![CPRE logo] The countryside charity
Northamptonshire

Northamptonshire Landscape Design Guide

CPRE Northamptonshire Landscape Design Guide

Acknowledgements

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Preface

Below are descriptions of the characteristics of the Northamptonshire landscape taken from authors of the past whose words still resonate in many aspects of the landscape today.

Wild Places of the County

"If I were asked to mention the characteristic of the Midlands most likely to strike a stranger – especially one coming from the North - it would be their intensely rural character. On the borders of Northamptonshire and Warwickshire, you may ride for 14, 15 or even 20 miles without passing through a single village, or by any house save a solitary farm or 'lodge', as the lone cottages attached to farm buildings are designated. Very lonely places they are too . . .".
(Louisa Mary Knightley,1889, 'The Midlands', *Murray's Magazine*, Vol. 5, p.99).

The River Valleys

"Most of the lordships, besides the lays of greensod which are left betwixt the furlongs, and in several places betwixt each of the lands, are so advantageously situate, that they have a valley of fruitful meadow adjoining to a brook or river, which in summer yields them a stock of hay, and serves at other times for feeding their cattle, horses and cows and sheep. The meadows on the banks of the Nyne and Weland are particularly famous, as being spacious and rich, affording great quantities of excellent hay".
(John Morton,1712, *The Natural History of Northamptonshire*, R. Knaplock, p.14).

Hunting Landscape

"The Northamptonshire landscape of the 18th and 19th centuries was a countryside in flux and because fox hunting did not require a predetermined landscape form it was able to adapt readily to changes taking place. During this period the champion lands of the county were replaced by the patchwork of closes we are familiar with today as enclosure, begun in the 15th century, gathered pace with the introduction of Parliamentary Acts to speed the process".
(Tracey Partida, 2007, 'The Early Hunting Landscapes of Northamptonshire',
Northamptonshire Past and Present, Number 60, p.54).

Configuration of the County

"Physically its backbone is a belt of Liassic rocks and Oolitic limestone, one stretch of the great Jurassic ridge which runs right across England from Dorset to the Humber. From the limestone, particularly the 'Lincolnshire limestone' found north of Kettering, is quarried some of the finest and most enduring building stone in England. This was used not only for Northamptonshire's own parish churches and villages, but further afield for such buildings as the great mediaeval monasteries of eastern England and the colleges of Cambridge".
(R.L.Greenall, 1979, *A History of Northamptonshire*, Phillimore & Co, pp.13, 14).

1. Introduction and Aims

CPRE Northamptonshire (the Northamptonshire Branch of the Campaign to Protect Rural England) aims to protect and enhance the character and vitality of Northamptonshire for the benefit of all. In 2016, CPRE published the ***Northamptonshire Countryside Design Guide*** to encourage the right kind of building in suitable places. This aimed to assist Planning Authorities, Parish Councils and Development Companies in creating a built environment of which the county could be proud. It has been warmly welcomed by all those groups, and its practical value greatly commended by local residents.

With an ever-changing planning system, and increasing threats to the countryside, CPRE Northamptonshire has now decided to follow up this initiative and complement it with this ***Northamptonshire Landscape Design Guide***, to assist those wishing to build in the county, and Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) whose responsibility it is to approve locations for development within Northamptonshire. CPRE believes it is important that new developments should not only relate well to the landscape of the Northamptonshire countryside, but also enhance and further promote its appeal.

This ***Guide*** is designed to be helpful to anyone who is interested in protecting what is special about their local landscape. ***The countryside of Northamptonshire is valued for its tranquillity as well as for its productivity, its understated beauty, and its intrinsic value and variety***. CPRE is concerned that these qualities are being lost as the landscape of Northamptonshire is being steadily eroded. What is special and unique about the countryside is being overtaken in too many places by bland, indiscriminate and/or uniform development that has replaced attractive and productive countryside.

Fig. 2: The Northamptonshire Uplands near Cottesbrooke.

The planning system provides the statutory means for protecting landscapes from harmful development. This guide aims to highlight the factors that developers, planners and others should take into account when assessing the landscape impact of proposals and in determining whether that impact is necessary or justified.

Overall, the objective is to enhance the countryside through greater understanding of the landscape and the maintenance of local distinctive features, so that developments within the county takes into account the context in which they are placed.

This *Landscape Design Guide* sets out to explain the essential relationship between the landscape, the appearance and character of the countryside, and settlement patterns. It enables the necessary links to be made between development and its design with the character of the countryside. Based on this, guidance is offered on the principles which should underlie development which have an impact on the landscape and on the choices open to planners and developers. In all this, the purpose of the *Guide* is to identify ways in which new developments can be designed to harmonise with, and enhance, local 'sense of place' - rather than detract from it.

The aims of the *Guide* are: -

> To raise awareness of the unique value of the Northamptonshire landscape and the distinctive characteristics of the countryside.

> To draw attention to the value of the countryside as a productive asset that is important to our survival.

> To ensure that local planning authorities fully consider the impact of development on the natural landscape and countryside in the development plan process and in the consideration of planning applications.

> To inform parish councils, and others who are consulted on the development plan and planning applications, about local landscape issues.

> To provide guidance to all on how new development might best enhance the landscape of Northamptonshire.

> To ensure that, when development takes place, it does not detract from the unique value of the landscape or the setting of towns, villages and features of historic and/ or intrinsic value.

> To ensure that the development industry takes landscape into account in site selection and the design of development.

2. The Importance of landscape

Landscape is important because it provides an identity for an area. It is always unique and provides a historical and geographical setting for people and places. It creates personal relationships and allows bonds to be developed through cultural ties and the enjoyment of visual and natural beauty. This is linked to landform, and natural or historic features. Its importance in society and to people has been expressed creatively through art, images and words, as set out in the Preface. The protection and enhancement of the Northamptonshire landscape is vital to the county's cultural and social history.

Landscape is ultimately determined by the geology that lies behind it. This is the fundamental structure that gives form and colour to the scenery and produces a certain kind of topography and natural vegetation. However, any particular landscape is also determined by how people have clothed the geological skeleton over the centuries. It is thus concerned with the ways in which people have cleared the natural woodlands, reclaimed marshlands, fen and moor, made roads, lanes, and footpaths, laid out towns, built villages, hamlets, and farm houses, country houses and parks, dug mines and driven canals and railways across the countryside - in short, with everything that has altered the natural landscape.

As a result, considerable contrast and variety of scenery may be encountered within a relatively limited area - a single parish or group of parishes. This is reflected in the relief or form of the ground, in soils, in the natural vegetation cover and its associated animal life as well as in the way human activity has adapted the natural environment to its own ends. Small differences in elevation, slope, aspect and shelter cause purely local variations in the weather, giving rise to different climates across the area. Such variations impact not only on the nature of the agricultural activity, but also on the species of flora and fauna that characterise the countryside.

All landscapes are precious. Many farmers hold the concept of managing the land for future generations as guardians. That concept is alien to many people in the building development industry who do not realise that land use is a limited resource. To remove the surface of the land, whether scrub, trees, grass or woodland, is significant, often irreversible. All building is a barrier to the continuity of wildlife movement, including the provision of basic habitat for species to flourish. This must be at the forefront of our minds when building. The longest warehouses/buildings now being constructed form an impenetrable barrier to all living beings. They should be part of the landscape with roofs designed to provide continuous runways of green for wild flora and fauna. Flat landscapes have an identity and character of their own. They are not to be thought of as conveniently horizontal for easy development. Given that most people's ideas of the countryside is a mélange of hills, trees and streams, heathland, originally wild with immense skies; this is both uplifting and extraordinary. To build on it can therefore be a great loss, unless

No country in the world contains so rich a variety of scenery in so small a compass as our own. Our county has a unique landscape that must be preserved for current and future generations to appreciate and enjoy.

care is taken to respect 'the sense of place', and the integrity of the landscape setting. Levels should be looked at to see how much of the building can slide into the land, or meld into it with minimum disruption.

The importance of landscape is acknowledged in the *National Planning Policy Framework 2021 (NPPF)* where protective policies are included in Section 15: 'Conserving and enhancing the natural environment'. Specific protection is also in Section 16: 'Conserving and enhancing the historic environment' where it is included within the category of being a heritage asset. This defines a heritage asset as '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'.

The importance of considering landscape as a heritage asset is set out in paragraph 194 of the NPPF, which states that 'In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting'. Significance is therefore derived from a heritage asset's physical presence, as well as from its setting. In its staged approach to good practice in assessing the setting of heritage assets, Historic England advises that consideration should be given to both the physical surroundings of the historic asset, and the actual experience of it. This includes appreciation of the view or vista, alongside the cultural associations that may contribute to the sense of place created by the setting.

Fig. 3: The shallow river valley of the Nene near Polebrook.

The NPPF reinforces this in the section on the Natural Environment where it states that planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by 'protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, and also recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services - including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland' (paragraph 174).

The significance of a historic asset may be recognised nationally through its designation in the *National Heritage List for England*, Register of protected historic buildings, scheduled monuments, sites, battlefields, registered parks and gardens. This online database needs to be consulted at the pre-application stage. The character of the landscape may also be at risk, especially if it provides habitat for rare or vulnerable wildlife, or if it embodies distinctive features, such as ancient woodland, lowland fen, wetlands, hedgerows, or special trees threatened by the development.

As well as national recognition, more locally and within the context of designated Conservation Areas, the importance of landscape is recognised. A 'Conservation Area' is an area of special architectural or historic interest - the character, appearance or setting of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance. That character and its setting may be dependent on, and is often related to, the surrounding landscape.

 It also needs to be established whether local biodiversity has been recognised as significant through designation as a 'Site of Special Scientific Interest'(SSSI), or whether the habitat for species of rare birds and/or wildlife has been safeguarded as a 'Special Protection Area' (SPA), A particular feature of Northamptonshire in its riverine areas are wetlands of international importance ('Ramsar' sites), such as the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits, which have statutory SPA designation. This has implications not only for the visual aspect of the landscape, but also for nearby development that could adversely disrupt wildlife habitat and wildlife corridors.

Fig. 4: The Welford arm of the Grand Union Canal provides a wildlife corridor.

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Ordinance Survey 0100055322.

