

4.4 Stakeholder Workshop - Local Distinctiveness

4.4.1 Understanding Daventry's character was discussed at the stakeholder workshop. The following list includes elements of design and locally distinctive features, which local stakeholders considered to be characteristic of the area.

1. Historic nature of High Street / Sheaf Street
2. Historic core and design elements / opportunities for improvement
3. Victorian building form
4. Shop front design
5. Key landmarks and buildings (Moot Hall, Church, War Memorial, Hospital, BBC building, Saracens Head, Banks, Magistrates Court)
6. Church and Churchyard, including retaining wall of church
7. Recreation Ground
8. Market Square - organic space
9. Gunnels / Alleyways
10. Burgage plots
11. Topography / Landscape
12. Gateways /civic frontage
13. Key views into and out of town
14. Key approaches into and out of the town
15. Appropriate scale of buildings
16. Open spaces – relationship
17. Parking – Free / need to retain
18. Opportunities for expansion

4.5 Defining Local Character – Daventry District's Landscape

4.5.1 The Northamptonshire Uplands are a long range of clay hills which extend from the Cotswolds and the Cherwell Valley in the south west to the low ground of the Leicestershire Vales around Market Harborough. In the west it abuts the lower ground of the Feldon and to the east subsides towards the Nene Valley within the Northamptonshire Vales. It is part of the Wolds landscapes that include the dip slope of the Cotswolds and extends to High Leicestershire and the Leicestershire and Nottinghamshire Wolds.

4.5.2 According to Pevsner (1961), 'the relatively high ground (c 500 ft), that runs from the Cherwell Valley through Daventry and Naseby, to the hills above Market Harborough, is formed by hard Middle Lias ironstone or Marlstone. Both below and above the rocks are mainly clay or clayey limestone in thin bands. In the next formation above the Lias, although a good deal of clay is still present, the most important unit is the brown sandy calcareous rock with clusters of fossil shells. In places, on the same stratal level, the ironstone is almost completely replaced by loose grey and white sands'.

4.5.3 The central section of the Northamptonshire Uplands has a rolling, gently hilly landform, with long, level views criss-crossed by a regular pattern of hedgerows with frequent ash trees. These and the small, but very frequent, copses give many areas a well treed character which has been lost on some of the more level and fertile ground. Although there are some settlements prominently sited on hilltops, most lie within

the small, sheltered valleys and this, together with the infrequency of the isolated farms and cottages, gives the area a remote quality. To the south of Daventry, the land is much more hilly and the undulations are sharper and more frequent. The fields are generally smaller and settlements are more frequent, with distinctive hills as the land steepens in the north above the Grand Union Canal at Hemplow or around Catesby. The main settlements of the area are small villages with red brick or ironstone buildings clustered around an ironstone church, although creamy-grey limestone is used in the north.

4.5.4 To summarise the Northamptonshire Uplands has:

- Rounded, undulating hills with many long, low ridgelines.
- Abundant and prominent ridge and furrow with frequent deserted and shrunken settlements.
- Sparse settlement of nucleated villages on hilltops valley heads.
- Mixed farming: open arable contrasts with pasture enclosed by good hedges with frequent hedgerow trees.
- Wide views from the edges and across the ridgetops.
- Straight, wide, enclosure roads, often following ridges.
- Little woodland, but prominent coverts on higher ground.
- Ironstone and limestone older buildings with a transition across the area. Brick buildings in some villages.