategy%20and%2010%20Year%20Action%20Plan.pdf>

CPCA Independent Climate Commission Report 2021
https://f.hubspotusercontent40.net/hubfs/6985942/CLIMATE%20COMMISSION%20REPORT_Final.pdf

Oxfordshire-Cambridgeshire Arc Spatial Framework
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/planning-for-sustainable-growth-in-the-oxford-cambridge-arc-spatial-framework/planning-for-sustainable-growth-in-the-oxford-cambridge-arc-an-introduction-to-the-spatial-framework>

Environment Bill 2020-21 and 2021-22
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/environment-bill-2020>

25 year Environment Plan for England
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/25-year-environment-plan>

Climate Change Act 2008 (2050 Target Amendment) Order 2019
https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukdsi/2019/9780111187654/pdfs/ukdsi_9780111187654_en.pdf

CONTACT OFFICERS

Name/Job Title: **Neil Sloper – Assistant Director Recovery**
Email: neil.sloper@huntingdonshire.gov.uk

Name/Job Title: **Clara Kerr – Strategic Growth Manager**
Email: clara.kerr@huntingdonshire.gov.uk

How Nature and Biodiversity Is Supported in Huntingdonshire



The Importance of Protecting Nature

Protecting and preserving nature and biodiversity has become a more salient issue in the minds of people all across the country, with 45% stating that green spaces have played a vital, positive impact in protecting their mental health and wellbeing during the Covid19 pandemic (Mental Health Foundation, 2021).

After a year of being at home, individuals have become more aware of the importance of access to local green and blue spaces. Studies have also suggested that this new awareness will lead to increased public support of future policy surrounding and aiming at more resilient and sustainable living environments (Rousseau, 2020).

Having access to good quality green space has been vital to our residents in this past year, with one Huntingdon resident reaching out to us to say:

“Lockdown actually showed me how essential green spaces are for my mental health... I discovered that even a couple of days of not getting outdoors and near some grass, trees and plants led to a massive decline in my mood. Just one walk in nature helped me not just survive, but even thrive...”

It is clear that accessibility to nature and open spaces is crucial in supporting the wellbeing of our residents, which is why Huntingdonshire District Council (HDC) has been actively taking steps to protect the nature and biodiversity we have in our District and continue to form actions and plans to build on this work.

An Overview of the District

- 1,534 hectares of Green Space
- 87m² of Green Space per Resident, more than double the national average
- 14,872m² (equivalent to the size of two football pitches) of meadow seed planted in 2021 to support Wildlife across our network of parks and open spaces
- Large network of watercourses maintained to support local habitats
- HDC own and manage approximately 42.8 Ha of woodlands which is comprised of “Woodland”, “Pocket Woodland” and “Shelterbelts”
- HDC currently manages over 9000 individual trees, tree groups, shelterbelts, and woodland within the District - it has been estimated that the tree canopy managed by HDC covers 400Ha of the district (equivalent to five and a half Wembley Stadiums)

Corporate Plan

Huntingdonshire has a strong record of protecting and maintaining a broad spectrum of open spaces, waterways, and countryside, all of which contributes to the quality of the natural environment across the district. HDC have committed to the principles and the aspirations of Doubling Nature across the district in its Corporate Plan, to protect the natural environment and in turn create a space where our residents wellbeing thrives.

Our Corporate Plan commits to protecting nature and the biodiversity in several ways...

People: Supporting people to improve their health and well-being

- Provide great, accessible green spaces, countryside leisure and cultural facilities and opportunities for recreation and health
- Ensuring new developments have sufficient public green open spaces
- Prioritising accessible, high quality, well maintained open space
- Facilitating and providing opportunities for positive activities that support residents' health and wellbeing needs
- Adopt a plan and deliver increases in nature, protecting and increasing biodiversity within our parks and open spaces

What have we already achieved?

Awards

- HDC currently holds three prestigious Green Flag Awards at Priory Park (St Neots), Hinchingsbrooke Country Park (HCP) and Paxton Pits Nature Reserve. This award recognises and rewards well managed parks and green spaces, setting the benchmark standard for the management of recreational outdoor spaces across the United Kingdom and around the world.
- 2020 Bees Needs Winner for Priory Park and HCP, recognising these parks as a haven for Bees and other pollinators due to success of our pictorial meadow planting
- 2021 Keep Britain Tidy **Love Parks** Network Award Winner recognising the actions HDC had taken to protect our parks and opens spaces during the Covid19 pandemic, including increasing litter bin capacity and improving accessibility

Healthy Open Spaces Strategy

- Adopted in October 2020 our Healthy Open Spaces Strategy lays out the importance of good quality parks and open spaces and how to maximise the health benefits of the Council's Parks and Open Spaces
- 58% of residents spoken to during the stakeholder consultation period, stated that wildlife and nature was the most important aspect of parks and open spaces, cementing that wildlife and nature is at the forefront of our residents minds and we need to work to protect that
- Approximately 100m² of wildflower seed given out to residents to help create biodiverse spaces at home
- 10-year action plan includes community led approach to help educate residents on the importance nature has on wellbeing and build communities around this

Trees

- Tree Strategy adopted in 2020 which contains updated policies relating to all aspects of Local Authority tree management, and incorporates national issues such as biosecurity, canopy cover management, and subsidence
- The Tree Strategy leads on the premise that trees and woodland areas play an important part in protecting the natural environment, by cleaning the air we breathe, providing habitats for plants and animal species and creating an attractive environment for people to live in
- Ensures a minimum of 2:1 ratio for tree replacement
- During winter 2020/21 HDC planted around 1500 new trees at Hinchingsbrooke Country Park and Priory Park, St Neots to both enhance the tree canopy and support nature
- Implementation of a robust Tree Management Programme: to include the adoption of a computerised tree inspection and management system to programme tree surveys and public tree works both proactively and reactively.
- As of January 2020, HDC currently administer 858 Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs); this equates to approximately 10,000 individual trees and 3000Ha of protected woodland, groups, and areas of trees

- Work in partnership with Development Management and the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to ensure that new developments protect existing trees and natural features whilst also providing new opportunities for tree planting

Development Management

- Adopted May 2019, Huntingdonshire's Local Plan identifies several Green Infrastructure Priority Areas, the policy also sets out HDC's approach to protecting and enhancing Huntingdonshire's green infrastructure for the benefit of biodiversity and residents for recreation and leisure
- Green infrastructure serves to balance built development - it facilitates opportunities for people to access open space and provides habitats for wildlife. Improving the ecological, visual, heritage and recreational value of the countryside brings environmental, social and health benefits
- Proposals for facilities associated with strategic green infrastructure that, by their nature, need to be in the countryside will be supported subject to their compatibility with the green infrastructure where adverse effects are avoided

Implementation and Monitoring	
Responsible agencies	Huntingdonshire District Council, Cambridgeshire County Council, The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority, town and parish councils, environmental protection agencies, landowners, developers
Delivery mechanism	Through the determination of planning applications, SPDs, Neighbourhood Plans
Timescale	Throughout the plan period
Monitoring indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Losses to biodiversity habitat • Additions to biodiversity habitat • Total change in biodiversity habitat

Championing Biodiversity

- Beehive area in Hinchingsbrooke Country Park expanded and made wheelchair friendly, with new interpretation which helps educate park users on the importance of protecting bees
- Hosting community litter picks and having equipment available in parks for ad-hoc litter picks to help preserve the quality of our green spaces, keep them, and increase community involvement with nature and the outdoors
- Venue for three Forest Schools at Priory Park, Hill Rise Park, and HCP, including Fireflies who meet at least once a week
- The new Berman Park in St Ives, a key action in the Corporate Plan achieved in 2021, provides a home for nature and biodiversity, including areas of wildflower, trees and seasonal wetland, this area connects to existing Countryside managed woodland known as the Thicket and will create a Green Corridor for local wildlife

- Annual wildlife reports for Holt Island and Paxton Pits, recently showing increased sightings of otters at Paxton Pits indicating that the habitat is favorable and being managed well
- Increasing popularity of sponsored nest box at Holt Island, managed by Friends group to increase funding and awareness
- Monitoring of wildlife through use of cameras – Holt Island badger and fox footage
- The Dragonfly Society named Paxton Pits a Dragonfly Hotspot after 26 species of Dragonfly and Damselfly, nearly half of all species known in the UK, were recorded in Dragonfly Week 2020

