APPENDIX 8.2

LANDSCAPE PLANNING POLICY AND LANDSCAPE CHARACTER ASSESSMENT EXTRACTS
A8.2 LANDSCAPE PLANNING POLICY AND LANDSCAPE CHARACTER ASSESSMENT EXTRACT

National Planning Policy

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2012)1

A8.1 The NPPF sets out the Government’s planning policies for England and provides the planning framework within which communities and local authorities can produce distinctive local plans which respond to local needs and priorities.

A8.2 Twelve core planning Principles are set out, of which the following are relevant to consideration of landscape and visual matters, and state that planning should:

- “not simply be about scrutiny, but instead be a creative exercise in finding ways to enhance and improve the places in which people live their lives;
- always seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings;
- take account of the different roles and character of different areas, .... recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and supporting thriving rural communities within it;
- 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; “

A8.3 The NPPF identifies and describes thirteen aspects contributing to the delivery of sustainable development which should be considered in developing local plans and reviewing planning applications. Those of relevance to the landscape and visual considerations of the Sites and Development include Section 7: Requiring good design within which Paragraph 58 states that planning policies and decisions should aim to ensure that developments, inter alia:

- “...establish a strong sense of place, ...
- respond to local character and history, and reflect the identity of local surroundings...
- are visually attractive as a result of good architecture and appropriate landscaping.”
A8.4 Paragraph 61 states that:

“planning policies and decisions should address the connections between people and places and the integration of new development into the natural, built and historic environment.”

A8.5 With regard to the natural environment, Paragraphs 109-125 of Section 11 focus on conserving and enhancing the local and natural environment. The framework states that the planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by inter alia “…protecting and enhancing valued landscapes.”.

A8.6 Paragraph 110 sets out that the aim, in preparing plans for development, should be to minimise adverse effects on the local and natural environment, and that plans should allocate land with the least environmental or amenity value.

A8.7 Paragraph 114 notes that furthermore, local planning authorities should:

“set out a strategic approach in their Local Plans, planning positively for the creation, protection, enhancement and management of networks of biodiversity and green infrastructure…”

A8.8 Paragraph 125 states that:

“By encouraging good design, planning policies and decisions should limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes and nature conservation.”

National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG) (March 2014)

A8.9 To support policies of the NPPF, the Government has produced Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) covering a number of topics.

A8.10 Under the heading of Natural Environment, sub-heading Landscape, Paragraph 1, PPG supports the use of landscape character assessment as a tool for understanding the character and local distinctiveness of the landscape and identifying the features that give it a sense of place, as a means to informing, planning and managing change. The PPG makes reference to Natural England guidance on landscape character assessment.

A8.11 Under the heading Natural Environment, sub-heading Biodiversity and ecosystems, Paragraph 17, PPG supports positive planning for biodiversity in and around development including “habitat restoration, re-creation and expansion; improved links between existing
sites; buffering of existing important sites; new biodiversity features within development; and securing management for long term enhancement.”

A8.12 Under the heading Natural Environment, sub-heading Green Infrastructure, Paragraph 27, PPG supports Green Infrastructure as networks of multi-functional green space, both urban and rural, which deliver a range of benefits for local communities including parks, open spaces, playing fields, woodlands, street trees, allotments, private gardens, waterbodies, green roofs and walls.

A8.13 Under the heading of Light Pollution, Paragraph 1, PPG refers to the risk of artificial lighting undermining enjoyment of the countryside or the night sky and, in Paragraph 2, considers potential effects on protected areas of dark skies or intrinsically dark landscapes. PPG then provides guidance for mitigation-by-design of artificial lighting, including location, timing and extent of lighting.

Local Planning Policy

A8.14 Local planning policies relevant to the Site are:

- The Joint Core Strategy for Broadland, Norwich and South Norfolk (Adopted March 2011, Amendments adopted January 2014) iii;
- The Development Management DPD (DMDPD) for Broadland District Council (2015) iv;
- The Growth Triangle Area Action Plan (GTAAP) for Broadland District Council (2016) v;
- Recreational Provision in Residential Development SPD (2016) for Broadland District Council vi and
- ‘Saved’ policies set out in the South Norfolk Local Plan (Local Plan adopted March 2003, Saved policies retained by Secretary of State in 2007 and not superseded by policies within the adopted JCS) vii

Joint Core Strategy (JCS) for Broadland, Norwich and South Norfolk (2011, amended 2014)

A8.15 The Greater Norwich Development Partnership (GNDP) (of which Broadland Council is a member) has set out the overarching strategy for growth across Norwich, Broadland and South Norfolk, within the JCS.

A8.16 Spatial Planning Objective 9 of the JCS is “to protect, manage and enhance the natural, built and historic environment, including key landscapes, natural resources and area of natural habitat or nature conservation value.” (page 26) The text expands that “Development must provide environmental gains though green infrastructure... Biodiversity, geodiversity and locally distinctive landscapes will be protected and enhanced. Linkages between habitats will be promoted...”
A8.17 Policy 1: Addressing climate change and protecting environmental assets states that:

“To address climate change and promote sustainability, all development will be located and designed to use resources efficiently, minimise greenhouse gas emissions and be adapted to a changing climate and more extreme weather.

The environmental assets of the area will be protected, maintained, restored and enhanced and the benefits for residents and visitors improved.

Development and investment will seek to expand and link valuable open space and areas of biodiversity to create green networks. Where there is no conflict with biodiversity objectives, the quiet enjoyment and use of the natural environment will be encouraged and all proposals should seek to increase public access to the countryside.”

A8.18 Policy 1 goes on to state that:

“In areas not protected through international or national designations, development will:

- Minimise fragmentation of habitats and seek to conserve and enhance existing environmental assets of acknowledged regional or local importance. Where harm is unavoidable, it will provide for appropriate mitigation or replacement with the objective of achieving a long-term maintenance or enhancement of the local biodiversity baseline;
- Contribute to providing a multifunctional green infrastructure network, including provision of areas of open space, wildlife resources and links between them both off site and as an integral part of the development;
- help to make provision for the long-term maintenance of the green infrastructure network […]” (page 30).

A8.19 Policy 2: Promoting Good Design states that “All development will be designed to the highest possible standards, creating a strong sense of place. In particular development proposals will respect local distinctiveness including:
• The landscape setting of settlements including the urban/rural transition and the treatment of ‘gateways’
• The landscape character and ..., taking account of conservation area appraisals and including the wider countryside ...
• Provision of landscaping and public art” (page35)

A8.20 Policy 10: Locations for major new or expanded communities in the Norwich Policy Area identifies the Old Catton, Sprowston, Rackheath and Thorpe St Andrews Growth Triangle as one of the areas for “major growth” and notes that this should include:

“Retention of existing important green spaces and significant levels of heathland re-creation to provide stepping stones to link Mousehold Heath to the surrounding countryside. Building design including, for example, appropriate use of green roofs’ will help provide linkages between green spaces”

Development Management DPD (2015)

A8.21 Policy GC4 – Design

“Development will be expected to achieve a high standard of design and avoid any significant detrimental impact… Proposals should pay adequate regard to:

i) The environment, character and appearance of an area;
ii) Reinforcing local distinctiveness through careful consideration of the treatment of space throughout the development, the appearance of new development, the scale of new development and landscaping;”

A8.22 Policy EN1 – Biodiversity and Habitats states that:

“Development proposals will be expected to protect and enhance the biodiversity of the district, avoid fragmentation of habitats, and support the delivery of a co-ordinated green infrastructure network throughout the district. Where harmful impacts may occur, it should be adequately demonstrated that: (inter alia) Adequate mitigation is incorporated,…”
A8.23 Paragraphs 3.8 and 3.9 note that this includes for locally designated sites e.g. County Wildlife Sites.

A8.24 Policy EN2 – Landscape

“In order to protect the character of the area, development proposals should have regards to the Landscape Character Assessment SPD and, in particular, consider any impact upon as well as seek to protect and enhance where appropriate:

i) Gaps between settlements;

ii) Visually sensitive skylines, hillsides and valley sides and important views including the setting of the Broads Area;

iii) Nocturnal character;

iv) Conservation Areas;

v) Scheduled Ancient Monuments;

vi) Historic Parks and Gardens; and

vii) Green spaces including natural and semi-natural features as well as geological/geomorphological features which make a significant contribution towards defining the character of an area.”