LEGEND
- Farmed Scarp Slopes
- Limestone Plateau
- Wooded Limestone Hills and Valleys
- Broad River Floodplain
- Limestone Valley Slopes
- Farmed Claylands
- Rolling Ironstone Valley Slope
- Urban
- Wooded Clay Plateau
- Clay Plateau
- River Valley Floodplain
- Ironstone Plateau
- Low Wooded Clay Ridge
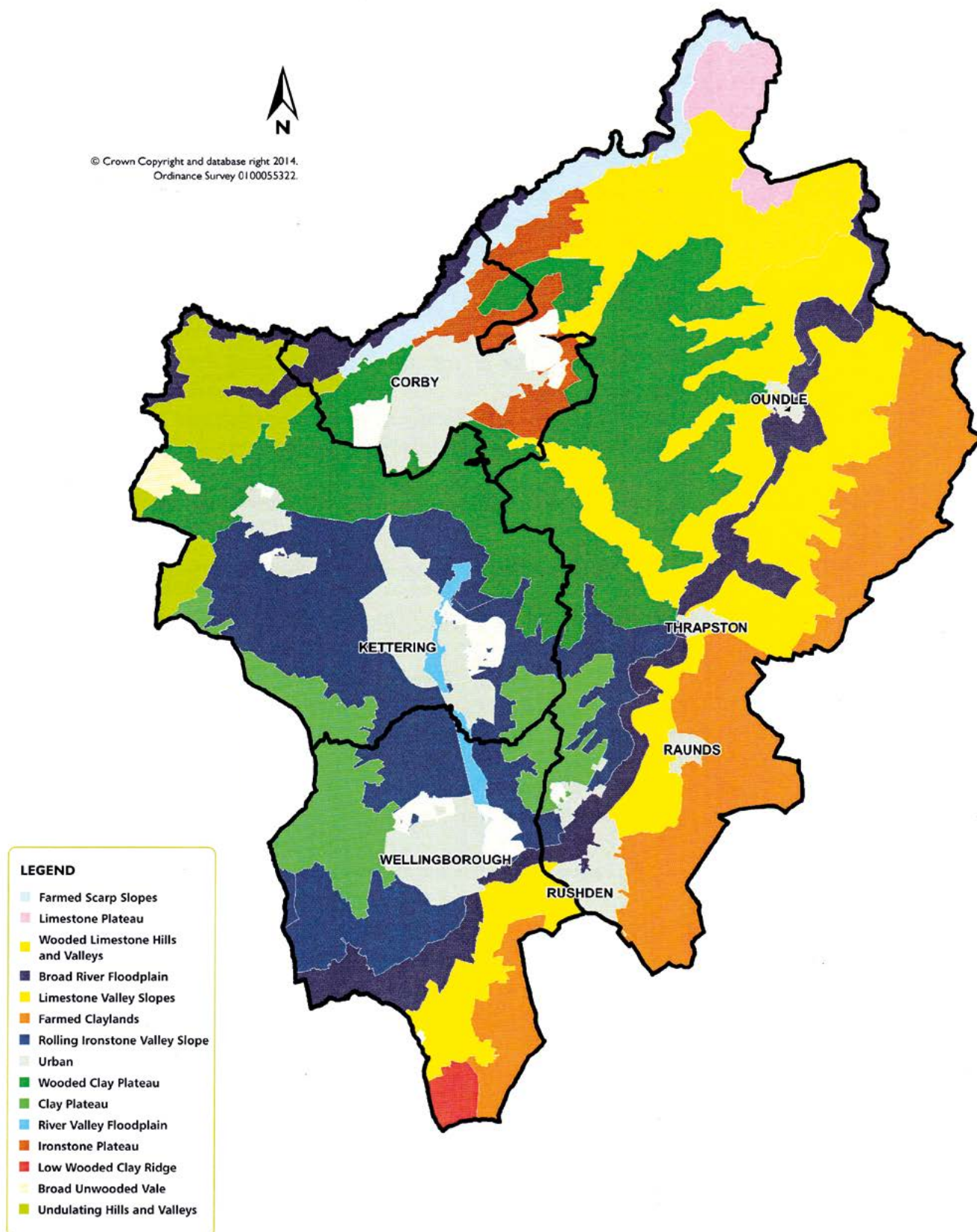- Broad Unwooded Vale
- Undulating Hills and Valleys

Fig.5: North Northamptonshire Landscape Character Types (Reproduced from North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy 2011-2031, p.43, Fig.13 by permission of North Northamptonshire Council).

The following *Current Landscape Character Assessment*, compiled for Northamptonshire in 2003 (CLCA 2003, pp.31-33) synthesises the 19 rural landscape character areas of the county into 5 main landscape character types.

The previous map (Fig.5) illustrates these landscape character types in North Northamptionshire.

Landscape Character Type		Landscape Character Areas
Ironstone Landscapes		
1. Ironstone uplands	1a	*Guilsborough Ironstone Uplands*
	1b	*Spratton and Creaton Ironstone Uplands*
2. Ironstone Hills	2a	*Eydon Hills*
	2b	*Staverton Hills*
3. Ironstone Quarried Plateau	3a	*Kirby and Gretton Plateau*
4. Rolling Ironstone Valley Slopes	4a	*Harlestone Heath and the Bramptons*
	4b	*Moulton Slopes*
	4c	*Ecton and Earls Barton Slopes*
	4d	*Hanging Houghton*
	4e	*Pitsford Water*
	4f	*Kettering and Wellingborough Slopes*
	4g	*Irthlingborough Slopes*
Boulder Clay Landscapes		
5. Clay Plateau	5a	*Naseby Plateau*
	5b	*Sywell Plateau*
	5c	*Burton Wold*
6. Undulating Claylands	6a	*The Tove Catchment*
	6b	*HackletonClaylands*
	6c	*BozeatClaylands*
7. Wooded Clay Plateau	7a	*Geddington Chase*
	7b	*Deene Plateau*
	7c	*Rockingham Plateau*
8 Low Wooded Clay Ridge	8a	*Whittlewood Plateau*
	8b	*Salcey Forest and Yardley Chase*
9. Farmed Claylands	9a	*Chelveston and Caldecott Claylands*
	9b	*PolebrookClaylands*
Limestone Landscapes		
10. Limestone Plateau	10a	*Croughton, Aynho and Farthingstone Plateau*
	10b	*Collyweston Limestone Plateau*
	10c	*King's Cliffe Plateau*
11. Wooded Limestone Hills and Valleys	11a	*King's Cliffe Hills and Valleys*
12. Limestone Valley Slopes	12a	*Wollaston to Irchester*
	12b	*Higham Ferrers to Thrapston*
	12c	*Thrapston to Warmington*
	12d	*Harper's Brook*
	12e	*Aldwincle to Oundle*
	12f	*Oundle to Nassington*

Lower Jurassic Geology Landscapes

13. Undulating Hills and Valleys

13a	Middleton Cheney and Woodford Halse
13b	Bugbrooke and Daventry
13c	Long Buckby
13d	Cottesbrooke and Arthingworth
13e	Stoke Albany and Ashley

14. Rolling Agricultural Lowlands

14a	Newbold Grounds

15. Farmed Scarp Slopes

15a	Hothorpe Hills to Great Oxendon
15b	Cottingham to Harringworth
15c	Harringworth to Duddington
15d	Duddington to Easton on the Hill

16. Low Pastoral Hills

16a	Boddington Hills

Riverine Landscapes

17. River Valley Floodplain

17a	River Cherwell Floodplain
17b	River Tove Floodplain
17c	Brampton Valley Floodplain
17d	River Ise Floodplain

18. Broad River Valley Floodplain

18a	The Nene - Long Buckby to Weedon Bec
18b	The Nene – Weedon Bec to Duston Mill
18c	The Nene – Duston Mill to Billing Wharf
18d	The Nene – Billing Wharf to Woodford Mill
18e	The Nene – Woodford Mill to Thrapston
18f	The Nene – Thrapston to Cotterstock
18g	The Nene – Cotterstock to Warmington
18h	The Nene – Warmington to Wansford
18i	The Welland – Market Harborough to Cottingham
18j	The Welland – Cottingham to Wakerley
18k	The Welland – Tixover to Wothorpe

19. Broad Unwooded Vale

19a	Boddington Vale Farmland
19b	Vale of Rugby
19c	Welland Vale

Other

20. Urban

20a	Brackley
20b	Towcester
20c	Daventry
20d	Northampton
20e	Desborough
20f	Rothwell
20g	Corby
20h	Kettering
20i	Rushden and Higham Ferrers
20j	Wellingborough
20k	Raunds
20l	Thrapston
20m	Oundle
20n	Burton Latimer
20o	Irthlingborough

3. The Northamptonshire Landscape

This county contains a rich variety of scenery, which, relative to its size, exceeds anywhere else in the world. Northamptonshire has a unique landscape that must be preserved for current and future generations to appreciate and enjoy.

The county's landscape is determined partly by its history, but most fundamentally by its geography and the geology of the area. This is defined by a belt of Liassic rocks and oolitic limestone, part of the Jurassic ridge which runs from the Humber down to Dorset. The remainder of the underlying landscape of the county is formed basically of Oxford clay, though there is a widespread covering of glacial clay, with gravel and alluvium in the river valleys.

Northamptonshire is a county of pleasant, rather than exciting landscape. But nevertheless, determined partly by its history and most fundamentally by its geography and geology, the county's landscape displays many contrasts, resulting in buildings and materials that reflect local traditions and provide variety and interest. And against this background, the county divides naturally into areas of definable landscape character.

Though never rising to more than 225 metres (740 feet) the Northamptonshire heights form one of the major watersheds of central England, with the Welland, the Avon and the Cherwell flowing in turn to the Wash and the Bristol Channel and to the Thames. But the river which dominates, and whose valley is the most prominent feature of the county, is the Nene, flowing from south-west to north-east. Along the river's course, and those of its tributaries, lie nearly all the main centres of population. The Nene Valley is the heart of the county, and contains the richest arable land, its most ancient settlements and finest mediaeval churches.

In the Middle Ages there were great royal hunting forests in Northamptonshire: Whittlewood and Salcey in the south, on the plateau between the Nene and Ouse Valleys, and Rockingham in the north between the Nene and the Welland. Since the Middle Ages it has been massively deforested and so today only small areas of vestigial ancient woodland or replanted tracts of land remain.

Large estates and parklands were often managed in the interests of hunting and riding, and the influence of this can still be seen especially where stables and hunt kennels are still in use. However, landscape management must now relate to much wider areas of interest. Overall, Northamptonshire is a county where the soil is rich and productive, allowing a mixed agricultural heritage of cereals and grazing, and these are now more relevant and have their own distinctive impact on the landscape.

The table on the previous two pages demonstrates that, against this background, the rural county divides naturally into some 5 areas of definable landscape character types (i.e. Ironstone, Boulder clay, Limestone, Lower Jurassic Geology, Riverine). These are highlighted in this *Guide* in terms of their impact and implications for development.

Fig. 6: Rolling landscapes and broad skies of West Northamptonshire.

4. What are the qualities of the Northamptonshire Landscape that need to be preserved?

In large parts of the county there remains an undisturbed rural quality, characterised by hidden villages nestling in shallow valleys and with open views across the undulating arable fields towards ridge-top woodlands.

