



**Settlements and Countryside
Local Plan (Part 2) for Daventry
District
Natural Environment
Background Paper Version 3
(BNE01)
July 2018**

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1. Introduction - Purpose of document

- 1.1 This document forms part of the technical evidence base that informs the Part 2 Settlements and Countryside Local Plan. It is one of a number of background papers that are being prepared to provide information about the issues that are dealt with in the Council's Part 2 Settlements and Countryside Local Plan. It sets out the current national and local policy context and guidance relating to heritage assets and the natural environment. It also assesses the District's natural assets and reviews the available evidence base to ensure that the natural environment is given appropriate recognition in policy formulation.
- 1.2 This background paper has been produced to sit alongside the Proposed Submission plan.
- 1.3 The terms relating to the natural environment are set out in a glossary in Appendix 1.

2. Structure of this document

- 2.1 Section 3 sets out the national and local policy context, including an overview of key national policies and the implications for the Part 2 Local Plan. Section 4 sets out what consultation has taken place. Section 5 sets out key pieces of evidence that have been collated and Section 6 identifies how the issues have been addressed in the Part 2 Local Plan.

3. National and Local Policy Context

National Policies - National Planning Policy Framework (March 2012)

3.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) makes a clear commitment to conserving the natural environment in the planning system. The natural environment is regarded as having a key role to play in achieving sustainable development (paragraph 7) and is referred to in two of the twelve core planning principles (paragraph 17), where in plan making and decision taking planning should:

‘take account of the different roles and character of different areas,.....recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside.....’ and

‘..... encourage multiple benefits from the use of land in urban and rural areas, recognising that some open land can perform many functions (such as for wildlife, recreation, flood risk mitigation, carbon storage, or food production’ and

‘contribute to conserving and enhancing the natural environment and reducing pollution. Allocations of land for development should prefer land of lesser environmental value where consistent with other policies in this Framework’

3.2 Section 7 looks at good design and states that planning policies should:

- Create an sustain an appropriate mix of uses including the incorporation of green and other public space
- Address the connections between people and places and integrate new development into the natural, built and historic environment

3.3 Section 8 deals with healthy communities. It highlights the importance of high quality open spaces and the need to base plan policies on up to date assessments. It also introduces the concept of Local Green Spaces where areas of open green space, that are important to local communities, can be recognised and protected through this specific designation. The strength of protection is as strong as for Green Belt, it needs to be consistent with sustainable development and spaces must meet three prescribed criteria to be successfully designated (paragraph 77).

3.4 Section 11 deals with the natural environment and states that local plans should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment:

- Maintain the objective of sustainable development
- Protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, geological conservation interests and soils
- Recognising the wider benefits of ecosystem services

- Minimising impacts on biodiversity and providing net gains in biodiversity where possible
- Preventing development from causing or being at risk from pollution or land instability
- Remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land
- Plan for biodiversity and geodiversity on a landscape scale through cross boundary working
- Plan positively for the creation, protection, enhancement and management of networks
- Identify and record all components of the ecological network
- Include policies to conserving and enhancing the natural and historic environment, including landscape
- Identify areas where development may be inappropriate
- Contain a clear strategy for enhancing the natural environment
- Retain and enhance all publicly accessible open space unless prescribed tests are met

3.5 The tests of soundness require local plans to be based on adequate, up to date and relevant evidence. This will include River Basin Management Plans, Local Nature Partnerships and an assessment of all components of the network. Sustainability Appraisal will be an integral part of the plan preparation process. Habitats Regulation Assessment may be required if there are likely significant effects on a European wildlife site and in this regard, paragraph 118 states that Special Protection Areas and Ramsar sites should be given the same protection as European sites.

Implications for the Local Plan

1. Consider the designation of Local Green Space
2. Minimise impacts on biodiversity and look for opportunities to make net biodiversity gains
3. Work cross boundary with partners
4. When making allocations, take into account agricultural land classification and avoid the best and most versatile land
5. Include criteria based policy against which to assess proposals, according to status
6. Identify most sensitive areas where development would be inappropriate
7. Undertake sustainability appraisal in tandem with each stage of the local plan
8. The sequential order is to firstly avoid causing harm, secondly to mitigate the harm and finally to compensate
9. Safeguard publicly accessible open space unless prescribed tests are met

National Planning Policy Guidance

- 3.6 National Planning Policy Guidance contains guidance on the natural environment, subdivided into sections on landscape, biodiversity and ecosystems, green infrastructure and brownfield land, soils and agricultural land.
- 3.7 Landscape: local plan should include strategic policies for the conservation and enhancement of the natural environment, including landscape. Where appropriate prepare landscape character assessments to complement Natural England's national character area profiles.
- 3.8 Biodiversity and ecosystems: need to have an understanding of the nature and distribution of local ecological networks and look for opportunities for habitat enhancement or restoration. If necessary undertake a green space audit within built up areas. Work strategically with partners including local nature partnerships. Consider how individual proposals could contribute to biodiversity and connectivity over a wider area. Take into account existing biodiversity strategies and local BAPs.
- 3.9 Green infrastructure: must be well planned, designed and maintained to provide a range of benefits. It may be necessary to prepare a green infrastructure framework or strategy. Work with neighbouring authorities and stakeholders including local nature partnerships and the LEP.
- 3.10 Brownfield land, soils and agricultural land: take into account the benefits of high quality (best and most versatile) agricultural land when making allocations.
- 3.11 Local green space: used to protect green areas of particular importance to local communities that meet the criteria in paragraph 77 of the NPPF. They are designated through local and neighbourhood plans.

Implications for the Local Plan

- 10. Undertake landscape character assessment if necessary and ensure that they complement Natural England's national character areas
- 11. Identify gaps and opportunities for new habitat links
- 12. Identify opportunities for enhancement and restoration
- 13. Work across boundaries with other local authorities and partners
- 14. Try to avoid high quality agricultural land when allocating sites
- 15. Consider designating local green space

Local Policies (Development Plan)

- 3.12 There are a number of adopted local policy documents that form the development plan for the District. These are the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (WNJCS) which was adopted in December 2014, the saved policies from the Daventry

District Local Plan 1997 (saved September 2007 and revised in February 2015 following adoption of the WNJCS) and 'made' neighbourhood plans. It is intended that the Part 2 Local Plan will replace the 1997 saved policies.

