Daventry Landscape Character Assessment
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Version</th>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>June 2018</td>
<td>T. Johns</td>
<td>T. Grimshaw</td>
<td>Amendment to text on page 16 of LCT4 'Rolling Valley Slopes' in response to representation to Emerging Draft Local Plan</td>
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1.0 Introduction

In October 2016, The Environment Partnership (TEP) Ltd. was commissioned by Daventry District Council to review of the Northamptonshire Current Landscape Character Assessment (CLCA) that was undertaken in 2005 and update the Daventry District part of the assessment. There are 11 landscape character types in Daventry District and this assessment has worked with the boundaries from the 2005 study and provided a more detailed analysis and description.

Landscape character assessment is an important tool to help local authorities ensure all landscapes are effectively planned, well designed and sensitively managed. It is a decision-making tool which systematically classifies the landscape into distinctive areas based on the interaction between landform, geology, land use, vegetation pattern and human influence. Its role is to ensure that future changes do not undermine the intrinsic character or features of value within a landscape.

Aim

The primary aim of this assessment is to provide a detailed understanding of the characteristics and sensitivities of each landscape character area and to identify key distinctive features.

The assessment will provide a robust evidence base in relation to the character and quality of the landscape and to help to identify the setting of some of the District’s villages. It will inform the evidence for landscape policies in the emerging Part 2 Local Plan which includes the review of the current Special Landscape Area designation, Green Wedge and Rural Access Area policies.

The assessment should be read in conjunction with the relevant Local Plan policies and other supporting landscape evidence.

Scope

The assessment focusses on the landscape character of the District together with the landscape setting to Daventry towns and some of the villages. Links are made with existing Village Design Statements where appropriate.

More detailed landscape assessments will be required from developers intending to develop on the fringes to settlements and guidance on the approach is provided in the Landscape Capacity Assessment Toolkit.

2.0 Who is this document for?

This document is relevant to anyone who has an interest in the landscape of Daventry. The main applications for the document are to:

- Promote what is special and contributes to sense of place in the District;
- Provide a technical document to inform the evidence for landscape policies within the emerging Part 2 Local Plan;
- Inform the consideration of site allocations in local and neighbourhood plans;
- Assist development management officers to assess whether proposals will make a positive contribution to landscape character;
- Assist council officers to provide targeted, landscape-related mitigation and conditions to accompany planning decisions;
- Provide guidance to developers to help prepare proposals which make a positive contribution to landscape and sense of place;
- Provide guidelines to land managers to identify area specific landscape management operations such as new tree, woodland and hedgerow planting or hedgerow boundary replacement; and
- Provide information for use by the general public and interest groups who may have a personal interest in the landscape around where they live.
3.0 Landscape Character Assessment

Landscape character is a complex interplay of physical and human influences which have shaped the landscape. An understanding of these influences is central to the assessment process and has provided the basis on which to define and describe landscape character. This Daventry LCA has reviewed the descriptions of physical and human aspects from the Northamptonshire Current LCA (2005) and updated descriptions as to how these features manifest themselves in the landscape. (Physical aspects are geology and soils, landform, hydrology, land use and land cover, and woodland and trees; human aspects are buildings and settlement, heritage features, boundaries, communications, and infrastructure and recreation.)

Within the characterisation process the landscape is divided into a series of **Landscape Character Types**. These are distinct types of landscape that are relatively homogeneous in character. They are generic in nature in that they may occur in different parts of the district and county, and indeed the country, but wherever they occur they share broadly similar combinations of geology, landform, drainage patterns, vegetation, and historical land use and settlement pattern. Each landscape character type is then sub-divided into **Landscape Character Areas**. These are unique and geographically discrete areas of the landscape that share characteristics of the broader landscape type to which they belong.

An important feature of the character assessment process is that it is objective; no judgment is made of a particular landscape’s value or quality. However, attention is given to identifying characteristics that are distinctive, rare or special as well as those that are more commonplace and it will be used to inform policy on landscape planning and protection.

*View across landscape towards Newnham Hill and Fox Hill from Chapel Lane (north of Badby Wood)*
4.0 National Character Areas

National Character Areas (NCAs), devised and prepared by Natural England, divide England into 159 distinct natural areas. Each is defined by a unique combination of landscape, biodiversity, geodiversity, history, and cultural and economic activity. Their boundaries follow logical lines in the landscape, often natural features, rather than administrative boundaries.

Those of relevance to Daventry District are described below. (Figure 1)

**NCA 95: Northamptonshire Uplands** covers most of the District extending from close to Market Harborough north of the District to Banbury to the south. The landscape is described as gently rounded hills and valleys with many long, low ridgelines and a great variety of landform. The watercourse network flows outward from high ground in all directions including the rivers Cherwell, Avon, Welland and Ise. Prominent scarp slopes in the north form an important backdrop to lowland vales associated with the River Welland and Avon. The central part of the character area is characterised by a series of undulating hills and valleys, while in the south individual hills and knolls are important in defining sense of place. The landscape is sparsely wooded but where present it is in more visually prominent locations. Views are often extensive from higher ground but more enclosed in more secluded river valleys. Human influences are evident in the pattern of rectilinear fields surrounded by hedgerows. Nucleated villages are often on high ground or at valley heads and characterised by local ironstone as a building material. Many historic sites, houses, parks and gardens also are features of this landscape. This includes the site of the Battle of Naseby as well as the many historic parkland estates (including Cottesbrooke and Althorp) and frequent ridge and furrow add a richness and diversity to this farming landscape. There are frequent reservoirs (the largest being Pitsford Water) which together with the Oxford Canal and Grand Union Canal form important landscape features as well as value as recreational and wildlife resources. Communications and transport infrastructure often follow the lower broader river valleys whilst main roads are often along the ridgelines.

**NCA 89: Northamptonshire Vales** covers the eastern edge of the District and the landscape is open with gently undulating clay ridges and valleys with occasional steep scarp slopes. It is primarily an agricultural landscape with relatively little woodland. The River Valleys of the Welland and Nene are distinctive features with flat floodplains and gravel terraces. Frequent large settlements dominate the open character including Northampton with linear infrastructure such as roads and rail. There are frequent smaller towns and villages as well as prominent historic parklands and country houses on the outer fringes where the landscape is more wooded.

**NCA 96: Dunsmore and Feldon** covers the western fringes of the District and includes the Rains Brook Valley south of Rugby. This is a predominantly quiet rural landscape with low hills, heathland plateau and clay vales. It has narrow meandering river valleys, canals including the Grand Union Canal and generally has low woodland cover. Settlements are mostly nucleated in form with occasional farmsteads. Busy roads and large industrial units are present on the outskirts of main settlements, including Daventry and Rugby.
5.0 Neighbouring Local Authority Areas

Daventry District has a number of boundaries with neighbouring local authority areas (Figure 2). To the north is Harborough District in Leicestershire. To the east is Kettering Borough and Wellingborough and to the south is Northampton Borough and South Northamptonshire (all in Northamptonshire). Along the western boundary is Stratford District and Rugby Borough, both in Warwickshire. As landscape character area boundaries follow lines based on readily identifiable features, some of the Daventry landscape character areas in this assessment extend across the administrative boundaries into the other Northamptonshire local authorities areas.
6.0 Method

This update assessment was carried out following the principles and methods set out in the following documents:

- An approach to Landscape Character Assessment, natural England 2014;
- Landscape Character Topic Paper 6: techniques and Criteria for Judging Capacity and Sensitivity, Swanwick C, The Countryside Agency (now Natural England) and Scottish Natural Heritage 2013; and

Desk-based Review

A summary of the NCA descriptions relevant to Daventry are set out above. A review was undertaken of the existing landscape character, environment and green infrastructure evidence base for Northamptonshire as well as other relevant documents including:

- Daventry District Local Plan Saved Policies (adopted 1997, saved 2007);
- Northamptonshire Structure Plan (1996-2016);
- West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (2014);
- Daventry District Part 2a Settlements and Countryside Local Plan Issues and Options document (2016); and
- Campaign to Protect Rural England Tranquillity Mapping.

The desk-based research also included analysis of Geographical Information Systems (GIS) data sets provided by Daventry District Council including:

- Topography;
- Heritage designations; and
- Natural environment designations.

Prior to carrying out site surveys the Northamptonshire Current Landscape Character Assessment was reviewed to determine potential key locations or survey points to be visited for each landscape character type and area. This was supplemented by a map of the District highlighting key viewpoints across the landscape provided by Council Officers.

Field Assessment

Site surveys were carried out by teams of experienced Chartered Landscape Architects, and included a comprehensive ‘drive-around’ the District and the walking of sections of public rights of way to gain an impression of landscape character and views (see Appendix A). Pre-determined key viewpoints at roads, public rights of way and settlements edges were also visited and assessed.

The site survey supplemented desk-based assessment to provide a review of each character area against the key characteristics to gain an understanding of where consistency remained and where landscapes had been subject to alteration since the previous assessment in 2005. The boundaries to landscape character areas were assessed to determine whether any minor amendments would be needed.

Landscape Character Type (LCT) Characteristics

Text for key characteristics of each landscape character type was updated.
7.0 How to use this document

The Assessment document has been structured to enable users to easily access information on a specific landscape character area.

The Daventry District LCA identifies 11 Landscape Character Types (LCT) across Northamptonshire (Figure 3). These are listed in the table below as well as the landscape character areas within each LCT using the reference number used in the 2005 study.

These are shown on Figure 1, Landscape Character Types and Figure 2, Landscape Character Areas.