This is not a county of dramatic scenery but that does not detract from its modest and tranquil beauty. Its beauty is often underestimated when considered against other areas of the country with national countryside designations. However, as was said in CPRE's **Northamptonshire Countryside Design Guide (2016)**: -

"Northamptonshire is a county of landscape contrasted with buildings and materials that reflect local traditions and provide variety and interest in the many small towns and villages. The county's historic settlements in their countryside setting of pasture, hedgerow and parkland represent a unique resource which should be respected when development is proposed. Inappropriate development threatens the county's character and the setting of settlements within the landscape".

The following distinctive features of the Northamptonshire landscape, that must be respected when considering any new development in the county, have been summarised from Natural England's *National Character Area profile* of the *Northamptonshire Uplands* (2014):-

> Mixed agricultural land, with open arable and permanent pasture.

> Intensive areas of open field systems, with nationally rare but locally abundant ridge and furrow, and earthworks of deserted and scattered settlements.

> A strong mostly parliamentary enclosure pattern, with traditional high A-shaped hedgerows of blackthorn and hawthorn.

> Vestiges of ancient woodland, scattered broadleaved coverts and copses.

> Several designated 'Sites of Special Scientific Interest' (SSSIs), with significant biodiversity and wildlife habitat.

> Rivers radiating in all directions, with river valleys, catchment areas, flood plains and reservoirs.

> Many large stately homes and small manor houses, some with areas of historic parkland.

> Limestone, ironstone, cob and brick nucleated settlements, with prominent church spires or towers.

Fig. 7: The River Nene at Fotheringhay with the Castle Mound.
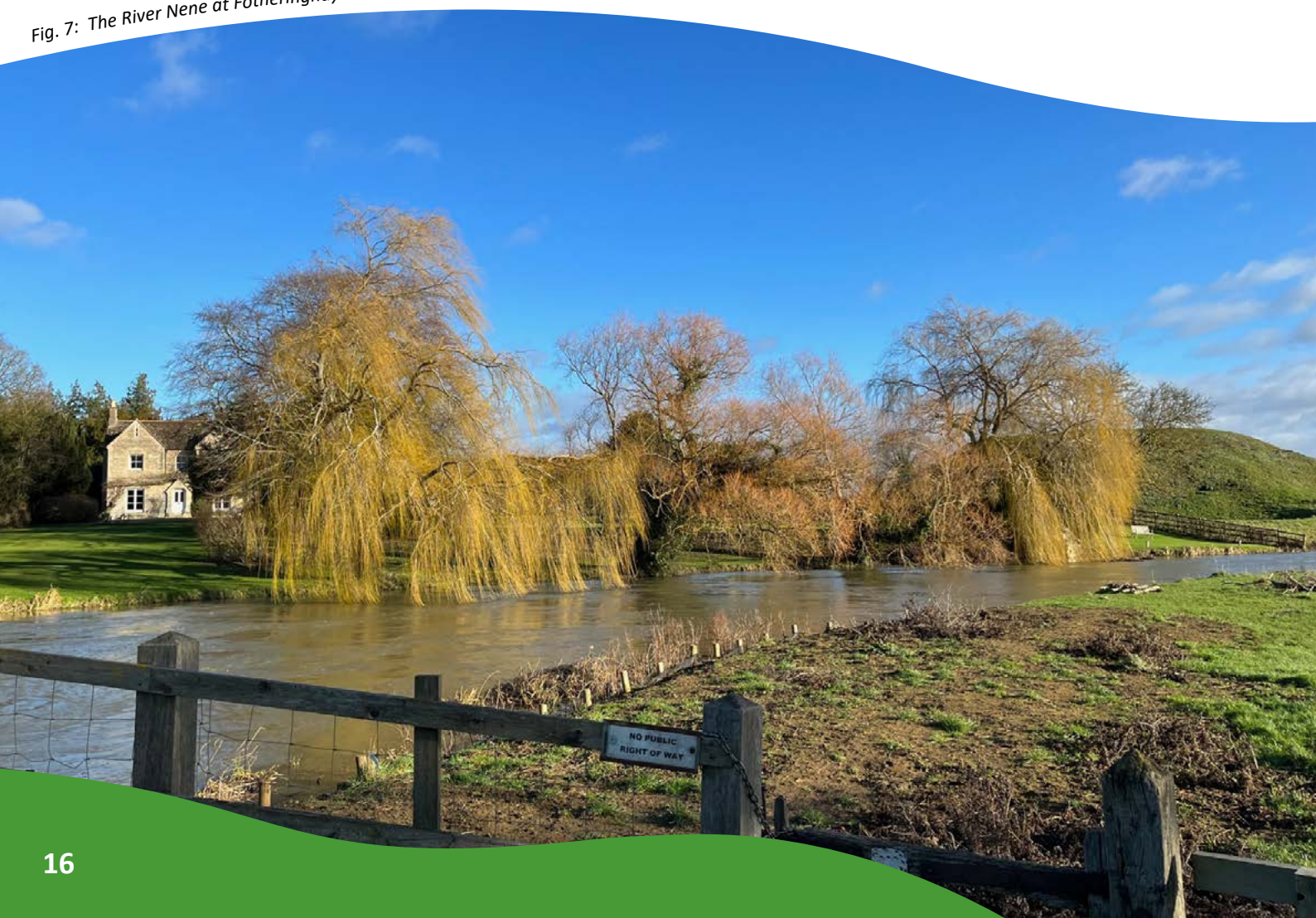
5. Meeting the Challenge

Structures behind decision-making

The planning system is based on individual decisions on planning applications determined within a framework of policies which filter down from national to local level. Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) must have regard to these policies and any other material considerations when determining individual proposals.

The system which operates, with each proposal being based on its individual merits, within a policy framework, does not give sufficient scope to allow questions to be asked about whether there is a real need for the development being proposed, and the extent to which landscape considerations were fully understood or appreciated early on in the process. The basic principle of many development proposals is already allowed through the planning system, before a specific proposal is made.

Planning is a dynamic process and should be able to respond to changing policies, land use needs and the environment. A strict zonal planning system, such as applied in the United States and elsewhere, has created inflexibility, and in this country similar problems occur when land use needs, local interests and landscape considerations are not given sufficient weight in the early stages of the planning process, or as individual development schemes come forward.

Inevitably because of the structure of the planning system we are pushed into a planning system, (often described as adversarial), where the development of land either for profit or need is pitted against a community that might not want change or genuinely sees that the reasons for development are flawed.

There is a fundamental process missing before the planning stage that should look at the potential land use in order to ascertain whether there is a real need for alternative development - whether agricultural, industrial or residential. Often it is this very perspective that surfaces too late in the planning process where moral or ethical uses of land are then deemed to be inadmissible within the planning regime.

This kind of strategic thinking is not strong enough in Britain, and although zones or uses are identified in Core Strategies by Councils, a long-term view that responds to real need or protection is missing. In the USA, a zonal strategy is used to 'designate agriculture, commercial, industrial, residential use zones to control the location of these activities and thus achieve a more desirable community' (Seitz, Nelson & Halcrow, 1994:400). This however can also be seen as an idealised scenario, which, if too rigidly applied, becomes unworkable.

The political will in Britain is also spurious, often responding to narrow interest groups. Planners will also naturally use their own Core Strategy documents to judge projects against. A great deal of effort and consultation has gone into these documents so good practical and legally based arguments are needed to promote change or influence a different outcome in decision making.

Strategic policies are measured against a 'Sustainability Appraisal', but, also in line with the NPPF, is 'a presumption in favour of sustainable development' (paragraph 11). However, where permissions are granted in line with this approach (e.g for solar or wind farms), this could be at variance with taking agricultural land out of food production.

Emerging issues

Since the turn of the current century there has been a growing interest in, and respect and support for vegetarianism and veganism. If, and when, this style of living grows, there will be implications for agriculture and the use of land, which in turn will impact on the landscape. Political decisions also affect agriculture, land use and the landscape. For example, leaving the European Union, and the consequential changes in trade and the movement of goods, has implications for food production in this country, which also impacts on the landscape.

In re-evaluating landscape and land use some fundamental issues arising from the events of recent years need to be considered. These include the UK's departure from the EU requiring more domestic food production, the probability of recurrent pandemics in the future, the need to respect the integrity of communities, the implications of one nation's sanctions upon another, and finally the increasing impact of climate change.

There is a great balancing act of preserving human sustenance and health set against the need for economic viability of the countryside. This is an issue that comes under the movement of 'biopolitics', so increasingly we should look again at how existing infrastructures and land use could be modified or re-purposed. There is increasing pressure for energy production through solar farms and carbon sequestration (tree and vegetative planting for biofuel) often encouraged by grants - whereas alternative viable strategies for saving energy or re-wilding land attract less financial support.

It is important more than ever to look closely at how existing infrastructures and land use could be modified or re-purposed to ensure economic viability for the countryside without compromising biodiversity. At the same time provision for the basic human needs of human sustenance, health and wellbeing must be ensured.

Brownfield sites and food production

Given all the pressures on the landscape, habitats and the natural environment and the need to secure an appropriate and acceptable balance between the competing needs of economic viability and landscape protection, innovative approaches may offer potential solutions. One which would help to protect the countryside from even greater industrialised food production, with the inevitable loss of habitat, can be met by urban food production. This is one way of protecting the countryside from even greater industrialised food production.

Local food production can mitigate the adverse effects of global warming and also reduces the need for industrialised food production methods with their associated impact on the landscape. Domestic gardens have a role to play as well and through the development of home food production systems salad and other small crops can be provided for households throughout the year. This is where local communities can have a real impact on how the land is used.

Northamptonshire resources in under-used warehousing

In parts of the county there is a significant amount of empty warehouse floor space. It is especially noticeable in West Northamptonshire, where an examination of available floor space in 2021 showed major increases in floor space available for use. It is essential that development should match need and not compromise landscape and the setting of towns and villages where

no demand or economic need has been identified. Where vacancies persist a more innovative approach to use should be examined.

New planning permissions often relate to the increasing demand for larger warehouse and distribution centres because the design for today's automated handling systems require significant floorspace and building height for them to operate. These are giant buildings, mostly confined to existing rail and road hubs, but their impact on the landscape is enormous. Although often on the outskirts of towns, they effectively 'block' traditional arrival views into a town, and also change the vista from towns and cities. What had been a natural and familiar progression of scale from low to high buildings in centres has changed dramatically. Although it may be acceptable to have centres such as H&M and Amazon buildings by the M1 in graded blue bands to sky white, this may not work elsewhere.

As the scale increases of these mega buildings, so should the planning requirements. Applications should show full impact on vistas so that they are seen against the existing morphology of the built-up areas as well as the surrounding countryside with existing features of woodland, hills and villages, from all ordinal directions.

The Effect of Multiple Developments

The cumulative effect of development can often create adverse conditions and have unfortunate implications for land use and the landscape, but it is not generally used as an argument to limit development. Furthermore, and as has already been stated, planning is a dynamic process, and so must respond to emerging needs and changing circumstances. In July 2021, the Government's *National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)*, exemplified this approach (paragraph 122) by emphasising that 'Planning policies and decisions need to reflect changes in the demand for land. They should be informed by regular reviews of both the land allocated for development in plans, and of land availability'. This allows for the impact of cumulative development to be addressed particularly where an adverse impact on the landscape could occur.