Local Policies - West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy

- 3.13 The West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (WNJCS) Vision makes reference to the natural environment, saying that the area will provide an enhanced network of green spaces and high quality parks and gardens and development will respond to biodiversity and habitat protection. The rural areas across West Northamptonshire will support a network of vibrant rural communities and villages which retain their local distinctiveness and character, set within beautiful countryside. The area's waterways, country houses, parks and woodlands will support a diverse leisure and tourism economy.
- 3.14 Relevant policies in the WNJCS are S10, BN1, BN2, BN3, BN4, BN8 and R1:
Policy S10 – Sustainable Development Principles contains the following natural environment related criteria
Policy contains a criterion to protect, conserve and enhance the natural and built environment and heritage assets and their settings. It promotes the creation of green infrastructure networks, enhances biodiversity and reduces the fragmentation of habitats.
- BN1 Green infrastructure connections
- 3.15 Policy aims to conserve, manage and enhance identified sub-regional and local green infrastructure corridors and provide new sustainable green infrastructure.
- BN2 Biodiversity
- 3.16 This policy aims to maintain and enhance existing biodiversity designations and support net gains. Biodiversity and geodiversity sites should be given appropriate weight to according to status. Give appropriate mitigation for unavoidable loss and link habitats.
- BN3 Woodland enhancement and creation
- 3.17 Supports enhancement and management of existing and creation of new woodlands. Support new woodlands that would extend, buffer or link existing ancient woodland.
- BN4 Upper Nene Gravel Pits Special Protection Area
- 3.18 Development should not lead to significant adverse effects on the SPA/Ramsar Site.
- BN8 River Nene strategic river corridor
- 3.19 This policy protects and enhances the natural and cultural environment of the Nene corridor.

R1 Spatial Strategy for the rural areas

- 3.20 This policy preserves and enhances areas of environmental importance and open land which is of particular significance to the village.

Implications for the Local Plan

16. Safeguard against habitat fragmentation
17. Consider inclusion of guidance on detailed requirements for GI corridor creation, enhancement and management
18. Protect according to status of sites
19. HRA screening needed for the Upper Nene Gravel Pits SPA/Ramsar site
20. Provide further advice on how biodiversity will be considered in the development management process – refer to Biodiversity SPD
21. Consider how to protect important open land in villages
22. Consider appropriate mitigation

Local Policies - Saved Local Plan policies

- 3.21 A number of policies from the 1997 Local Plan were saved in 2007. Policies relevant to the natural environment are as follows:

- Policy EN1 Special Landscape Area
- Policy EN10 Green Wedges
- Policy EN11 Rural Access Areas
- Policy EN12 Green Links
- Policy EN35 Ecologically important sites in Daventry

Implications for the Local Plan

23. Consider how a special landscape area or similar designation will be taken forward in the Plan
24. Consider the need for green wedge or similar designation
25. Consider the need for rural access areas
26. Identify opportunities for new habitat/green links

Local Policies - Neighbourhood Development Plans

- 3.22 As at July 2018, 11 Neighbourhood Development Plans have been made across the District¹. These are listed as follows;

- Barby & Onley Neighbourhood Development Plan

¹ Made Neighbourhood Plans in Daventry District. Available at <https://www.daventrydc.gov.uk/living/planning-policy/neighbourhood-planning/made-neighbourhood-development-plans/>

- Braunston Neighbourhood Development Plan
- Brixworth Neighbourhood Development Plan
- Crick Village Neighbourhood Development Plan
- Flore Neighbourhood Development Plan
- Kilsby Neighbourhood Development Plan
- Moulton Neighbourhood Development Plan
- Spratton Neighbourhood Development Plan
- Welford Neighbourhood Development Plan
- West Haddon Neighbourhood Development Plan
- Woodford cum Membris Neighbourhood Development Plan

3.23 It will be important to ensure that on matters that are related to the natural environment, future neighbourhood plans complement and align to the Part 2 Local Plan wherever possible.

Local Guidance - Supplementary Planning Documents

3.24 The Council has adopted 23 village design statements although some are over 10 years old. These documents have the status of SPDs which means that they are a material consideration in the determination of planning applications. The on-going programme of VDSs being prepared by Parish Councils are a combination of new VDSs and updates of existing VDSs.

3.25 The VDSs contain a range of guidelines. Common themes relating to the natural environment include protection of open countryside, habitats, trees, hedgerows and open spaces within villages; protection of key views; appropriate landscaping of new development including the use of native species; and creation of new habitats within developments. A number also reference the Northamptonshire Biodiversity Action Plan targets for habitat creation.

Biodiversity SPD for Daventry District

3.26 A County-wide SPD was prepared by Northamptonshire County Council in partnership with the Wildlife Trust for Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Northamptonshire and Natural England. The SPD supplements policies in the WNJCS and advises applicants, decision and policy makers on how the consideration of biodiversity can be incorporated into the planning process. Good practice, a biodiversity checklist and a step by step guide highlights key actions to be taken at each step of a planning application. The need for applicants to refer to the SPD is to be incorporated into the Local Requirements for planning applications. The Council adopted the Biodiversity SPD for Daventry District in 2017 as a version specific to the District.

Northamptonshire Biodiversity Action Plan 2015-2020

3.27 The 3rd edition of the Northamptonshire Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) was produced in January 2017. It sets out the highest priorities for action to conserve Northamptonshire's most threatened habitats and species (known as priority/BAP habitats and species), to create bigger, better and more joined up habitats at a landscape scale. The focus for the BAP is to maintain and restore priority habitats and it provides a Habitat Action Plan for each. Priority habitats present in the District are listed in the Appendix. The BAP provides a baseline, targets and action plan up to 2020 for each habitat and associated species.

3.28 General Action Plans cover general strategies, targets and actions for conservation. The most relevant General Action Plan for the local plan is Policy and Planning General Action Plan. The main issues are highlighted as being:

- Wildlife diminishing in Northamptonshire despite the protected sites system
- Site protection and management as part of a wider ecological network
- Protecting remaining sites and taking the opportunity enhance and create new habitats
- Pressure on land

3.29 The strategy and guidelines identified include:

- Protect key habitats and species in local plans
- Ensure that green infrastructure of any existing or potential value is given significant consideration in all planning applications

3.30 Targets include:

- No net loss of Local Wildlife Sites, nature reserves, pocket parks or Protected Wildflower Verges to development
- Ensuring that all relevant new development leads to a net gain in biodiversity (on or off-site), with consideration of BAP targets
- Ensuring that all new development are accompanied by a suitable ecological survey that details loss and creation of priority habitat

3.31 Actions include:

- Referencing the aims of the BAP in local plans and SPDs
- Identifying and embedding ecological networks in local plans

3.32 A user guide for planners provides the context to biodiversity conservation and explains how the BAP can be used in policy and development management.