Live Projects

- Priory Park, St Neots – grant application to clear pond -we will have different levels within the pond to attract different pond species (plants and wildlife). To enhance the habitat within the park by encouraging wildlife and benefiting the knowledge of local children.
- Parklets Project – providing themed green spaces in town centres, encouraging wildlife, and including local native planting. The community engagement process has highlighted how important nature is to the public with comments such as, adding in mini herb community planters around the parklets, a nature/wildlife themed design and a popular comment of how planting was the most liked feature of the parklet. By carrying out the pilot, we will be able to see whether incorporating nature into the project's design will be a success or not.
- Launch of GoJauntly, an app with the aim of getting users actively involved in nature, including a 'Nature Notes' feature which encourages users to engage with and appreciate their surroundings
- Rolling programme to try and eradicate invasive species such as Turkey Oak and Sycamore regrowth while leaving as much standing deadwood as possible for the benefit of wildlife where it is safe to do so
- Paxton Pits Nature Reserve have an area set aside for bark chippings from HDC Arboriculture Team, this is used for paths, new tree, and hedgerow planting - it is also signposted on site to allow people to help themselves in return for a donation to our Friends group
- St Neots Riverside dredging, a partnership with the Environment Agency and St Neots Angling Society, working to support and protect fish stock and habitats
- Fish pass at Godmanchester - part of an ecological project to improve fish and eel migration along the Great Ouse

- Improving habitat at Paxton Pits Nature Reserve for nightingales after a few years of (national) decline

In the Future

Priory Park Pond Dipping Platform	We hope to build a pond dipping platform that will encourage a wealth of wildlife and insects on the site, while also creating a community asset where residents can learn about the benefits of nature
Priory Park Bee Poles	Building off the success of Priory Parks Bees Needs Award we hope to install Bee Posts to provide a hope for solitary bees and other pollinators
Memory Trees in all parks	An initiative to provide a forum to share memories and experiences
Learn from Museum After Dark Event	Identify appropriate events and activities in appropriate sites that enable people to safely experience parks after dark
Work in Partnership with Woodland Trust	Work in partnership with the Woodland Trust and support the aspirations of the District Council's Tree Strategy through an annual big tree plant event
Parks Passport	Encourage people to visit more of our parks and open spaces. Create a passport app, where families can collect a virtual stamp for each site they visit, creating a relationship between families and nature
Adopt an open space	Establish a scheme for local groups, organisations and businesses to adopt a space. Adopters can support the space through financial or in kind contributions such as volunteering, promotion, education programmes or supporting projects within the site.

Protect and maintain trees across our network of parks and open spaces	Use the HDC Tree Strategy to shape the approach across in parks and open space
Over £2million investment in Nature	An excess of £2m already assigned for more improvements to our parks and open spaces in the next 2 years
Bringing nature back to verges	Pilot of a new management method for roadside verges that promote biodiversity and nature with the aim to roll out wider based on the learning in 2022/23

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Mental Health Foundation, Rowland, M., 2021. *Why Nature is the theme for Mental Health Awareness Week 2021*. [online] Mental Health Foundation. Available at: <<https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/campaigns/mental-health-awareness-week/why-nature>> [Accessed 12 May 2021].

Rousseau, S., Deschacht, N. Public Awareness of Nature and the Environment During the COVID-19 Crisis. *Environ Resource Econ* 76, 1149–1159 (2020). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10640-020-00445-w>

Huntingdonshire District Council Tree Strategy:

<https://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/media/5069/huntingdonshire-tree-strategy-2020-2030.pdf>

Huntingdonshire District Council Healthy Open Spaces Strategy:

<https://applications.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/moderngov/documents/s111005/Appendix%20%20-%20HDC%20Healthy%20Open%20Spaces%20Strategy%20and%2010%20Year%20Action%20Plan.pdf>

Huntingdonshire District Council Corporate Plan:

<https://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/media/1390/corporate-plan.pdf>

Huntingdonshire District Council Local Plan:

<https://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/media/3872/190516-final-adopted-local-plan-to-2036.pdf>

Executive Portfolio Statement: **Huntingdonshire - Our Sustainable Environment**

In my portfolio of Operations and Environment I would like to set out this Council's and my own commitment to an environmentally and financially sustainable Huntingdonshire.

We **Love Huntingdonshire**. This Council has a longstanding record and commitment to the environment, enabling Huntingdonshire to be a good place to live and work, with a good start in life and a place to enjoy good health. We have shown this through action.

Pride of Place was established within our 2018 manifesto with continuous development of good quality services, improving them to be more sustainable with good financial management. Our aim is not just to be successful, but to be both environmentally and financially sustainable.

Nature and Biodiversity. Huntingdonshire District Council is the guardian of 1,534 hectares of green space, owning and managing 42.8 hectares of woodlands with a managed tree canopy of 400 hectares including over 9000 individual trees.

Let me set out what we have achieved so far in our Built and Natural Environment as well as our own operations, our immediate plans already agreed and those I have asked to be developed. I call on the Council to support Love Huntingdonshire and our commitment to doubling nature.

What have we already delivered?

Our Own Activities

We have adapted our own activities as a Council so that we can continue to provide our services in an efficient manner while still being sustainable financially and environmentally.

Since 2018 CO₂ savings have increased to over 600 tons per annum through innovative investment in our buildings, with a further 440 tonnes per annum projected to be saved by March 2022 thanks to our planned decarbonisation project. This project

sees HDC securing £3.8M Salix funding to reduce our carbon emissions at Pathfinder House and One Leisure Ramsey.

We have introduced our first electric van and implemented fleet reduction plans as well as new monitoring equipment to reduce energy use at our buildings, while working to establish a carbon baseline management plan and looking to identify how we can move the last 20% of our energy to renewable sources.

The introduction of Council Anywhere has enabled the council to actively encourage members of staff to work flexibly, resulting in considerably reduced business travel, with the added benefits of improved efficiency and staff wellbeing.

We are piloting a community business pledge and award scheme to help recognise and celebrate the environmental focus of our businesses.

We are working with Highways England to keep our main roads clean and green and enhancing our Council wide approach to Enforcement with a strategy and shared delivery plan, across all Council services, including how we can better use enforcement to tackle environmental crime.

Our waste services are in the top quartile in the Country, with recycling contamination below 7% - which is achieved through education, communication and direct intervention with residents when required

We have funded projects to help prevent litter and increase recycling, including working alongside our Town Councils by implementing high street recycling litter bins.

Our Natural Environment

We are all so fortunate to live in Huntingdonshire and be in such close proximity to beautiful parks, open and green spaces.

The last year has raised awareness for all about the importance of protecting these open spaces, with **95% of our residents having visited a park or open space**, and **64% say they are essential to their quality of life**. Supporting them to preserve and increase nature for our residents to enjoy is crucial.

Which is why we supported and adopted a Healthy Open Spaces Strategy that aims to get more people in our parks and open spaces, to help improve their physical and mental wellbeing, as well as creating communities within our valuable parks.

With great feedback from our residents, we have successfully planted more **pictorial meadows, the equivalent footprint of 5 and a half Wembley stadiums**, to help double nature and increase biodiversity in our open spaces. The pictorial meadows are not only a huge benefit for the wildlife, but officers have been inundated with gratitude and photos of the flowers from residents across the district.

Berman Park has been a successful addition to St Ives, a brand new natural park for residents to enjoy and for wildlife and biodiversity to thrive.

We are working towards project delivery of £2.5million investment in our open spaces and country parks over the next 3 years, including Hinchingsbrooke Country Park and Paxton Pits Nature Reserve.

Three of our parks and open spaces have been awarded a Green Flag and Hinchingsbrooke Country Park and Priory Park host a further award for protecting bee habitats.

Our Tree Strategy, adopted in 2020, will increase the tree canopy in Huntingdon planting over 3000 more trees and protecting those that we have. We have started

already with initiatives such as the recent planting of 100 saplings with the Young Farmers and the Woodland Trust planted near Hartford.

Our Built Environment

We are also working hard to help shape our built environment for good, through planning policy, guidance, and interventions.

We want to at least double the provision for electrical charging points in our market towns and install secure cycle hubs to encourage more cycling between our car parks, parks and open spaces and leisure facilities to develop better infrastructure to encourage cycling.

Adopted May 2019, Huntingdonshire's Local Plan identifies several Green Infrastructure Priority Areas, the policy also sets out HDC's approach to protecting and enhancing Huntingdonshire's green infrastructure for the benefit of biodiversity and residents for recreation and leisure

Green infrastructure serves to balance built development - it facilitates opportunities for people to access open space and provides habitats for wildlife. Improving the ecological, visual, heritage and recreational value of the countryside while bringing environmental, social and health benefits.