One of the most effective ways of understanding and demonstrating the effect of cumulative development is through graphics and photography, which can supplement a written analysis.

Modern technology allows past and present air photography to compare satellite imagery to show changes in the location and scale of development and how this may impact on the landscape. Everyone associated with the development industry or landscape protection and enhancement might benefit from assessing new proposals against the information obtainable through satellite imagery.

Fig. 8: The impact of multiple warehouse developments around Wellingborough.

6. The Issues identified

Three of the major issues affecting the Northamptonshire landscape have been identified as:

(i) the indiscriminate siting of warehouses and the spread of business parks;
(ii) large-scale wind and solar farms;
(iii) the identified need for new housing.

It is these threats to the landscape that have resulted in the production of this ***Guide***.

The following map, indicates the spread of large-scale warehouse/storage facilities across the county since 2011. The Office for National Statistics (ONS) released data in 2022 showing that, in terms of scale, West Northants had the highest number of business premises occupied by transport and storage facilities in the UK (3,200) with North Northants in third place in the country (2,700). The scope and scale of such developments constitute a major threat to the landscape setting.
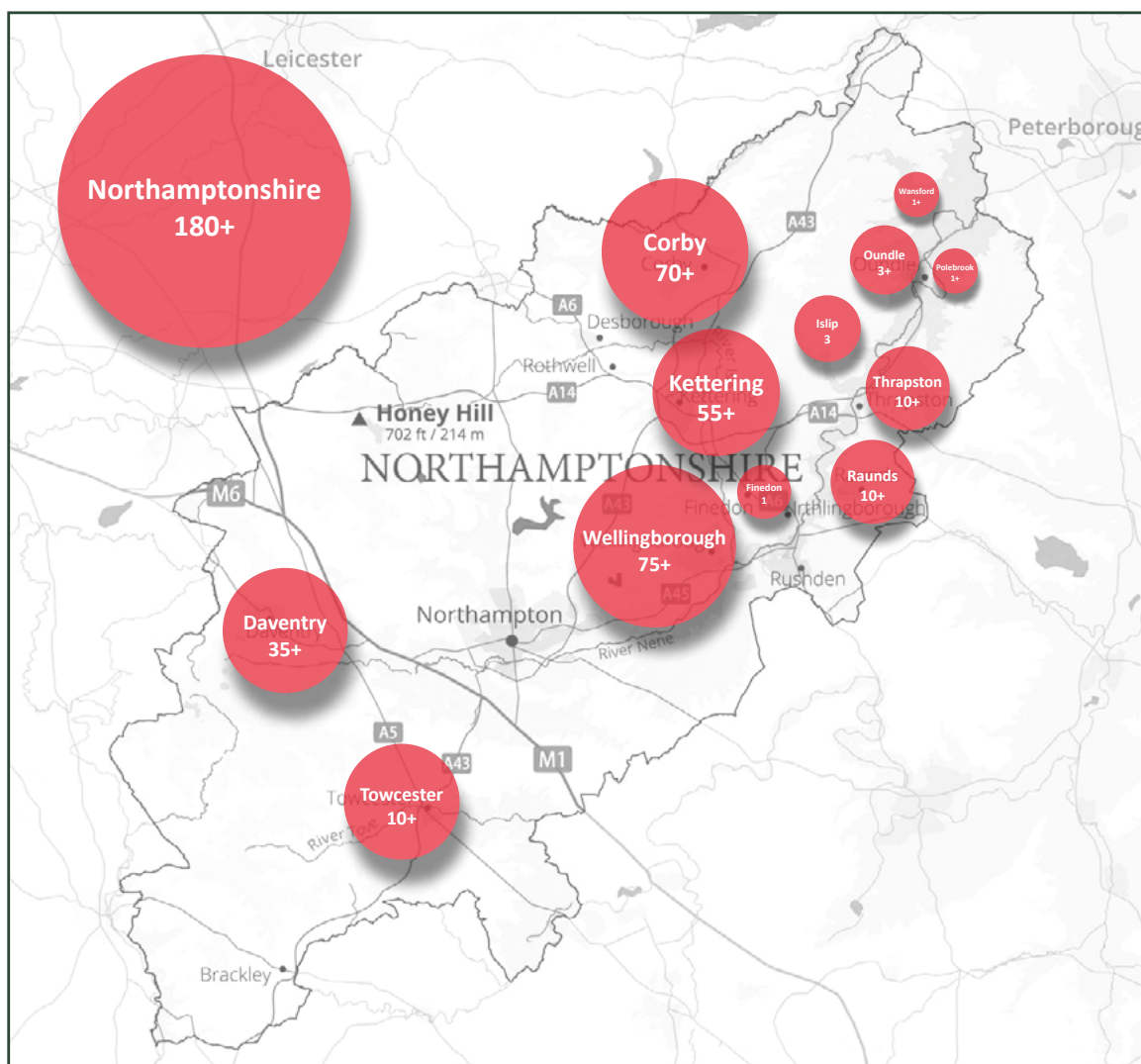
(Indicative figures compiled from Cylex, YELL and 192.com Business/Trade Directories, 2023)   ©www.freeworldmaps.net

Fig.9: Concentration of transport and storage warehouses in Northamptonshire.

There is also creeping urban sprawl from housing developments and business parks that risk undermining the integrity and setting of villages near expanding market towns, for example Glapthorn and its relationship with Oundle, and Titchmarsh to the north of Thrapston. Important open spaces between settlements which protect the landscape and their setting are vital to maintain their integrity, but are at risk from development pressures.

The spread of large scale windfarms and solar farms

Since 2000 the Northamptonshire countryside has been the subject of many windfarm applications, and, perhaps to a lesser extent, solar farm applications, although solar farm applications are currently growing in number. Not all have been granted permission but significant sites have been developed such as Burton Wold (between Burton Latimer and Finedon) and Kelmarsh (off the A14). A further example of the damaging impact of windfarms can be seen near Finedon in the east of the county. These examples are in prominent locations, and serve to demonstrate the adverse impact of such developments on the countryside particularly where insufficient consideration has been given to their siting.

The similarity between landscape here at Finedon was once likened to the battlefield at Waterloo by the Duke of Wellington. It is therefore regrettable that the current situation demonstrates how this important historical association and landscape has now been permanently affected by windfarm development.

Fig. 10: Windfarms and Warehousing disfigure the landscape around Wellingborough.

Indiscriminate siting of warehouses and business parks

As with the growth of peripheral housing estates around the urban areas, of equal and often greater impact has been the proliferation of warehousing and business parks.

Northamptonshire lies within the freight industry's 'Golden Triangle' and is on a crossroads for both north/south and east/west distribution throughout the country, using the M1, A14, A43 and A45, making it something of a target area for distribution centres to feed the ever-increasing demand for next day deliveries that people have become so accustomed to. Sadly, with the automation of warehouse storage, has come the ability to stack goods ever higher and higher, to be accessed at very short notice, thereby encouraging yet taller and taller buildings.

Furthermore, areas designated as employment land have been given planning permission for these large-scale distribution centres, which, despite their significant floor space, employ far fewer people than more traditional employment activities. The result is large and visually dominating buildings on the periphery of many of the towns in the county, which produce little economic or social benefits in terms of providing employment opportunities or contributing to the local economy, while having a significant adverse impact on the landscape and setting of towns.

The approaches to Corby, particularly from the south and east are dominated by many such buildings as are the southwest and north approaches to Kettering. Attempts have been made to establish tree screening, but this will take many years to mature before it lessens the impact. Approaches to Wellingborough from the east along the A45, and in particular across the wide vistas of the Nene Valley, are dominated by large unbroken warehouse buildings.

Northampton has many such buildings, some of which have been more successfully integrated with areas such as Moulton Park.

Elsewhere, such as to the east of Thrapston, adjacent to the A14, there is an area of warehousing which is clearly visible across the Nene Valley. Of equal impact are the warehouses at Raunds, adjacent to the A45, again visible from the country roads on the opposite side of the Nene Valley.

At Denford, within one of the most unspoilt sections of the Nene Valley, a former brownfield site of early twentieth century iron ore furnaces was allowed to grow without sufficient consideration

Fig. 11: A poorly designed warehouse complex on a brownfield site in open countryside near Islip.

being given to its impact on the landscape. This included the recent development of a very large unbroken warehouse building, clearly visible across the river valley.

Undeveloped designations in the county indicate the potential for more damage to occur in the near future. In the south of the county, land allocated for development adjacent to the A43 and A5 at Towcester will result in large-scale warehousing development on a site that will be visible on the approaches to this historic market town.

Addressing the need for more housing

The development plan sets out the strategic approach to housing development in the county as well as the identification of specific sites. CPRE both nationally and at a local level holds the view that the calculations for housing numbers at a strategic level should continue to be scrutinised and challenged against actual housing needs surveys.

Historically, large scale estate development has taken place on the edge of built-up areas, expanding the urban environment into otherwise unspoiled countryside, with a consequential impact on the landscape. Government policy suggests that the number of new houses needing to be planned for in Northamptonshire will be substantial, and so could pose a real threat to many aspects of the countryside that we currently enjoy.

Major undertakings in the past have expanded existing urban boundaries, and the scale of development likely in the future has the potential to continue to do this. Despite the obvious preference for the development of brownfield sites, the scale of new housing proposed suggests that small scale developments and the re-use of urban land will not provide sufficient scope to accommodate identified need.

The hitherto tacit demarcation of town and country can no longer hold. This can be seen at many locations along the A43 where housing development has extended up to and even beyond the highway at Brackley, Towcester, Northampton and Corby. This is a challenge on a scale that matches that from the more obvious commercial and distribution development.

Despite the expected scale of development, before large new land allocations are considered, brownfield and under-used land should be examined. With changes in the way society is likely to operate in the future, with more home working and home delivery, office and retail complexes within towns may become unused and so could give scope for re-use or redevelopment for residential accommodation, before greenfield and edge of town sites are contemplated with the potential to damage to the landscape.

The overriding consideration for Local Planning Authorities is that they should meet *housing need in a sustainable way without eroding the county's valued and irreplaceable countryside*. Whereas all residential development should be sustainable and well-designed, with access to public transport and a range of facilities, on greenfield sites housing should be planned to enhance the surrounding countryside - rather than something that can be deemed acceptable because it can be screened from view.

Where there is an identified need for more houses, it is the nature of the planning authorities' and the developer's response that is critical. *It is style, site and landscape setting that must be given urgent and comprehensive consideration*.

7. Landscape Setting

Section 2 of the *Guide* identified the landscape character types of the county. The setting of buildings and settlements, within these diverse landscape character types of Northamptonshire, requires an appreciation and understanding of the specific characteristics of the character area where development is proposed.