3.33 Habitat creation can be helpful to maintain sufficient habitat for priority species and the BAP contains habitat opportunity maps as a guide. Statutory sites receive some form of statutory protection, however, non-statutory sites have no statutory

protection and rely on national or local policy to provide a degree of protection. The BAP habitat and species conservation targets and actions should be used to inform the local plan, with the aim of ensuring the conservation of priority habitats and species and that development leads to a net gain in biodiversity. The BAP also acts as an evidence base, providing information on the rarity of priority habitats and species and where their conservation, restoration and creation are most important. Where new habitats are created, the BAP provides targets and guides restoration schemes. The BAP also guides multi-functionality in landscaping schemes.

Implications for the Local Plan

- 27. Plan for biodiversity at a landscape scale
- 28. Include policy to protect key habitats and species
- 29. Biodiversity features and habitats outside designated sites are also important
- 30. Aim for a net gain in biodiversity and contribute to BAP objectives
- 31. Refer to Biodiversity SPD for Daventry District
- 32. Encourage use of biodiversity checklist
- 33. Surveys must be undertaken at an early stage of the process, certainly before determination

Daventry District Council Corporate Strategic Plan 2017-2020

3.34 Although this document does not form part of the development plan, it sets out objectives and priorities for the Council, which are to:

- Objective 1: Improve our business economy, learning and skills
- Objective 2: Protect and enhance our environment
- Objective 3: Promote healthy safe and strong communities and individuals
- Objective 4: To be an efficient and effective Council

3.35 Below each of these objectives sit priorities and measure to achieve them. In the context of the natural environment, Objective 2 'Protect and enhance our environment' leads to Priority E3 'Deliver attractive public spaces' and one relevant measure:

- E3.2 Number of high quality parks that are provided for public use

Implications for the Local Plan

- 34. Promote the enhancement of green infrastructure
- 35. Identify parks that would benefit from enhancement and the specific works that would be needed

4. Issues arising from public consultation

Issues Consultation 2012

4.1 The responses relating to the natural environment are summarised below:

- More high quality open spaces should be provided in the town to improve health and wellbeing
- Green spaces in Daventry should be better linked to create an effective network for recreation, amenity and ecological reasons
- Green spaces in Daventry should link historical features and the surrounding villages
- Daventry Country Park extension should focus on the creation of wildlife habitats with some informal recreation facilities
- Concern about the impact of wind turbines across the District and how the Local Plan might address the issue
- Special Landscape Areas from Saved Local Plan is a valuable designation that should be retained in the new Local Plan
- Pockets of local green space within and around villages need to be protected due to historical, ecological or landscape significance
- All landscapes, not just landscapes of special value, should be protected
- Areas of tranquillity should be protected.
- Resist proposals that adversely affect important wildlife sites

Issues and Options Consultation 2016

Issue 16 – Existing Employment Areas

4.2 16 responses were received to this issue. One response recommended that opportunities should be identified to develop green infrastructure for Daventry town, to enhance the setting and promote public access to and interpretation of scheduled sites.

Issue 32 - Landscape

4.3 21 responses were received to this issue. In terms of the SLA, many supported the retention of this designation, others pointed out that the SLA has been deleted across four North Northants local authorities and a continuation of the designation in Daventry would require substantial justification. It was also suggested that because the current policies pre-date the NPPF and have no criteria based evidence or support, they are out of date. Landscape designations should be criteria based to comply with the NPPF.

4.4 Landscapes should be considered at a local level, such as local green spaces, particularly where there is no neighbourhood plan. Residents' views on spaces and

views they value should be taken into account. There should also be a category between LGS and SLA that act as a buffer between settlements.

- 4.5 Designation should be informed by existing designations and evidence including local landscape surveys, appeal decisions, audit and review of land sensitivity, mapping/photos, views of local residents, tranquillity, geology and topography. The character based approach (NECA) includes historic landscape characterisation (HLC) which provides a basis for landscape sensitivity studies which can help determine the best locations for development. Definitions of high sensitivity could be used but this is subjective.

Issue 34 – Northampton and Daventry Fringe

- 4.6 26 responses were received to this issue. The majority supported a continuation of a Daventry and Northampton fringe designation. In terms of how it would be defined, some suggested that it should be mapped and others favoured a criteria based policy. The ecological and landscape importance of land in the fringe areas will need to be reassessed, informed and new designations defined by up-to-date evidence and local opinion. The opposite view was also expressed that the green wedge should be deleted. A number of designations may lead to over-protection and weakening of presumption against development in the open countryside.
- 4.7 There was little support for a green belt designation. According to the NPPF, the designation of new green belt should be exceptional. There has never been a green belt in Northamptonshire, the county is part of a long term growth area and as green belt is meant to endure, extensive work would need to be undertaken to enable long term growth. Any decision to designate green belt should be through a review of the WNJCS due to its strategic and cross boundary nature.

Issue 37 –Biodiversity

- 4.8 33 responses were received to this issue. The majority of respondents thought that the WNJCS made sufficient provision for biodiversity. Where an additional policy was considered necessary, this would refer to specific sites, biodiversity improvements, wildlife corridors and green infrastructure shared between authorities including the Nene Valley Nature Improvement Area and ecological features that are unique to the district. Local Plan needs to be aware of the review of the Biodiversity Action Plan.

Issue 46 – Community Service Facilities

- 4.9 20 responses were received to this issue. One response considered that new development should contribute to Natural England's Accessible Natural Greenspace Standard (ANGSt), refer to Daventry Infrastructure Studies GI and Landscape Report.

Issue 48 – Daventry Country Park

- 4.10 There were 23 responses to this issue. The majority did not consider that a specific policy on the Country Park was necessary. Of those that did support a specific policy, this was justified because of its importance for leisure, health and biodiversity. A boundary should be defined, the area protected and mitigation and enhancement measures included in the event that the SUE is built. A number of rural communities will remain without provision and this should be addressed where possible.

Issue 59 – General Question

- 4.11 In response to the general question, one respondent stated that the plan needed to consider how WNJCS policy BN1 on green infrastructure will be implemented at a district level. Spatial housing options could have implications for the Daventry Spur sub-regional and Newnham-Napton on the Hill local GI corridors. The Part 2 plan should include a policy on how the town's expansion will incorporate secure contributions and deliver long term management of GI corridors.