Reporting on the landscape character types and areas is by discrete sections of the main document, including maps and photos. Each section includes:

- An introduction to the landscape character type with summary of key landscape features;
- The sub-division into landscape character areas and a narrative for each covering more detailed landscape descriptions, statement of landscape condition and a landscape strategy outline; and
- A conclusion covering landscape guidelines and priorities going forward for the landscape character type.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Landscape Character Type</th>
<th>Landscape Character Area</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Ironstone Uplands</td>
<td>1a Guilsborough Ironstone Uplands 1b Spratton and Creaton Ironstone Uplands</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Ironstone Hills</td>
<td>2a Eydon Hills 2b Staverton Hills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Rolling Ironstone Valley Slopes</td>
<td>4a Harlestone Heath and the Bramptons 4b Moulton Slopes 4d Hanging Houghton 4e Pitsford Water</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Clay Plateau</td>
<td>5a Naseby Plateau 5b Sywell Plateau</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Undulating Claylands</td>
<td>6a The Tove Catchment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Undulating Hills and Valleys</td>
<td>13a Woodford Halse and Weedon Bec 13b Daventry 13c Long Buckby 13d Cottesbrooke and Arthingworth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Rolling Agricultural Lowlands</td>
<td>14a Newbold Ground</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Farmed Scarp Slopes</td>
<td>15a Hothorpe Hills to Great Oxendon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. River Valley Floodplain</td>
<td>17c Brampton Valley Floodplain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Broad River Valley Floodplain</td>
<td>18a The Nene – Long Buckby to Weedon Bec</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. Broad Unwooded Vale</td>
<td>19b Vale of Rugby 19c Welland Vale</td>
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Daventry Landscape Character Assessment

Figure 3 Landscape Character Types

1. Ironstone Uplands
2. Ironstone Hills
4. Rolling Ironstone Valley Slopes
6. Undulating Claylands
13. Undulating Hills and Valleys
14. Rolling Agricultural Lowlands
15. Farmed Scarp Slopes
16. Broad Unwooded Vale
17. River Valley Floodplain
18. Broad River Valley Floodplain
19. Broad Unwooded Vale
LCT 1 Ironstone Uplands

1a Guilsborough Ironstone Uplands

1b Spratton and Creaton Ironstone Uplands

Daventry
LCT 1 Ironstone Uplands

Key Landscape Character Features

- Elevated, undulating upland landform provides intermittent long distance views
- Ironstone geology expressed in local vernacular buildings and in rich red soils. While building materials vary, vernacular architecture and churches display the local ironstone. This provides a strong sense of connection with the underlying geology and memorable local landmarks and features.
- Distinct broad backed ridges aligned on a northwest to southeast orientation impart a distinctive grain to the landform.
- Arable farmland in medium and large-scale fields predominates on elevated land although sheep pastures also prevalent, often in smaller fields on sloping landform, around farmsteads and village fringes. This strengthens the distinction between a broader scale field pattern on the open and gently sloping elevated land and ridge tops, with agricultural practices creating a seasonally changing patchwork of contrasting colours and textures; and a network of smaller scale pasture fields on steeper slopes and lower lying areas.
- Limited woodland cover, comprising occasional small coverts and spinneys on valley slopes below the spring line and small shelter belts close to farmsteads emphasises the distinction between the simple and more open elevated areas and more enclosed and verdant valley slopes below the crest of the upland ridges.
- Hedgerow trees are an important landscape feature, particularly given the landscape’s unwooded character and provide locally important features within an otherwise generally open character.
- Hedgerows generally low and well clipped although intermittent sections show evidence of decline. The pattern of fields is evocative of centuries of land management and changing agricultural practices.
- Settlement pattern of small nucleated villages located along principal direct routes across the uplands together with a wider settlement pattern of isolated farmsteads off tracks located at right angles to the main arterial routes. This generally sparse and simple settlement pattern imparts a rural character to the landscape.
LCT 1 Ironstone Uplands

Character Area 1a Guilsborough Ironstone Uplands

19c Vale of Rugby

5a Naseby Clay Plateau

13d Cottesbrooke and Arthingworth

13c Long Buckby

January 2017
LCT 1 Ironstone Uplands

Description

This is the larger of the two landscape character areas and is an elevated landscape that rises above the northern part of the Undulating Hills and Valleys LCT that extends across much of the western side of the county. The central part of the character area is an elevated gently undulating broad backed ridge extending from Teeton in the south to the A14 which forms the northern boundary. The fringes of the character area are steeply sloping forming the slopes of the ridge. At the northern end of the character area is Honey Hill which rises to 214m AOD and is a distinctive landmark from surrounding roads and along the Jurassic Way. There are a number of small tributaries which start around the fringes of this character area and flow down the steeper slopes to join river valleys within the adjacent Undulating Hills and Valleys LCT. The most notable are two narrow valleys which are both between Guilsborough and Cold Ashby which are the upper parts of tributaries that flow into Hollowell Reservoir in the adjacent LCT Undulating Hills and Valleys (LCA13d). There are also a number of natural springs around Hollowell.

This is a rural landscape with a simple pattern of medium to large arable fields bounded by low hedgerows with hedgerow trees. The combination of field size and low hedgerows allows long distance views across the landscape, particularly close to the fringes where views are possible across the adjacent vales to hills within the Undulating Hills and Valleys LCT. Arable fields tend to occupy the higher ground whilst pasture is on the steeper valley sides, steeper slopes on the edge of the character area and as smaller fields around the fringes of the settlements and close to farmsteads.

Woodland cover is predominantly broadleaved spinneys and coverts and is concentrated around steeper valley slopes in the northern and western parts of the character area, small woodlands around the fringes of Cold Ashby Golf Course, along springs and streams and around the fringes of settlements. Other woodlands in the southern part of the character area are often on upper slopes of river valleys which extend into the adjacent Undulating Hills and Valleys LCT (LCA13c). Within the steeply sloping valleys there is a greater concentration of woodland copses and spinneys and field size is generally smaller which combines to create a sense of enclosure and a contrast to the more open arable farmland elsewhere.

Areas of more recent copse planting are present to the south west of Cold Ashby. This planting includes a high proportion of evergreen species. The fringes of these plantations are planted with broadleaved species to help integrate the woodlands into the surroundings. Elsewhere woodland planting is limited and tree cover comprises mainly oak and ash hedgerow trees which punctuate the otherwise simple open landscape. Tree cover is often concentrated around farmsteads and isolated buildings forming shelterbelts which are often prominent in this open landscape or specimen trees are planted as avenues along farm access tracks. At the entrances to some farmsteads there are stone or brick walls which are an urbanising feature within this rural landscape.

Profile of Honey Hill viewed from adjacent Welford Road
Occasionally species of pine are present within hedgerows along some roads and around farmsteads and villages. In addition specimen conifer planting is present around some farmsteads (as shelter belts) and at the entrance to Cold Ashby Golf Course. This conifer planting is uncharacteristic and a suburbanising feature within the landscape where the majority of tree planting is broadleaved.

The Ironstone geology is a strong unifying feature, its presence reflected in the rich red soils of the ploughed fields, and its use as a local building stone in vernacular buildings within the series of villages that are present across the plateau. Settlements are generally on the fringes of the character area occupying the slopes of the ridges. Guilsborough is the largest settlement and is primarily a linear settlement on high ground to the immediate west of Hollowell Reservoir. Parkland along its eastern boundary extends down the slopes from the village towards Hollowell Reservoir and provides a distinctive edge to the village and around the reservoir. Guilsborough Church forms a distinctive landmark within the surroundings farmland and on the approach to the village from the south.

Other settlements of Cold Ashby, Thornby, Holowell and Teeton have a smaller clustered form. Open spaces and mature trees as well as small copses around village fringes are important to the villages’ sense of place. Grounds of manors are important in providing a verdant and wooded character to village edges at Teeton (Teeton Hall), Thornby (Thornby Hall) and at Hollowell. Smaller pastoral fields are also important in integrating villages into their rural surroundings and often taller unclipped stockproof hedgerows and hedgerow trees provide some screening or softening to village fringes.

Recreational uses are often present around village fringes such as around Guilsborough School and a recreation ground on the western edge of Cold Ashby. These facilities respect the field pattern and mature boundaries help integrate them with the surrounding farmland.

Individual trees are important to the character of villages and an important aspect of the village skyline often creating the appearance of properties dispersed within trees in views towards the settlements from surrounding roads and footpaths. Mature evergreen trees (of various species) are a feature of some of the villages such as Teeton and Hollowell and provide interest along village approaches.

The villages have many older local vernacular buildings constructed from Northamptonshire Ironstone and cob buildings and boundary walls are evident in a number of the villages, such as Thornby and Cold Ashby and where present add to local historic character and sense of place.
LCT 1 Ironstone Uplands

Character Area 1a Guilsborough Ironstone Uplands

Cob buildings are typically properties constructed from ironstone to the base and straw and clay above (some of which has been refaced with brick). This character is often reinforced by local vernacular stone or brick walls around properties and village roads. Some newer developments have used local ironstone to help reflect local distinctiveness and integrate them into the village.

West Haddon is on the southern edge of the character area. The older part of the settlement is within the adjacent character area (LCA13c). The newer 20th century expansion of the village is on higher ground within this character area and development is gradually extending up to the ring road along its northern fringes. This part of the village appears as a line of properties within limited trees or vegetation on high ground from the surrounding farmland.

This is a generally quiet rural area with movement and noise confined to well used arterial roads that are to the north and south west of the character area. Most of the rural roads are relatively narrow and bordered by narrow grassed verges and hedgerows. Most have low hedgerows although on lower ground and closer to settlements hedgerows are often taller where they are around pastoral farmland.

Infrastructure within this landscape includes 6 wind turbines north west of Guilsborough and a mast at Honey Hill both of which are prominent vertical features on high ground within this open rural landscape. There is also a solar farm north of Guilsborough, this is set away from the roads and is barely perceptible in the landscape due to screening by hedgerows. Access tracks to the facility are rural in character.

Landscape condition

Moderate
Landscape features across this character area are generally in good condition although there is evidence of hedgerow fragmentation and loss with replacement by wire fencing. The fencing is generally well maintained although does undermine the pattern of the landscape.
LCT 1 Ironstone Uplands

Character Area 1a Guilsborough Ironstone Uplands

Landscape Strategy

New development and changes in land management practices should conserve and enhance the quiet and generally open rural character of the Ironstone Uplands. The sloping fringes of the ridges are visible within the surrounding landscapes and development on these slopes would be visible and difficult to mitigate within a generally open landscape. The hedgerow network is an important characteristic of the landscape and the retention, conservation and enhancement of hedgerows should be encouraged to strengthen their visual contribution to the landscape as well as their biodiversity value. Hedgerows are important along rural roads and they should be managed to retain their integrity and maintain views out over the landscape.