Such characteristics could include the form, colour and shape of the hills, characteristics of the valleys and rivers, form and type of woodland, fields patterns and floodplains. However, what constitutes the landscape setting extends beyond the visual appearance of each locality, because the land form is also influenced by the ecology, geology and archaeology of the area, as well as its landscape history, including successive patterns of land use, architectural and cultural associations.

Taking into account the unique combination of features that make each landscape setting distinctive therefore becomes a crucial factor in determining the siting of any new development. Each of the five main landscape character types, that Northamptonshire's *Landscape Character Assessment (CLCA, 2003)* identified in the countryside (i.e. Ironstone, Boulder Clay, Limestone, Lower Jurassic Geology, Riverine landscapes), are intrinsically unique in their sense of place and landscape setting. Planning proposals have to be assessed in relation to the character of the surrounding landscape. Consideration has to be given as to how the development will fit into, and enhance, the landscape setting, rather than risk undermining the special features that make it distinctive. It is important for preserving and enhancing the natural scenery of undulating hills and valleys, limestone, ironstone and boulder clay landscapes, and river valley flood plains (notably surrounding the River Nene, but also around the Ise, Welland, Tove and Cherwell rivers) that can be identified in Northamptonshire's landscape.

Fig. 12: The water meadows of the Nene Valley near Aldwincle.

As referred to in section 2 of the *Guide* (pp.9,10), there is a national recognition that landscape should be considered as a heritage asset, and that these assets merit consideration in planning decisions.

The importance of protecting heritage assets was demonstrated by the landmark High Court ruling in 2013 against the proposal to erect four wind turbines close to the National Trust property, Lyveden New Bield (Fig.14) in the north of the county. This established the national importance of taking the landscape setting into account when considering a development that could adversely affect the sense of place and the surrounding panoramic setting of a historic building .

As well as the landscape setting of important historic buildings, established by this important decision, preserving the landscape setting of historic sites, such as the battlefields of Northampton, Edgcote and Naseby, for current and future generations to appreciate, as well as the remains of 'lost' or 'shrunken' villages, and ridge and furrow field patterns, should be important planning considerations.

Safeguarding historic assets and maintaining a strong 'sense of place' should therefore be upheld as essential planning principles, so that the conservation and preservation of Northamptonshire's diverse landscape can continue to be appreciated and valued by current and future generations.

CPRE's *Northamptonshire Countryside Design Guide* (2016) made the important point that *landscape design should form an integral part of any development in the county*. A development, which is inappropriately sited, designed or landscaped, can have a negative impact over the wider setting of the countryside. In many cases, this will prove to be irreversible. *It is essential that a harmonious transition is achieved between the countryside and settlement areas, such as hamlets, villages and towns*. This means that local topography, embracing landscape, historical, ecological and archaeological features, must be taken into account. Any new development on the outskirts of towns must not intrude, or have a negative effect, on the adjacent countryside through the use of inappropriate design, materials or contrasting colours.

The Setting of Existing buildings within the landscape

It is not only the natural environment that gives the landscape and countryside its character. For centuries, some buildings have acted as notable landmarks, and views of them can also add to and enhance the landscape.

In particular, churches, as well as manor houses, mills, bridges and viaducts and other sites of historical and industrial heritage, have endured for many years. *They are important because they represent fixed points in the landscape, and a physical representation of a community's identity*.

Despite the passage of time, these buildings often remain the most dominant feature in the landscape, and to affect the setting of them, through the development of structures which compete with them, in terms of location or size, or affect the setting of the buildings in the landscape will have an adverse effect on them and their setting. The integrity of the structures could be seriously undermined by the physical presence of other structures which compete in scale, or become visible in the local landscape.

The protection of these buildings and their relationship with the surrounding countryside and any settlement to which they relate is as important as the protection of the landscape itself.

In order to respect the integrity of the landscape setting and 'sense of place', a distinction has to be made between 'developments in the wider countryside', and 'developments on the edge of small towns or villages'. The former must be integrated into the surrounding countryside in ways that respect the landscape setting, whereas the latter arise from developments on the edge, or outskirts, of villages or towns. Like our *Countryside Design Guide* (2016), the Landscape Design Checklist in Appendix A therefore differentiates between these two main categories of landscape setting. This checklist has been designed to help the preparation of proposals that should either seek to mitigate the impact on the wider countryside, or seek to achieve a smooth transition between the settlement and the surrounding countryside setting.

Fig. 13: The church and manor house in their landscape setting at Pilton.

8. Design in the Landscape

The Choice of Site

This part of the process is a precursor to the more detailed analysis of a site, required by Planning Authorities as part of the design process. The choice may have been determined through land already allocated for development in existing policy documents for the area. In these instances, it is to be hoped that the relevant Local Planning Authority (LPA) has carried out a site analysis and assessment of the impact of development upon the landscape when such sites are allocated for development. In some cases, the choice of a site, is often influenced by financial or economic pressures where an owner has decided to sell a site to realise his or her assets, or a developer may bring forward a site speculatively, where no proper assessment of the landscape impact of development has been made.

Whatever the background, where there is a choice, *it is important that the impact of development on a site, and its surroundings, is taken into account as part of the decision making process*. This may be by a LPA selecting sites for inclusion within the Development Plan or by a developer, or a private individual, making choices between available sites for development, or by making a speculative proposal.

Whatever the case, CPRE recommends that a demonstrable analysis be followed to ensure that the site, or sites, which are selected are those where the development will impact least upon the landscape. In some cases, sites may be chosen where development may lead to enhancement of the present landscape as can be the case with brownfield sites.

The important factor, where there is choice, is to accept that some sites are not appropriate for development because they would impact too harshly on the landscape. This is the yardstick by which a development, that has not been subject to a logical site analysis, should be judged by the LPA - which should refuse permission where an unacceptable impact on the landscape is the likely outcome from the development.

Reducing the impact of development

Designing a building within the landscape requires a combination of techniques. These include an understanding of the natural environment, design and aesthetic flair, adherence to planning law and policy, and a knowledge of horticulture, construction and ecology. *The art of 'landscape architecture' is therefore, a consideration of the total environment whatever the scale of development*.

As previously referred to, the choice of site is of prime significance. In designing a scheme for a chosen site, the impact of the development will be heavily influenced by how the development is located within the site, and the site's overall treatment. This will determine the success, or otherwise, of a development within the landscape.

While the initial choice of site is fundamental, other factors will follow to shape the environment, such as the use of natural and artificial landforms, tree planting, boundary treatments and designed landscape features, and all of these determine the extent to which the scheme will impact on the landscape. The need for a demonstrable analysis in site selection has already

been referred to. This approach is also advocated by many Local Planning Authorities and supported by CPRE at the detailed planning stage. This arises particularly in guidance to preparing any supporting statements relating to such matters as access, flood risk, air quality, transport, landscaping and landscape impact, which should accompany applications for many forms of development. In this way, the most satisfactory solution to any development can be secured.

Landscape character

Setting, and its importance have already been described in detail in section 7 (pp.24-26) of this *Guide*. As part of any site analysis, reference must first be made to Northamptonshire's *Landscape Character Assessment (CLCA, 2003)*, in order to identify the landscape area to which the development relates. It is not sufficient to just quote a landscape type or characteristic. *A thorough understanding must be derived of that landscape type, how it was formed, what the geology and ecology is of the site, what were the traditional building materials used for that area and the way in which they were used*. Very different approaches will be needed in the design of buildings in the variety of 19 landscape character areas that constitute the 5 main landscape character types identified in rural Northamptonshire (pp.12,13). The 'one-size-fits-all' approach used by some developers in the past is no longer appropriate and has led to the destruction of many landscapes.

Visual continuity

The next part of the analysis of the site is to identify *how it relates to the existing landscape and what are the important aspects of the surroundings that can be used in the design process* in order to ensure visual continuity. Most sites are visible from the surrounding area, and can be viewed from both a distance and close by. These views are vital to ensuring that if development takes place, it will relate well to the site characteristics and the wider landscape.

This can be best achieved by a close examination of the site from within its boundaries, and by viewing it from the surrounding area. As well as views from within a site and from a distance; views through and across a site, are also very important. In such circumstances, it may be necessary to leave areas of the site undeveloped to retain these unique views.

As part of the visual survey, *it will be vital to record the natural features within and around the site, and the characteristics of any settlement to which the site relates*. This will include woodlands, ponds, tree belts or field boundary patterns as well as historic buildings.

In certain historic landscapes, of which there are many in Northamptonshire; it will also be necessary to research the former use of the site or how the wider landscape has been influenced by previous activities or earlier designs.

Fig. 14: Lyveden New Bield - A historic house in a unique landscape setting.

In some cases, there will be no settlements or previous developments to record – just purely the natural features. But if the site is part of, or adjacent to a settlement, it is important to understand how that settlement relates to the landscape. It may be set on a ridge, as many settlements are along the river valleys in Northamptonshire. It may be undulating countryside with settlements partially hidden in the folds of the land, as in the Northamptonshire uplands. It may be a relatively flat area to be found between the major river valleys of the county, where settlements are very visible, or it may have characteristics of all of the types mentioned.

The camera is an important tool as a means of recording a site for the design process, and may also be used for the production of accurate photo-montages of a development from many angles on a site, before design is finalised. Images of the site should also include less attractive aspects, as these may be areas where a development can enhance the existing landscape.

By carrying out a full survey and understanding how visual continuity can be secured through design the implications of development for the landscape can be taken fully into account. Sadly, this process is not always carried through, and the impact of large buildings on distant views is not appreciated until it is too late.

A Concept for the Built Form

Having built up a strong picture of the site and its surroundings as existing, and having understood from the Northamptonshire *Landscape Character Assessment (CLCA, 2003),* and other historical research, how the landscape was formed; consideration can then be given to the nature of any development proposed for the site.

On a site allocated for development the intended use will be known, but some sites come forward speculatively from a developer or landowner. Whatever the origin of a development proposal, the form and bulk of the development will vary considerably depending on the intended use.

The scale, density, location within the site, and detailed design elements will be critical considerations at this stage.

For example, most housing is in the form of low-rise development, rarely exceeding more than two or three storeys in height, and so may fit easily into the contours of a site with minimal impact on the landscape, despite covering a large part of the site. However, commercial and warehouse developments are likely to be of a much larger scale and will be harder to design. Their form and bulk may be considerable, but the footprint may not be large within the site as a whole.

At any stage through the process from concept to detailed design, it will be important to consider a scale, form and location within the site that respects the setting and the impact of development on the surrounding landscape. This reinforces the points made in the previous section concerning visual continuity. If the development would impact too detrimentally on the site, or surrounding landscape and continuity cannot be achieved, then it should be rejected.