Implications for the Local Plan

36. Ensure responses are taken into account in formulation of part 2 Local Plan

Emerging Draft Consultation 2017-2018

- 4.12 The representations to the emerging draft are set out in full [here](#)² and the summary of representations, responses and actions can be viewed in the Summary of Representations, response and action – Daventry District Part 2 Local Plan. Representations were received to all the natural environment policies largely relating to policy wording or requiring clarity to the text and policies in the plan. They have not resulted in a change to the approach of the plan nor have they required additional evidence to be produced. Therefore it is not considered appropriate to repeat them in this background paper.
- 4.13 Substantive representations were received to the Special Landscape Area (SLA) and Green Wedge policies and designations which required the review of the evidence relating to the SLA and Green Wedge. Brixworth Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, on behalf of Brixworth Parish Council, objected to the proposed boundary of the SLA west of Brixworth, which does not include land included in the current designation. The representation made the case that the Council's evidence "Daventry Landscape

² <https://www.daventrydc.gov.uk/living/planning-policy/part-2-local-plan/consultation-responses/>

Study - Special Landscape Area Study” which formed the basis for drawing the boundary of the SLA, was flawed and that not including this land in the SLA would leave the western side of Brixworth vulnerable to development pressure. The existing SLA boundary should be retained. The Council has reviewed the representation and the technical evidence submitted and has concluded that the area to the west of Brixworth does not sufficiently meet the criteria for SLA designation. The Council has not changed the boundary of the SLA in response to that comment. The SLA is a strategic landscape designation at the District level, however, this would not preclude local landscape designations being brought forward at a neighbourhood plan level. As a result, a change to policy ENV1 has been made in the Proposed Submission plan, which will recognise such designations, providing they are supported by appropriate evidence.

- 4.15 Representations were received to the Green Wedge at Daventry and Northampton. At Daventry, the site promoter of the Daventry South West housing site (HO1) questioned the Council’s evidence “Daventry Landscape Study – Fringe Assessments” on the basis that a parcel of land could be excluded from the Green Wedge without harming its function in this location. This would enable the extension of HO1 for additional housing. The Council has reviewed the representation and supporting technical evidence and has concluded that whilst there would be some adverse impacts on local landscape character and views, the impact would be moderate and there is the potential for landscape enhancements that would mitigate effects over time on Big Hill, the spinneys, Green Wedge and SLA. Additions to policy HO1 are included in the Proposed Submission version to deal with the need for landscape mitigation.
- 4.16 At Northampton, a number of representations were received from statutory consultees, land owners and promoters regarding the proposed Green Wedge designation within Daventry District to the north of the Northampton urban area. They were critical of the principle of the Green Wedge, seeing it as restrictive, unjustified and harming the ability to meet Northampton’s needs. Having reviewed the representations the Council considers that the Green Wedge designation remains justified at Northampton and no changes to the extent of the Green Wedge have been made. An NRDA Green Wedge Background Paper has been prepared to address the issues. This can be downloaded from the Local Plan evidence base webpages.
- 4.17 The full responses to the representations can be viewed from the Council’s Local Plan evidence base page.

Implications for the Local Plan

37. Change policy ENV1 to support local landscape designations brought forward through neighbourhood plans providing they are supported by appropriate evidence.
38. Remove an area of land from the Green Wedge at Daventry South West and incorporate into allocated site HO1. Change wording of policy HO1 to refer to landscape enhancement and mitigation.

5. Overview of evidence base

- 5.1 High quality natural environments fulfil a number of important functions including improving quality of life, health and wellbeing, providing wildlife habitats, meeting the challenge of climate change, maintaining and promoting local distinctiveness, providing educational benefits and enhancing built, historic and landscape contexts. The beneficial services of the natural environment are termed 'ecosystem service' and include provisioning, regulatory, cultural and supporting.
- 5.2 The District's natural environment is one of its greatest assets. With the exception of Daventry town the District is predominantly rural and covers an area of 257 square miles. It is characterised by undulating landscapes containing agricultural land, country estates and a large number of scattered villages and hamlets which sit in the sheltered valleys and hilltops.
- 5.3 At a landscape scale, the District does not contain any nationally important landscapes such as national parks or Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, however, a large proportion of the District is covered by Special Landscape Area (SLA), a local designation which recognises its special character and quality. Fringe areas around Daventry and Northampton are designated as Green Wedges and Rural Access Areas, although a high quality landscape is not a pre-requisite for these designations. Instead their purpose is to maintain a buffer between settlements to prevent coalescence and provide public access.
- 5.4 The majority of the District falls within National Character Area 95 Northamptonshire Uplands which is characterised by gently rounded hills and valleys with many long low ridgelines and a great variety of landform. The landscape changes within the District with the north being characterised by prominent scarp slopes, the central area contains undulating hills and valleys and the south has individual hills and knolls. Watercourses flow from the upland areas and there are frequent reservoirs, which, together with the Oxford and Grand Union Canals form important landscape features and recreational and biodiversity resources. The villages are often on high ground or at valley heads and are characterised by vernacular buildings in local Northamptonshire ironstone. Historic sites, houses, parks and gardens are also characteristic of this landscape.
- 5.5 The landscape at the District's eastern fringe is more open and gently undulating and falls within National Character Area 89 Northamptonshire Vales. The Nene and Welland River valleys are distinctive features with flat floodplains and prominent historic houses and parklands on the outer fringes. National Character Area 96 Dunsmore and Feldon occupies a very small area in the western fringe around Barby

and the M45. It is a quiet rural landscape with low hills, heathland plateau and clay vales containing river valleys and canals.

- 5.6 Pressure on land for development in the District is high, particularly in the rural areas and on the fringes of Daventry and Northampton. It is important to have an up-to-date understanding of the available assets in order to protect the most valued landscapes and sites. It is also important not to forget that undesignated sites also perform a valuable function in providing a linked network of habitats.

Existing evidence

Northamptonshire Landscape Character Assessment

- 5.7 The current landscape has been shaped by geology, urban growth and major infrastructure and is characterised by tranquillity, productive farmland, attractive villages and many historic parks and estates. The Northamptonshire Current Landscape Character Assessment (CLCA, 2005) sets out key characteristics, physical and human influences, local distinctiveness, landscape condition and individual descriptions of distinctive character types and areas.