A8.25 Policy EN3 – Green Infrastructure

“Residential development consisting of 5 dwellings or more will be expected to provide at least 4 ha of informal open space per 1,000 population”

A8.26 Paragraph 3.20 notes that:

“The requirement for informal open space set out within this policy is in addition to the formal recreation provision requirement set out in Policy RL1 of this DPD. However, in general new areas of open space created should be multi-functional serving a variety of purposes e.g. where appropriate they could incorporate formal and informal recreational provision as well as sustainable drainage areas where appropriate (in accordance with paragraph 99 of the NPPF)

A8.27 Policy RL1 – Provision of Formal recreational space
“Residential development consisting of five dwellings or more will be expected to make adequate provision and subsequent management arrangements for recreation. The provision of formal recreation should equate to at least 1.68 ha per 1,000 population and the provision of children’s play space should equate to at least 0.34 ha per 1,000 population.”

Local Plan Growth Triangle Area Action Plan (2016)

A8.28 Policy GT2: Green Infrastructure (Strategic Policy)

“An area surrounding Thorpe End which would form an appropriate landscape setting to the Garden Village is identified on the Policies Map. Development will not be permitted that would significantly intrude on the sense of separation between Thorpe End and new development.

Biodiversity and habitat connectivity will be achieved through the delivery of two primary and seven secondary green infrastructure corridors. The corridors are shown on the Policies Map.

Formal and informal recreational open space and Green Infrastructure will be provided through development in accordance with the Development Management policies of the Local Plan. Informal and formal open space, sport pitches, play areas, walking and cycling routes, landscaping and sustainable urban drainage systems will be located and orientated to support the delivery of the identified primary and secondary corridors.”

A8.29 Policy GT7: Land South of Salhouse Road (Area Based Policy)

“A site of approximately 56ha is allocated for mixed use development south of Salhouse Road. This development will include: (inter alia)

An agreed landscape masterplan will be required prior to the commencement of development. This landscape masterplan should include:
- Formal and informal recreational open space in accordance with the Council's adopted policies.
- The open space and landscaping delivered as part of this development should provide separation between new development and Thorpe End including a tree belt along the north eastern edge of the allocated Site. An indicative area of land that would form a suitable landscape setting to Thorpe End is shown on the Policies Map.
- The Delivery of the Green Infrastructure links in accordance with Policy GT2, which should include links between Thorpe Woodlands, Harrisons Plantation and Rackheath Park.”

Recreational Provision in Residential Development SPD (2016)

A8.30 The SPD provides guidance on how the policies set out within Polices EN1, EN3 and RL1 of the DMDPD will be applied in practice. This states at paragraph 3.2:

“Informal open space areas created will need to be to a sufficiently high standard and quality to provide a viable alternative to visiting N2K (Natura 2000) sites or contribute to the provision of a viable alternative as part of a wider green infrastructure network. Regard should be had to the Green Infrastructure Study and the Green Infrastructure Delivery Plan underpinning the JCS. This may include some of the priorities identified in the Greater Norwich Green Infrastructure Delivery Plan (GiDP) and the Greater Norwich Infrastructure Plan (GNIP). Regards should also be had to priorities identified within the emerging Norfolk Green Infrastructure Strategy.”

Broadland District Local Plan (Replacement) Saved Policies (2006)

A8.31 Saved polices within the Broadland Local Plan 2006 of relevance to landscape and visual issues have been superseded by policies within the adopted DMDPD (Appendix 3).

Other relevant documents

Greater Norwich Development Partnership Green Infrastructure Strategy (2007)

A8.32 Chris Blandford Associates, on behalf of the Greater Norwich Development Partnership, produced a Green Infrastructure (GI) Strategy to inform growth and infrastructure requirements in the Greater Norwich Joint Core Strategy Area. The conceptual base for the
strategy is the provision of multi-functional green infrastructure, meeting a range of community needs. The strategy proposes a GI Network including GI Corridors where it is proposed that new and enhanced GI provision be prioritised. The overall objective of the GI strategy is set out in four key themes as outlined below:

- Sustaining and Enhancing the Character and Local Distinctiveness of Riverscapes, Landscapes and Townscapes;
- Making Space for Wildlife;
- Providing a High Quality, Multi-functional and Connected Network of Accessible Greenspaces for People; and
- Adapting to Climate Change through Sustainable Planning and Design

A8.33 Sub-Regional GI Corridors including the North East Norwich - Wroxham - North Walsham Corridor and a network of Local Green Infrastructure Corridors are identified in the strategy with the potential to deliver the following ‘functions’:

- Access and Movement - Linking settlements to their hinterland, destinations and the wider strategic GI Sustainable Movement Network. The corridors provide sustainable links through attractive green routes with clear way marking and other relevant facilities
- Biodiversity - Providing a focus for the enhancement and linkage of the biodiversity resource
- Enhancement of flood risk, water management and other natural processes
- Enhancement and promotion of countryside and urban character to celebrate the distinctiveness of these different corridors
- Enhancement and promotion of heritage and cultural assets
- Enhancement and promotion of recreation and leisure, providing connections between communities, accessible greenspace and other destinations

A8.34 Local GI Corridors would provide linkages between Sub-Regional Corridors and settlements. It is identified that Local GI Corridors “require more resources to improve their functionality than the Sub-Regional Corridors” and that investment will be required so that they can “deliver one or more” of the listed “functions”. (Section 3.4 page 17/18)

Greater Norwich Green Infrastructure Delivery Plan, The Landscape Partnership (2009)ix

A8.35 The study area for the Green Infrastructure Delivery Plan focuses on two areas covered by the CBA GI Strategy to the north east and south west of Norwich, reflecting the main areas for
proposed growth as identified in the Joint Core Strategy. The plan involved the identification of five GI priority areas (GIPAs) developed as a refinement of some of the GIS corridors in the 2007 study. Detailed profiles produced for each of the GIPAs in Appendix 5 of the GNGi Delivery Plan should be used to guide the elements to be promoted which are sensitive to the particular character of the area. (Para 2.24) The GIPA relating to the Site is the “Norwich to the Broads” GIPA.

A8.36 The key recommendations for the “Norwich to the Broads GIPA” (page 1-2) include:

- “There is a general lack of small (2ha-20ha) areas of accessible open space: the density [of small areas of accessible open space] should be increased to a minimum of 1 site for every 9kmsq. Where possible these sites should deliver biodiversity or landscape function, for example woodland creation.

- There is a scarcity of larger (>20ha) areas of accessible open space (much of the Broads floodplain is not strictly accessible): the density [of larger areas of accessible open space] should be increased to a minimum of 1 site for every 12kmsq. Where possible these sites should deliver biodiversity or landscape function, for example woodland creation.

- Promote a new (>60ha) county park for the Rackheath area: this could incorporate recreation of historic Mousehold Heath landscape: a mosaic of heathland, woodland and grassland between the Broads and Norwich and linking areas of woodland, particularly to the north of Norwich to provide a substantial landscape buffer to growth of the City and a green gateway to Norwich...

- Create green corridors, including dedicated routes for pedestrians, cyclists and equestrians from Norwich to Wroxham and from Norwich to Acle, linking areas of existing and planned new development...

- New development should protect and enhance the character and unique qualities of existing settlements, using vernacular in new building design in relation to existing tradition of settlements and building in SUDS. There should be no development on the indicative floodplain.

- Strengthen and enhance ‘green wedges’ of countryside that stretch into Norwich at Thorpe End and Preston: these have the
potential to enhance Norwich’s image as a visually green city with wooded hinterland

- **Extend existing grassland, hedgerow and woodland habitats, increase connectivity and ensure adequate buffers are in place...”**

A8.37 The Priorities and Actions for Landscape Character in the Norwich to the Broads GIPA (page 6/7) include:

- *Enhance the management of intensively farmed agricultural land to enhance the landscape setting of settlements within the Area.*
- *Strengthening and linking areas of woodland, particularly to the north of Norwich to provide a substantial landscape buffer to growth of the City.*
- *Strengthen and enhance ‘green wedges’ of countryside that stretch into Norwich at Thorpe End and Sprowston: these have the potential to enhance Norwich’s image as a visually green city with wooded hinterland*
- *Strengthen and enhance area of countryside (views, gateways and approaches) adjacent to Norwich*
- *Any new development and greenspace networks should seek to protect and enhance the character and unique qualities of existing settlements: ensure new developments utilise the characteristics of the local landscape setting to inform decisions regarding the position and design of proposals and the integration of appropriate mitigation measures, taking into account Broadland District Council/Broads Authority Design Guides.*

A8.38 In the Conclusions and Recommendations section at paragraph 7.8 it is noted that “The GIPA’s are reflected in the Joint Core Strategy as areas for focusing GI delivery as part of the Strategic Growth Locations”.