The more contained wooded and pastoral valleys are a local feature of this landscape and contrast with the more open arable fields on higher ground. This character should be retained through management of woodland and any new planting should be focused on lower slopes avoiding the more open broad backed ridge. This landscape contains areas of new plantation woodland (including some for forestry). Broadleaved fringes to new planting with limited conifers, particularly where used plantations are for forestry is important in ensuring that they integrate with their surroundings. Shelter belt planting should avoid the use of leylandii and choose other more locally appropriate species around farmsteads and farm buildings.

Development in this rural landscape is often integrated into its surroundings by pastoral fields, maturing hedgerows and tree planting. Any new development, particularly along village fringes should respect the pattern of development, trees and open space to ensure that it demonstrates a positive contribution to local distinctiveness; respects approaches to villages, views to village skylines and landmark buildings or features (such as churches) and avoids hard developed edges intruding into the countryside.

Reference to village design statements and neighbourhood plans (where available) will aid recognition of local distinctiveness. New buildings should draw from characteristics and details of the local vernacular, including the use of local Ironstone or compatible materials to retain the strong connectivity between built form and the landscape.
LCT 1 Ironstone Uplands

Landscape Character 1b Spratton and Creaton Ironstone Uplands

1a Guilsborough
13c Long Buckby
13d Cottesbrooke and Arthingworth
4d Hanging Houghton
17c Brampton Valley Floodplain
LCT 1 Ironstone Uplands

Landscape Character 1b Spratton and Creaton Ironstone Uplands

Description

This character area is the smaller of the two within this landscape type and occupies high ground (broad backed ridge) east of Hollowell Reservoir. The land is a broad ridge at approximately 136m AOD at its highest and falling to the east and west where the lower lying vale landscape is part of the Undulating Hills and Valleys LCT. The landform is gently undulating although more steeply sloping to the north of Creaton as the land falls towards a tributary of the River Brampton as well as the east of Spratton where the landscape forms the upper slopes of a small river valley.

The landscape is characterised by irregular shaped medium to large arable fields bordered by low hedgerows and few hedgerow trees through the central and northern parts of the character area. Around the village fringes and primarily west of Welford Road the fields are smaller and typically pasture bordered by low hedgerows but hedgerow trees become more common. Along some of the fields lines of trees or shelterbelts are a common feature, often containing a high proportion of evergreen trees. This is most notable west of Welford Road and the shelterbelts extend down the slopes and into the adjacent character area (13c). In the southern part of the character area around the fringes of Spratton land use also includes recreational grounds, sports pitches and areas of horse pasture. Hegderows and trees along boundaries help to integrate most of these land uses into the pattern of the landscape. However horse paddocks with tape and wire fencing is often a detracting feature and disrupts the field pattern within the landscape.

Woodland is scarce within this character area. A small copse is present around Creaton Pond north of the village. Other woodland is present as small copses or groups of trees within village fringes, often around larger properties and former manor houses. Hedgerow trees and individual trees along field boundaries play an important role in providing interest and structure within the farmland. The silhouette of conifers also provides a local feature. Trees are most notable along the small springs in the eastern part of the character area. Shelter belts are common around some of the individual farmsteads between the two villages. Shelterbelts commonly have a proportion of evergreen species (pines) and together with Leylandii shelterbelts are notable change to character compared with the predominantly broadleaved species, primarily oak and ash present within the landscape. Leylandii is a suburbanising feature in this rural landscape.

There are two settlements along the eastern slopes of the ridge; Creaton and Spratton. Both are small clustered settlements extending east from Welford Road. Parts of each settlement are integrated into their rural surroundings by small scale pastoral fields often with taller unclipped stockproof hedgerows and frequent hedgerow trees. Where arable fields extend to the settlement fringes built form is often more noticeable in the landscape such as the south eastern edges of Creaton and the eastern and northern edges of Spratton. Older buildings and boundary walls are constructed of Northamptonshire Ironstone which links the buildings with the geology of the landscape and also provides a sense of place.

View of landscape along the northern edge of Creaton
LCT 1 Ironstone Uplands

Landscape Character 1b Spratton and Creaton Ironstone Uplands

Creaton is a small settlement partly divided by Welford Road (A5199). The northern most part of the settlement is the older part of the village and a designated Conservation Area. Areas of wooded open space within the village and small scale pastoral fields around its fringes are important to its character and the appearance of a village nestled within trees. This is particularly notable in views towards the settlement from the north where tree planting and pasture provides screening to the village and attractive views and a sense of a wooded area in an otherwise open landscape. Little Creaton is a medieval settlement to the south east of the village and notable in the landscape as a series of undulations in the farmland.

Spratton is a slightly larger clustered settlement extending east from Welford Road. Small scale pastoral fields as well as recreation grounds are present around the fringes of the settlement. St Andrews Church is a landmark feature of the skyline, particularly along village approaches from the east where the village skyline is of a rising roofline of properties within trees and the church a prominent landmark.

Other built development in the landscape comprises farmsteads and associated farm buildings. Many of these are notable in the landscape by the shelterbelt planting around the buildings.

Welford Road is the only major route through this landscape. Characteristic of Daventry District, the road follows the high ground across the ridge. Trees and hedgerows are often taller limiting the roads visual influence in the wider landscape, where the hedgerows are lower there are long views across the surrounding vale landscapes.

West of Creaton views from the road are across open space and pastoral fields on the fringes towards the wooded parkland of Cottesbrooke Park in the adjacent Undulating Hills and Valleys LCT (LCA 13d). Other smaller roads accessing Spratton and Creaton are generally at right angles to Welford Road crossing the lower lying vale and river valley landscapes. Rural roads are generally bordered by low hedgerows with frequent hedgerow trees, however in places mature hedgerows and frequent hedgerow trees provide a degree of enclosure, such as along Brixworth Road.

Landscape condition

Moderate

Landscape features across this character area are generally in good condition although there is evidence of hedgerow fragmentation and loss and replacement by wire fencing. This is generally well maintained although does have a localised influence on character as do the areas of subdivision for horse paddocks.
Landscape Strategy

New development, or changes in land management practices should be controlled or encouraged to conserve and enhance the generally open rural character of this landscape. Shelterbelts are common around farmsteads and field boundaries. Planting of new shelterbelts species should include predominantly broadleaved trees and a small proportion of evergreen species but avoid Leylandii.

Where development is considered appropriate, new buildings should make reference to the local vernacular, including the use of local Ironstone or compatible materials and the layout of buildings in relation to the street, courtyards and parking. Reference should also be made to the layout and arrangement of landscape elements, such as the form and scale of tree planting, to ensure they integrate into the landscape avoiding continuous lines of development on the fringes of settlements by incorporating open space, trees and small copses to break up building lines and contribute to the perception of villages developed within wooded areas. Development should also respect the character of settlements positioned on the eastern side of the ridge on sloping ground and should respect distinctive views across villages towards the wider landscape (where present).
LCT 1 Ironstone Uplands

Landscape Guidelines

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Landform, Hydrology and Views</th>
<th>Land Management</th>
<th>Woodland and Trees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>▪ Conserve long distance views and expansive character on areas of upland landform by encouraging sensitive management of hedegrows.</td>
<td>▪ Conserve the field pattern of hedgerows and fences enclosing medium and large scale arable fields across the more open, elevated land, and smaller scale grazed fields on steeper sloping landform, lower lying areas and village fringes.</td>
<td>▪ Conserve and enhance existing small coverts and spinneys on valley slopes and shelterbelts close to farms by appropriate management and encouragement of natural regeneration. Where appropriate, restore lost or denuded coverts and initiate replanting of native species in favour of conifers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Enhance where appropriate long distance, expansive or notable views by sensitive management of woodlands/tree belts/hedgerows and built development.</td>
<td>▪ Conserve the field pattern ensuring alternative land uses such as horse paddocks or recreation grounds integrate into the pattern of the landscape. Other associated infrastructure such as stables or sports pavilions are placed where they are least visible. Try to avoid visual intrusion of tape and wire fencing enclosing individual pony paddocks which contributes to a cluttered appearance across the landscape.</td>
<td>▪ Enhance woodland planting focusing areas of new planting on lower slopes, around village fringes and along springs where tree cover already exists to protect the open and expansive character of this upland landscape. Ensure new tree and woodland planting does not obscure key views to landscape features or buildings. Planting should use a high proportion of broadleaved species.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Conserve and enhance landscape elements that are aligned with and reinforce the distinctive grain of the landform, such as settlement form, vegetated property boundaries and hedged field boundaries.</td>
<td>▪ Discourage hedgerow removal and field amalgamation that lead to broader areas of monoculture, and a consequent reduction in the visual interest associated with the mosaic of fields and cropping patterns.</td>
<td>▪ Conserve areas of woodland planting along village fringes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Restore field boundaries and other landscape features that emphasise relief features and the underlying physical grain of the landscape.</td>
<td>▪ Conserve existing hedgerows and initiate new hedgerow tree planting, particularly in areas where significant tree loss has occurred or is likely due to the ageing of surviving examples. Planting should be in accordance with other guidelines (above) in respect of retaining the open character of upland areas. Species should primarily be native oak and avoid ash.</td>
<td>▪ Shelterbelt planting should include primarily broadleaved species with a small proportion of evergreens but avoid leylandii and planted in accordance with UK Forestry standards.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Conserve views from Welford Road beyond Creaton towards Cottesbrooke Park.</td>
<td>▪ Conserve hedgerows and field patterns to reflect various periods of enclosure and as features of the landscape emphasizing relief. Gap up existing hedgerows and seek to initiate more sensitive hedgerow management that encourages more natural growth and encourages hedgerow trees to regenerate.</td>
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Narrow rural lane bordered by hedgerows and trees
LCT 1 Ironstone Uplands

Settlement and Built Form

- Conserve buildings, and their setting (such as boundary walls) that express the local ironstone geology and strengthen the connection between built development and the underlying geology.
- Restore stone walls and other features using local stone to reflect the connection with the local ironstone geology.
- New boundaries and entrances to farmsteads and properties should be appropriate to their rural location comprising hedgerows and where appropriate stone walls. Avoid security fencing, walls and gates that are an urbanising influence on the local landscape.
- Create new buildings that utilise local stone sources. Seek wherever possible to respect local building vernacular, through the layout of building form, scale and massing ensuring they make a positive contribution to village character. Seek to minimise new development obscuring important views of historic cores, landmark buildings or views of surrounding countryside.
- Conserve the simple pattern of small, nucleated villages along principal routes across the uplands and wider pattern of isolated farms off tracks.
- Conserve the character of settlements primarily on the eastern slopes of the ridges.
- Conserve village skylines with churches or trees as prominent characteristics.
- Conserve areas of open land (fields and vegetated boundaries) and open space around village fringes that makes an important contribution to village character as identified in this landscape character assessment, village design statements and neighbourhood plans (where available).
- Conserve existing boundary walls and hedgerows within villages that play an important role in reinforcing local distinctiveness within the streetscene.
LCT 2 Ironstone Hills
LCT 2 Ironstone Hills

Key Landscape Character Features

- Elevated, rolling upland landform with distinctive isolated hills provides a memorable skyline. The summit profiles of the isolated hills and ‘knolls’ are a particularly notable feature within the landscape.
- Ironstone geology expressed in local vernacular buildings and in rich red soils. This provides a strong sense of connection with the underlying geology and buildings form memorable local landmarks and features.
- The quiet and compact ironstone villages with their rich ironstone vernacular buildings are complemented by the pattern of isolated farms, many in secluded locations accessible off long tracks, which are also frequently constructed in Ironstone. This imparts a sense of harmony with the landscape reinforced by a deeply rural and peaceful character dominated by agriculture.