New evidence

Daventry Landscape Study

- 5.8 The CLCA pre-dates the most recent Natural England guidance on landscape characterisation published in 2014. The Council therefore engaged consultants to undertake a major review of landscape evidence, the Daventry Landscape Study (2017). The Landscape Study comprises:
- A detailed review of the landscape character assessment at a District level (Core Task 1)
 - A review of the historic Special Landscape Area (SLA) designation (Core Task 2);
 - Investigation of the potential for AONB designations (Core Task 3);
 - A review of the fringe areas of Northampton and Daventry including a case for Green Belt designation (Core Task 4);
 - Formulation of landscape policies (Core Task 5) based on the evidence gathered;
 - Assessment of five potential site allocations at Daventry (Core Task 6);
 - Provision of a Landscape Toolkit (Supplementary Task 1)

Core Task 1 Landscape Character Type Assessments

- 5.9 The District contains 11 landscape character types and 21 character areas, which are set out in Appendix 2. This element of the Study reviews the 2005 work and provides a more detailed analysis and description of the overall landscape character types and

detailed landscape character areas at the District level. It updates the characteristics of the landscape character types and provides descriptions of each landscape character area and their key distinctive features. It also provides details of landscape condition, a landscape strategy for each landscape character area and landscape guidelines. The desk based review was supplemented with site surveys.

5.10 This part of the Study was used to inform all of the subsequent elements.

Core Task 2 Special Landscape Area (SLA)

5.11 Saved Policy EN1 designates and protects the SLA, of which there are four distinct areas within the District: Welland Valley, Hemplow Hills, Cottesbrooke and Brington, Catesby and Fawsley and Eydon and Culworth. The SLA review was considered necessary because the designation is a historic one that originated in the first Northamptonshire Structure Plan in the 1980's. One of the purposes of the 2005 landscape characterisation work was to undertake more objective character based assessment to replace the SLA designation. As a consequence, the policy has not been carried through in the WNJCS and the local plans of a number of other Northamptonshire authorities however it was still considered to be an important designation with Daventry District. If the District Council wants to pursue a high quality landscape designation it needs to be robustly evidenced. The Landscape Study therefore explores the potential for the continued use of the SLA designation and the robustness of the boundaries. A number of factors were used to assess the landscapes, including quality, rarity and recreational value.

5.12 The review concluded that most of the areas of existing SLAs displayed sufficient distinctiveness and specialness to be retained and in some cases, additional areas were recommended for inclusion. Conversely, areas that did not demonstrate the distinctive characteristics of the SLA or the scenic quality of the landscape, or have been adversely affected by urbanising development, have been recommended for removal.

Core Task 3 Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)

5.13 A preliminary assessment of the suitability of parts of the District for potential AONB status was undertaken, using the four reviewed areas of SLA as a basis because these areas are the highest quality parts of the District. Each SLA area was assessed against statutory designation criteria set out in guidance issued by Natural England.

5.14 The assessment concludes that although the SLA landscapes demonstrate some of the natural beauty criteria and are generally well managed and in good condition, they do

not meet all the factors needed for AONB designation. They might be special at a local and county scale but they are not distinctive or special enough at a national level, and their relatively small individual sizes also means that they are not extensive enough to meet the AONB criteria.

Core Task 4 Daventry and Northampton Fringes

- 5.15 Saved Policies EN10 and EN11 define two distinct designations around the Daventry and Northampton fringes, termed Green Wedges and Rural Access Areas respectively. Both are restrictive policies where land is kept open to serve a particular purpose. The Green Wedge designation applies to large areas of predominantly open/green space flanking Daventry and Northampton and has the purpose of acting as a buffer, preventing the coalescence of these settlements with neighbouring villages. The purpose of the Rural Access Area is to maintain the open and green nature of the areas and increase public access. Neither designation is dependent upon the quality of the landscape. As with the SLA, robust evidence is needed to justify fringe designations.
- 5.16 Land units were identified around the north of the Northampton urban area and all round Daventry (excluding the North East SUE), using the existing Green Wedges and Public Access Areas as a starting point. The review assessed the key landscape characteristics of the land units, their sensitivity, contribution to the setting of settlements and the perceived separation between settlements and the perceived openness of the landscape.
- 5.17 The majority of the land within the units has been recommended for designation as Green Wedge. This reflects the general importance of the land in providing separation between the urban area and outlying settlements. It was decided not to retain a separate designation of Rural Access Area because a single designation is capable of performing the same primary function of protecting the predominantly open character, the identity and setting of settlements, preventing coalescence and support public access.
- 5.18 Consideration was also given to the merit and feasibility of a Green Belt designation around Northampton. Green Belt designation would provide stronger protection than the Green Wedge, however, according to the NPPF, new Green Belt should only be established in exceptional circumstances, at a strategic scale and it would require the co-operation of neighbouring local authorities. However the study found that there were insufficient exceptional circumstances to justify its inclusion and the existing Green Wedge policy has largely been effective in preventing coalescence. The designation is therefore not being taken forward in the Part 2 Local Plan.

Core Task 5 – Policy formulation

- 5.19 The evidence from Core Tasks 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 was used to formulate policies for Landscape, ENV2 Special Landscape Area, ENV3 Green Wedge ENV3 and site specific policies HO1 Daventry South West, HO2 Daventry Micklewell Park Extension, EC7 Land North West of Nasmyth Road, Daventry and EC9 Daventry South East Gateway.

Core Task 6 Daventry Sites Assessment

- 5.20 The assessment assessed the capacity of five sites located on the Daventry town fringe to accommodate development, in order to inform the most appropriate locations for a either housing or employment.

Supplementary Task 1 Landscape Capacity Assessment Toolkit

- 5.21 A supplementary task involved the production of a toolkit which is to be used to help making decisions on applications that impact on landscape. It will help to identify the landscape's sensitive to the proposal and enable an assessment of whether the landscape has capacity to accommodate the proposal without adverse impact.
- 5.22 The components of the Landscape Study can be found on the Local Plan evidence base pages of the Council's website³.