_Broadland District Council Growth Triangle Statement on Green Infrastructure (2014)^

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^http://planningguidance.communities.gov.uk/

^Greater Norwich Development Partnership, Adopted 2011 (amendments adopted 2014) Joint Core Strategy for Broadland, Norwich and South Norfolk
Appendix 8.2

79. North East Norfolk and Flegg

National Character
Area profile:
Introduction

As part of Natural England’s responsibilities as set out in the Natural Environment White Paper\(^1\), Biodiversity 2020\(^2\) and the European Landscape Convention\(^3\), we are revising profiles for England’s 159 National Character Areas (NCAs). These are areas that share similar landscape characteristics, and which follow natural lines in the landscape rather than administrative boundaries, making them a good decision-making framework for the natural environment.

NCA profiles are guidance documents which can help communities to inform their decision-making about the places that they live in and care for. The information they contain will support the planning of conservation initiatives at a landscape scale, inform the delivery of Nature Improvement Areas and encourage broader partnership working through Local Nature Partnerships. The profiles will also help to inform choices about how land is managed and can change.

Each profile includes a description of the natural and cultural features that shape our landscapes, how the landscape has changed over time, the current key drivers for ongoing change, and a broad analysis of each area’s characteristics and ecosystem services. Statements of Environmental Opportunity (SEOs) are suggested, which draw on this integrated information. The SEOs offer guidance on the critical issues, which could help to achieve sustainable growth and a more secure environmental future.

NCA profiles are working documents which draw on current evidence and knowledge. We will aim to refresh and update them periodically as new information becomes available to us.

We would like to hear how useful the NCA profiles are to you. You can contact the NCA team by emailing ncaprofiles@naturalengland.org.uk

The North East Norfolk and Flegg National Character Area (NCA) slopes gently from west to east and is divided into three parts interspersed by The Broads National Character Area (NCA). Inland it is a rich agricultural area with small- to medium-scale fields, and is mainly unwooded. Isolated farmsteads and small nucleated villages with large medieval churches are linked by a dense network of lanes.

The coast is a prominent feature of the NCA. In the north, the coast is fringed with soft sediment cliffs that are naturally eroding inland, especially at Happisburgh. These soft cliffs have internationally important geological exposures and also a range of important soft cliff habitats. The oldest fossilised human footprints ever found in Europe and more than 800,000 years old, were discovered here in 2013. Maritime cliff grassland is present along this section of the coast, particularly at Mundesley. Dune habitats are also present further south, with associated dune grassland habitats and dune scrub. The Scroby Sands Wind Farm that lies off Great Yarmouth provides a backdrop to coastal views in the south, and in the north the Bacton Gas Terminal is a dominant feature on the coast. There are four international nature conservation designations, a National Nature Reserve and a Ramsar site.

The NCA extends from the seaside resorts of Gorleston-on-Sea in the south along to Winterton-on-Sea, and from Happisburgh along to Mundesley in the north. A small area south-east of Mundesley is part of the Norfolk Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. To the north-west lies the principal market town of North Walsham which, with its neighbouring village of Worstead, has a Flemish influence and is built with flint and red brick, with roofs of Norfolk reed thatch or pantiles. The 14th-century ‘wool churches’ are testament to the historic prosperity of the textile and weaving industry. To the south-west are the enlarged commuter villages of Brundall and Blofield close to the City of Norwich and the market town of Acle further east at the edge of the Broads. In the east the area known as Flegg encompasses the urban coastal town and tourist resort of Great Yarmouth, England’s energy port, and the tourist centres of Caistor-on-Sea and Hemsby and their associated extensive caravan and chalet holiday parks that align the coast. The three sections of the NCA are linked together by the rivers Yare, Bure, Ant and Thurne and strategic rail and road routes.

Allowing natural processes to occur along the coast, where appropriate, while providing protection from flooding, is an ongoing challenge.
Statements of Environmental Opportunity

- **SEO 1:** Conserve, enhance and manage the nationally significant coastal landscape, including that within the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, by implementing strategies to adapt to coastal change and sea level rise that are consistent with the current Kelling Hard to Lowestoft Ness Shoreline Management Plan (2012). Work with coastal processes as far as possible, while enhancing people’s enjoyment of the area, through improving its unique assemblage of coastal habitats with their geological and historical importance and through improving and increasing opportunities for sustainably managed access to support recreation and education.

- **SEO 2:** Seek opportunities to increase the quantity and quality of semi-natural habitat mosaics and geodiversity sites and to enhance historic landscape character and its resilience to climate change, while providing additional benefits for access and recreation for local communities and visitors – thereby enhancing their experience by increasing understanding and improving the local economy.

- **SEO 3:** Work with the local farming community to safeguard future food production, while maintaining and enhancing the historic landscape character with its patchwork field system and hedges; enhancing biodiversity (especially in arable margins and hedgerows), geodiversity, water quality and availability, pollination and soil quality; managing soil erosion; conserving heritage features and assets; and addressing the impacts of climate change.

- **SEO 4:** Encourage measures that enhance existing settlements and the design and location of new developments and infrastructure that can adapt to coastal change, limited water availability, and encompass green infrastructure, yet maintain traditional Norfolk character and conserve and enhance historic features and archaeology, geodiversity and biodiversity.
Physical and functional links to other National Character Areas

The North East Norfolk and Flegg National Character Area (NCA) is intimately linked with The Broads NCA, which wraps around and between the three distinct parts of this NCA, occupying the flood plains of the five major rivers that form the core of the Broads. Two of the distinct areas of the NCA abut the coast; the other lies entirely inland. To the west, the NCA adjoins the Central North Norfolk NCA, the topography of which is more varied. Great Yarmouth forms its thin, southernmost extent, joining at this point with the northern extreme of the Suffolk Coast and Heaths NCA.

Views inland are extensive across remote and open areas. Large churches are very prominent in the open landscape, with blocks of woodland and copses seen along the Broads margin. Sea walls and coastal dune systems block views of the sea along much of the coast, but where it is visible views are expansive, and Scroby Sands Wind Farm can be seen along the southern coast. Several roads, the railway, the Weavers’ Way long-distance footpath and National Cycle Network routes physically connect the three distinct areas of the NCA both to each other and to neighbouring areas.

The geology of the area is complex but has features in common with adjoining NCAs, which are similarly underpinned by Pleistocene Crag bedrock overlain by till, sands and gravel. The NCA is within the Kelling Hard to Lowestoft Ness sediment cell boundary (the Wash to the Thames). The natural erosion of the area’s soft sea cliffs extends up to Sheringham in Central North Norfolk; this process supplies material that is vital to maintaining the sandy beaches from Winterton southwards as far as the Suffolk Coast and Heaths NCA.

Potable water supply for the NCA is abstracted from a bore hole near North Walsham; from Omesby Broads in the neighbouring Broads NCA and in the south-west of the NCA groundwater is pumped from the chalk aquifer and surface water is abstracted from the River Wensum also in the Broads NCA.

A small part of the Norfolk Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty extends into the area south-east of Mundesley. The port of Great Yarmouth stands at the gateway of the tidal River Yare, which is a navigable route to Norwich. Former railway lines provide valuable wildlife corridors. The A47 road that runs from Great Yarmouth to Norwich is a strategic route both for trade from the port and for commuters.

Distinct area

- Great Yarmouth and the developed coastal strip
**Key characteristics**

- A generally flat, low-lying landscape, compared to adjacent areas, which has limited topographic variation and slopes gently from west to east, becoming flatter as it merges with the Broads.

- Soils that are deep, loamy and free draining. They are very fertile and support productive arable farming. Horticultural crops are grown on the lighter soils towards the coast.

- Naturally active coastline of geological and geomorphological importance, providing a main source of sediment to the south of the NCA, within the sediment sub-cell. Internationally important Pleistocene sediment and fossil deposits are exposed in eroding coastal cliffs.

- Distinctive coastal sand dune system and deposits of marine shingle, with sections of sandy cliffs and long, wide, sandy beaches.

- Copses and large woodland blocks around Blofield Heath, East Rushdon and North Walsham, such as Bacton Woods, are important features of inland areas. They lend an intricate, enclosed character to the mix of pastures and arable land on the Broads margin, contrasting with the scarcity of woodland elsewhere. High hedgerows with prominent hedgerow oaks are notable features.

- The River Yare, which provides a distinctive riverine landscape and flows out through the tidal lake of Breydon Water to the North Sea.