Following on from this, sites where a development is intended to sit on a skyline, may dominate a valley bottom, or any form of landscape, it will be inappropriate. It is unlikely that any mitigation method would be sufficient to allow an acceptable scheme, they will be unsuitable in terms of landscape impact, they will not be able to ensure visual continuity or will cause irreparable damage to the countryside and they should be rejected.

If a site being considered meets the tests so far set out, the designer should be prepared to consider an innovative approach. This may involve breaking up the mass of a building by stepping roof levels, or by providing some accommodation in smaller units, either attached to, or grouped around, the main building, or by creating an L-shaped building. Where appropriate, floor levels should follow the contours of the land, and characteristics of the site. In some cases, earth moulding may be an appropriate means of stepping a building to follow the contours. Long unbroken facades should be avoided in the countryside as they are alien to the natural forms of the landscape.

Fig. 15: Northamptonshire Uplands near Ravensthorpe where a reservoir forms part of the landscape.

Where there are existing trees, hedgerows or plantations, use should be made of them to screen development, or to help a development sit well into an already woodland environment. New tree planting may be essential and this is considered below. **Site boundaries should be carefully respected**, and this is also considered elsewhere (p.30).

Scale, Colour and Materials

Following on from the choice of the built form within a site, *scale, colour and materials* are the primary elements that will result in a design that will allow it to relate successfully with its surroundings and existing landscape.

Scale has already been touched on to the extent that uses that require large scale buildings need extremely careful siting and design. Scale is also important when placing smaller commercial buildings, and even housing on sites which have an impact on the landscapes. This applies particularly on sites adjacent to existing small towns and villages where scale is important to ensure that the settlement does not become dominated by the new development. Where a development site is within a valley, an appropriate scale will be important to ensure that no adverse visual impact is created by features such as large areas of roofs.

Colour and materials relate very much to a proper understanding of the landscape, its geology and its uses. Traditional colours will be evident within a landscape relating to the building materials of that area, and also the land use. Green is not necessarily the best colour to use in the countryside, as it will not change with the seasons as most natural greens do. Wherever possible, materials that relate to a particular landscape should be used in new developments.

Where modern materials, such as coated claddings are called for, muted colours to match the natural pigments of the landscape can be used. In very specific cases, colours may be used effectively to reduce the apparent bulk of a building. This technique has been used satisfactorily on some modern farm buildings by using shades of blue and grey to reduce the impact against the sky.

Fig. 16: A method of camouflage for large warehouse buildings.

Tree Planting and other forms of Mitigation

Screening developments with trees has traditionally been seen as an acceptable form of landscaping, or mitigation for developments. Tree planting should not be used to try and screen development which was not appropriate in the first place. Poorly designed tree planting schemes, such as regimented lines of trees around a large building or trees planted on earth mounding only serve to highlight the fact that it is there. Also, with very large commercial schemes, the time taken for a tree to reach effective maturity may be beyond the life of the warehouse.

However, tree planting should be used, together with other landscaping, where it will help a well-designed and acceptable scheme to integrate more effectively with the surrounding landscape, and improve setting, appearance and biodiversity.

Generally, a mixed planting scheme involving indigenous species and those which will thrive, given the specific location and condition of the site, should be used. Visual continuity with the settlement to which it relates and the existing landscape is essential.

The natural formation of woodland should be fully understood, with mixed hedgerows at the edge, then smaller trees such as birches, followed by large oaks, ash trees and other appropriate species as well as other plants appropriate to the site and the surroundings. Such formations will also help to support wildlife and create a diverse range of habitats.

The use of appropriate indigenous trees is crucial. It is unlikely that fast growing conifers will be appropriate. Naturalistic grouping of trees can help to soften the edge of a development with the open countryside, whilst the use of tree planting within developments will improve the site's environment. This will have particular benefits for residents in housing developments and will reduce the impact of the multitude of new roofs and gable ends. Community woodland and community orchards and allotments can become welcome assets, if properly managed within a housing development, and should be considered, along with appropriate management plans.

Where biomass planting has been undertaken, efforts should be made to protect and restore the traditional Midlands A-shape hedgerow style as one means of integrating tree planting . Mitigation is sometimes offered where trees are to be lost to development by offering to replace them on another site. This is not to be encouraged as a carrot to gain more building land. It should only be considered in extreme cases where possibly the new trees will have a greater public and landscape benefit.

Earth mounding and reformation of the landscape is another means of integrating new developments into a landscape setting, quite often by trying to hide them within a reformed landscape. This can have its merits if carefully planned to relate to existing contours but, if used simply as a screening mechanism, can look very artificial. An increasingly popular means of softening large roof areas, and in some cases wall areas, is to have a living roof or wall using well-chosen planting. This perhaps works best on roofs with naturalist curves.

Boundary Treatments

Appropriate boundary treatments are vital to securing a successful relationship between a development and its setting within the landscape. Boundary treatment needs particularly sensitive treatment at the edge of settlements where it is important to maintain visual continuity. Contours may best define a natural boundary rather than an existing physical boundary between land ownerships. In such cases, it may be necessary to leave undeveloped an area of land to follow natural boundaries.

As previously pointed out, naturalistic grouping of trees can soften boundaries and in turn, this can mask any necessary security fencing. Because boundary screening may be visible from a distance it should be designed with caution as too rigid a treatment may mar views and produce a uniform and unnatural appearance. Where high security fencing is not required, investigation of local traditional fencing can be helpful integrating a new development, such as the use of iron post and rail park fencing.

The transition between countryside and settlement can also be enhanced through maintaining, or re-creating, a 'sense of arrival' along the approach into settlements. This can be achieved through the planting of trees, avenues and the continuation or restoration of traditional drystone boundary walls.

Fig. 17: Mature boundary treatment near Wellingborough screens a 1980s industrial park.

9. Minimising the impact

This section considers different types of development and their likely impact. In considering the development of any site, the critical factors to examine are whether the site is suitable for the type of development proposed and, if it is suitable, how can it best be designed, either to enhance the landscape, or to make the least impact.

The consideration that will need to be given to the best way of integrating a new development in the landscape will depend on the nature of that development. Because each development has the potential to create its own unique impact, *integration will depend on a careful assessment of the likely specific effect of each individual proposal*.

The list of development types is not exhaustive. Small housing schemes and single dwellings are not covered specifically, as these are dealt with in detail in CPRE Northamptonshire's *Countryside Design Guide*.

Urban Extensions and large housing estates

These forms of development normally take a large area of land, which is often greenfield land. The location for such developments should always be agreed as part of the *Development Plan* for the area, rather than the result of speculative development. As part of the Development Plan Process, the proposed site should have been through a rigorous selection process, part of which should involve assessing its impact on the landscape.

If possible, this type of housing provision is best located on brownfield land, where in most cases well designed and appropriate development will be an enhancement, and greenfield sites will not have been used. Where there is no proven alternative to locating extensions to large urban areas other than on a new greenfield site, the visual impact on the whole setting is paramount. In such cases, it is unacceptable to locate such developments on visually sloping sites, hilltop locations or where they will clearly intrude on a wide vista, such as the river valleys. The retention of attractive rural approaches to major urban areas should also be safeguarded from such development.

Where brownfield sites are not available, low grade or non-productive agricultural land should be considered in locations where natural boundaries do not exist. Flat areas with few views across will have less impact on the surrounding countryside. All such developments will require a very careful interface with the open countryside. Often the retention of field boundaries, and areas of field as public open space, can soften the interface with the countryside. Taking domestic garden boundaries to visible interfaces with the countryside can never be successfully hidden, and often results in a very raw edge to an urban area. Policies do exist in some authorities relating to the extension of gardens into open countryside to help minimise this impact.

Fig. 18: Retained field boundaries, around an area of public open space at Monksmoor Park, Daventry, help to break down the interface with the countryside.

Flats and multi - storey living, offices and business parks

Wherever possible flats and multi - storey buildings are best located within the built-up urban area. They look alien when viewed within the landscape and cannot be integrated successfully. If flats of more than two storeys are proposed on greenfield developments, they should be set well away from the site boundaries with a building hierarchy stepping down to the rural edge.

Business and technology parks are often planned at the edge of urban areas, and typically are made up of multi - storey buildings. Often such business parks have enough land to consider low rise buildings, especially for offices. While this will increase the building's footprint, the visual impact on, and from the surrounding countryside, will be reduced. Every site is unique and so is every solution, so a balancing act is needed taking all the site and surrounding characteristics into account when designing the scheme.

Car parking and vehicular servicing are difficult issues to deal with satisfactorily. Ideally, as far as possible, new development should be located and designed to reduce travel needs, or to allow alternatives such as walking, cycling and public transport to provide access to commercial sites. Where car parking and service bays are necessary, an underground location may be the solution to reducing the impact that large areas of parking can have both within the site and from the surrounding area.

There are examples of successful landscape schemes around business parks; in some cases, treating the buildings and vistas within the site as the classical landscape designers of the past would have treated a country house park. This approach is fine when viewed within the development but can look contrived when viewed against the wider countryside. Similarly, formal planting schemes will not be appropriate at the built up/rural interface, and so landscaping schemes should become less formal as they near the site boundary, where this interacts with the countryside beyond.

Earth mounding, which can include artificial mounding, can be used to lessen the impact of multi-storey buildings, but careful consideration is needed to ensure that this will blend with the surrounding landscape character.

Tree and hedgerow planting is an obvious means of reducing the impact of large buildings, and this should always follow the hierarchy of planting with a mix of indigenous species, as described previously in this guide. Where large buildings are set well within a site, tree planting at the edge, or tree clumps across the site will have the most impact. Where the countryside consists of large expansive views, large areas of tree planting to screen buildings can be just as intrusive as the buildings themselves, and if this is presented as a solution, it is likely to make the site unsuitable for development.

Fig. 19: An example of retained hedges and mature trees within a housing development at Monksmoor Park, Daventry.

Some successful 'living walls' have been created on high rise buildings, but these are specialist features, which require constant maintenance, and need to be very carefully located so that they do not stand out as much as the structure itself.

Warehouses and Distribution Depots and Industrial Units

The height requirements for warehousing have increased as new methods for storing and distribution have evolved. This is a process which seems likely to continue. While high rise residential and office development is capable of location within an existing built-up area, the scale and operational requirements of warehouse and distribution activities means that development generally takes place at the edge of settlements, and often forms the interface between the countryside and urban areas. In some cases, it is located on new, and more remote sites near to the strategic road or rail system.

This has resulted in some of the worst examples of damage to the Northamptonshire countryside (eg.Fig.8, Fig.11). This has been due to insufficient consideration being given to the wider impact of the development, particularly in the Nene Valley, or because adequate attention has not been given to the design of the scheme at the detailed planning stage. As a first choice, the siting of warehousing and industrial areas should always relate to sites allocated in the Development Plan, where due consideration should have been given to the impact of development although this has not always been the case in the past. This should prevent the kind of problems which have been created in the past where speculative proposals have been permitted with a consequential detrimental impact on the countryside.