- Varied landform, extensive views and sense of exposure on some prominent hilltops with intermittent long distance views and an expansive character
- Sense of remoteness in some areas contributes to a perception of peace and tranquillity.
- Limited standing or flowing water, although springs rising below the Ironstone feed three principal watercourses, and serve as a reminder of the significance of this area as a national watershed with the upper reaches of the streams draining into the Severn, Thames and Nene, and eventually The Wash.
- Productive medium and large-scale arable fields predominates on elevated land with agricultural practices creating a seasonally changing patchwork of contrasting colours and textures. Sheep and cattle pastures are also prevalent, often in smaller fields on the lower slopes and also surrounding settlements. The mosaic of agricultural land use contributes to a well-managed and productive character.
- Medium sized broadleaved woodlands and mature hedgerow trees combine to give the sense of a well treed landscape and provide a sense of enclosure in contrast with the more open and elevated hill tops.
- Areas of ancient woodland, notably Badby Wood are important visually as well as for their biodiversity value.
- Hedgerows are generally low and well clipped although intermittent sections show evidence of decline. The hedgerow network creates a neat patchwork across the varied landform and serves as a reminder of a pattern that has evolved over centuries of land management and changing agricultural practices.
LCT 2 Ironstone Hills

Description

Most of this landscape character area is south of Daventry District in South Northamptonshire. The small area within the district extends south from Byfield to the District boundary. Key features in the landscape include two hills at 184m and 192m AOD and the River Cherwell within a narrow valley east of West Farndon (along the District boundary) and another tributary flowing along the southern boundary of the District into the River Cherwell. The distinctive form of isolated hills notable to this landscape character type can be viewed from Church Street along the northern boundary of the character area. Elsewhere individual profile of the hills this landform is less obvious and the landscape is perceived to be rolling farmland.

The River Cherwell and the other tributary are characterised by frequent riparian trees and small areas of woodland as well as occasional ponds. Land use is primarily pasture and rough grassland along the floodplain of the River Cherwell. Ridge and furrow is occasionally evident in pastoral fields. Arable farming is prevalent on higher ground elsewhere within the character area occupying medium to large scale fields bordered by closely cropped (pollarded) hedgerows and frequent hedgerow trees. This is a simple managed landscape that retains a rural and remote character.

Woodland is relatively sparse within the character area and restricted to Root Spinney, Pole Spinney and mature woodland on higher ground at Golden Hill Farm. However, frequent mature hedgerow trees, lines of trees within hedgerows and copses on high ground together with the rolling landform creates enclosure and a wooded character to the landscape particularly when viewed from the river valleys. The landscape is also influenced by views towards other larger areas of woodland to the south which is within the landscape character area but outside Daventry District. Planting is mostly broadleaved although there are some individual evergreen trees which are notable in the landscape, particularly individual evergreen trees which are silhouetted on the highest ground. There is evidence of replanting of hedgerow trees, small woodlands and hedgerows which will contribute to the character of the landscape as they mature.

Settlements are relatively sparse and restricted to a number of isolated properties and farms and the small hamlet of West Farndon on lower ground on the eastern edge of the character area and the fringes of Byfield and Church End on the northern boundary of the character area. This reinforces the sense of remoteness and tranquillity to the landscape. West Farndon is a collection of individual properties and farmsteads, farm buildings surrounded by small pastoral fields or gardens. Many properties display the local vernacular including steeply pitched roofs with local ironstone the prevailing building material. The southern edge of Byfield and Church End is on the northern boundary of the character area. The edge of the village is characterised by small-scale pastoral and arable fields with mostly unclipped stockproof hedgerows which provides a green edge to the village. In longer views the village appears as rooftines set amongst mature trees with the distinctive individual hills of the Staverton Hills landscape character area (2b) to the north forming a backdrop. Holy Cross Church forms a landmark in views on the approach to the village along the A361.
Other views within this landscape character area vary, from along the roads there are views across to the rising high ground of the hills. Views are across the valleys towards a patchwork of farmland bordered by frequent hedgerow trees and woodland on higher ground of hills outside the District to the south. Similar views are possible from the two bridleways across the character area which cross the higher ground. Views are slightly more enclosed on the lower lying ground south west of West Farndon due to landform and trees; woodland blocks on the highest ground form distinctive features in these views.

Roads are mostly narrow rural roads bordered by hedgerows. The A361 is the only major road in the character area passing through the western part of the character area and traffic noise has a localised influence on tranquillity.

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Roads are mostly narrow rural roads bordered by hedgerows. The A361 is the only major road in the character area passing through the western part of the character area and traffic noise has a localised influence on tranquillity.

Landscape Condition

Good
The landscape is generally well maintained with intact features. There is evidence of planting of new hedgerow trees and woodlands which will contribute positively to the area as they mature.

Landscape Strategy 2a

New development and land management practices should be controlled to maintain a rural and remote character. This would be achieved by avoiding the more open areas of higher ground to ensure that the character of farmland and blocks of woodland on high ground is retained.

Land use changes and associated development that adversely affects the sense of remoteness and tranquillity that is evident within this character area should also be avoided. The pattern of arable farmland on higher ground and smaller-scale pasture and riparian trees along river valleys should be retained and where possible reinforced through land management. Retention of mature intact hedgerows and frequent hedgerow trees is important in retaining this character.

Any development should retain the remote rural character with little development visible in the landscape. Where development is considered appropriate, reference should be made to the layout and arrangement of building form, such as the massing and scale of built development, to ensure it integrates into the landscape (reference to village design statements and Conservation Area Appraisals where applicable). Any change around the southern edge of Byfield and Church End should respect its position on lower ground with a green well vegetated village fringe and the church prominent on the approach along the A361. Development should not make the village more prominent in the wider landscape or interrupt the longer views to high ground beyond the village.
LCT 2 Ironstone Hills

Landscape Character Area 2b: Staverton Hills

14a Newbold Grounds

13a Woodford Halse and Weedon Bec

13b Daventry

Daventry
LCT 2 Ironstone Hills

Landscape Character Area 2b: Staverton Hills

Description

The Staverton Hills landscape character area comprises undulating hills that rise above the surrounding landscape to the immediate south of Daventry. These are distinctive features forming isolated hills that are easily identifiable and form local landmarks due to their distinctive form and visual prominence. Each hill is distinct from the next due to the mosaic of woodland, trees, farmland and grassland. Arbury Hill, is the highest point in the county other memorable hills include Sharman’s Hill, Everdon Hill, Steppinton Hill, Windmill Hill and Charwelton Hill. Many of these hills have small copses or isolated trees at their summit which helps reinforce distinctive character. Hills such as Big Hill, Fox Hill and Newnham Hill are to the north of the character area and form a distinctive edge which screens Daventry from the wider landscape. From footpaths and roads on these hills there are panoramic views across the skyline of Daventry on lower ground and towards the high ground to the north of the town.

There are a number of watercourses through the landscape, primarily forming the watershed to larger river catchments. Watercourses include the River Nene, River Leam and river Cherwell. They are often only notable in the landscape by their riparian vegetation and associated ponds or adjoining ditches.

This is a deeply rural area with a generally remote, quiet and often tranquil character. Field pattern and size varies across the character area with a smaller field pattern evident around settlement fringes and on higher ground across Fox Hill, Big Hill and Newnham Hill in the northern part of the character area. Medium to large scale fields are common elsewhere bordered by low clipped hedgerows and frequent hedgerow trees. Larger fields are present around some of the more notable hills such as Arbury Hill or as parkland at Fawsley and at Badby Down, arable fields north east of Badby Woods and to the east of Charwelton. Arable farming is the predominant land use although pasture is common across some of the steeper slopes and where the field pattern is smaller in scale around settlements and in the northern part of the character area. Ridge and furrow is an important local feature especially notable around Arbury Hill, Hellidon and at village fringes. Localised changes in land use include a vineyard at Windmill Hill Farm south of Hellidon.

Woodland is frequent across this landscape and contributes to the distinctive character of the hills. The most prominent is Badby Woods on high ground (Ancient Woodland and SSSI). This woods includes a feature of the Fawsley estate, Hazely Knob, which is within the centre of the wood and approached by axial rides. Other woodland includes adjacent woodland within the northern fringes of Fawsley Park (the majority of which is in the adjacent character area: 15a Woodford Halse) and woodland on Big Hill and Newnham Hill. South of Staverton, farmland is enclosed by a number of mature geometric conifer woodlands which is a local change to character of the predominantly broadleaved woodlands elsewhere in the character area. South of Hellidon there are some other linear belts of geometric broadleaved and evergreen woodland enclosing Attlefield Barn which again forms a localised change to character.
LCT 2 Ironstone Hills

Landscape Character Area 2b: Staverton Hills

Other woodland is smaller in size, often on steeper slopes and along streams in the southern part of the character area. These combine with frequent hedgerow trees and occasional lines of mature trees to create an impression of a well treed landscape. Parkland features such as specimen trees are common in the landscape, primarily on the northern fringes of Fawsley Hall adjacent to Badby Woods, north of Badby Lane and north of Newnham. Badby Down is a distinctive open parkland west of Badby Woods. The former Great Central Railway is notable by the linear woodland along the embankments which can be glimpsed from road bridges crossing the line. Catesby Tunnel is an historic feature of the landscape constructed to retain the integrity of the grounds around Catesby House.