- Strong vernacular style of domestic and agricultural buildings, reinforced by use of flint and red brick. Roofs are commonly Norfolk reed thatch or pantiles. Isolated flint churches – either round-towered Saxo-Norman churches or medieval wool churches – are prominent in the open landscape.

- Nucleated villages and hamlets, linked by a dense network of small lanes. Chalet parks and large caravan sites dominate the settlement structure along parts of the coast.
SEO 2: Protect and manage the tranquil, enclosed valleys and the network of streams, springs and associated semi-natural habitats set within a farmed landscape, for the maintenance and enhancement of livelihoods, public enjoyment and ecosystem services.

For example, by:

- Promoting management at catchment scale, encouraging good environmental management and the extension of semi-natural habitats to improve connectivity and benefit biodiversity, aid water retention, and increase water storage capacity.

- Managing and extending species-rich meadows, mires and rushy pastures to enhance biodiversity richness and connectivity, supporting the sense of tranquillity and assisting water and soil regulation.

- Encouraging the protection and traditional management of the medieval field pattern of small, irregular fields enclosed by species-rich hedgerows and the network of winding narrow lanes.

- Working with the local farming community to consider how to safeguard food provision while enhancing a range of key ecosystem services, regulating soil erosion and soil and water quality, conserving the historic environment, and benefitting biodiversity.

- Working with farmers and local communities to ensure that the necessary skills and knowledge are maintained, shared and enhanced to secure a future for farming and land management practices.

- Supporting and encouraging initiatives that add value to local food products and foster a strong brand, securing more viable farm businesses.

- Supporting community-based schemes that provide affordable food for local communities.

- Supporting initiatives that promote awareness and understanding of soil structure and management, including the consequences of mechanised activity and soil compaction, particularly in wet weather; and increasing the amount of farmland managed under principles established through the Catchment Sensitive Farming initiative.

- Following the principles described in the Catchment Flood Management Plans for the area: increase flood plain storage and create wetlands; ensure that development (particularly at Chard) does not increase run-off; reconnect estuaries with flood plains; and create habitat and wildlife corridors.

- Seeking opportunities to maximise the availability of water by reducing the rate at which water flows through the area by the reinstatement of natural, meandering drainage patterns and channels and restoring functional flood meadows adjacent to main watercourses.

- Providing wide grass buffer strips and reedbeds adjacent to river banks to act as silt traps, and preventing livestock access to the water's edge.

Continued on next page...
SEO 2: Protect and manage the tranquil, enclosed valleys and the network of streams, springs and associated semi-natural habitats set within a farmed landscape, for the maintenance and enhancement of livelihoods, public enjoyment and ecosystem services.

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- Planting areas of wet woodland and expanding and connecting existing valley woodlands to further minimise soil erosion.

- Raising public awareness of the consequences of erosion caused by recreational pressure and encouraging sustainable use of the access areas.

- Supporting and promoting sustainable management and planting of traditional orchards, including the use of local varieties.

- Managing and promoting access opportunities for quiet enjoyment of the area and encouraging sustainable transport options to reduce traffic levels.

SEO 3: Protect and manage the open, exposed character of the ridgetop plateaux and the associated rich cultural heritage. Plan for the restoration and extension of semi-natural habitats and promote and create opportunities to enhance public understanding and enjoyment.

For example, by:

- Protecting the distinctive, unspoilt and exposed skylines and open plateaux from development of an inappropriate scale and character, including vertical structures and intrusion of light affecting the dark night skies.

- Considering the historic setting and associations, notably with the Second World War airfields, when planning new development.

- Encouraging management and re-creation of the heathland commons and restoration of more prominent conifer plantations to semi-natural habitats, particularly plantations on ancient woodland sites.

- Protecting the high scenic value of the NCA, the tranquillity and outstanding views by giving careful consideration to the scale and siting of new development and infrastructure.

- Strengthening the strong, square Parliamentary enclosure field pattern and long, straight ridge roads, including the distinctive beech hedgerows and avenues.

- Supporting opportunities to enhance understanding of the historic environment resource through research and conservation, and its rich potential for new discoveries.

- Protecting and appropriately managing the rich cultural heritage of the area, including bronze-age barrows, hill forts and earthwork castles, through clearance of scrub, maintaining livestock grazing at appropriate levels and recreation management.

- Promoting and supporting initiatives that provide educational and awareness opportunities for visitors and local communities.

- Managing and promoting access opportunities and supporting initiatives that link open access areas.
BROADLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL
LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

Landscape Character Assessment
Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)

September 2013
LANDSCAPE CHARACTER ASSESSMENT
SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT (SPD)

1 Explanatory Background

i.i The enclosed Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) relates to the Landscape Character Assessment Review commissioned to Chris Blandford Associates (May 2008) by Broadland District Council in October 2007. The Study covers the District excluding the Broads Authority Executive Area, for which the Broads Authority are the local planning authority, and the more built up parts of the district close to Norwich because of their urban nature. Furthermore, it updates the previous Landscape Character Assessment (1999) in accordance with the current guidance. Though, the previous LCA will continue to provide informal guidance on Areas of Landscape Value under Local Plan Policy ENV 8. The Local Plan Policies are 'saved' until they are superseded by the proposed Local Plan.

i.ii The LCA SPD is supplementary to Policy 1 Addressing Climate Change and Protecting Environmental Assets in the Joint Core Strategy Development Plan Document (JCPD) which forms part of Broadland’s emerging Local Plan. The LCA SPD will be material consideration in determining planning applications.

i.iii The LCA draft (SPD) was subject to a six week consultation between November – December 2011 along with the Sustainability Appraisal / Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening confirming no SA/SEA for LCA (SPD) was required by environmental bodies. Changes made to the LCA (SPD) reflect comment received, policy updates and factual changes. These changes are highlighted in the text as well as, deleted section struck through. More specifically, updates include current policy and guidance, current records of Ancient Woodland including a revised Figure 2.3 Nature Conservation Designations map. For future updates refer to the Natural England website.
BROADLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL
LANDSCAPE CHARACTER ASSESSMENT
SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT (SPD)

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2. Policy Background
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1. Introduction

1.1 The Landscape Character Assessment SPD is supplementary to the Joint Core Strategy Development Plan Document (DPD) Policy - 1 Addressing Climate Change and Protecting Environmental Assets and as such forms part of Broadland’s emerging Local Plan. This SPD relates to, and provides guidance for, the application of relevant development plan policies and other planning guidance in the consideration of development proposals. Furthermore, it is itself a material consideration in the determination of applications for planning permission.

   Policy 1: Addressing Climate Change and Protecting Environmental Assets – Joint Core Strategy

   To address climate change and promote sustainability, all developments will be located and designed to use resources efficiently.....

   ....The environmental assets of the area will be protected, maintained, restored and enhanced and the benefits for residents and visitors improved.
   .....(extract)

1.2 The Joint Core Strategy states (Paragraph 5.4) ‘the area has a wealth of environmental assets ranging from international to national status, to those of local importance. These must be safeguarded and enhanced for the benefit of current and future generations. These assets include biodiversity (wildlife and habitats), built heritage and wider historic environment, ancient monuments and archaeological assets, geodiversity (geological features), landscape and historic landscape character; as well as some general aspects such as the countryside and rural character, the setting of Norwich, towns and villages and the Broads’.

1.3 Furthermore, although the Joint Core Strategy was subject to a legal
challenge, the section which the LCA SPD is supplementary to remains adopted and unaffected.

2. Policy Background

2.1 The main planning policy background and planning guidance at national, and local level are set out below:

2.2 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), 2012
(section 11 Conserving and enhancing the natural environment) states that the planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment. In addition, under Plan-making section paragraph 170 states ‘where appropriate, landscape character assessment should also be prepared, integrated with assessment of historic landscape character, and for areas where there are major expansion options assessment of landscape sensitivity’.

2.3 Planning Policy Guidance 15: Planning and the Historic Environment (paragraph 6.40) makes reference to suitable approaches to the identification of the components and character of the wider historic landscape developed by the Countryside Commission (see its Landscape Assessment Guidance’.

2.4 Joint Core Strategy (2011)
The Joint Core Strategy for Broadland, Norwich and South Norfolk was adopted in March 2011. The JCS sets out the long-term vision and objectives for the area, including strategic policies for steering and shaping development. It identifies broad locations for new housing and employment growth and changes to transport infrastructure and other supporting community facilities as well as, defining areas where development should be limited. It helps deliver other services and related strategies. The JCS received a legal challenge on parts of the text, and associated maps and diagrams, these were remitted by High Court Order. However, sections relevant to the LCA (SPD) remain adopted and unaffected.