There will, of course, be existing sites, either operational or previously used where development or redevelopment might bring positive enhancements to the landscape and countryside. Before new greenfield sites are allocated, the redevelopment or re-use of existing unused or out-dated industrial and warehouse sites should be considered for allocation by LPAs. Developers should also be directed to such sites when speculative proposals come forward. As stated in section 2, there are many vacant warehouses in the county, often in strategically important locations. These give scope for beneficial use and both developers and LPAs should be certain that any proposal that comes forward cannot be accommodated within existing vacant or underused sites and buildings before new or greenfield sites are considered.

Often these areas have mature planting, which can be retained. More cost - effective new buildings can replace the outdated ones, and the principles of brownfield redevelopment can be achieved.

In selecting sites for allocation within the development plan or in the consideration of any other site that may come forward, it is crucial that LPAs take into account the impact that the scale of the development could have by using the visual impact tests described in this document and rejecting those sites which are unsuitable. It is necessary with all sites at an early stage to check viewpoints, looking at the likely impact of the scheme from the surrounding area. In some cases, views of a development may be as far back as eight to ten miles from the site. Photographic recording is an important tool, and, in some cases, accurate photomontages can be used to demonstrate positive or negative impact on the countryside. All elements need to be considered; so, for example, lighting and security measures will also have an impact as well as the buildings themselves. Light pollution is a growing problem along with the need to ensure the most energy

efficient system and so lighting and security should be designed to ensure minimum impact and in particular avoid unnecessarily excessive lighting around warehouses during night time.

It is not sufficient to assume that large warehouses can be hidden behind tree planting unless mature existing tree belts can be used. As previously noted, by the time most trees have reached maturity, the warehousing will most likely have become redundant. Sites where part, if not all, of the building can be hidden within the folds or contours of the landscape, can be acceptable. In some cases, the creation of artificial mounding in conjunction with natural contours can help to reduce the impact of large buildings. This is also referred to elsewhere in the guide.

As noted in section 8 of this guide, *materials and colour* play an important part in the way large buildings impact on the landscape. Regimented coloured cladding only serves to emphasise a building in the landscape Innovative approaches to colour can have effective results. Lessons can be learnt from the wartime camouflage artists when naturalistic blends of colour were used. While some interesting creations have resulted from cladding with stylised trees, such an approach will not always be suitable and each scheme will require its own, possibly unique, solution. Grey and white cladding, shading from darker to light, can be effective against the sky and can help reduce the scale and impact of the building.

Out of Town Shopping Development and Retail Parks

Retail parks share many of the issues of business parks and warehouse complexes in terms of their impact on the countryside and location at the urban fringe. Ideally large brownfield sites should be the prime allocations in the Development Plan. A significant example of this is the former gasworks site in Northampton.

Another interesting example of the use of a semi - brownfield site for retail is at Rushden Lakes, where great emphasis has been placed on the interface between retail and leisure activities with highly sensitive ecological areas.

Buildings on retail parks can vary from relatively low-rise in nature to the height required for some warehousing and office buildings. Because of this means of integration into the countryside may vary and similar issues to those described previously for warehousing would apply.

The design of roofscapes, and the use of traditional local materials, can add variety and help to integrate retail units into the adjacent countryside. Often it is the rear of the units that interface with the countryside, and these may be less well designed. Each elevation needs careful treatment to minimise its impact.

Car parking is an integral part of retail parks despite green transport initiatives. Car parking areas and servicing should be located to reduce its impact on the site and landscape and not create large parking areas or service areas which visually dominate the site or surrounding area. Car parking dominates the Rushden Lakes Shopping Complex, whereas multiple smaller parking areas could have been integrated more satisfactorily.

Signs, especially on the approaches to retail parks, although essential, can be visually intrusive and damage the surrounding area. Signs should always be located so that they do not constitute a visual intrusion and should try to reflect the character of the area, using where possible traditional local materials.

Schools and Colleges, Care Homes and Medical Facilities

These tend to be individually designed buildings; the locations of brownfield sites will be preferable for such uses, especially when these are near to the area they are intended to serve. Development of these sites, as well as providing community needs will also result in an enhancement of the brownfield site. Significant brownfield land has been used in Northampton for University buildings and halls of residence.

Where these buildings are to be located on the edge of a settlement at the interface with the countryside, the building form should reflect traditional vernacular building types, such as a complex of farm buildings. This may mean limiting the height to two storeys in order to reduce the impact.

Often these types of building are set back from the site boundaries, thereby giving scope for landscaping using the hierarchical format of indigenous planting, or retaining existing field boundaries, hedges and trees.

Petrol and Service Stations

These are often located in open countryside to serve major roads, and can be intrusive - especially when viewed from the surrounding countryside. Choosing and allocating sites that are screened by the contours of the landscape, or by other features, such as existing woodland, will make them less visible. Choosing vernacular forms and local materials will also help to integrate the buildings into their surroundings.

Like retail parks, service stations require signage. If the location is not a trunk road, but associated with a market town, village or in the open countryside, then signage should be limited. On motorways and dual carriageways, signs should be located so as not to intrude into the wider countryside. All illumination should also be shielded to minimise light pollution.

Farms, Country Parks, Leisure Facilities, and the settings of Historic Houses, Parks and Gardens

Buildings associated with these types of activities are generally of a much smaller scale than many associated with more commercial types of activity. However, they can still have a detrimental impact on the sensitive landscapes in which they are located. Location and design are fundamental considerations and the use of vernacular forms and materials can help to integrate contemporary buildings into a traditional landscape.

The visitor centre at Stanwick Lakes is an example of a contemporary building, which sits well within its landscape. A more traditional approach to providing visitor facilities is at Top Lodge, Fineshade, where traditional farm buildings have been converted and extended. Visitor facilities or any building in these settings should never be so dominant or designed in such a way that they actually detract from the asset to which it relates.

Many historic houses tend to use existing buildings, such as stables, as visitor facilities which should always be the preferred option. Where a new visitor centre or associated facilities, such as car or coach parking is needed that cannot be accommodated in traditional buildings, a location

remote from the historic core of the complex may be the best option. Examples of this approach elsewhere in the country are at Waddesdon Manor in Buckinghamshire and Fountains Abbey in Yorkshire).

Historic landscapes, parks and gardens are often associated with country houses, and can come under pressure for development. Sometimes this is as a result of large estates being subdivided, or the need to generate resources to repair or restore the house, gardens or structures to which it relates. Where a scheme is proposed, it is essential to ensure that historic landscapes, parks and gardens are not damaged or compromised by inappropriate development. *The starting point for any consideration of a development proposal is a thorough understanding of context and evolution*. Parks and gardens often complement the house to which they relate and may contain structures, planting or designs that have vital historic characteristics and may also be associated with well-known designers of significance.

As well as pressure on large estates and landscapes relating to country houses, farm diversification has led to many non-traditional uses in the countryside. Where farms take on such activities, or where expansion is proposed, they should be accommodated within existing farm buildings where possible. These already form part of the setting and would result in little impact on the landscape. Farm diversification is good for business but can also bring with it many pressures on the countryside. This would include increased traffic generation on rural roads and on-site areas for car parking. The potential adverse effect of this, in terms of safety and visual impact may restrict forms of farm diversification.

Caravan and Mobile Home Parks

This category of development includes mobile home and caravan sites that accommodate caravans and mobile homes for occasional or holiday use only, and sites used for permanent occupation. Also falling into the category of temporary holiday accommodation are lodges, and the structures associated with the growing interest in glamping holidays and the development of sites with accommodation provided in yurts and associated structures. In all cases they are often in open countryside or at the edge of urban areas and therefore their impact upon the surrounding landscape can be considerable.

The design and appearance of both holiday and permanent sites, where the layout is frequently in regimented lines, creates a stark appearance and this, together with the choice of materials and colours, contrasts and conflicts with the local vernacular traditions.

There is no control over the colour of caravans, particularly on sites accommodating holiday visitors. In contrast, for some mobile homes and holiday lodges, colour and materials may be specified as part of a planning approval.

In choosing the appropriate site for caravans, mobile homes and other forms of holiday accommodation, a location where views across the site into the open countryside or more distant landscape should be avoided. Similarly, development on hillsides is not suitable as these are generally visible from a much wider area.

A more appropriate site would be one where existing mature planting can be utilised to ensure sufficient screening, but it is important that any site for such activities should not compromise broader policies to avoid development in the open countryside or impact on designed landscapes or mature woodland.

An increasing amount of tourism within this country seems likely in the future, as travel patterns change and this may generate an increased demand for sites that can accommodate camping, caravanning and similar activities. This does not mean that where an acceptable site has been identified, and developed, future expansion to meet increased demand would be appropriate.

An existing farm complex may give scope for the location of accommodation for temporary holiday use, and can contribute to farm diversification. It may be possible to utilise under-used buildings within the farm complex, and this would be preferable to siting new structures or mobile holiday homes, although it may be possible for temporary holiday accommodation to be successfully integrated into the landscape by careful siting within the farm complex.

Mobile homes or lodges and other associated buildings can be constructed from timber and other traditional materials. Where a small number of static caravans are to be provided, they can be more appropriately located within disused areas of the farmyard rather than by expanding beyond the built part of the complex. Wherever they are located they should be designed and finished in a way that they can be successfully integrated with their surroundings.

Recycling plants and buildings associated with mineral extraction

Recycling plants should only be sited in open countryside where there is sound justification to warrant locating the process away from existing settlements. As with warehousing and industrial buildings, similar principles should be followed in open countryside. The use of natural materials, such as timber cladding and living roofs can help to integrate buildings with the existing landscape.

Boundary treatments are important where these types of buildings are in open countryside. High security fencing is out of place and should be softened with planting outside the security line. Locations adjacent to existing woodland or tree plantations will also help to soften the development.

Buildings associated with mineral extraction are generally temporary, but can exist for many years in some cases. Therefore, they need to be sited where they will have minimal impact on the landscape. Care should also be taken over the choice of cladding to blend in with the countryside.

Farm Buildings

Traditional farm buildings, built from local materials are an established part of the Northamptonshire countryside. Modern farming methods however often have no use for such buildings, and many have been converted for other uses as discussed in our *Countryside Design Guide* (2016). Modern farming methods require larger buildings than those associated with traditional methods of farming. While these are needed to maintain a sustainable countryside and viable agricultural industry; their design, colour and siting are important. Where possible, new farm buildings should be located so that they physically relate to existing buildings on the farm, and in particular to any traditional grouping, without overwhelming the original buildings. Impact on the surrounding landscape and character of the farm, will, in this way, be minimised.

Where new buildings are to be in open countryside, innovative designs need to be considered to reduce the impact. This can include incorporating variable ridge lines and the sub division of buildings into smaller units. ***As with other forms of development in the countryside, effective landscaping schemes are essential***. This can include locating the buildings to make best use of existing trees and landscape features to reduce impact, and supplementing existing tree planting where required.