Proposals for facilities associated with strategic green infrastructure that, by their nature, need to be in the countryside, will be supported subject to their compatibility with the green infrastructure where adverse effects are avoided

The new **Local Plan to 2036** includes **8 key policies** to shape Huntingdonshire's environment:

- LP2 – Strategy for Development - **minimises travel to access employment and leisure** opportunities, **promotes cycling and walking**
- LP3 - **protect and enhance green infrastructure for biodiversity** with increased green space trees to store carbon and reduce flooding impact
- LP5 – Flood risk – **minimise contribution to further flooding**, protect our vital floodplains
- LP12 – **Design for energy efficiency** to reduce energy demands, challenging but achievable zero carbon target.
- LP16 – sustainable travel, **increased opportunities for walking and cycling**
- LP30 – **Biodiversity, priority habitats**

- LP35 – **Renewable and low carbon energy**, supporting energy generation reducing fossil fuel use
- LP36 – **Air quality**, attention to impact of new developments including promotion of clean air zones

Future Plans

To establish a clear Climate Strategy in 2022 with a Climate Action Plan adopted and underway by 2023, drawing all our activity together to measure and monitor our impact on CO2 and nature to ensure we continue to deliver positive change.

To identify what we can do more of through:

- better use our statutory powers to shape our built environment
- better use our enforcement powers to shape our built and natural environment
- implementing our Healthy Open Spaces Strategy
- managing our valued green open spaces and parks to positively impact nature and wildlife

Summary

We have set out and followed an **environmentally sensitive manifesto that is financially sustainable**. The challenge facing all of us is significant and the pace of change is faster. We are committed to doing more.

Our single Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan will be established in 2022 and then reviewed on an annual basis to ensure continued progress.

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Appendix 3 – Annual Governance Risk - Environment

This risk is defined within the Annual Governance Statement (AGS) as:

The human impact on our environment and our health through litter and waste minimisation, environmental pollution (land, water and air) and energy consumption.

The scope:

Transport choices and congestion, use of sustainable materials, achieving high levels of recycling of high quality, development standards for new residential areas.

Desirable outcomes:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Use of solar and renewable energy to reduce CO2 emissions</i>• <i>Supporting the expanding use of electric vehicles and alternative transport choices</i>• <i>Maximise recycling and reducing contamination of that which is recycled</i>• <i>Implementing a single use plastics policy across HDC services</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Maximising impact of green space by investing and expanding green spaces and their bio-diversity</i>• <i>To influence Parish and Town Councils to develop sustainable neighbourhood plans</i>• <i>Ensuring new developments are environmentally sustainable</i>• <i>To understand community ambition for sustainability</i>
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COMMENTS FROM OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (CUSTOMERS AND PARTNERSHIPS)

OXCAM ENVIRONMENTAL PRINCIPLES

- 9.1 The panel discussed the OxCam Environmental Principles at its meeting on 7th October 2021.
- 9.2 Councillor Alban expressed that he was thrilled and enthused that 2040 is the target end date for the implementation of these principles, this gives confidence that the Council is looking to achieve these targets with a sense of urgency and also that the Council can play a part in enabling this across the community.
- 9.3 Councillor Wilson seconded this enthusiasm and questioned where resources would be diverted from as mentioned in 7.1 of the report. Councillor Fuller assured that this would be taken from underspends from other budget areas.
- 9.4 The report was praised by Councillor Criswell who observed that it builds upon and forms a progression from previous green initiatives implemented by the Council. Councillor Criswell observed that whilst a green environment is welcomed, commuting and local transport should also be considered including an aspiration for everything to be available for residents within a 15-minute radius of their homes. A joined-up approach to development would help to achieve a sustainable future.
- 9.5 Councillor Wilson suggested that the environmental principles be included in every new policy and plan adopted across the Council to ensure targets are met.
- 9.6 Councillor D'Souza commented on an exciting and ambitious paper and endorsed that the Council should influence the local community and help to educate local groups, enabling them to implement and adopt the principles in the community.
- 9.7 The panel welcomed the report and encourage the Cabinet to endorse the recommendations contained within the report.

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Public
Key Decision - Yes

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Title/Subject Matter: Community Transition Strategy 2021-23

Meeting/Date: Cabinet – 14th October 2021

Executive Portfolio: Executive Councillor for Community Resilience and Well-Being, Councillor Simon Bywater

Report by: Corporate Director (People) - Oliver Morley

Ward(s) affected: All

Executive Summary:

This report presents the proposed Community Strategy for Huntingdonshire; and how Huntingdonshire District Council will work with residents and community groups to support the best possible outcomes for Huntingdonshire, its residents and businesses. Huntingdonshire DC has a strong record of having supported and worked in partnership with our residents and the community organisations that support them over an extended period. This report lays out the ways in which we seek to expand and build on these strong foundations.

Much of this approach builds on the evidence based, innovative and genuinely co-produced activity that has taken place during the period of Covid impact. It lays out how HDC will seek to deliver on its ambitions for the best possible outcomes for residents in partnership with our residents and community groups, who share these objectives.

This Strategy has been written following strong input from Community groups, ongoing shared working arrangements and a series of workshops which took the learning from Covid and how the District had responded. It is hoped and believed, that it represents a shared vision and way of working for the future.

This Strategy is presented as a Transition Strategy, recognising that the Place Strategy for Huntingdonshire will represent the largest community engagement activity in a generation, and this engagement should rightly influence and shape the Community strategy. We therefore wanted to lay down a clear commitment to objectives and ways of working in the immediate term but provide an opportunity to review and update this on the back of the Place Strategy consultation.

Recommendation(s):

The Cabinet is

RECOMMENDED

To endorse the proposed Community Transition Strategy and the list of actions that sit within the supporting Action Plan.

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 This report seeks endorsement of the proposed Community Transition Strategy and the list of actions that sit within the supporting Action Plan.

2. WHY IS THIS REPORT NECESSARY/BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Huntingdonshire District Council (HDC) has a strong ambition for Huntingdonshire, its residents, and communities. Evidence is compelling that people who live in strong communities, tend to be happier, and achieve better outcomes. Similarly public services are able to have the greatest impact where residents and communities are able to take advantage of opportunities, building self-reliance and aspiration. The foundations of good work, residents enjoying good health, where people enjoy a good start and people live within a good place, benefit everyone.
- 2.2 These outcomes however are beyond the remit or reach of any one organisation. Rather it requires a process for joint working that seeks to help people help themselves, that offers a helping hand where required, and that interlinks support in a way that removes duplication and presents resources to residents in a way that makes sense to them.
- 2.3 Within this context it is essential that the area has a Community Strategy which seeks to lay out the ambitions for the area and the process by which engagement will take place with residents and those seeking to meet community needs. That is the intent of this strategy.

3. OPTIONS CONSIDERED/ANALYSIS

- 3.1 Many District areas do not have a Community Strategy in the form this is presented. There is no statutory duty to do so. However, following the significant review of evidence and insight, testing of impacts and trialing of Community interventions a key opportunity for such a document has been identified. This work has also led to the conclusion that attempting to “do” community to others both does not meet the ways of working to which we aspire or enable the production of the kind of flexible and responsive services that our communities need.
- 3.2 Another option exists of leaving the Community to deliver to their own needs. However that would leave the Community to push ahead without the support of one of its key allies and advocates. There is a lot the District Council can do, and a lot we have learned from our Community colleagues. We believe that through the alignment of our efforts, the District Council has a key role in coordinating and convening, supporting community groups, and developing new ways of working with them to achieve more together than we can apart.

4. COMMENTS OF OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY

- 4.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Customers & Partnerships) is due to receive this report at its meeting on 7 October 2021. Comments from the Panel will be circulated in advance of the Cabinet’s meeting.

5. KEY IMPACTS / RISKS

5.1 The key impact of this Strategy is to ensure all partners involved in supporting Communities within Huntingdonshire will be clear on how we intend to work and the outcomes we are seeking. The strategy lays out how we intend to work around four themes, our approach will be:

- Evidence based and responsive
- Engaging and capacity building
- Proactive
- Creative

5.2 The key risks to which the Strategy responds largely lie around longer term Covid impacts (captured in the areas Covid Impact Assessment), and Covid Recovery dashboards dealt with in the Recovery work plan.

6. WHAT ACTIONS WILL BE TAKEN/TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

6.1 The supporting Action Plan lists the 14 actions that we will be pursuing in order to deliver against the Community Strategy over the next 2 years.