2.5 Broadland Local Plan (Replacement) 2006

The Broadland District Local Plan (Replacement) adopted in 2006 remains saved and forms part of Broadland’s local development plan although some of the policies have been superseded by the JCS. It is intended that the Local Plan (2006) will be replaced by the JCS along with the emerging Site Allocations, (DPD), Development Management (DPD) and North East Growth Triangle Area Action Plan (AAP).

3. Assessment
3.1 As part of the Landscape Character Assessment SPD the LCA Review provides an up-to-date integrated assessment of the landscape character of the district in accordance with the current guidance and best practice. The study firstly assesses the landscape character of the district, considering not only scenic and visual characteristics but also the physical, historical influences that have shaped the landscape. A total of six Landscape Character Types are defined, within the six generic landscape types, and sixteen Landscape Character Areas within the district. (See figure 3.5 and sections 3.2.9 and section 3.0 and figures 6 to 30). For each area issues of landform and geology, landscape and land use, settlements and buildings, landscape and visual character and historic land use character are discussed. The Broads Area and the built up areas of the Norwich fringe parishes were excluded from the assessment and this SPD does not apply to them. Rural settlements have been regarded as being part of the landscape character area within which they lie.

4. Consultations

4.1 Consultations on draft LCA (SPD) include two pre-consultation exercises with internal staff, key stakeholder organisations i.e. Statutory Bodies and Interest Bodies as well as with Town and Parish Councils in early December 2007 and March 2008. As part of the process, Broadland District Council consulted with the Tree Wardens on the Draft Landscape Typology. Comments made were used to inform the draft LCA (SPD) which was subject to a further public consultation from 7 November to 19 December 2011. The responses received were considered and where appropriate reflected in changes to the LCA SPD.

4.2 The Council also consulted the environmental statutory bodies in July 2011 with regards to an SA/SEA Sustainability Appraisal / Strategic Environmental Screening for the draft LCA SPD confirming no SA/SEA required as the parent Policy 1 of the Joint Core Strategy had been subject to both a Sustainability Appraisal Report and Appropriate Assessment as required by the European and National legislation.

5. Application to Development Proposals

5.1 Regard will be had to the SPD in considering development proposals. Proposals will be considered for how well they conform to the distinctive character of an area, and whether they will add to or detract from this. In addition, Management Strategies and Objectives are set for each landscape area as well as Landscape Planning Guidelines for informing land use planning decisions.
Broadland District Council

BROADLAND DISTRICT
LANDSCAPE CHARACTER ASSESSMENT

UPDATED September 2013

May 2008

CHRIS BLANDFORD ASSOCIATES
Environment  Landscape  Planning
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PREFACE

This Technical Study was commissioned by Broadland District Council. The Study provides a review of the existing Landscape Assessment for Broadland District, undertaken in 1999\(^1\). and an update in accordance with current published guidance (2002). It provides a baseline inventory of variations in landscape character across the District, and outlines guidance for conserving, enhancing, and/or restoring locally distinctive landscape characteristics. The need to protect and enhance landscape character is recognised by Government planning policy on the delivery of sustainable development through the planning system. To ensure that full account is given to landscape character in planning decisions, this Study is commended to the Council for use as an evidence base for informing the preparation of the Local Development Framework and in development control.

We are grateful for the advice and guidance provided by the Steering Group, namely:

- Isabel Whitehead – Senior Policy Officer, Broadland District Council,
- John Walchester – Senior Policy Officer, Broadland District Council,
- Barbara Hornbrook – Conservation Manager, Broadland District Council.

In addition, we appreciate the help of individuals from other organisations who willingly assisted in the provision of data and information for the Study. We would also like to acknowledge the representatives of organisations who attended the stakeholder consultation workshops held during the course of the Study (see Appendix A for details). The information gained from these stakeholders provided an important input to the Study.

The Consultant team comprised:

- Dominic Watkins
- Emma Clarke
- Flora Wehl
- Alison MacDonald
- Chloé Cova
- Sarah De Vos

Chris Blandford Associates
March 2008

\(^1\) Broadland District Landscape Assessment and Review of Areas of Important Landscape Quality: Final Report, June 1999, Chris Blandford Associates
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background

In October 2007, Broadland District Council commissioned Chris Blandford Associates (CBA) to undertake a Landscape Character Assessment of the District (excluding the Broads Authority Area).

The aim of the Study is to provide an up to date integrated assessment of the landscape character of the District, reviewing the existing landscape character assessment, in accordance with current guidance and best practice. This will serve as a baseline inventory to enable a better understanding of Broadland’s landscapes for monitoring change. The Landscape Character Assessment will be used as a technical evidence base to inform the Local Development Framework currently being prepared by the Council, and guide development control decisions.

Methodology

The overall approach to the Study is based on Landscape Character Assessment – Guidance for England and Scotland (Countryside Agency/Scottish Natural Heritage, 2002), the latest published guidance, and takes into account current best practice. Landscape Character Assessment addresses both the relatively objective process of landscape characterisation, which involves identifying, mapping, classifying and describing ‘landscape character’, and the more subjective process of evaluating landscape character to inform planning and land management decisions.

In summary, the main stages involved in the study process were:

- Information Scoping
- Desk-Study Research
- Field Survey
- Characterisation
- Evaluation
- Preparation of the Study Report

Consultation with key stakeholder organisations via a stakeholder workshop was an important and integral element of the Study. The purpose of the stakeholder consultation was to strengthen the evidence base by gathering opinions about landscape character from the key stakeholders, and to promote the value of the Study as a tool for informing planning and land management decisions in rural areas.

Structure of the Report

Section 1.0 sets out the context for the Study. It explains the background to the Study, its aims and objectives, and highlights the importance of landscape character. It also describes the planning policy framework for the Study, and outlines the approach and process behind the assessment methodology.
Section 2.0 provides an overview of the District. It describes the physical and historical influences on the landscape, considers past and current perceptions of the landscape and identifies the key forces for change affecting landscape character today.

Section 3.0 provides an overview of landscape character across the District as a whole within the national and county context, and provides detailed ‘profiles’ of the 6 Landscape Character Types and 16 Landscape Character Areas identified by the assessment. The profiles describe the character of each Landscape Character Unit, and set out management strategies, objectives and guidelines for informing environmental land management initiatives and land use planning decisions.

Section 4.0 sets out the main conclusions of the Study, and provides recommendations to the Council for its consideration and action as appropriate.

**Informing Judgements**

Judgements about the acceptability, or otherwise, of development and/or land management proposals should take account of:

(i) The description and guidance for the relevant Landscape Character Type(s) related to the proposals in landscape character terms; and
(ii) The description and guidance for the relevant Landscape Character Area(s) related to the proposal.
1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

1.1.1 In October 2007 Broadland District Council commission Chris Blandford Associates (CBA) to undertake a Landscape Character Assessment of the District.

1.1.2 Broadland District is predominantly rural, covering an area of 213 square miles to the north of the City of Norwich, Norfolk. It embraces large areas of low lying arable land, and to a lesser extent, pasture farmland. It also contains numerous woodlands and plantations along the areas of historic parkland. For the most part, the boundaries of the District are roughly defined by the river valleys of the Bure, Wensum and Yare. In the west, the boundary follows the edge of and the elevated Till Plateau. The eastern edges of the District are within the executive areas area of the Broads Authority, which is the local planning authority for the Broads Authority Area. For the purposes of this Study, however, the landscape within this area has been excluded from the Study Area.

1.1.3 An existing Landscape Assessment was produced for the District in 1999, excluding the Broads Authority Executive Area and the main built up areas. The main purpose of the Study was to evaluate the quality of the landscape to inform a review of the existing boundaries of Areas of Important Landscape Quality designated in the then current Local Plan. This Study seeks to update the 1999 assessment in line with current guidance and best practice.

1.2 Study Aims and Objectives

1.2.1 The main aim of the Study is to provide an up to date integrated assessment of the landscape character of the District, reviewing the existing landscape character assessment, in accordance with current guidance and best practice. The Study was undertaken at 1:25,000 scale and will serve as a baseline of environmental information to enable a better understanding of Broadland’s landscapes.

1.2.2 The Study also aims to provide a ‘tool kit’ of integrated guidance for use as part of the development management process in the consideration of impacts and potential measures for mitigation and development proposals.

1.2.3 The key objectives of the Study are to:

- Undertake a systematic review and update of the District’s existing Landscape Character Assessment (completed in 1999\(^2\)) to identify Landscape Character Types and revise Landscape Character Areas;
- Provide a comprehensive description and evaluation of the landscape character units identified within the District, integrating field survey information on visual character with historic landscape character, biodiversity and geodiversity (including ecological network mapping information).