Green Infrastructure and biodiversity

- 5.28 Green infrastructure or GI can be defined as a network of multifunctional green spaces and interconnecting links. 'Making the Connection: a Strategic GI Framework' (2006) is part of the Northamptonshire Environmental Characterisation Project and defines GI networks for both urban and rural areas at a sub-regional scale. Key principles of the Strategy include the delivery of a multifunctional GI network, securing a net gain in biodiversity and taking opportunities to deliver GI when they arise.
- 5.29 Sub-regional and Local GI Corridors were identified in the GI Strategy and are shown in the WNJCS. The Sub-regional corridors are based on the strategic waterways and valleys, notable concentrations of biodiversity that pass through the District, or well defined movement patterns and opportunities, including linkages between major settlements. Sub-regional corridors in the District comprise the following: The Nene (Newnham- Northampton), the Daventry Spur, The Oxford Canal/Cherwell Valley (Oxford-Rugby) and the Brampton Arm (Northampton-Market Harborough).

³ <https://www.daventrydc.gov.uk/living/planning-policy/part-2-local-plans/evidence-base/>

- 5.30 Local corridors link up the Sub-regional corridors and in the District they comprise Crick-Banbury, Newnham-Napton on The Hill, Newnham-Woodford Halse-Sulgrave East, Great Oxendon-Rugby, Northampton-Daentry, Pitsford Water-North Kilworth, Top Lodge-Desborough and Macmillan Way. These are broad areas of opportunity and are subject to refinement. The corridors clearly cross local authority boundaries and collaborative working between authorities and agencies will be important.
- 5.31 District contains a number of valuable sites that range from nationally important Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) to locally important sites, including Local Nature Reserves, Local Wildlife Sites, local geological sites and country parks. There are also remnants of ancient woodland, some of which coincide with the SSSIs. Biodiversity is not confined to designated sites but is present throughout the District in both urban and rural areas. Due to the pressures of development and climate change, it is important that the green and blue spaces form an interconnected network to enable biodiversity to respond and migrate.

Open Space, Sport and Recreation Strategy review

- 5.32 The 2009 Open Space, Sport and Recreation Strategy has been updated to form the evidence base for open spaces, playing pitches and built recreation facilities for the three West Northamptonshire authorities. It contains a specific Open Space Strategy which updates the previous audit carried out in 2009 to 2016 and makes recommendations for new standards of provision based on up-to date evidence, which will be taken forward and adopted through the emerging Part 2 Local Plans. All the typologies of open space in the review are those with public access and have some recreational use, they are:

- Parks and gardens
- Natural and semi-natural green space
- Amenity green space over 0.2 ha or where there is a clear recreational use identified e.g. children's play area on site
- Allotments and community gardens
- Children's play space and informal youth provision e.g. outdoor basketball hoops
- Civic spaces
- Cemeteries and churchyards with a recreational use

- 5.33 The recommended standards have been inserted in the Proposed Submission Local Plan for consultation. The new draft standards are for all typologies with the exception of civic spaces and cemeteries and churchyards. The standards relate to new residential development over 0.2 hectares or sites of six dwellings or more for quantity per 1000 population, accessibility and quality. Where appropriate, separate standards are set for Daentry town and the parishes. There are parts of the District

within the Northampton Related Development Area NRDA), and for this reason, the NRDA open space standards have also been included.

Habitats Regulations Assessment

- 5.34 The preparation of the WNJCS involved the assessment of the likely effects of its policies on European conservation designations under the Habitats Regulations 2010. It was identified that policies may have an adverse impact on two European sites, Rutland Water Special Protection Area (SPA) and Ramsar Site and the Upper Nene Gravel Pits SPA and Ramsar Site. The subsequent screening removed Rutland Water from further consideration. Natural England has confirmed that only the Upper Nene Gravel Pits SPA and Ramsar Site needs to be considered in the screening exercises for the Part 2 Local Plan.
- 5.35 The SPA has been designated on the strength of the assemblage of over-wintering water birds. The integrity of the SPA depends on maintenance of suitable habitats and water environment. The Ramsar site has been designated on the criterion of supporting over-wintering bird assemblage and supporting significant populations of mute swan and gadwall. Factors with potentially adverse impacts on the site include loss of habitat through land take, reduced water quality, noise, activity and light disturbance and increased visitor pressure.
- 5.36 Assessment of the likely effects has indicated that the distance from the Daventry allocations is sufficiently large that there is no likelihood of the Plan causing direct effects through land take or noise, activity and light disturbance. In terms of water quality and increased visitor pressure, the HRA Screening points out that all development will need to comply with relevant policies in the WNJCS.
- 5.37 The full Sustainability Appraisal and Habitats Regulation Screening can be viewed from the Council's website.⁴

⁴ <https://www.daventrydc.gov.uk/living/planning-policy/part-2-local-plans/evidence-base/>

6. How implications for the Local Plan have been addressed

- 6.1 Throughout the document, a number of implications for the Local Plan have been identified as a result of national and local planning policies, evidence related to the natural environment and responses to previous consultations. Some of the implications for the Local Plan are repeated throughout this document where different sources have raised the same issues. Where this has happened, the table below only addresses it once.
- 6.2 The Local Plan addresses all of these issues through the collection of further evidence or through proposed policies in Chapter 9 of the Settlements and Countryside Local Plan and this is set out in Table 1 below.
- 6.3 Relevant policies in the Local Plan are:
- RA1 Primary Service Villages
 - RA2 Secondary Service Villages
 - RA3 Other Villages
 - HO1 Daventry South West
 - HO2 Daventry Micklewell Park Extension
 - EC3 Land to the North and West of Daventry town centre
 - EC7 Land North West of Nasmyth Road, Daventry
 - EC9 Daventry South East Gateway
 - ENV1 Landscape
 - ENV2 Special Landscape Area
 - ENV3 Green Wedge
 - ENV4 Green Infrastructure
 - ENV5 Biodiversity
 - ENV6 Daventry Country Park
 - ENV7 Daventry Canal Arm
 - ENV11 Design
 - CF1 Health and Wellbeing
 - CF2 Open space requirements
 - PA1 Local Green Space

Table 1 Implications for the Local Plan and how they have been addressed

Ref.	Implications for the Local Plan	How they have been addressed
1 14 20 36	Consider how to protect sensitive land in villages including the designation of local green space	Policies RA1, RA2 and RA3 protect areas of environmental importance and open land that makes an important contribution to the form, character and setting of Primary and Secondary Service Villages and Other Villages.