7. LINK TO THE CORPORATE PLAN, STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND/OR CORPORATE OBJECTIVES

7.1 This report delivers against significant aspects of the Corporate Plan and the People element (Good Start/Good Health): We want to make our district a better place to live, to improve health and well-being and support people to be the best they can be:

- People – Support people to improve their health and well-being
- People – Develop a flexible and skilled local workforce
- People – Develop stronger and more resilient communities to enable people to help themselves

8. CONSULTATION

8.1 Throughout the Covid outbreak we have worked cross organisationally as a core way of operating, meeting on a fortnightly basis as equals with relevant Community partners. We have also undertaken regular project work and joint working in relation to emergency food need, and the development of process and technology solutions to cross agency working. It is this co-production space, working as equals to develop shared solutions which is critical to delivering the objectives laid out in this report.

8.2 In addition to this we ran a series of 3 joint workshops with the County Council, and Community partners to take the learning from Covid and to reflect on what had worked well, and what we needed in the future. All of this is captured in the document.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 Not applicable to this report.

10. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

10.1 Resources are in place to deliver this activity within currently committed resources. Where gaps exist projects will be developed on a case by case basis.

11. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

11.1 This approach is not anticipated to have any negative impacts on the equalities agenda.

12. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDED DECISIONS

12.1 The Community Transition Strategy provides a clear direction for what we are doing (and proposing to do), why we are doing it and what impact it is having in terms of Community outcomes. It is believed to be an appropriate response to the challenges we are currently facing, and the challenges we are forecast to see in the future.

13. LIST OF APPENDICES INCLUDED

Appendix 1 – Community Transition Strategy 2021-23

14. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.

CONTACT OFFICER

Name/Job Title: Oliver Morley, Corporate Director (People)
Tel No: 01480 388103
Email: Oliver.Morley@huntingdonshire.gov.uk

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WeareHuntingdonshire

The Huntingdonshire Community Strategy – Transition Plan 2021 to 2023

Huntingdonshire District Councils approach to work with its community, community organisations and other local partners to deliver positive outcomes for our residents.



Foreword

The last 18 months have been remarkable. The tragic and longstanding effects of Covid will live long in the memory, and we stand with our communities, as we have throughout this difficult time, to both support them in the immediate impacts of Covid, but also to work with them to ensure that Huntingdonshire grows back stronger in the future.

As we have worked with our communities over the past year we have also witnessed one of the biggest changes in ways of working that has ever been seen either locally or nationally. As the groundswell of spontaneous community support, and emergence of a myriad of new schemes and support arrangements has seen us all humbled by what our residents and businesses have done for each other. We know however that Covid was not ground zero for strong Community working in Huntingdonshire. If our communities and their organisations were able to respond quickly to Covid it was in large part down to the vibrant community scene that already existed, built on strong local bonds, knowledge and a pool of talented staff and volunteers, something that we have always valued, but which has become integral to the way we work over the past 18 months.

For our part as local politicians we have been clear that we want our organisation to do “whatever is required” to meet the needs of our residents and communities. During Covid that saw us supporting a brand-new network of Recognised Organisations – tailored to their 15 local areas, making community groups and local delivery a cornerstone of our response in the earliest days of the crisis delivering hundreds of food packages, and becoming one of the few, possibly only district council, in the country directly supporting our most vulnerable Clinically Extremely Vulnerable residents to shield. In addition, from the very early days of the crisis we recognised that residents would require a simple one-stop-shop for advice and support regardless of who provided the service. Our WeAreHuntingdonshire website did and continues to do just that, providing clear access to the support that our residents need irrespective of where that support comes from.

We have also acted with our resources, putting more money than ever into supporting local communities and community groups, and in the management of the distribution of grants, have sought at every opportunity to not just meet immediate need but also build capacity and long term solutions for both the individuals and families affected.

The last year has shown us several things. Firstly, how well we have worked together as a whole community. As a council we take our own delivery very seriously and strive to deliver the best possible results for our residents and businesses. However, our work over recent years and in particular our experience during Covid has made us acutely aware that there are limits to what any single organisation can do and the better we understand the problem, the more we can align support to provide a simple and logical process for residents and businesses the better.

Better solutions, better targeted and more impactful, reduced bureaucracy, increased pace of delivery, and more local ownership are some of the pieces of feedback that we have had from those who have benefited from these new solutions.

What we believe is that as we continue to live with Covid and begin to deal with its longer-term consequences that many of these things will continue to be true. We are therefore committed to continuing to pursue these ways of working to ensure that we respond quickly to deal with changing needs and ensure that as an area we grow back stronger from the impacts of Covid.

We are taking the learning from this experience and intend to embark on the largest engagement in the District Council’s history to develop a Place Strategy for Huntingdonshire that goes beyond what

the Council does, to focus on what we all want the area to be, and what role residents, businesses and all local organisations can play in delivering exactly this. With this in mind, we did not want to launch a strategy which appeared to suggest we knew what all the answers were before we undertook this exercise. This engagement will then inform our collective longer-term community approach, with everyone locally having a chance to input. This document therefore lays out a way of working and the areas of priority based on what we are seeing now. But as we have seen during Covid, we will continue to flex and amend to meet those needs.

As Members we have clear priorities. We believe passionately in a strong economy and its key role into supporting our residents to live independent and fulfilling lives. We also believe in being there to provide a helping hand when people need it, central to this is us being there early before too much harm has been done, and whilst we can help people get back on track. Finally, we want to create a strong sense of place. We are proud to be from Huntingdonshire and we know our residents and businesses are too. We are keen to work together to make Huntingdonshire the best it possibly can be, all playing our part, because together We Are Huntingdonshire.

Simon Bywater

Executive Councillor for Community Resilience and Well-Being Huntingdonshire District Council

Purpose of document (Why)

This document lays out our approach and practical plans for how we intend to work with and for our communities over the next 18 months as we develop a longer-term Community Strategy for Huntingdonshire. Informed by the biggest community listening exercise in the area's history, as part of the development of our long-term place strategy. In short, this document lays out an approach to achieving more together working in partnership with our communities, than we could ever hope to achieve alone. Listening to and engaging with our residents to create solutions and an appreciation of our support, rather than a dependency on our help.

The outcomes that our communities want for themselves, meaningful quality work, a good education for their children, good physical and emotional health, and to live in a pleasant place where people support themselves and each other. At the heart of an approach like this will always be the resident and business owner, being aspirational for themselves and their family. But local providers, be they schools, hospitals or councils, play a big part in people's lives too. We as a council want to work to help local people meet their needs and achieve all they can within Huntingdonshire. That will mean us understanding local needs and barriers, and working to advocate for our residents to ensure that we do all we can to support joined up solutions, and the creation of opportunities that make sense to our residents, not just the organisations that deliver them.

This is work that will take time, however we can point to concrete examples of where we are already doing this: Proactively writing to residents who are newly on Universal Credit to encourage them to also apply for Council Tax Support; the WeAreHuntingdonshire website which presents services on the basis of what the resident needs, rather than who delivers it. It will be a process that we work through together.

We intend to create an environment in which we support positive solutions to emerge and not one where we seek to deliver every one of them ourselves. Many of these solutions will build on what we have seen already and be directly delivered by the community, for the community in the community.

The key purpose of this strategy is to work to ensure positive outcomes for residents creating an environment where solutions are found early and communities are able to shape their own futures and meet their own needs, supported at all points by the District Council who are invested in the best possible outcomes for local residents, irrespective of who is delivering the service.

What does this document cover?

This document outlines our approach to engagement with Huntingdonshire residents. Detailing the approach that we propose to use to ensure we do all we can to:

- Provide a helping hand to residents, and are there to support residents to achieve good outcomes when they need us;
- Build a strong economy that our residents both drive and benefit from; and
- Further the pride in Huntingdonshire and support our residents to take care of their families and their communities.