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\(^2\) Broadland District Landscape Assessment and Review of Areas of Important Landscape Quality: Final Report, June 1999, Chris Blandford Associates
1.2.4 The area of Study characterised by this assessment includes all of the rural area up to and including the urban edge of the main settlements. It excludes landscapes within the Broads Authority Area.

1.3 The Importance of Landscape Character

1.3.1 The UK Government signed the European Landscape Convention\(^3\) on 24 February 2006. The Convention aims to encourage public authorities within member states to adopt exemplary and long lasting policies and measures for the protection, management and planning of all landscapes, both outstanding and ordinary, that determine the quality of people’s living environment.

1.3.2 The European Landscape Convention defines landscape as:

‘an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors.’

1.3.3 The term landscape is typically synonymous with the countryside; however, landscape is everywhere and may comprise rural landscapes, urban landscapes or townscape, urban fringe landscapes, coastal landscapes or seascapes, etc.

1.3.4 In England and Scotland, Landscape Character Assessment\(^4\) is a tool that allows landscape character to be understood, explained and described in a transparent and robust way. It does this by mapping and describing the variations in physical, natural and cultural attributes and experiential characteristics that make one area distinctive from another at a range of spatial scales. Landscape Character Assessment also recognises how landscapes have changed over time, and acknowledges the changing influences of human activities and the impacts of economic development.

1.3.5 The overall aim of landscape planning, design and management should be to achieve sustainable landscapes that are as visually, biodiverse and culturally rich as possible to meet society’s social, economic and environmental needs. A better understanding of landscapes provided by Landscape Character Assessments – their diversity, character and distinctiveness, evolution, sensitivity to change and their management needs – is essential in helping to work towards this goal.

1.4 Planning Policy Framework

1.4.1 National Planning Policy relating to landscape character is contained below: in PPS5\(^5\) and PPS7\(^6\).

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\(^3\) The European Landscape Convention opened for signature in Florence on 20 October 2000. Jim Knight, Minister for Rural Affairs, Landscape and Biodiversity announced the UK signing of the European Landscape Convention on 24 February 2006.

\(^4\) Landscape Character Assessment: Guidance for England and Scotland (Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage, 2002).

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), 2012

1.4.2 (section 11 Conserving and enhancing the natural environment) states that the planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment. In addition, under Plan-making section paragraph 170 states ‘where appropriate, landscape character assessment should also be prepared, integrated with assessment of historic landscape character, and for areas where there are major expansion options assessment of landscape sensitivity’.

1.4.3 Planning Policy Guidance 15: Planning and the Historic Environment (paragraph 6.40) makes reference to suitable approaches to the identification of the components and character of the wider historic landscape developed by the Countryside Commission (see its Landscape Assessment Guidance’).

Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development

1.4.2 PPS1 sets out the Government’s overarching planning policies on the delivery of sustainable development through the planning system. It states that one of the Government’s objectives for the planning system is that planning should facilitate and promote sustainable urban and rural development by protecting and enhancing the natural and historic environment and the quality and character of the countryside (para 5). In its key principles, PPS1 states that ‘a spatial planning approach should be at the heart of planning for sustainable development’ (para 13.iii) and ‘design which fails to take the opportunities for improving the character and quality of an area should not be accepted’ (para 13.iv). When preparing development plans, planning authorities should seek to enhance as well as protect biodiversity, natural habitats, the historic environment and landscape and townscape character’ (para 27). PPS1 also requires new design to be integrated into the existing urban form and natural and built environments (para 35).

Planning Policy Statement 7: Sustainable Development in Rural Areas

1.4.3 Landscape Character Assessment, along with Village or Town Design Statements and Village or Parish Plan, is recommended by PPS7 as a tool to assist Local Authorities in the preparation of policies and guidance that encourages good quality design throughout rural areas (para 13). Landscape Character Assessment is also recommended by PPS7 as a tool for creating carefully drafted, criteria based policies in Local Development Documents to protect valued landscape outside nationally designated areas without the need for rigid local designations, which may restrict sustainable development and the economic vitality of rural areas. PPS7 advises that local landscape designations should only be maintained or, exceptionally, extended where it can be clearly shown that criteria based policies cannot provide the necessary protection (paras 24 and 25).

The East of England Plan

6 Planning Policy Statement 7: Sustainable Development in Rural Areas (ODPM, 2004), Landscape Character Assessment SPD
1.4.4 The Draft Revision to the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) for the East of England was published by the Regional Assembly for consultation in December 2004. An Examination in Public (EIP) into the draft RSS was held between November 2005 and March 2006. The EIP Panel Report was published in June 2006, which included recommended changes to the draft RSS. Further proposed changes were published in March 2007 and the Final RSS is due to be published early in 2008. The Draft RSS contains a range of policies requiring action by local planning authorities.

1.4.5 The Draft RSS is based on the principles of sustainable development. It specifically identifies protection of protected landscapes/designated areas and application of landscape character as a key consideration in the spatial development of the region. Taking into account the recommended changes of the Secretary of State, the specific relevant policy is Draft RSS Policy ENV2—Landscape Character:

‘Planning authorities and other agencies in their plans, policies and programmes and proposals will, in accordance with statutory requirements, afford the highest status of protection to the East of England’s nationally designated landscapes—the Norfolk and Suffolk Broads, the Chilterns, Norfolk Coast, Dedham Vale and Suffolk Coast and Heath Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)s and the North Norfolk and Suffolk Heritage Coasts. Within the Broads priority will be given to conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the area, promoting public enjoyment and protecting the interests of navigation. Within the AONB priority over considerations will be given to conserving the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of each area.’

Throughout the East of England planning authorities and other agencies in their plans, policies, programmes and proposals should recognise, and aim to protect and enhance the diversity and local distinctiveness of the nationally defined countryside character areas, by:

— developing area-wide strategies, based on landscape character assessments, setting long-term goals for landscape change, targeting planning and local management tools and resources to influence that change and giving priority of these areas subject to most growth and change;

— developing criteria-based policies, informed by area-wide strategies and landscape character assessments, to ensure that all development, respects and enhances local landscape character, and

— securing appropriate mitigation measures where avoidance of damage to local landscape character is unavoidable.

Norfolk Structure Plan

1.4.6 The approved Norfolk Structure Plan was adopted in 1990. Under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the Structure Plan and its policies are saved until 2007—or until superseded by the published RSS (whichever is sooner).

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The East of England Plan: Draft Revision to the Regional Spatial Strategy (December 2004).
1.4.7 The Structure Plan contains three policies related to landscape protection: Policy ENV2 on the character of Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, the Heritage Coast and the Broads; Policy ENV3 on Areas of Important Landscape Quality and Policy ENV4 on the distinctive character of the Norfolk countryside and coast.

Local Planning Context

1.4.8 Broadland District Council has prepared and adopted a Local Plan for the whole of the District to guide development and to protect and enhance the environment, which contains a number of policies concerned with the protection of different aspects of landscape, including in particular:

- Policy ENV1 Protection and enhancement of the character of the District
- Policy ENV2 Layout, design and setting of developments
- Policy ENV3 Maintenance of landscaped areas
- Policy ENV5 Protection & Management of ecological & landscape features
- Policy ENV 8 Areas of Landscape Value
- Policy ENV10 Restoration & maintenance of Historic Parkland landscapes
- Policy ENV 24 New Development & impact on the character of the Broads Area

The Joint Core Strategy (adopted) 2011 replaces policies crossed out above with:

- Policy 1 Addressing climate change and protecting environmental assets.
- Policy 2 Promoting good design
- Policy 18 The Broads

1.4.9 The Local Plan (2006) will eventually be replaced by Local Development Framework (LDF) under the arrangements set out in the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. The LDF comprises a series of Local Development Documents (LDDs) that will set out proposals for the future development, use and conservation of land and buildings.

1.4.10 The main LDDs are the Joint Core Strategy, Development Management Control Policies, Site Specific Allocations, Proposals Map and the Northeast Growth Triangle Area Action Plan. Together with the RSS, these LDDs comprise the statutory Development Plan Documents against which all planning decisions will normally need to be made. It is intended that this Landscape Character Assessment will be used as part of the evidence base of technical studies to inform the LDDs.