		<p>Policy ENV1 is a general landscape policy that aims to protect the local distinctiveness of the District's landscapes.</p> <p>Policy PA1 protects areas of Local Green Space that have been nominated by the Town and parish councils due to their particular value to local communities.</p>
2 5 10 11 15 21 27 28 36	<p>Minimise impacts on biodiversity, make provision for appropriate mitigation and aim to achieve net biodiversity gains. Protect key habitats and species and ensure BAP objectives are taken into consideration.</p>	<p>Policy ENV5 aims to protect designated and non-designated biodiversity and geodiversity features. Under part B, all proposals that would cause harm will be required to submit an ecological assessment detailing mitigation or compensation. Part C encourages proposals to seek a net biodiversity gain and requires any new habitats to address BAP species and habitat priorities.</p> <p>Site specific housing policies HO1 and HO2 require the provision of structural green and wildlife corridors within these new developments which will and protect important landscape and heritage features. Policy EC3 aims to retain green areas within the town; EC7 requires the strengthening of boundary hedgerows and EC9 requires development to mitigate impacts on biodiversity.</p>
3 11 12 15 16 25 26 33 36	<p>Set out detailed requirements for green infrastructure creation, enhancement and management. Ensure this is done cross boundary at a landscape scale.</p>	<p>Policy ENV4 aims to protect, enhance and restore GI assets. It contains criteria that refer to sub-regional and local corridors set out in the WNJCS and how proposals should link into these (criterion i); working with partners across local authority boundaries (criterion ii); specific proposals that would enhance the Daventry town green links (criterion iii); proposals that would avoid fragmentation and reconnect gaps; and support the identification of important GI in neighbourhood plans.</p>
4 6 13 36	<p>Avoid developing the most sensitive areas. Avoid allocating sites on the best quality agricultural land</p>	<p>The entire emerging draft Local plan, including site allocations and reasonable alternatives, have been subject to a sustainability appraisal.</p> <p>Policy ENV2 sets out criteria to assess development proposals within the SLA, the most sensitive landscapes in the District. Where the development of proposed allocations could impact on sensitive landscape features, this is highlighted the policy (HO1, criterion Bvi).</p>

		The site selection process has ensured that none of the proposed allocations are on the highest quality agricultural land.
5 17 36	Use a criteria based policy to assess proposals and protect sites according to status. Biodiversity features outside designated sites are also important.	Policy ENV5 aims to protect designated and non-designated biodiversity and geodiversity features. Part A of the policy sets out how different types of sites will be assessed depending on whether they are statutorily protected, of local importance or undesignated.
7 18	Undertake sustainability appraisal and HRA screening of the Upper Nene Gravel Pits SPA/Ramsar site.	The emerging draft Local plan, including site allocations and reasonable alternatives, have been subject to a sustainability appraisal. In addition, and as part of the evidence base, OPUN facilitated the detailed consideration of three potential allocations. Impact on landscape character featured in all of the discussions. HRA screening has been undertaken of the emerging Draft Local Plan.
8 34 36	Safeguard publicly accessible open space unless prescribed tests are met Identify parks that would benefit from enhancement and the specific works that would be needed	WNJCS policy RC2 safeguards against the loss of existing open space unless three criteria can be satisfied. Policy CF1 also protects existing green infrastructure and open spaces and refers to RC2 where proposals would result in a loss. The OSSR review has reviewed publicly accessible open space within the District and has been used to set new standards in the Emerging Draft Local Plan (Policy CF2). Criterion Aii of policy CF1 supports the protection, management and enhancement of existing built facilities, green infrastructure and open spaces. The site surveys for the OSSR provide detail of the condition of public parks and will be used to inform enhancement proposals.
9 36 37 38	Undertake landscape character assessment Consider how to support local landscape designations in neighbourhood plans.	The Daventry Landscape Study was commissioned to provide important up-to-date evidence for the Local Plan. It underpins the landscape policies ENV1, ENV2 and ENV3. Change wording of policy ENV1 to support local landscape designations in neighbourhood plans providing they are supported by appropriate evidence.

	Review of Green Wedge evidence has concluded that an area of land adjacent to Daventry South West can be removed from the Green Wedge without harming its function.	Remove area of land from the Green Wedge at Daventry South West and incorporate into site allocation. Change wording of policy HO1 to refer to landscape enhancement and mitigation.
10 15 25 36	Safeguard against habitat fragmentation and look for opportunities to link habitats	<p>All the criteria in policy ENV4 would assist in enhancing the GI network. Criterion iv specifically addresses the problem of fragmentation.</p> <p>Part C of policy ENV5 seeks to create new habitats, avoid fragmenting existing habitats and strengthen the habitat network.</p> <p>The policy on Daventry Country Park (ENV6) aims to integrate the Country Park Extension into the existing park by creating linked natural and semi-natural green space.</p>
19 30 31 32 36	Consider how to incorporate biodiversity into the development management process and encourage the use of a checklist. Ensure surveys are undertaken at an early stage.	Policy ENV5 sets out criteria for how Part D requires proposals to comply with the principles in the Biodiversity SPD for Daventry District, which sets out how biodiversity is to be considered and incorporated into the development management process. It includes a step by step guide to incorporate biodiversity into development and a checklist which will assist in completing the 1APP application form.
22 23 24 36 37 38	Consider how the Special Landscape Area, Green Wedge and Rural Access Area designations will be taken forward.	<p>The Daventry Landscape Study was commissioned to underpin landscape policies in the Local Plan. It considered the case for each of these historic designations. In the case of the SLA, a designation has included in the Local Plan, although the boundary is different to that in the saved policies. The relevant policy is ENV2.</p> <p>Following consultation on the emerging draft, the evidence relating to the SLA to the west of Brixworth was reviewed. This concluded that the evidence is robust and that no change will be made in the proposed submission version of the plan to the boundary of the SLA as a result of this representation. A change has been made to policy ENV1 to recognise local landscape designations in neighbourhood plans.</p> <p>The Green Wedge has also been retained and</p>

		<p>extended at both Daventry and Northampton. The Rural Access Area designation has been deleted and the land areas incorporated into the Green Wedge where appropriate. The relevant policy is ENV3.</p> <p>Following consultation on the emerging draft, the evidence relating to the Green Wedge at Daventry South West was reviewed. This concluded that it would be possible to remove an area of Green Wedge without it affecting its function. The boundary of the Green Wedge has been changed in the proposed submission of the plan and the wording of policy HO1 has been changed to require landscape mitigation and enhancements.</p> <p>The principle of Green Wedge at the Northampton fringes has been reviewed in the NRDA Green Wedge Background Paper, however, no change to the boundary has been made in the proposed submission version of the plan.</p>
27 29 36	Protect key habitats and species and ensure BAP objectives are considered	Policy ENV5 aims to protect designated and non-designated biodiversity and geodiversity features. Part C encourages proposals to seek a net biodiversity gain and requires any new habitats to address BAP species and habitat priorities.