View across landscape south of Hellidon towards Charwelton Hill

Rural lanes are often narrow and winding, some are enclosed by mature hedgerows and trees creating a tunnel effect. Along other roads hedgerows are lower and afford views across the countryside. Localised replacement of hedgerows with post and wire fencing has resulted in a dilution of landscape pattern where it occurs. The A361 cuts through the landscape and is bordered along much of its length by mature hedgerows and trees limiting its influence on the landscape although traffic noise has a localised effect on the rural and remote character.

Settlement is relatively sparse but present on high ground on the western edge of the character area. Many buildings are constructed in the rich red brown hues of the locally sourced Ironstone. Villages are characterised by narrow lanes and buildings providing a strong sense of enclosure. Mature trees are important to village character as are smaller open spaces. The rich vernacular of the villages imparts a sense of unity and connection with the underlying geology. The main villages of Hellidon and Staverton are on high ground and their village core designated as Conservation Areas. They are well integrated into their rural surroundings by the presence of mature woodlands, pastoral fields enclosed by mature hedgerows and trees and the grounds of larger manor houses (such as Staverton Hall) or farms. Around parts of the village fringes panoramic views across the surrounding countryside are possible and play an important role in connecting the village with its rural surroundings. Whilst they both contain churches with prominent towers, the collection of mature trees within the villages means that the church spires are often not notable on the village skyline from the surrounding landscape. These villages have distinctive approaches characterised by rolling landform emphasising isolated hills with woodland and lines of trees or farmland and parkland.
Upper Catesby is a small collection of red brick workers cottages off Upper Catesby Road on high ground adjacent to the distinctive grounds of Catesby House. It appears a small group of properties set amongst trees with sloping pasture and horse paddocks surrounding it. Other development is restricted to isolated properties and farmsteads accessed off long tracks some accompanied with single storey barns. Most are in part surrounded by vegetation which helps to screen it in views. Where this screening comprises tall evergreen species it forms a prominent feature and contrasts with the generally broadleaved character found elsewhere. Resort developments at Staverton and Hellidon Lakes are set within wooded grounds with buildings barely perceptible in the landscape and golf courses appearing as areas of woodland.

Views are generally across a rolling landscape towards a skyline of distinctive knolls often covered with woodland and trees. Foreground views are of a patchwork of farmland bordered by low hedgerows and frequent hedgerow trees. This is most notable from roads east of Catesby where Arbury Hill and Sharman’s Hills provide a distinctive skyline. In the eastern part of the character area Badby Woods forms a feature of views. Other distinctive views are possible from the PRoW crossing Badby Downs across parkland at Fawsley and much of the landscape character area. The radio mast near Bromtrees Farm and Cherwell Farm (south of Hellidon) is on high ground and forms a prominent landmark across the surrounding landscape. It is frequently visible in views across the southern part of the character area.

In the northern part of the character area, around Fox Hill and Newnham Hill views are across farmland towards Daventry including warehousing and housing on low ground on the southern edge of Daventry and the rising high ground of Borough Hill beyond.

The landscape to the north of the town is visible in distant views and includes wind turbines and high ground in the northern part of the district.

**Landscape Condition**

**Good**

The landscape is generally well managed. There is evidence of some hedgerow loss around some fields and replacement by post and wire fencing which erodes the landscape pattern. Landscape features, in particular woodlands and parkland, are intact and contribute positively to the sense of place.
LCT 2 Ironstone Hills

Landscape Character Area 2b: Staverton Hills

View of parkland and pasture to the north of Newnham.

Arbury Hill

Landscape Strategy

This is a landscape defined by frequent isolated hills that form landmarks and aid orientation through the landscape and by its remote and tranquil character. New development and land management practices should be controlled to maintain this remoteness, avoid the more open areas of higher ground and ensure built development does not become prominent in the landscape. In particular avoiding any encroachment onto the upper slopes and summits of the isolated hills to ensure that their distinctive profile and character is retained. The mosaic of woodland, trees and grassland on the hills should be conserved to retain the distinctiveness of each of the hills.

The integrity of the ironstone villages should remain intact and new development should respect the form and local vernacular of these distinctive settlements including the use of the local ironstone building stone or compatible materials. Where development is considered appropriate, reference should be made to the layout and arrangement of new elements, such as the massing and scale of built development, to ensure it integrates into the landscape (reference to village design statements and Conservation Area Appraisals where applicable). Villages are generally on higher ground with trees and hedged pastoral fields around fringes that help to integrate them into their surroundings. Any change on the fringes of villages should reflect these characteristics.

Any change or new development along the southern edge of Daventry should ensure it does not rise above the adjacent hills (Big Hill, Fox Hill and Newnham Hill) where it would form a prominent element in the landscape and alter the impression of Daventry set on lower ground and surrounded by farmed hills.

The verdant character evident on the lower slopes of hills associated with the mosaic of woodlands and hedgerows should be retained and where possible enhanced. The hedgerow network is an important characteristic of the landscape and the conservation, enhancement and replanting of hedgerows to strengthen their visual contribution to the landscape as well as their biodiversity value should be encouraged. This is particularly important along some of the rural enclosed lanes where hedgerows are important to this character.

Open views across the rolling farmland towards individual hills are a characteristic feature of this landscape most notably east of Catesby, from PRoW around Badby Down and roads south of Hellidon. Any development or other change such as woodland or shelterbelt planting that interrupts these views would have an adverse effect on landscape character.
LCT 2 Ironstone Hills

Landscape Guidelines

Land Management

- Conserve the distinctive field pattern with hedgerows enclosing medium and large scale arable fields across the elevated land, and smaller grazed fields on the lower slopes and around settlements.
- Discourage hedgerow removal and field amalgamation that leads to broader areas of monoculture, and a consequent reduction in the visual interest important to the character of the area.
- Conserve and enhance hedgerows and field patterns to reflect various periods of enclosure and as features of the landscape emphasising the landform across the landscape.
- Conserve the integrity of field patterns by replanting stretches of lost hedgerow or gapping up of broken stretches particularly along roads and on the slopes of hills.
- Conserve the enclosed character of some of the rural lanes through ensuring management of roadside hedgerows to retain a tunnelling effect and a contrast with the more open sections of road.
- Conserve the character of areas of parkland around Fawsley Hall, north of Badby Lane and north of Newnham

Woodland and Trees

- Conserve the well treed character of the landscape by woodland and tree management. Seek opportunities and initiatives for natural regeneration of woodlands and hedgerow trees and replacing conifer blocks with native broadleaved species. Gap up fragmented hedgerows and ensure appropriate management is in place to allow healthy hedgerow growth and long term regeneration of native species.
- Conserve the species diversity, character and visual appeal of ancient woodlands (such as Badby Woods) and seek opportunities for sensitive management through coppicing where appropriate.

- Consider how hilltop woodlands appear from lower areas when determining woodland expansion or new plantings.
- Any new woodland planting should avoid high percentages of evergreen species and should avoid geometric shapes taking reference from surrounding field pattern to ensure woodland is integrated with the surrounding landscape
- Conserve hedgerow trees

View looking east from the Jurassic Way north of Hellidon
Conserve and where required restore local ironstone buildings, walls and other features to retain the strong connection between built development and the underlying geology.

Create new buildings that utilise local stone sources. In the absence of viable quarrying, source appropriate reclaimed stone or equivalent stone with similar appearance. Seek wherever possible to respect and interpret local building vernacular

Conserve the simple pattern of a sparsely settled landscape of small villages and isolated farms off long access tracks. Conserve the setting of villages on higher ground nestled within trees in views from the surrounding roads and PROW.

Where new development is proposed ensure it makes a positive contribution to village character and sense of place. Undertake research into the setting of villages, and village features (materials, architectural detailing, layout massing) in advance of any development of village fringes to minimise new development obscuring important views of historic cores.

Retain the mosaic of small-scale pastoral fields, woodlands, mature trees and manor gardens around the fringes of settlements to retain their integration into the surrounding landscape.
LCT 4 Rolling Ironstone Valley Slopes

- 4a Harlestone Heath and the Bramtons
- 4b Moulton Slopes
- 4d Hanging Houghton
- 4e Pitsford Water

Daventry
LCT 4 Rolling Ironstone Valley Slopes

Key Landscape Character Features

- Broad valley slopes dissected by numerous tributary streams that provide a surface expression of the diverse drainage network and its interrelationship with the variety and complexity of the landform.
- Ironstone geology expressed in local vernacular buildings and in rich red soils.
- Building materials vary, vernacular architecture and churches display the local ironstone.
- This provides a strong sense of connection with the underlying geology and memorable local landmarks and features.
- Rolling landform, extensive views and sense of exposure on some prominent locations creates an expansive and open character in contrast to lower and more secluded areas.

- Steep slopes adjacent to more elevated landscapes provide diversity. These areas are often more secluded and support farm management regimes including smaller pastoral fields that contrast with the more elevated and open areas.
- Water bodies, including the county’s largest reservoir at Pitsford Water provide focal features, and enrich the diversity of the landscape. Pitsford is particularly distinctive through its reflective quality and constantly changing appearance in response to changes in both light and weather conditions.
- Productive arable farmland in medium and large-scale fields predominates on elevated land although sheep and cattle pastures are also prevalent, often in smaller fields adjacent to watercourses. Agricultural practices create a patchwork of contrasting colours and textures extending across valley slopes providing seasonal interest and diversity to the experience of the landscape.
- Where broadleaved woodlands and mature hedgerow trees combine, these impart a sense of a well treed landscape. The location of this mosaic of woodland and tree cover is an important feature particularly the association with steeper slopes or adjacent to Woodland also present as coverts in the agricultural landscape or in the designed parklands that are also evident within the Ironstone Valley Slopes.
- Hedgerows are generally low and well clipped although intermittent sections show evidence of decline. The pattern of hedgerows, many of which contain mature and semi-mature oak and ash, creates a rich tapestry across the landscape and is indicative of the many centuries of evolving land management and changing agricultural practices.
- Well settled with numerous villages and towns with the landscape directly and indirectly influenced by the close proximity to Northampton.