1.5 Approach and Methodology

1.5.1 The overall approach for undertaking the Landscape Character Assessment was based on the latest guidance published by the Countryside Agency⁹, taking into account current best practice. Landscape Character Assessment

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⁹ Landscape Character Assessment – Guidance for England and Scotland (Countryside Agency/Scottish Natural Heritage, 2002).
addresses both the relatively objective process of landscape characterisation, which involves identifying, mapping, classifying and describing ‘landscape character’, and the more subjective process of evaluating landscape character to inform planning and land management decisions.

Integration of Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) component

1.5.2 A Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) Project is currently being undertaken for the whole of Norfolk County. Currently available information from the HLC includes mapping of current land use for the majority of Broadland District. HLC datasets showing relic land use are not yet available, and neither is written descriptions of ‘Historic Landscape Types’ or ‘Historic Landscape Zones’ (providing a simplified historic description and judgements about significance and sensitivity).

Integration of Ecological Network Mapping

1.5.3 The Norfolk Biodiversity Partnership has prepared an indicative Ecological Network Map of Norfolk\textsuperscript{10}, with the aim of protecting and enhancing the wildlife resource through appropriate and sensitive management and habitat creation to restore connectivity/create a series of linked sites. In addition, a District-Ecological Network Map has also been produced for Broadland\textsuperscript{11}. The overall aim is to take forward the findings of the County-level Ecological Network Report and apply these at the District Level. Within the District-level report, ecological network priorities were identified for each of the Landscape Character Areas set out within the existing Landscape Character Assessment of Broadland District (1999). These priorities have informed the definition of the Management Strategy and Objectives for each Landscape Character Type within this Study.

Study Process

1.5.4 The following stages of work were undertaken as part of the Study process:

Information Scoping

1.5.5 The preliminary stage involved the following main tasks:

- Identifying and reviewing existing LCA information covering Broadland, including the existing assessment completed in 1999;
- Obtain information and data for incorporation into the landscape character assessment.
- Desk Study Research

\textsuperscript{10} Report of Ecological Network Mapping Project for Norfolk: Presentation of Methodology and Draft Maps for Consultation (July 2006), Reg Land, Norfolk Wildlife Trust for Norfolk Biodiversity Partnership: (www.norfolkbiobiodiversity.org)

\textsuperscript{11} Broadland District Ecological Network Mapping, R. Land, Norfolk Wildlife Trust on behalf of the Econet Topic Group, January 2007.
1.5.6 This stage involved desk-based research to identify the physical and historical factors that have influenced the shape and use of the landscape. This work drew on a variety of documents and maps (see Appendix C for details) that describe the physical geography and cultural history of the District (including geology, soils, hydrology, vegetation and topography). The desk research also considered past and current perceptions of the landscape, and identified the forces for change affecting the character of the District's landscape.

1.5.7 In summary, the desk work involved:

- Mapping of existing character assessments covering the Study Area, to identify draft Landscape Character Types and Landscape Character Areas including:
  - National Joint Character Areas: 1:250,000 scale;
  - National Typology (known as Landscape Description Units Level 1): 1:250,000 scale;
  - County Typology (known as Landscape Description Units Level 2): 1:50,000 scale;
  - Local Landscape Character Areas - identified within the existing Broadland Landscape Character Assessment (1999);
- Analysis of existing 1:25,000 scale landscape character assessments for neighbouring local authority areas – including Breckland, North Norfolk, South Norfolk and the Broads Authority;
- Analysis of the Strategic Habitat map (plus descriptions) set out within the Ecological Network Mapping Project to inform draft Landscape Character Types and Areas.

Field Survey

1.5.8 Field surveys were undertaken during October and November 2007. The aim of the surveys was to undertake a visual analysis of how different features and elements combine to create distinctive patterns in the landscape. The surveys were undertaken from key viewpoints within each draft Landscape Character Type and area by a team of field assessors using a structured checklist. The checklist included:

- Landform
- Rivers/drainage
- Land cover
- Field pattern and field boundaries
- Communication routes
- Settlement form/pattern
- Building styles
- Scale
- Texture
- Enclosure
- Stimuli
- Sense of tranquillity
- Movement
- View types and composition
- Landmarks
1.5.9 The survey information (including photographs) was used to (i) inform the descriptions of landscape character and (ii) to test and refine the boundaries of the draft Landscape Character Types and Areas.

Characterisation

1.5.10 The characterisation stage involved the combination of the desk study research and field survey analysis to identify and map generic Landscape Character Types and geographically unique Landscape Character Areas at 1:25,000 scale.

1.5.11 For each generic Landscape Character Type, its boundaries were mapped and the following information was recorded:

- Location and Boundaries
- Key Characteristics
- Summary of Visual Character
- Historic Environment Character
- Ecological Character
- Key Forces for Change

1.5.12 For each unique Landscape Character Area, its boundaries were mapped and a summary of its visual character described.

Evaluation

1.5.13 This stage involved making the following judgements about each Landscape Character Type and Area. For each Landscape Character Type, the following information was included:

- Landscape Condition and Strength of Character;
- Management Strategy and Objectives (incorporating identified priorities for habitat conservation and enhancement identified by the Ecological Network Mapping Project).

1.5.14 For each Landscape Character Area, their inherent landscape sensitivities were evaluated and landscape planning guidelines identified. The sensitivity analysis for each Landscape Character Area, together with the proposed management strategies and objectives for each Landscape Character Type, can be used to inform:

- the identification of spatial development options within the Local Development Framework;
- Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic Environmental Assessment of Local Development Framework site allocations;
- the highlighting of landscape issues that may need to be considered in greater detail in relation to development control decisions;
- the application of criteria-based landscape protection and enhancement policies within the Local Development Framework.

Key Stakeholder Consultation
1.5.15 Consultation with key stakeholder organisations was an important and integral element of the Study. The purpose of the stakeholder consultation was to strengthen the evidence base by gathering opinions about landscape character from the key stakeholders, and to promote the value of the Study as a tool for informing planning and land management decisions in rural areas.

1.5.16 The consultation involved a workshop to explore stakeholder’s views on (i) what gives different places their local identity and distinctive character and (ii) key issues for the protection and landscape enhancement of character in the District (see Appendix A for further details). This information was fed into the desk study research, field survey and characterisation stages of the Study to refine and validate the preliminary draft mapping of Landscape Character Types and Areas by the Consultant Team. It was also used to identify issues that needed to be addressed by the management strategies, objectives and guidelines within the evaluation stage. As part of the process, Broadland Tree Wardens were consulted on the Draft Landscape Typology.

1.5.17 A second stage of Consultation was undertaken during March 2008. Broadland District Council circulated a questionnaire to Parish Councils, key Statutory Stakeholders and Community Groups. The questionnaire sought views on the Draft Landscape Character Assessment report, the overall approach to the Study and Landscape Character Areas. The responses from this process were collated online and fed into the Final Report.

1.6 Structure of the Report

1.6.1 The Study report is structured as follows.

Section 1.0 sets out the context for the Study. It explains the background to the Study, its aims and objectives, and highlights the importance of landscape character. It also describes the planning policy framework for the Study, and outlines the approach and process behind the assessment methodology.

Section 2.0 provides an overview of the District. It describes the physical and historical influences on the landscape, considers past and current perceptions of the landscape and identifies the key forces for change affecting landscape character today.

Section 3.0 provides an overview of landscape character across the District as a whole within its national and county context, and provides detailed ‘profiles’ of the 6 Landscape Character Types and 16 Landscape Character Areas identified by the assessment. The profiles describe the character of each Landscape Character Unit, and set out management strategy and objectives and guidelines for informing environmental land management initiatives and land use planning decisions.

Section 4.0 sets out the main conclusions of the Study, and provides recommendations to the Council for its consideration and action as appropriate.
3.8  WOODED ESTATELANDS

Location and Boundaries

3.8.1 This Landscape Character Type is located in the central and northern part of the Study Area – bound to the east by River Valley (Landscape Character Type A), and to the west by Woodland Heath Mosaic (Type B) and Tributary Farmlands (Landscape Character Type D). To the south, it is met by the fringes of the city of Norwich. To the north it adjoins Random Enclosed Rolling Open Farmland, Small Valleys and Wooded with Parkland Landscape Character Types, within the North Norfolk District landscape.

Key Characteristics

3.8.2 The following Key Characteristics are typical of the Wooded Estatelands Landscape Character Type:

- A pattern of small manor houses, isolated halls and larger estates, with associated parkland extending across much of the area;
- These buildings impart a strongly ordered and human influence over the surrounding landscape;
- Numerous copses, woodlands and small plantations associated with these estates, punctuating a landscape of underlying predominantly arable farmland;
- Settlements have many historic buildings associated with them and a strong local vernacular;
- Strong historic dimension throughout the landscape;
- Woodland provides a sense of enclosure;
- Underlain by a mixed geology of Till, with loams and pebbly soils.