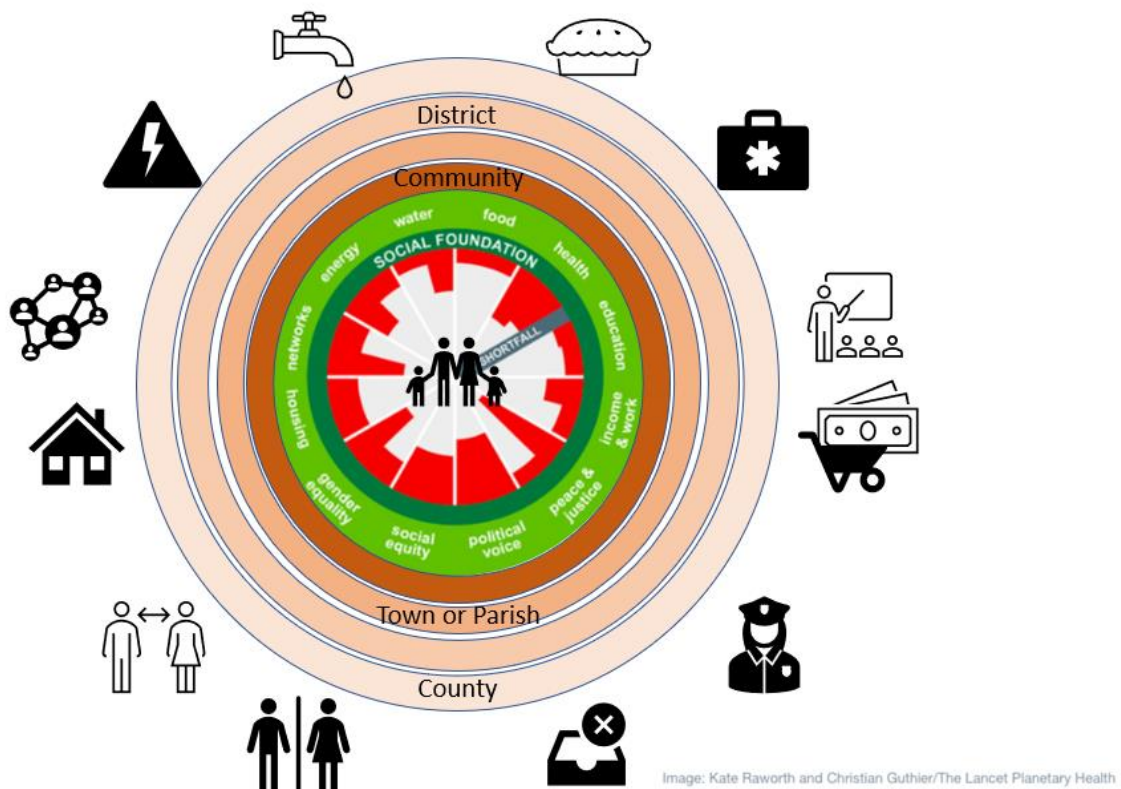
In doing this, the strategy links very closely with a number of other Council documents:

- Our Economic Growth Strategy – outlining how we will nurture and grow the strong economy that will serve Huntingdonshire into the future. Ensuring there is a close tie in between our residents and business, and we have the skilled workforce able to access and drive the local economy. It is also important to recognise the absolutely critical role that businesses play in our communities. With the enlightened approaches of our businesses not only creating employment opportunities, but also supporting and developing employees, supporting other

local businesses and caring for the environment but also acting as key community hubs – which is what our pubs, tea-shops and local shops are.

- Our consultation and engagement strategy – how we engage, listen and respond and more importantly share and involve our residents in developing solutions to local issues will be critical to the success of this project.
- Our digital strategy – we live in a world of 24-hour digital access and integrated services. People expect services to be designed around them, accessible when they want them and fast. Our use of data and technology will be important in linking up services with the needs of our residents.
- Our Core Service Strategy and Medium-Term Financial Strategy – Whilst this document looks at our relationship with residents, there is clearly a close link with the services we deliver directly, be that leisure, waste or benefits services. We will ensure that these services wherever possible, are integrated in a way that makes sense for residents. We must also be aware of the financial impact that increased demand could have on our services and our overarching financial position.

What is a community?



The diagram above seeks to provide a simple representation of how an individual or family interacts with the place in which they live. At the heart of it is the individual or family, who have a range of needs to fulfil. The success of those residents is largely dependent on their ability to fulfil these needs successfully.

This family is then part of a number of localities, first they live in a community, this is likely to be defined by the residents themselves, it could be a street, an area, or a village or town. This community then exists within a formal parish or town boundary, a district, and a county, and finally the country.

These structures, are not geographical as we know, they also come with service delivery and accountability for certain outcomes. They may indeed deliver some of the services that meet the needs of residents, or a resident may not directly use any of these services, and have responsibility for the outcomes that are delivered collectively such as peace and justice.

However, the success of any of those geographies is closely linked to the ability of the residents at its heart to thrive and succeed. This paper proposes the way in which Huntingdonshire District Council will work to help residents succeed, and communities thrive. Recognising that generally solutions delivered closest to the family are likely to be the ones most responsive to their needs. This will require a clear understanding of need, but also open and honest conversations with those other tiers of government, and often directly with those organisations that help meet resident needs – businesses, the police and other organisations, utility company etc.

One of the outputs of this piece of work could be further work to define exactly where and what are communities are, building on the kind of work that has established are 15 community recognised organisation patches.

Why are we proposing a ‘Transition Plan’?

Whilst we engage more fully with our communities around the longer-term priorities that our residents and businesses have, the reality of Covid, is that there continues to be both immediate needs linked to the controls that the Government has had to put in place, and ultimately some consequences of the virus that are likely to have longer lasting impacts.

With this in mind we believe our communities would be best served by the adoption of an interim transition plan that will establish the principles as well as the areas of activity that we will commit to undertake over the next 12-18 months. The learning from this activity included in this plan will then be combined with the output from the work of the Place Strategy to enable us to produce a longer term community strategy that is properly informed and produced in partnership with our communities, one that hopefully everyone feels a sense of ownership of and commitment too.

This will lay out how we will:

- Continue to support communities to deal with the direct impacts of Covid – such as working to reduce infection rates, maximise take up of Covid vaccinations and supporting our Shielded residents.
- Support our residents with the longer-term consequences of Covid – dealing with the impacts of economic changes, and the social impacts of an extended lockdown and the wider changes this period will generate.
- Work with our communities on a million other priorities that have nothing to do with Covid, from flooding to play parks, urban design to bio-diversity.

To solve a problem first you have to understand the problem - What is the evidence showing us?

Evidence is a core element of the community approach. We want to see lives improved and the area going from strength to strength. That will require us to gather and build evidence to inform our work with our communities and to enable us to prioritise and ensure that activity is having the effect we need it to. This does not mean all spreadsheets and formulas (although they will play a part), it means proper intelligence about what is happening on the ground to help us focus on what is important. The listening exercise as part of the Place Strategy will be a core part of this, regular insight and feedback from community representatives will be another, surveys, involving residents in designing solutions, and performance information from our businesses – funnelled through our Economic Growth strategy will all play a part in helping establish this picture.

So what is the current evidence telling us? It is not only now that Covid is having an impact on our lives the evidence is suggesting that some of these impacts will be felt for some time to come. The data and evidence suggests future needs in a number of areas, and demand that will be placed on services to support those residents who have been worse affected. Work has also been undertaken to map the anticipated impacts of Covid in relation to the nearest equivalent that we have, this being the 2007/8 financial crisis. Demand for District Council services remains relatively stable at present, with small increases in areas relating to financial support or income collection. However, beyond our direct service delivery there are signs of change, which could indicate the future need to come.

- Universal Credit claimant rates are at a historic high in Huntingdonshire. Higher than they got to at the height of the financial crisis of 2007/8. We remain hugely positive about the strengths of the local economy and are actively supporting it, but believe that there will be impacts for local residents caused by these changes that we are keen to support.
- Demand is rising for support with emergency food and essential supplies, and indications are that rent arrears are also rising. These are early days, but indications are that demand is increasing. This has been mirrored in demand for Winter Support Grant payments that we have supported the County Council in administering.
- More residents are struggling to pay their utility bills and are requesting help to repay gas and electricity debts or to purchase credit to top up their meters.
- There is an increase in the number of contacts to CAB from residents who are experiencing financial difficulties.

Whilst a direct comparison is difficult, and recognising the significant efforts and financial support being provided by the Government to address these needs, the experience in 2007/8 showed that this initial demand was a prelude to delayed demand for statutory District Council functions.

- 2007/8 also showed that nationally this demand later translated into statutory care demand and national impacts on wider community outcomes – educational challenges, increases in looked after children etc.

It is important to note here that since 2007/8 the local government sector has seen a real-term reduction in spending power of circa 30%. There are indications that the demand could exceed what was seen in 2007/8. Also since the financial crisis the areas direct reliance on local sources of funding – NNDR and Council Tax has increased significantly, so demand caused by unemployment has the risk of also generating a commensurate fall in NNDR receipts and the ability to pay Council Tax. More demand, less resource. This is a key issue that as a community we need to cover together to ensure that we collectively benefit from a thriving local economy.