View of Pitsford Water from Brixworth Country Park
LCT 4 Rolling Ironstone Valley Slopes

Character Area 4a Harlestone Heath and the Bramptons
LCT 4 Rolling Ironstone Valley Slopes

Description

Harlestone Heath and the Bramptons is next to the north western part of Northampton and is separated from the wider landscape character type by the River Brampton Floodplain (17c) along the eastern edge. Landform is defined by the valleys formed by tributaries that flow into the River Brampton. The main valley in the landscape character area is formed by Brampton Brook, now also accommodating a link for the West Coast mainline railway network. A tributary to the Brook heads westward towards the fishpond at Harlestone. To the east the landscape character area extends to the western slopes of the River Brampton valley. Gentle valley profiles are discernible in views and enhanced by riparian vegetation in the valley bottoms.

The overriding land use is arable farming on higher ground to the north bordered by low clipped hedgerows with occasional gaps and limited hedgerow trees. However there is variation to this pattern particularly near to tree lined watercourses next to pasture. In contrast at the southern edge next to Northampton there is a large wooded plantation known as Harlestone Heath. It is mixed woodland with some evergreen visible in prominent positions in views from the A428 corridor passing through. Part of the plantation is managed for the production of timber. Extending north of the plantation and railway along the edge of the city are two golf courses, across the spur of land between the River Brampton and Brampton Brook. These are the Northamptonshire County and Brampton Heath Golf Clubs and they are well integrated into the landscape as the fairways follow the contours of the land. The edges of the fairways are wooded, with some smaller copses and individual specimen trees providing variety. To the north west there is another area of mixed woodland south of hamlet known as Lower Harlestone. North west of the hamlet there are some smaller blocks of woodland in which Northampton Golf Club has been integrated. Like the other golf courses, the fairways are well integrated into the landscape, with linear belts of trees, blocks of woodland, copses and individual specimen trees. Next to the western edge of the character area is the Althorp Park estate forming some of the highest ground in the area. The wooded boundary to the estate on relatively high ground adds to the sense of enclosure in the locality.
To the eastern edge of the landscape character area are two small settlements known as Chapel Brampton and Church Brampton. Both have a nucleated form and have developed around the intersections of a number of roads. Although the settlements are on relatively high ground their edges to properties are wooded making them quite discreet in the landscape. The most prominent building is St Botolph Church at the western edge of Church Brampton. It is on higher ground compared to the adjacent roads, nevertheless the mature trees to the churchyard boundary screen the church from views when trees are in leaf.

To the west are the smaller hamlets of Harlestone, Lower Harlestone and Upper Harlestone. These are arranged around a network of winding country lanes and notable for the large number of listed buildings and the conservation area covering Lower Harlestone. A key feature is the Fish Pond between Harlestone and Lower Harlestone in the valley bottom. Between the hamlets the landscape is characterised by smaller pastoral fields with hedgerow boundaries and some individual specimen trees in the fields. The larger area of mixed woodland on higher ground and wooded area to the Northampton Golf Club form a backdrop to the hamlets. In terms of other development there are a number of large detached properties fronting Glebe Lane and the A428 set in large gardens with wooded boundaries and several isolated farmsteads.

An update of the Harlestone Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan has been prepared which extends the conservation area to include the Golf Club, Harlestone, Upper Harlestone and the wooded area south of Lower Harlestone recognising the landscape setting to the hamlets.

There are two main roads on higher ground orientated in a north westerly direction and linking the wider district with the northern edge of Northampton. To the east is the Welford Road (A5199) routed through Chapel Brampton. South of Chapel Brampton there are tall hedgerows and some mature hedgerow trees making the road quite discreet in the landscape. North of Chapel Brampton, there are low hedgerow boundaries to the road and fewer hedgerow trees making the road more prominent.

To the west is the A428 which is routed through Lower Harlestone. The road is largely screened from view by the belt of woodland linking the Harlestone Heath plantation and the mixed woodland south of the hamlet. North of the hamlet the road is more exposed. There is some further road infrastructure at the southern end of the A428, with the part completed Northampton North West Relief Road terminating at a roundabout. There are proposals to extend this along the southern edge of Harleston Heath and then near to the River Brampton to meet the A5199. Just south of this proposed road alignment is the designated sustainable urban extension (N7 SUE) which would bring part of the north western edge of Northampton near to Harlestone Heath.

In between the main road infrastructure there is a network of smaller rural lanes in an east to west orientation with hedgerow boundaries and mature trees along some sections. The evergreen tree-lined section of road between Chapel Brampton and Church Brampton is particularly distinctive with a variety of Scot’s Pine and Black Pine species along its length. There are two long...
LCT 4 Rolling Ironstone Valley Slopes

Character Area 4a Harlestone Heath and the Bramptons

Landscape Condition – Moderate to Good

The low clipped hedgerows to the large agricultural fields and various wooded areas are generally intact and make a positive contribution to the landscape. However, in places, the low clipped hedgerows, occasional gaps and limited hedgerow trees to those agricultural fields slightly undermines landscape condition.

Distance footpaths; the Midshires Way routed north west and Northamptonshire Round routed in an east to west direction. Both of these take in the varied landscape character of this area from the more exposed arable areas to the north, the settlements in the central area and the wooded areas to the south. The wider network of PROW connects with the long distance footpaths.

The type of views available in the landscape character area relate to landform and the proximity of vegetation. Wider long distance views are possible from the more exposed higher ground to the north. Views tend to be shortened in the south along the valley bottoms and near to the large wooded areas and golf courses. However, there are some long distance views at Sandy Lane towards the Brampton Valley.

Undulating pastural land to edge of Harlestone

View from Northamptonshire Round towards the Brampton Valley

Landscape Condition – Moderate to Good

The low clipped hedgerows to the large agricultural fields and various wooded areas are generally intact and make a positive contribution to the landscape. However, in places, the low clipped hedgerows, occasional gaps and limited hedgerow trees to those agricultural fields slightly undermines landscape condition.
LCT 4 Rolling Ironstone Valley Slopes

Landscape Strategy

New development and changes to land management should conserve and enhance the diversity and richness of the landscape, and provide opportunities to emphasise the variations of the three broad areas that contribute to local distinctiveness. The first of the three is the arable farming to the north. The land management approach should focus on restoring gaps in the hedgerow network, with the provision of new hedgerow trees. Pastoral fields next to Brampton Brook should be maintained under that use including the tall unclipped stockproof hedgerow enclosure. At the interface with the arable fields, encourage the growth of tall unclipped hedgerows and maintain and extend riparian planting next to Brampton Brook. The setting to Chapel Brampton and Church Brampton also needs careful management through retention of the smaller scale pastoral fields to the perimeter. This should include encouraging the growth of hedgerows boundaries and the planting of new hedgerow trees. Physical separation between the two villages should also be maintained.

The second area is the largely wooded Harlestone Heath and the wooded infrastructure of the adjacent golf courses. These provide a distinctive wooded edge on undulating landform to the north west of Northampton and this should be conserved.

The final area includes the group of hamlets around Harlestone with a network of pastoral fields and smaller wooded areas. The latter two elements should be conserved to maintain the setting of the hamlets and potential large scale development should be resisted. More detail is provided in the Harlestone Heath Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan.

In view of the proximity of Northampton to the southern edge of this landscape character area, it is particularly vulnerable to development pressures and change, including new residential development (SUE N7) and road infrastructure in the form of the proposed Northampton North West Relief Road. It is important, therefore, that where development is considered, its integration with the local landform and networks of vegetation is carefully considered. Reference should also be made to the locality to integrate with particular details of local vernacular building styles, materials, and layout of building form and its relationship to the street. Woodland cover should also be retained wherever possible and conserved and enhanced to strengthen this resource and provide a buffer between the edge of Northampton and the wider landscape character area.
LCT 4 Rolling Ironstone Valley Slopes

Landscape Character Area 4b Moulton Slopes
LCT 4 Rolling Ironstone Valley Slopes

Landscape Character Area 4b Moulton Slopes

Description

Moulton Slopes is next to the northern edge of Northampton and it extends eastwards into the neighbouring district of Wellingborough. The character area is separated from much of the wider landscape character type by the intervening the River Brampton Valley Floodplain (17c) although adjoins with a short section of the neighbouring landscape character area 4e Pitsford Water near to the settlement of Pitsford. The landscape is characterised by a gently rolling landform particularly influenced by the valley formed by the tributary to the River Brampton. The valley is orientated in an east to west direction and the meandering watercourse flows in the same direction towards the River. The valley is in the central part of the landscape character area.

A large proportion of the landscape character area is occupied by arable farming with moderately sized fields following an orthogonal pattern. Fields are generally bound by hedgerows, although there are places where these have been removed and where parts of fields have been used to store machinery and materials. Riparian vegetation follows the course of the tributary creating a feature at the bottom of the valley with pastoral fields alongside. There are two large historic parks; to the east is Overstone Park and to the west is Boughton Park which is designated both as a registered park and garden and a conservation area. The former includes Overstone Hall with large grassland areas and individual specimen trees, wooded edges to the park, a golf course and a large lake. Boughton Park also includes a large hall and the Park extends north across the valley. The tributary flows through the park and broadens out into an ornamental lake. Apart from the lake, the Park is characterised by a sequence of grassed spaces enclosed by blocks of woodland, lines of poplar trees, a small arboretum and individual specimen trees.