There are many ethical and environmental concerns about factory farming methods, nevertheless proposals for this industrialised form of production do come forward, and these can be on the same scale as a major industrial building. Like industrial buildings they should not be located in open countryside. Their siting, design and landscape treatment and mitigation requires very careful consideration, and their location may, in some cases, may be more appropriate to an industrial park.

As will all forms of development which may impact on the landscape, green is not normally an appropriate colour for farm buildings. Earthy hues, straw colours and, in some cases, dark browns and black, are more appropriate and reflect the character of traditional buildings in the countryside.

Roads

Road developments can have a massive impact on the countryside. Many battles have been fought over the routing of roads through the countryside. An exhaustive list of factors affecting road building would be impossible and inappropriate in this document.

Historically trackways and roadways followed the contours of the land and in some cases ownership boundaries. Taking account of contours is still a vital element in siting of roads to ensure they fit well with existing landscapes. The impact of a new road on the wider landscape and views of the road needs to be taken into account, just as much as for a large warehouse, or any other form of development.

Where roads do not follow the contours of the land, and the creation of cuttings and embankments are necessary, integration with the countryside is very difficult, and particular attention will be needed to the landscaping and tree planting to ensure minimum impact on the surrounding countryside.

The possibilities of long stretches of dual carriageway being visible across a wide landscape should be avoided. Tree planting can be used to soften the visible edges of roads, but should be planted in naturalistic clumps reflective of indigenous tree growth and species. Opportunities should be taken to design and landscape roadside verges in a form that encourages nature conservation and allows natural wildlife corridors to form or be retained.

Fig. 20: Bluebells at Hemplow Hills near Daventry.

10. Conclusion

The purpose of this *Guide* is to draw attention to the unique qualities and value of the Northamptonshire landscape. Its overriding aim is to encourage those responsible for development to have regard to, and respect for this when development that might impact on the landscape is being considered.

No *Guide* of this type can be comprehensive and cover every type of development. However, it is believed that its content, and the guidance it provides, can be used to assist in ensuring that development in all forms has full regard to the basic considerations the *Guide* contains, which have been referred to throughout the document.

The basic philosophy which underpins the *Guide* is that *any proposal which comes forward and any decision taken regarding development must have full regard to, and be based upon a deep appreciation and understanding of the landscape*. Not only its geology and history need to be considered, but also the elements which go to make up its unique quality and characteristics. This includes settlements and settlement pattern, the flora and fauna, forests, woodlands and trees, rivers and watercourses, field patterns and agriculture. *The interaction between these elements and their interdependence is fundamental to ensuring that development respects, and does not damage the landscape, or any element which gives the landscape its character and distinctiveness*.

While the Development Plan sets out both strategic and local policies regarding development and its location, including development which may have an impact on the landscape, policy alone cannot always ensure the right decision is taken. It is hoped that this *Guide* will provide some constructive options, and become a bridge between policy and the need for local aspirations and interests to be taken into account by all those involved in the development process.

Appendices

Appendix A: Landscape Design Checklist

In relation to development in the wider countryside: -

1. Is the proposed development in compliance with the approved *Development Plan, the Local Plan, the Neighbourhood Plan and/or Village Design Statement?*

2. Has an area search been undertaken at the pre-application stage to investigate whether there are restrictions arising from the designation of the location as a *Conservation Area, a Special Protection Area or a Site of Special Scientific Interest?*

3. Have special biodiversity areas and wildlife corridors been adequately respected?

4. Has there been a site analysis, taking into account landscape, ecological and archaeological considerations?

5. Does the development respect the *sense of place* that characterises the setting, including the balance between settlement patterns and the wider countryside?

6. Is the appreciation of the experience of historic assets safeguarded, as well its physical surroundings?

7. Does the development contribute positively to the conservation and enhancement of landscape features in the surrounding countryside?

8. Has the impact of the development on prominent views between settlements and their surroundings been taken sufficiently into account?

9. Does the proposed site respect the natural features of the landscape setting, and maintain visual continuity with the countryside?

10. Has the view of the site been considered from different angles and vantage points?

11. Have maintaining vistas of important features (eg. church spires, scheduled monuments, river valleys, etc.) been adequately safeguarded?

12. Does the scale, size and colour of the development, as well as choice of materials, successfully integrate it into the landscape?

13. Are public rights of way (including footpaths and bridleways) safeguarded, with provision for their maintenance and preservation?

In relation to development on the edge of small towns and villages: -

1. Does the development intrude, or have a negative impact, on the adjacent countryside through the use of inappropriate design, materials or colour?

2. Is the development suitable for the site in terms of scale, size, built form and colour?

3. Will traditional building materials that blend with surrounding buildings be used?

4. Has the integrity of neighbouring village communities been safeguarded in the location of new housing developments and/or industrial parks on the edge of nearby urban centres?

5. Have existing field patterns been retained, and, where possible can mature hedgerows and trees be used to integrate the development into the countryside?

6. Is sufficient screening (eg. through appropriate tree planting species, colour, minimal light pollution) envisaged in order to help merge the development into the landscape adequately?

7. Does the proposed lighting scheme seek to minimise the impact of night time glare and light pollution through low colour temperature of all external lighting and avoidance of upward lighting?

8. Have mitigation options (eg. appropriate tree planting species, restoration of traditional hedgerows, earth mounding, boundary treatments, traditional fencing/ dry stone walls) for integrating the development into the landscape been considered?

9. Will the development secure a harmonious transition between the settlement and the countryside?

10. Does the choice and location of signage reflect the *sense of place* and landscape setting?

11. If car parks are envisaged for visitors or development site workers, have appropriate measures been taken so that they merge into the landscape setting?

Appendix B: The Landscape Planning Background - Structures behind decision-making

Planning decisions are made according to a framework of policies which filter down from national to local level. The more local policies generally interpret or expand upon the higher level policies detailing how they should be applied within the local context.

Local Planning Authorities must grant permission for a development unless it is contrary to these policies or other material considerations. However, this is not a clear-cut process. There are occasions when the significance of the harm caused by a scheme might not be considered sufficient to outweigh the benefits that it would bring, and so it would be approved. Planning officers and planning committees have to weigh such proposals in the planning balance. They must, however, bear in mind that if they refuse an application, the applicant may appeal to the Planning Inspectorate who might overturn their decision and award costs against them. This can lead to conflict or concern when permission is granted for proposals that are widely unpopular with local communities because there are not strong enough reasons in policy to refuse them.

This highlights the importance of ensuring that when new planning policy documents are being developed, local communities must ensure that they include policies that identify and protect the things that are important to them (such as their valued landscapes). If protective policies are not in place when an application is made, it is usually too late to prevent a harmful development.

Appendix C: Abbreviations

AONB - *Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty*

BMVL - *Best & Most Versatile Land*

CLCA - *Current Landscape Character Assessment*

DEFRA - *Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs*

JCS - *Joint Core Strategy*

LPA - *Local Planning Authority*

NPPF - *National Planning Policy Framework*

ONS - *Office for National Statistics*

SPA - *Special Protection Area*

SSSI - *Site of Special Scientific Interest*

Appendix D: Glossary

Affordable housing - *Social & affordable rented housing provided for eligible households whose needs are not met by the market.*

Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) - *A national designation to protect land identified by Natural England and other bodies as being of outstanding landscape quality.*

Best & Most Versatile land - *Land graded at 1,2, or 3a under DEFRA's Agricultural Land Classification.*

Biomass planting - *Land used for the production of biomass used in the production of renewable energy.*

Boundary treatment - *The treatment around the edge of a development e.g. tree planting.*

Brownfield site - *Land previously developed or built upon.*

Built environment - *Built up areas as opposed to open countryside.*

Built form - *The shape and design of a building.*

Carbon sequestration - *A means of absorbing carbon such as tree planting or peat restoration.*

Conservation Area - *An area which is statutorily protected for its historic and architectural qualities.*

Core strategy - *The Strategic Development Plan for an area as approved, after public consultation by an Inspector appointed by HM Government (see also Development Plan).*

Designated employment land - *Land designated in the Development Plan or Local Plan for any type of employment use.*

Development Plan - *A strategic area plan that incorporates policies to be adopted by Local Plans, Neighbourhood Plans and Village Design statements.*

Earth mounding - *Man made earth movement usually to screen or enhance the setting of a development.*

Grade I, II*, II Building - *Historic England's Grading of buildings according to their exceptional interest, requiring 'Listed Building Consent' for any changes.*

Heritage asset - *A building, site, monument, landscape or place having a degree of historical significance that merits consideration in planning decisions.*

Indigenous trees - *Native British tree species eg Ash, Beech, Birch, Lime, Oak, Willow.*

Infill development - *Small scale development within existing urban areas.*

Joint Core Strategy (JCS) - *North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy 2011- 2031 (July 2016) and West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (December 2014).*

Landscape architecture - *The design and assessment of landscape in particular for development.*

Landscape character type - *The specific features that define a particular area of the countryside.*

Landscape setting - *The unique combination of features that make each landscape distinctive.*

Living walls - *External walls of buildings covered in vertical planting. These can have both a visual impact and carbon reducing impact.*

Local Plan - *The Plan for the future development of the local area drawn up by the Local Planning Authority in consultation with the local community.*

Neighbourhood Plan - *A Plan prepared by a town/Parish Council for a particular neighbourhood area.*

Nucleated settlements - *Small homogeneous settlement patterns.*

Ramsar site - *Wetlands of international importance under the Ramsar Convention (1971)*

Ridge and furrow - *An historic field pattern formed of ridges and furrows created by the division of land into strips for cultivation, prior to the 18th century Enclosure Acts which created the larger field seen today.*

Sense of place - *The environment created by specific buildings and uses in a given area.*

Settlement edge landscape - *The interface between urban or built up areas and open countryside.*

Settlement boundary - *Built up areas of settlement within a specific defined area.*

Scheduled Ancient Monument - *A building, or site statutorily protected as an historic structure or site, the remains of which may be buried underground. Scheduled Ancient Monument Consent is required for any type of work to these sites.*

Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) - *A site or area designated by Natural England as important due to its wildlife, geology or landform.*

Special Protection Area (SPA) - *An area designated under an EU Directive as being of international importance for the breeding, feeding, wintering or migration of rare birds and vulnerable species.*

Supplementary Planning Document - *A document adding further detail to the Local Plan on specific a site or issue.*

Vernacular form - *A traditional building form often relating to a particular style or use of materials associated with that area.*

Village Design Statement - *Plan developed by small village(s) incorporating current assets and future planning options.*

Visual continuity - *Buildings or forms of landscape or a mixture of both that harmonise.*

Wildlife corridors - *Areas of habitat connecting wildlife populations.*

Windfall Site - *A site which gains Planning Permission that is not in the Development Plan or Local Plan.*

Appendix E: References & Further Reading

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