Direct government support to those affected by Covid remains in place. Whilst we all hope for a smooth and speedy recovery from the impacts of Covid, we believe, and importantly our community organisations do to, that it is prudent to continue to pursue a course of action which seeks to understand and response to these impacts over the period of this strategy.

What have we learned during Covid?

The response to Covid has seen us deliver any new services and meet needs in very different ways. However, whilst new and innovative, a number of the approaches and lessons that informed these services were informed by work that had been done in previous years. Importantly though, the Covid response has enabled us to better understand local needs and how these are best met and to learn from delivering some of these services at a scale, pace and range never previously delivered. Some of the findings are that:

- Residents and community organisations have valued the role of the District Council in supporting residents during difficult times. Not muscling in, helping out.

- Residents only care about solutions and services that help them achieve what they are trying to do regardless of who delivers it. There is confusion about the remits and lack of coordination across local service delivery.
- There is realism amongst the community about the capacity of organisations to deliver. They value clear guidance, honesty and simple processes that allow them to get what they need with the lowest possible fuss.
- A large amount of community need sits with residents who do not have a significant public sector footprint, and therefore we struggle to reach proactively. These same people are also struggling to navigate a system that they have not had previous experience of.
- Residents are open to non-traditional service delivery, involving the community or non-governmental solutions, as long as these services are linked to the need they have, and believe the system is listening to what they need.
- The voluntary and community sector is very effective at having those conversations and being enterprising about the solutions. Developing solutions that did not previously exist, on the basis of evidence of need, and being able to reach places with local residents that at times professional council officers cannot.
- Horses for courses. There are some things that only a single organisation can do, and everyone should play to their strengths. Within this though, the involvement of other stakeholders has improved service delivery, either through playing a direct part, or by sharing their insight that improved the method of delivery. Coordination is key.
- Statutory partners are well placed to help coordinate, gather and share evidence and create overarching pictures of demand which can then help better inform the actions of a range of partners.
- No one likes duplication – it is slow and expensive. Those on the front line want to help, and as long as guidance is clear are more than willing to assess and distribute funds.
- That the networks we have established over the past 12 months with broader partners, a fortnightly Covid-coordination meeting, and a monthly Emergency Food work meeting have delivered benefits way in advance. Ensuring that all players are treated as ‘equal partners’ with the experience and knowledge of grass-roots organisations is appropriately valued and used to shape and informs priorities and activity.
- That every engagement is an opportunity to not just solve the problem in front of you, but to risk assess and where needed seek to put in place longer term support eg referral to social group which will build sustainability and reduce the likelihood of repeated presentations. Building capacity not just distributing resources.

How will our approach do this?

While we continue to battle with the pandemic, our focus over the next 12 months will evolve with the crisis, however it will be based on the following areas of work, that will both allow us to grow back stronger, but also ensure that we have concrete areas of action that the longer-term Community Strategy can build upon:

It will be evidence based and responsive – We do not have the time or financial capacity to undertake activity that is not valuable and effective. A strong evidence base enables us to do two things. Track impact, and intervene in a targeted way that reduces the expensive and abortive contact from people who either do not qualify or are not suitable for the support, whilst simultaneously not reaching those residents who would benefit most and whose failure to access the support often generates additional high cost demand further down the line. We will pursue this task by:

- **Establishing a Covid Recovery evidence base** – Continue the ongoing work already underway to build and monitor the evidence base of the longer term impact that Covid will have on every aspect of our lives, and the actual impacts we are seeing locally – not

what might happen, but what is happening and what does this mean. To use this data to inform core service delivery and appropriate future budget provision. Addressing significant historic weaknesses in data collection across the public sector and making full use of the evidence that our community and their representatives have. Building a balanced picture which our residents and communities would recognise.

- **Learning lessons and apply the learning** – To continue to review the lessons of comparable events such as the 2007/8 financial crisis to enable us to better, and to employ these to ensure the way we work learns the lessons, whilst also recognising the different starting points of both individuals and organisations before the two events.
- **Offering targeted support to those who are likely to benefit** – Continue to pursue the fully funded MHCLG projects which seeks to identify common characteristics of those in need, and to link them up with appropriate solutions and enable onward referral to appropriate agencies – through the establishment of a Community Signposting Tool. To use the technology to work with partners and offer targeted support and outbound contact to nip issues in the bud.

Engaging and capacity building – Covid has shown us once again the value of a strong coalition of providers all working together to meet the needs of residents. There is increasing evidence through Covid of people going to non-governmental organisations as their first point of contact, we do not want these opportunities for prevention to be missed. Furthermore, more community-based organisations are sometimes more effective at helping people to solve their own problems in sustainable ways than traditional public sector approaches. Finally, the scale of demand we are forecasting means any additional capacity we can collectively generate is going to be to the communities advantage.

- **Foundation Building and leveraging in resources** – Embracing the truly astounding offer of help and support that we have seen from our communities over the last 12 months and ensure that these relationships are sustained, and we seek to build ongoing capacity by supporting growth and grant bid activity, and any other opportunity to leverage in funding across the district. Working with our local community infrastructure organisation to build capacity, attract volunteers, and ensure community groups are viewed as key delivery partners, with appropriate funding when designing services.
- **Build local capacity** – To work with community groups, to develop a culture where residents feel confident and able to ask for help and support within their community, and digitally, in turn resolving problems more quickly and reducing the demand on public services.
- **Integrated support locally** – To support this work by exploring opportunities, where appropriate, for RO's to act as a front door for council services. Equipping and empowering our network of community Recognised Organisations to be able to offer direct support to our communities on areas such as debt, employment and well-being – building on the kind of flow chart approach we have benefited from in Flooding - Appendix 1.
- **Develop easy digital tools** – To evolve and improve the WeAreHuntingdonshire website, and to use other tools to ensure residents have the information that they need to make informed choices about their behaviours and in turn, the impact that these have on others, our communities and our economy. Using digital tools to complement the critical in-person support that already exists, and which in certain circumstances is irreplaceable.
- **Nurture the commercial community** – Work with the Economic Development Team to encourage residents to invest in the district by working, shopping and spending their time locally. Supporting both pride in Huntingdonshire and driving the local economy.

- **Develop our community advocate role** – Continue to develop our role as a coordinator and advocate to meet local needs, as seen during both flooding incidents and Covid, working to represent our communities to other agencies to ensure we get the best outcome for our communities, and recognising the high value generated through this role in comparison to the return we get for often limited direct delivery. For this to inform our ways of working across BCP and other areas of core business.
- **Establish clear community goals** – To fully support the engagement activity as part of the development of the Huntingdonshire Place Strategy to develop a clear set of community goals and needs.

Proactive – Wherever possible we will use our evidence base, and feedback from the community and their representatives to be proactive and seek to prevent issues, rather than to respond to them. There is a growing evidence base that expensive and destructive crises such as eviction, mental health crisis or children being taken into care have their roots in a range of longer-term causes, and life events, and if these are identified steps can be taken to prevent the cost and damage of crisis. Covid Response – Dealing with the ‘now’ by working closely with the voluntary and community sector, especially the District’s 15 Recognised Organisations (ROs) to support:

- **To continue to actively support the Clinically Extremely Vulnerable** – the CEV group are at greatest risk of a poor health outcome from Covid. Enabling this cohort of individuals to remain within their homes but at the same time receive the support necessary to manage their health and well-being as well as ensure they receive financial assistance.
- **Establish a clear hierarchy of prevention and embed it in our core business** – Seek to develop a clear methodology for prevention, which recognises the role of factors such as housing, employment and social support as key drivers of positive outcomes, and reduction in expensive negative demand.
- **Seek to identify and respond to the ‘moments of truth’ in residents’ lives** – Explore learning from other areas and sectors of making use of change in payment history to act as a catalyst for broader support around income maximisation and employment support.
- **Support our most vulnerable** – Look to continue our targeted intervention on a risk based approach with individuals and families who have been financially impacted by Covid meaning that by not receiving help and support now, they are at greater risk of poor financial outcomes such as homelessness.
- **Explore potential for a local employment service** – Explore the potential for the development of more co-ordinated and locally driven employment offers, which seeks to establish the deliverability of clear pathways for our residents from unemployment to skills and employment offers linked directly to our economic aspirations for the area as covered in the Economic Development Strategy.
- **Never reinvent the wheel** – utilise, support and respect the critical work, and detailed know how of community groups that have been providing valuable coordinated support for many years.