The landscape character area includes three ironstone villages: Moulton in the east, Boughton to the west and Pitsford to the north and a separate linear village at Overstone. Moulton has developed along a network of country lanes, with a small central core, including St Peter and St Paul Church. The southern part of the village connects with the northern edge of Northampton along Northampton Lane South, although there are a number of remaining arable fields in the vicinity that provide a limited sense of separation between the village and Northampton. The eastern side of Moulton extends towards the A43 and development fronts the road network also connecting...
to Northampton. Along the northern side of Moulton, the tributary in combination with the riparian vegetation and pastoral fields provide a green corridor, contributing to the setting of St Peter’s and St Paul’s Church. There is development north of the green corridor including Moulton College which includes a number of buildings, car parking and sports pitches. On its south side, the College campus includes an arboretum linking to the green corridor. The other campus boundaries are defined by a line of trees. This central part of the village is designated as a conservation area and an update prepared to the Moulton Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan in 2017. East of the College there is a separate small residential area fronting Holcot Road. To the west there are a large number of arable fields and some tree belts following some small watercourses. This provides a sense of separation between Moulton and the Moulton Park employment area (inside the Northampton town boundary) to the south west and Boughton to the west.

Boughton has a small central core around the intersection of some minor roads with linear development fronting the road network extending out from the centre. Development extends south along Vyse Road and the A508 Harborough Road linking the village to Northampton. Elsewhere along the southern edge of Boughton, physical separation is limited to a playing field and small wooded area. Physical separation is undermined to the south west by the new Buckton Fields residential development on the west side of the A508 and the Boughton Quarry landfill site, although parts have been planted with trees. Boughton Park provides a wooded edge to the western and northern part of the village. To the north the rolling landform and large blocks of woodland provide separation between Boughton and Pitsford, although landscape character is undermined by the quarry site next to Moulton Road.

Pitsford has a nucleated form and with the exception of the south, is surrounded by a series of small and irregular shaped pastoral fields with some well vegetated boundaries. Those pastoral fields extend west towards the A508. Along the southern edge of the settlement are the Pitsford School sports pitches with lines of trees forming the boundary. Significant areas of each of the three villages are designated as conservation areas with a number of listed buildings.

Overstone consists of mainly post-war residential properties fronting Sywell Road creating a linear village. On the northern side of the road properties have vegetated rear gardens that back onto arable fields. Part
LCT 4 Rolling Ironstone Valley Slopes

Landscape Character Area 4b Moulton Slopes

of the southern side is fronted by properties and part by Overstone Park which brings a wooded character and setting to Sywell Road and Overstone.

In terms of other development, there are a number of isolated farmsteads which are partly screened from view by hedgerows, groups of trees or small woodland within the property boundary.

There are two main roads heading in a northerly direction. These are the A508 (Harborough Road) and the A43 (Kettering Road). The A508 follows the profile of the rolling landform and for much of its length there are vegetated boundaries, making the road quite discreet in the landscape. Another distinctive boundary feature are the low stone walls along the A508 that also appear next to minor roads across the landscape character area. The A43 is mainly fronted by residential development, to the east of Moulton but the northern section passes next to a series of arable fields and becomes more exposed.

There are proposals for a Northampton Northerm Orbital Route (NNOR) linking the A5199 and the A43, with a number of potential options routed near to the edges of Boughton and Moulton. A sustainable urban extension (N3 SUE) and improvements to the A43 are proposed on land between the eastern edge of Moulton and Overstone.

There is a network of more minor roads between the main road infrastructure which tend to follow an east to west alignment and link the three villages to the wider area. These roads tend to be bound by hedgerows with some wooded edges. This includes the prominent wooded edge to Pitsford Road linking Moulton and Pitsford. There are no promoted footpaths in the landscape character area and the PRoW network tends to be limited to short footpaths connecting the three villages to the wider area.

The gently rolling landscape and the wooded corridors to watercourses and road network, together with woodland blocks and the enclosure provided by trees in Overstone Park and Boughton Park mean that views tend to be shortened. There are limited views towards the neighbouring landscape character areas apart from the higher ground to the west of Pitsford.

Some of the land between the villages and the northern edge of Northampton is designated as Green Wedge or Rural Access Area. These designations were updated in 2017.

**Landscape Condition**

Moderate to weak

Wooded edges to historic parks are intact. Arable fields and the hedgerow network are generally well maintained although there are places where these are becoming fragmented.
Landscape Strategy

This landscape character area is under considerable pressure for development due to its proximity to the northern edge of Northampton. This includes pressure for new residential development and the Northampton Northern Orbital Route (NNOR). Boughton and Moulton already physically connect with Northampton and are most at risk of coalescence. Working with other planning policies such as the Green Wedge, further development around these settlements should be resisted particularly where fields, hedgerow boundaries and wooded areas contribute to the physical separation and the setting of the settlements. The watercourse and green corridor north of the church at Moulton should be conserved as it is important to the setting of the church and the historic core of the village. More detail on the setting of Moulton is provided by the Moulton Conservation Area Assessment and Management Plan.

Adverse effects of the northern NNOR should be minimised through careful routeing of the road and should include the conservation of existing landscape features including the integrity of the meandering valley orientated east to west, the riparian vegetation to the watercourse and pastoral fields. Mitigation of the effects of the road should include enhancements to wooded areas and hedgerows in keeping with landscape character.

The fine grained nature of the pastoral fields around Pitsford should be conserved to maintain the distinctive setting of the village. Any development proposals should be carefully integrated into the pattern of the landscape and should include retention of hedgerows to field boundaries. The fields to the western side of Pitsford and next to the A508 are particularly vulnerable to development due to their accessibility and any proposals should not dominate the footprint and setting of the village.

The proposed NNOR threatens to sever sections of PRoW network but the proposals should ensure footpaths remain connected with wayfinding. This should ensure better links between the urban edge and the countryside.
LCT 4 Rolling Ironstone Valley Slopes

Landscape Character Area 4d Hanging Houghton

17c Brampton Valley Floodplain

6b Sywell Plateau
LCT 4 Rolling Ironstone Valley Slopes

Landscape Character Area 4d Hanging Houghton

Description

Hanging Houghton is the smallest of the Rolling Ironstone Valley Slopes landscape character type. It extends from Brixworth in the south to Draughton and is less than 1km in width. Its eastern edge follows a ridgeline and the landform gradually slopes down westwards before forming a steep west facing scarp down to the River Brampton.

Most land is occupied by arable farming with large fields and low clipped hedgerow boundaries. The steeper slopes near to Lamport, Hanging Houghton and Brixworth are characterised by pastoral fields enclosed by tall unclipped stockproof hedgerows and some hedgerow trees. There is limited woodland with the exception of the occasional spinney in the vicinity of Draughton (Leywell Spinney) and Lamport (Bullock Close Spinney) and the scarp slopes west of Hanging Houghton (Clint Hill Fox Covert) and land south of Brixworth. Although a sense of enclosure is provided by the consistently wooded eastern side of A508 Harborough Road in the adjacent landscape character area.

In terms of settlements there is Brixworth village and the hamlets at Draughton, Lamport and Hanging Houghton. All are on high ground associated with the ridgeline. The north western edge of Brixworth is distinguished by the All Saints Parish Church spire appearing above mature trees to the churchyard. The large number of trees in the conservation area also contribute to the distinctiveness of the north western part of the village, particularly the wooded land around a small lake in the village and wooded gardens to large residential properties. The lake is drained by a watercourse which has formed steeply sloped small valley to the west of the village. Elsewhere the western and southern edges of the village are characterised by post-war residential development and a partially visible edge to the village. The exception is the row of lime trees forming the approach to Park Farm to the south west, providing a soft well vegetated edge to the village.

The western part of Draughton is in the landscape character area and is characterised by several large properties set in wooded grounds next to Home Farm. West of the farm complex, arable land slopes down towards the Brampton Valley Way.

The northern part of Lamport is in the landscape character area and includes several listed properties with wooded gardens and some pastoral fields beyond with some tall unclipped stockproof hedgerows, some hedgerow trees...
and a short wooded network leading to fish ponds to the north west.

Hanging Houghton has a distinctive line of lime trees linking it to Harborough Road and this is supplemented by the well wooded grounds to Lamport Grange. There are a number of modern properties but with maturing vegetation to their plot boundaries. Manor Farm includes some traditional buildings and more modern warehouses but there are some groups of trees alongside that enhance the setting of the hamlet.

Other development in the Hanging Houghton landscape character area includes the Lamport Hotel next to Harborough Road and farmsteads near to Draughton and on farmland near to Brixworth.

The A508 is the only main road passing through the landscape character and although north of Brixworth it follows the highest section of the ridge the eastern and part of the western boundaries tend to be wooded limiting its impact on the wider landscape. There are a number of country lanes that link the hamlets to the A508 and these are bordered by low clipped hedgerows with occasional hedgerow trees. In terms of PRoW, there is the Brampton Valley Way near to the western edge and the Northampton Round that passes to the southern side of Brixworth along the Merry Tom Lane bridleway. There are short sections of PRoW near to Draughton and near to the small valley west of Brixworth.

Where the road network follows the ridge, there are some extensive views across the undulating neighbouring landscape character areas as the roads follow the highest ground compared with the wider area. However, there are places where these views are screened by tall hedgerow boundaries or the wooded boundaries to the A508.

**Landscape Condition**

**Moderate**

Most features are well maintained and intact, however there is evidence of some hedgerow fragmentation south of Brixworth.
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Landscape Strategy

The main areas for intervention are the large areas of arable farming, the setting to the hamlets and historic core to Brixworth and the countryside to the south and west of the same village. The arable farming forms the ‘spine’ of the landscape character area and the large fields and low clipped hedgerows and occasional hedgerow trees allow expansive views across the wider area. The open nature of the arable fields is complemented by occasional spinneys on lower ground which bring visual interest. There are opportunities for new hedgerow trees and small wooded blocks that would maintain openness but would contribute to the distinctiveness of the landscape character area.

The finer grain pastoral fields next to the hamlets and historic core of Brixworth should be conserved as they contribute to the setting of those places and enhance views towards rooftops of historic buildings and church spires. Conservation of pastoral fields should include retention of the taller unclipped stockproof hedgerow boundaries and hedgerow trees.

The south western edge of Brixworth is characterised by large arable fields, with limited vegetation to field boundaries and more gently sloping landscape. Through land management there is opportunity to plant up gaps in field boundaries with hedgerows with hedgerow trees. This would enhance landscape character and would provide visual interest.