Appendices

Appendix A – Definitions

Ancient woodland	An area that has been wooded continuously since at least 1600 AD (NPPF Annex 2: Glossary).
Semi-natural woodland	ancient woodlands sites that have retained the native tree and shrub cover that has not been replanted, although it may have been managed by coppicing or felling and allowed to regenerate naturally.
Biodiversity Action Plan	sets out the highest priorities for action to conserve the most threatened and declining habitats and species.
Ecosystem services	The benefits people obtain from ecosystems such as food, fuel, water, air quality, climate control, heritage and recreation (NPPF Annex 2: Glossary).
Green infrastructure	A network of multi-functional green space, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities (NPPF Annex 2: Glossary).
Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA)	The process of screening and appropriate assessment of options to understand their impacts on European wildlife sites, which are Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas .
Landscape character assessment	Process of identifying and describing variation in the character of the landscape. Seeks to identify and explain the unique combination of elements and features that make landscapes distinctive.
Landscape Character Type	Distinct types of landscapes that are relatively homogenous in character. They can occur in different areas in different parts of the country.
Landscape Character Area	Single unique areas within a character type which are discrete parts of a landscape character type. Each has its own individual character and identity, although will share the same generic characteristics as others of the same character type.
Local Nature Partnership	A body, designated by the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, established for the purpose of creating or improving the natural environment in an area and the benefits derived from it (NPPF Annex 2: Glossary).
Local Wildlife Site	Non-statutory designation comprising sites of substantial local importance for wildlife conservation which are

	identified by a partnership between the Wildlife Trust, local authorities, statutory nature conservation agencies, local naturalists, landowners and wildlife charities using national criteria which have been adapted for local use. Most are privately owned.
Pocket Park	Local public green spaces which are owned, looked after and cherished by local communities for peaceful enjoyment and the protection of wildlife. They are a local designation, designated by Northamptonshire County Council in partnership with local organisations.
Protected Wildflower Verge	Non-statutory designation comprising verges rich in wildlife which designated on the basis of threats and declines in certain species, national priorities and local distinctiveness. Managed by the wildlife trust in partnership with local authorities, statutory nature conservation agencies, local naturalists and landowners.
Ramsar site	Wetlands of international importance, designed under the 1971 Ramsar Convention (NPPF Annex 2: Glossary).
Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)	Site designated by Natural England under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (NPPF Annex 2: Glossary).
Special Landscape Area	local designation from the Northamptonshire Structure Plan which identifies areas of locally attractive landscape which are special in a county context (Northamptonshire Structure Plan 1996-2016 glossary).
Special Protection Area (SPA)	Areas which have been identified as being of international importance for the breeding, feeding , wintering or the migration of rare and vulnerable species of birds found within European Union countries. They are European designated sites, classified under the Birds Directive (NPPF Annex 2: Glossary).

Appendix B – Landscape Character Types and Areas

Landscape Character Type	Landscape Character Areas	Key characteristics
1. Ironstone Uplands	1a Guilsborough Ironstone Uplands 1b Spratton and Creaton Ironstone Uplands	Elevated and gently undulating Patchwork of contrasting colours and textures Limited woodland cover Hedgerow trees an important feature Small nucleated villages with isolated farmsteads Variety of building materials, some ironstone in vernacular buildings
2. Ironstone Hills	2a Eydon Hills 2b Staverton Hills	Elevated rolling uplands with distinctive hills Varied landform, extensive views Sense of exposure and remoteness Patchwork of contrasting colours and textures Trees abundant in landscape Variety of building materials, some ironstone in vernacular buildings
4. Rolling Ironstone Valley Slopes	4a Harlestone Heath and the Bramptons 4b Moulton Slopes 4d Hanging Houghton 4e Pitsford Water	Broad valleys Rolling landform, extensive views Sense of exposure Numerous water bodies Patchwork of contrasting colours and textures Trees abundant in landscape Numerous villages Variety of building materials, some ironstone in vernacular buildings Influenced by proximity to Northampton
5. Clay Plateau	5a Naseby Plateau 5b Sywell Plateau	Broad elevated undulating plateau Expansive long distance views Sense of exposure Limited tree cover Numerous water bodes Sparsely settled with small villages

		and isolated farmsteads Monuments and landscape features associated with Battle of Naseby
6. Undulating Claylands	6a The Tove Catchment	Wide panoramic views across elevated areas Undulating landform also creates more contained areas Productive rural landscape with equal balance of arable and pastoral farming Small deciduous copses and hedgerow trees are distinctive features in the open landscape Hedgerows are often low and well clipped Concentrations of small woodlands apparent on steeper slopes Settlement pattern sparse and indicative of a quiet and deeply rural landscape
13. Undulating Hills & Valleys	13a Woodford Halse and Weedon Bec 13b Daventry 13c Long Buckby 13d Cottesbrooke and Arthingworth	Extensive undulating and productive landscape Many watercourses, reservoirs and man made lakes Navigable canals important visual component Numerous small woodlands Strong historic character Numerous villages linked by winding lanes Character eroded by communications routes, urban influences and infrastructure
14. Rolling Agricultural Lowlands	14a Newbold Ground	Newbold Ground the only example in the county Rolling agricultural landscape Dissected landscape creates series of small interconnecting valleys Open views Limited tree cover Few settlements, mainly isolated farmsteads and buildings Generally inaccessible landscape Quiet, simple rural landscape

15. Farmed Scarp Slopes	15a Holthorpe Hills to Great Oxenden	Relatively steep elevated scarp Sense of elevation and panoramic views Poorly suited to arable farming Limited settlement Neat hedgerows Widespread ridge and furrow
17. River Valley Floodplain	17c Brampton Valley Floodplain	Flat floodplain landscape Wide views over open floodplain Limited woodland cover Gappy hedgerows Extremely limited settlement Significant urban influence Some parkland landscapes
18. Broad River Valley Floodplain	18a The Nene – Long Buckby to Weedon Bec	Broad flat wide floodplain surrounded by rising land Limited woodland cover Very limited settlement, some scattered farmsteads and buildings Urban influences Numerous restored landscapes with wetland and lakes Recreational activities focused on restored lakes
19. Broad Unwooded Vale	19b Vale of Rugby 19c Welland Vale	Expansive long distance and panoramic views Numerous small watercourses Broad flat landscape Extremely limited tree cover Sparsely settled Significant communication routes