Creative – A lot of the learning that has been taken from the Covid response places direct challenge to traditional ways of working and the structural barriers that often get in the way of **‘common sense’ service delivery**. Some of these issues will be easier to address than others, but with an expectation of growing demand, and recognising the lower levels of resource than we had in the past, we will be able to ill afford duplication of effort across organisational boundaries that we see in some areas.

- **Continue to define and develop solutions to local needs** – To continue to work with all local agencies to develop a suite of solutions to local need, with clear processes for dealing with residents with multiple issues, focusing on the areas of:
 - Employment
 - Food and essential items

- Utilities support
- Social and Emotional Support
- Income maximisation and financial advice
- **Explore system solutions with local partners** – To develop proposals as part of the MHCLG funded project for how a shared assessment and referral process would work across partners including RSLs, Community Group and Emergency Food providers, and potentially onto other statutory partners. Meaning customers can access support from first point of contact, and don't need to repeat the same information multiple times.
- **Explore one touch assessment gateways** – To work with partners to identify potential gateway services, such as applying for a school place, registering for Council Tax that could enable data to be reused, assessments reduced and the risk of expensive future poor outcomes be reduced.
- **Services wrapped around residents not organisational charts** – To continue to find ways to simplify the navigation process through the local public and voluntary sector landscape, and recognising the different needs of experienced community workers, and members of the general public.

How will this look in terms of working relationships?

All of this activity will be overseen by the areas Place Based Board, with Policy and priority issues escalated to local members for decision.

Regular working groups with community groups as key equal partners will continue. In addition community groups will be invited to input into delivery and design sessions where they can add value.

How will we monitor how we are doing?

Through tracking of community impacts captured in the area's community impact assessment, and recovery metrics. Including metrics around employment and economic metrics, council demand volumes, health and mental indicators, and environmental metrics. We will track input and prevention activity eg number of people exercising regularly, as well as outcome metrics number of people entering hospital, so wherever possible we can identify and prioritise prevention activity that empower residents and communities, rather than processes that only make sense to statutory partners.

We will also regularly monitor and report on progress against the Community Strategy Action Plan, included below in Appendix 2.

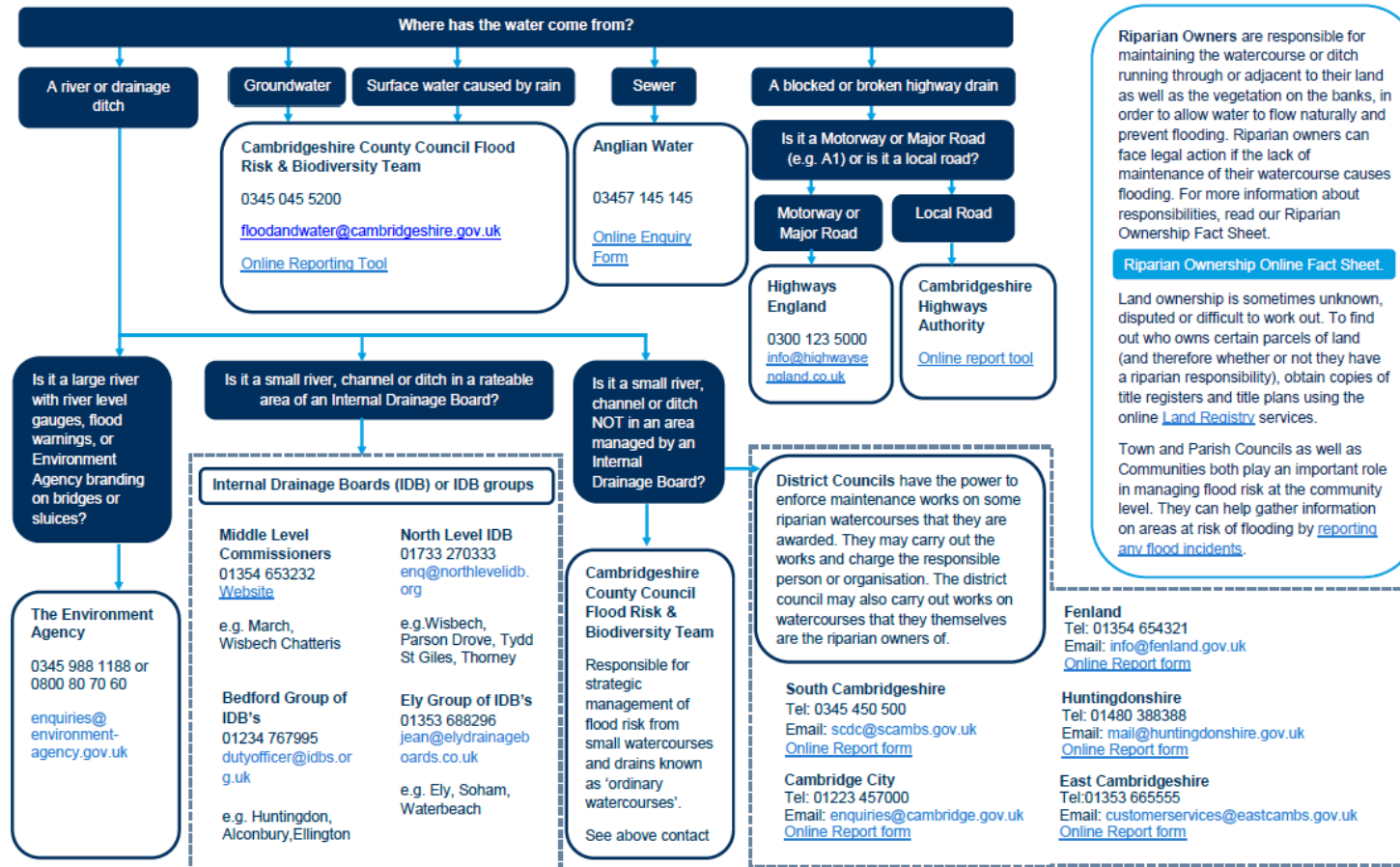
How will we know if we have succeeded?

1. We will see better outcomes for residents than seen in comparable areas that use a more traditional approach and proportionately less demand for 'crisis' services than in other areas. Our contribution to outcomes will increasingly be delivered via coordination and unblocking rather than direct delivery. – Having provided a helping hand.
2. We will see a stronger economic response with a close relationship between community need and support linked to the areas long term economic priorities. Not just jobs, good long term jobs. – Driving a strong economy.
3. We will have an area that self-reports growing satisfaction in Huntingdonshire as a place to live, and which supports them to be aspirational for themselves and their families. – Driving pride of place. Something we have already started to see in some of our communities.

Appendix 1 – A simplified explanation of complex responsibilities. Cambridgeshire’s flood response.



Investigating and Regulating Flooding: Who manages what?



Riparian Owners are responsible for maintaining the watercourse or ditch running through or adjacent to their land as well as the vegetation on the banks, in order to allow water to flow naturally and prevent flooding. Riparian owners can face legal action if the lack of maintenance of their watercourse causes flooding. For more information about responsibilities, read our Riparian Ownership Fact Sheet.

[Riparian Ownership Online Fact Sheet.](#)

Land ownership is sometimes unknown, disputed or difficult to work out. To find out who owns certain parcels of land (and therefore whether or not they have a riparian responsibility), obtain copies of title registers and title plans using the online [Land Registry](#) services.

Town and Parish Councils as well as Communities both play an important role in managing flood risk at the community level. They can help gather information on areas at risk of flooding by [reporting any flood incidents](#).