There are also opportunities for new hedgerow trees to the boundary of the Northampton Round promoted footpath, with small copses to the corners of fields. This would enhance views from the footpath towards the settlement edge.
LCT 4 Rolling Ironstone Valley Slopes

Landscape Character Area 4e Pitsford Water

4d Hanging Houghton

4e Pitsford Water
LCT 4 Rolling Ironstone Valley Slopes

Landscape Character Area 4e Pitsford Water

Description

The Pitsford Water landscape character area is approximately 5km north of the northern edge of Northampton and the main boundary is with the neighbouring landscape character area 5b Sywell Plateau. The landscape is characterised by gently sloping agricultural land towards Pitsford Water Reservoir from Sywell Plateau with some variation provided by the gently defined valleys to the watercourses feeding the reservoir.

As with the other Rolling Ironstone Valley Slopes landscape character areas, a large proportion of land is occupied by farming, with a mix of pastoral and arable land. The pastoral land tends to be associated with the network of watercourses that flow towards Pitsford Water and pastoral fields near to the Reservoir. Compared with the arable, pastoral fields are smaller with larger unclipped stockproof hedgerows and occasional hedgerow trees. Arable land tends to be on higher ground with larger fields, with clipped hedgerow boundaries and occasional hedgerow trees.

In contrast to the agricultural land, Pitsford Water reservoir is an extensive body of water constructed in 1956 and extending to 413ha, it is the largest in Northamptonshire and designated as a site of special scientific interest (SSSI). The landscape to the margins of the reservoir is also unlike the wider area. Apart from its water supply function, the southern part of the reservoir focusses on recreational activities with the margin of land next to the water body designated as Brixworth County Park. There is a network of footpaths and cycleways passing through large grassed areas enclosed by a series of woodland blocks.

The reservoir is bisected by a causeway accommodating the road linking Holcot and Brixworth. The reservoir’s northern part is also designated as a nature reserve (managed by the local wildlife trust) and the water’s edge is characterised more by wooded areas than the southern part. This includes inundated shorelines, with scrub and marsh areas and then grassed areas on slightly higher ground. Beyond the grassed areas are densely planted mixed and conifer woodland forming straight edges with the agricultural land beyond. Conifer woodland predominates around the north eastern ‘arm’ of the reservoir and there are several rectangular shaped conifer woodland blocks set amongst arable fields to the east. Public access to the northern part of the reservoir is carefully controlled due to the designation, although there is a PRoW routed through neighbouring fields.

The landscape character area includes two ironstone villages, Scaldwell and Old and part of Holcot. All three have nucleated forms developed around a main street or at the intersection of several routes. Scaldwell, north west of Pitsford Water, is surrounded by a number of arable fields and some small pastoral fields close to its edge. The wider landscape is sparse in terms of trees but when approaching the village by road it appears in views as a well wooded enclave with occasional rooftops. This includes some tall deciduous and conifer trees associated with gardens and the green in the centre of the village. North of Scaldwell is the site of the medieval village of Faxton. It is designated as a Scheduled Monument and now occupied by arable farming and small wooded areas.

View towards northern part of Pitsford Water from the Causeway
LCT 4 Rolling Ironstone Valley Slopes

Landscape Character Area 4e Pitsford Water

Old is north of Pitsford Water and linked to Scaldwell by Old Road. In terms of the approaches to the village, the spire of St Andrew’s Church is quite prominent as there are fewer trees in the village with the exception of a wooded area and some mature trees to the northern part of the village. To the perimeter of the village are a number of small irregular shaped pastoral fields with unclipped stockproof hedgerows. South east of Scaldwell is a small modern residential development, known as Cherry Hill, occupying a former industrial site. The hedgerow boundary of the former field remains in place, nevertheless the properties are prominent in views from the south and east.

The western part of Holcot is in the Pitsford Water landscape character area. It is near to the eastern edge of Pitsford Water and is quite discrete in the landscape due to the blocks of woodland next to the edge of the reservoir. The spire of Holcot Church comes into view when travelling along Brixworth Road from the west. The western edge of the village is characterised by smaller pastoral and arable fields that are enclosed by the woodland blocks to the west.

The A508 bypass to Brixworth forms a section of the south western boundary of the landscape character area and it is screened from view by woodland planting. Apart from the A508, there are no ‘A’ category roads in the landscape character area and there are few minor roads. The road network links the three villages and together with the Causeway across the reservoir creates a complete ‘inner circuit’ of the landscape character area. The roads are bound by well clipped hedgerows and along certain sections there are wide grass verges next to the road before the hedgerow enclosure. There are occasional hedgerow trees.

In terms of PRoW, there is a circuit to the perimeter of the southern part of Pitsford Water which includes a section of the Northamptonshire Round long distance footpath. Apart from the footpath linking the Causeway to Scaldwell to the west of the northern part of the reservoir there are few PRoW in that locality. There are some PRoWs that extend northwards from Scaldwell and Old linking with the neighbouring Sywell Plateau. There is a more comprehensive PRoW network near to the medieval village at Faxton close to the northern boundary of the character area.

Views from the ‘inner circuit’ road network are of an expansive rolling landscape, with some occasional limited glimpses towards Pitsford Water. Similar views are enjoyed from the PRoW to the north of Scaldwell and Old. Views from the footpath network around Pitsford Water extend across the water body but are then contained by the wooded edges and rising landform. Apart from the Causeway and the PRoW to the west, there are only occasional views towards the northern part of Pitsford Water.

Landscape Condition
Moderate
Most features are well maintained and intact, including the network of hedgerows to arable fields and pasture and the copses and wooded areas to the perimeter of Pitsford Water.
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Landscape Strategy

Landscape management interventions should help to strengthen the local variations between arable fields, pastoral areas, setting to the ironstone villages and the fringes to Pitsford Water. The large scale arable fields on higher ground convey an expansive landscape and provide a reference to the neighbouring predominantly arable Sywell Plateau. The close clipped hedgerows help to articulate the gently sloping landform and allow occasional glimpses of Pitsford Water. Any gaps in hedgerows should be planted up and there are opportunities for additional planting of hedgerow trees to provide visual interest. However, amalgamation of large fields should be resisted.

The smaller pastoral fields, on lower ground and associated with watercourses should be conserved. This includes the taller unclipped stockproof hedgerows. As with the landscape strategy for other areas in this landscape character type, the hedgerows boundaries with neighbouring arable fields should be encouraged to grow taller and remain unclipped to reinforce the local pattern of the landscape. Riparian planting next to watercourses should be maintained and extended.

The fine grained nature of the pastoral fields surrounding the ironstone villages should be conserved to maintain their distinctive wooded setting and appearance in the more open wider landscape. Any development proposals should be carefully integrated into the pattern of the landscape to include retention of hedgerows to field boundaries.

Wooded watercourse east of Pitsford Reservoir

Pitsford Water and land to the fringes has a discrete landscape character compared with the wider character area to the north. The publically accessible areas along the southern part of the reservoir have an appropriate mix of grass, meadow and maturing woodland planting. The landscape near to the northern part of the reservoir includes some blocks of conifer woodland with straight edges. Over time the strategy should encourage the modification of these woodland blocks in accordance with the UK Forestry Standard Guidelines to include more of a patchwork of conifer and broadleaved trees, with a more diverse edge to include shrub species. Any new woodland proposal near to Pitsford Water should also follow the same guidelines.

The earlier landscape character area description highlighted the occasional glimpsed views towards Pitsford Water. Opportunities to promote views towards the reservoir from the PRoW network to the south of Old and Walgrave should be encouraged through wayfinding and interpretation.
**LCT 4 Rolling Ironstone Valley Slopes**

### Landscape Guidelines

#### Landform, Hydrology and Views
- Conserve and enhance the appearance, integrity and quality of rivers and streams. Seek to avoid change that would compromise the characteristic diverse pattern of watercourses and the relationship these have with topography and vegetation.
- Conserve the expansive and open character of prominent and elevated locations in the landscape and Enhance the contrast between these areas and more secluded, intimate and intricate landscapes elsewhere.
- Restore hedgelines, woodlands and declining habitat such as grasslands where appropriate to contribute to the diversity and intricate character of areas of steeply sloping landform.
- Conserve the setting to large water bodies, including ornamental ponds for their intrinsic visual appeal, as well as their recreational and nature conservation value.
- Enhance the setting and fabric of Pitsford Water by seeking opportunities for enhanced recreational and nature conservation facilities. Seek to ensure that the character of the landscape is enhanced through habitat management and creation, working with the reservoir operator.

#### Land Management
- Conserve the distinctive patterning of large arable fields created by hedged boundaries on elevated land and pasture in smaller fields on sloping land.
- Enhance hedgerows by sensitive management that encourages diversity with some hedgerow trees, whilst maintaining a neat network of boundaries that impart a sense of order, and of productive agriculture.
- Conserve taller, unclipped, stockproof hedgerows to pastoral fields. Discourage hedgerow removal and field amalgamation that lead to broader areas of monoculture, and a consequent reduction in the visual interest associated with the mosaic of fields and cropping patterns.

#### Woodland and Trees
- Conserve and where possible enhance the mosaic of woodland cover across the landscape. Modify geometric blocks of conifer woodland to include more deciduous species, more round edges to wooded footpath and some shrub species to edges. In accordance with UK Forestry Standard Guidelines.
- On elevated land avoid significant planting that would compromise the open and elevated character of the landscape.
- Conserve and enhance the fabric of parkland landscapes.

#### Settlement, Infrastructure and Built Form
- Conserve buildings, and their setting, that express the local ironstone geology and strengthen the connection between built development and the underlying geology.
- Restore stone walls and other features using local stone that express the local ironstone geology and strengthen the connection between built development and the underlying geology.
- Create new buildings that utilise local stone sources. In the absence of viable quarrying, source appropriate reclaimed building stone for re-use. Seek wherever possible to respect and interpret local vernacular, but not necessarily copying detailing, or building styles. Ensure new building respects the local vernacular through the appropriate layout of building form in relation to the local streetscene, and the scale, massing and use of materials.
- Conserve the rural character of the landscape surrounding towns, and avoid visual, actual or perceptual coalescence of neighbouring settlements to maintain the integrity and identity of each.
- Conserve and enhance the character and identity of individual settlements and seek to approve only new development that performs this objective and makes a positive contribution to sense of place.
- Create a vibrant and visually appealing urban rural fringe or interface that is functional and sensitive to variations in local landscape and townscape character without compromising views and integrity of the historic settlement core or causes coalescence of settlements.