Appendix 2

Huntingdonshire Community Strategy Action Plan

Supporting the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Public Service Board (CPPSB) **Four Grand Challenges:**

Good Place

Good Start

Good Health

Good Work

All workstreams

Action	Why	What	How	By When	Who
1.0 <u>Strong governance and alignment</u> - Develop and implement a Huntingdonshire Place Based Board	A holistic view of needs and coordination of response informed by the needs of different communities is central to the Community strategy approach, enabling targeted activity.	Establishment of a Huntingdonshire place-based board to commission evidence and monitor delivery across partners and to serve as the areas Health and Wellbeing Board and Community Safety partnership.	To circulate a Terms of Reference and establish the new Board.	By December 2021	Oliver Morley (OM)/ Joanne Lancaster (JL)
2.0 <u>Explore system solutions with local partners</u> - Pursue external funding opportunities to continue development of a multi-agency Place based Intelligent Community Signposting Tool	Residents often struggle to know where to go for help, or what help is out there. Users and partners have recognised the value of a simple tool to solve user problems and signpost between partners.	To pursue a next phase of the project delivered in conjunction with MHCLG, by seeking to expand the project to include top tier partners in Health and the County Council.	Discussions with CCG and CCC already underway.	Bid decision by December 2021	OM
3.0 To continue to actively support the	The Resident Advice Team has been	The development of a	Engagement with partners and bringing	December 2021	Claudia Deeth (CD)

Clinically Extremely Vulnerable - Further develop and establish the long-term sustainability of the Resident Advice Team	instrumental in enabling us to support Clinically Extremely Vulnerable residents, using partners networks to address underlying issues.	sustainable funding model across partners which seeks to embed a problem-solving approach as financially sustainable business as usual activity.	forward of proposals.		
4.0 <u>Establish a Covid Recovery evidence base - Support and contribute to the creation of a Community Impact Assessment (CIA).</u>	Evidence and Insight are core to being able to identify and work to respond to need.	To work with the performance team and partners to support the establishment of a refreshed CIA, and ongoing performance metrics.	Engagement and input. Contribution of data already compiled.	December 2021	CD/OM /Neil Sloper (NS)/Liz Smith (LS)
4.1 <u>Establish a Covid Recovery evidence base - Contribute to and adopt relevant recommendations as identified within the Community Impact Assessment.</u>	As above	As above	As above	June 2022	CD/OM
5.0 <u>Foundation Building and leveraging in resources - Work with Hunts Forum to finalise and implement the accreditation scheme for community and voluntary sector groups. Recruit and sustain</u>	A strong community approach builds on a strong, well resourced and vibrant community sector. We will work closely with Hunts Forum to support the growth and continued	Joint working and engagement with the community sector which supports the scheme but also demonstrates the clear value of going through the	Engagement and ongoing community sector meetings.	October 2021	OM/CD

consistent levels of volunteers that support a variety of offers.	development of the community sector.	accreditation process.			
6.0 Support our most vulnerable - Develop a model that sustains the provision of surplus food to community fridges and food banks and reduces the amount of food waste going to landfill	Emergency Food need has grown across the area. We are keen to support the desire to reduce food waste, and support those in need.	Map food need, and work to develop offers in areas of need. Support funding bids, and donations to enable longer term sustainability.	Secretariat support to community food network. Collation of data, and support for funding bids.	Ongoing	Amand a Turner (AT)/CD /OM
6.1 Support the establishment of more resident led community fridges that also focus on healthy eating and cooking on a budget.	As above	As above	Support with the identification of sites, funding opportunities and establishment of partners to run the fridges.	Ongoing to December 2022	AT/CD/OM
6.2 Further develop the Food Network to enable the sharing of best practise and to target resources in areas of most need	As above	As above	As above	Ongoing to December 2022	AT/CD/OM
7.0 Seek to identify and respond to the 'moments of truth' in residents' lives - Create a District Council workforce that can confidently	Residents do not recognise boundaries between services. At times service demand will be an indication of a further underlying cause.	An ongoing review of areas where we can improve outcomes and remove duplication.	Reviewing data and revising processes, and providing training where evidence suggests business cases/or	Ongoing to December 2022 Pilot assessment July 2022	OM/ John Taylor (JT)/CD /Tony Evans (TE)

<p>recognise the early signs of a resident needing help and respond appropriately. Officers fully understand the impact that their decisions have on the wider organisation as well as the customer.</p>	<p>Great progress has been made in some areas such as Housing in looking holistically at these needs. This approach will extend this using the tools and network established through this approach. Better outcomes at lower costs.</p>		<p>service improvements exist.</p>		
<p>8.0 Implement six community based and led job clubs.</p>	<p>Employment is a foundational aspect of self-reliance and contributes positively to almost all other outcomes. Solutions that link effectively to local employment and local knowledge are liable to significantly enhance the DWP offer.</p>	<p>Support local community groups to access external funding, and support with best practice learning and signposting.</p>	<p>Engagement from the Community Development Team.</p>	<p>June 2022</p>	<p>CD/OM</p>
<p>9.0 Pilot a sports equipment loan scheme to residents via accredited community/ voluntary sector groups</p>	<p>Those engaged in regular activity are more likely to benefit from positive outcomes in other parts of their lives. This project will support our ambition to become a more active district by supporting those</p>	<p>A loan scheme supported by the recovery project activity.</p>	<p>Co-produced with the community partners, as we have seen with current book loan and activity pack schemes beginning with Hinchinbrooke park.</p>	<p>Initial pilot December 2021 Ongoing proposals March 2022</p>	<p>Jayne Wisely (JW)/Helen Lack (HL), CD</p>

	who struggle to access resources.				
10.0 Work with community groups to welcome and support the integration of any Afghan Refugees into Huntingdonshire	As with all new starts strong alignment of employment, education and support offers offer the best prospect for the individual the organisation and the broader community	Align activity across agencies to provide a joined up package to any refugees welcomed to Huntingdonshire.	Practical support arrangements with community at the heart of the package	Ongoing	CD, Jon Collen (JC)
11.0 Develop community led initiatives that tackle mental health issues and avoid crisis situations by creating an alternative to NHS led treatment.	Mental Health challenges are a contributory factor to many other poor outcomes – such as job loss and eviction. We will seek to support community initiatives to try and boost wellbeing – including promotion of activity programmes, social contact and time spent in the open air.	Supporting the continued development of community projects that may not be titled mental health projects, but which are known to boost resilience and wellbeing, including physical activity, social contact and gardening and outdoor activities.	Use of data to identify needs, and to work to co-develop offerings, which are supported where possible with grant funding and support for external bids.	Ongoing	NS, LS, JW, CD, OM
12.0 Re-visit the 'Keeping Aspirations high' initiative within identified primary schools and pilot 6 schemes.	High aspirations encourage self-reliance and drive positivity. We will work to re-establish the previous pilot to link schools that will benefit with local employers to support children.	Ongoing engagement to seek to reduce the fall off in ambition as children age. Opportunity for children to benefit from commercial knowledge of	Cohorts of aspiration leads engaging on annual basis with participating schools.	In place by September 2022	CD

		employment opportunities.			
<p>13.0 Common Sense service delivery - Work with partners and in particular CCC Social Services, to explore the development of multi-agency wrap around early intervention community led approach to reduce the number of formal care packages, including children on a Child Protection Plan.</p>	<p>These arrangements are amongst some of the most expensive and disruptive to positive outcomes that we see. Opportunities to seek to support alternative delivery would benefit everyone.</p>	<p>Evidence points to a sense of purpose, and social connections being key factors in positive outcomes for vulnerable residents. We will explore programmes such as community mentor and support programmes, and voluntary and employment opportunities to test if we can support positive outcomes.</p>	<p>Working closely with County colleagues, the Police and community groups to identify support for those who would benefit from it, at the early stages of need.</p>	<p>Initial proposals June 2022</p>	<p>CD/OM</p>

COMMENTS FROM OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (CUSTOMERS AND PARTNERSHIPS)

COMMUNITY TRANSITION STRATEGY

- 4.1 The panel discussed the Community Transition Strategy at its meeting on 7th October 2021.
- 4.2 Councillor Criswell noted that Huntingdonshire District Council and the voluntary sector had worked well together to form a cohesive and swift response to the Covid-19 crisis. He observed that the relationship with town and parish councils was not always as robust but was hopeful that the proposed strategy would address this and create stronger partnerships for the future.
- 4.3 This sentiment was seconded by Councillor Banks, who stated how impressed he was with the involvement of the volunteer organisations and that the strategy provided an opportunity to form closer working relationships with parish and town councils to provide more resilience for the future.
- 4.4 Councillor Alban echoed this and was impressed at the rapid growth in community resilience across the district over recent years, he hoped that this could now be harnessed and developed to allow for stronger communities in the future.
- 4.5 Councillor Tysoe observed that whilst local government responsibilities and functions can be complicated, residents aren't interested in the bureaucracy, they are more focused on achieving the end result, this strategy should help to achieve this.
- 4.6 Following a comment from Councillor D'Souza on data usage, the Corporate Director (People) reassured that the value of human contact can't be replaced but there are some who prefer the anonymity of digital. It was also noted that core to the strategy is the better use of data and technology enabling ongoing engagement and dialogue with residents which will result in the kind of common-sense service delivery for residents aspired to in the strategy.
- 4.7 The panel welcomed the report and encourage the Cabinet to endorse the recommendations contained within the report.

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