Summary of Visual Character

3.8.3 This gently rolling landscape of predominantly arable farmland is underlain by a mixed geology. In certain locations, Till predominates. This results in a...
land cover of loams and pebbly soils. Topography within this Landscape Character Type is more strongly rolling than with adjacent flatter landscapes, with field boundary trees, copses and woodlands nested within the folds of the landscape.

3.8.4 The numerous copses, woodlands and small plantations provide a sense of enclosure, as well as being points of visual focus within views across the farmland. There is a striking settlement pattern of small manor houses, isolated halls and larger estates. Large historic halls are dominant landscape features, often with associated parkland and designed landscapes, which contrast with the adjacent farmland landscapes.

3.8.5 A network of minor and major roads cut across and link small villages within this Landscape Character Type. The influence of the urban edge of Norwich is also quite strong towards the south of this Landscape Character Type. Despite this, there is generally a predominantly rural character and associated strong sense of tranquillity throughout most of this landscape. Views across this landscape are restricted in places by the pockets of woodland. In other places, however, long views across gently rolling farmland can be gained.

3.8.6 Evidence of prehistoric presence within this Character Type has been recorded, mainly as finds spots, including Palaeolithic hand axe finds, Mesolithic flintwork and trancheet axes and Iron Age horse equipment. The only evidence of this period still upstanding are the Bronze Age barrows, although these tend to be greatly reduced in size.

3.8.7 Echoes of Horstead's ancient past have been found as early Celtic and Roman cremation urns and the outline of a Roman marching camp believed to have been constructed during the Boadicean Rebellion. Elsewhere, Roman objects and coin finds spots have been recorded as well as a Roman site at Bolwick Hall Farm.

3.8.8 Town names in the form of 'ham', such as Marsham, Horsham and Frettenham, reflect the Early Medieval period along with metalwork, pottery, coins and the remains of St Faith Priory, a Scheduled Ancient Monument near Horsford, dated 1105.

3.8.9 A number of perceptible moats notably Horsford Castle's Norman motte and bailey (with remains of a keep, traces of stone buildings and a barbican) bear witness to the Medieval period. Other buildlings relating to this period include Blickling Hall, which began life as a manor house in the 11th century and was owned by Harold Godwinson (later to become the King of England). By 1091 it had become the country palace of the bishops and towards the end of the 14th century, Sir Nicholas Dagworth had a moated house built on the Site.

3.8.10 In between these large estates, in the early 14th century, arable cultivation dominated. However, by 1750 this had gradually become more mixed with pastoralism becoming more apparent. Unlike other areas of Broadland the area around Horstead and Frettenham were untouched by parliamentary
enclosure. Today, the field pattern is predominantly 20th century agriculture with some 18th - 19th century enclosures, patches of woodland and some inland managed wetland following river corridors. Ancient and semi-natural woodland as well as ancient replanted woods are present in this Type.

3.8.11 Dispersed small-medium linear and medium-large nucleated villages, small manor houses (such as Horsford Manor), isolated halls (such as Rippon Hall) and larger estates with associated parkland (such as Blickling Hall and Heydon Hall, Grade II* and II on the register of Parks and Gardens of Historic Interest respectively), extend across much of the area. Generally, settlements have many historic buildings associated with them and a strong local vernacular. Red and colourwashed brick are commonly used materials along with pantiled or thatched roofs.

Ecological Character

3.8.12 The ecological character of this landscape character type is dominated by the following habitats:
- Extensive areas of woodland and shelterbelts associated with large estates
- Small copses of woodland near river valleys
- Unimproved valley meadow
- Fen
- Damp neutral grassland
- Hedgerow network
- Treebelts and clumps of mature trees

3.8.13 The Nature conservation value of these habitats is recognised by the following designations:
- Crostwick Marsh Site of Scientific Interest (SSSI)
- County Wildlife Sites

Key Forces for Change

3.8.14 The following Key Forces for Change have been identified for the Wooded Estatelands Landscape Character Type:
- Loss of field boundaries as a result of agricultural intensification;
- Small-scale incremental development within villages, which may be inconsistent with local built character and materials;
- Changes in woodland cover as a result of changes in management;
- Changes in management of historic halls and their associated parkland settings;
- Increased use of rural roads associated with tourism and visitors to historic attractions;
- Loss of field trees and mature landscape structure as a result of agricultural intensification.

Evaluation
3.8.15 This Landscape Character Type has a generally strong and distinctly recognisable sense of place throughout, with historic halls, woodland copses and small settlements providing visual landmarks and focal points. As a result, this landscape is considered to have a generally strong character. There is evidence of decline in hedgerow field boundaries and loss of hedgerow trees, however, overall, this Landscape Character Type exhibits a mature landscape structure.

**Management Strategies and Objectives**

3.8.16 The overall strategy for the Wooded Estatelands should be to conserve the relatively intricate pattern of woodland clumps and copses and historic halls, alongside the generally strong character and recognisable sense of place. **Plantings to enhance hedges should be appropriate to the specific local character of the Landscape Character Areas.** For more information refer to ‘Planting hedges in Norfolk – maintaining regional character; A guide to restoring and planting hedges’ [www.norfolkbiiodiversity.org/reports/](http://www.norfolkbiiodiversity.org/reports/). Specific management objectives are to:

- Seek opportunities for the creation of woodland and wood pasture;
- Seek opportunities to promote catchment sensitive farming;
- Seek to conserve and restore declining hedgerows and field trees;
- Seek opportunities for the management and creation of urban and urban fringe greenspace, as well as the maintenance and enhancement of green corridors through the built areas;
- Seek to conserve and enhance the landscape structure within the area, including blocks and belts of woodland, copses of mature trees, mature parkland trees and intact hedgerows;
- Conserve and enhance existing woodland belts to buffer potential new housing development;
- Seek to retain and conserve parkland landscapes and character to provide greenspace between potential new housing development.

3.8.17 Within this Landscape Character Type, the following Landscape Character Areas have been defined:

**E1:** Blickling and Oulton
**E2:** Marsham and Hainford
**E3:** Spixworth
**E4:** Rackheath and Salhouse

3.8.18 A Summary of each area's visual character, inherent landscape sensitivities and landscape planning guidelines are set out below.

**E1:** BLICKLING AND OULTON

**Summary of visual character**

3.8.19 This Character Area comprises a gently rolling landscape, stretching southwards from the upper reaches of the River Bure. The land becomes
E4: RACKHEATH AND SALHOUSE

Summary of visual character

3.8.34 This landscape character area forms a large tract of land extending southwards from the edge of the Bure valley within Broads Authority Area. The topography of this area is generally flat, particularly in western parts, and falls gradually towards the Broads. The land becomes increasingly undulating in northern and eastern parts, and where tributaries of the Yare and Bure rivers incise it. Geology is an important influence on the character of the area. Located on a band of sands and gravels, the soils produced are light, sandy, and less fertile that the high quality land further west, within E2 Character Area.

3.8.35 Historically, much of this character area formed part of a large area of heathland. The heathland extended from the northern settlement edge of Norwich almost to Salhouse. Today, only areas of heath retained within the urban area of Norwich remain (Mousehold Heath), which contain high ecological value and provide an important landscape resource. However, subtle clues of the area's past land cover is reflected in local names of villages, roads and farms, such as Rackheath, Heath End, Heath Farm and Mousehold Heath Farm. The area has only a recent history of agricultural development. The Enclosure Acts that eventually led to the parcelling of this land have created a strong geometric layout, with medium-sized regular fields and a strong grid road pattern. These mostly arable fields are interspersed with plantations, copses of mature trees and woodland belts, along with remnant patches of heath. Woodland is the area is a mixture of deciduous and coniferous plantations, often with patches of scrub and heath within the interior. Radial routes extending from Norwich, including the Bittern railway, dissect the mosaic of fields, woodland and roads.

3.8.36 Retained for a long period as an area of common land, few settlements developed within this landscape. Many of the settlements located in this area have only developed in recent years, providing housing on the outskirts of Norwich along main transport routes, often nucleated around road junctions. The settlements form blocks within the surrounding rural landscape, and often comprise abrupt boundaries. This is particularly evident in western parts of the area. Here, the housing style is typical of modern suburban developments - detached and semi-detached dwellings, often located around cul-de-sacs. A large industrial estate has recently developed immediately west of the Bittern railway, which is fairly enclosed from the wider landscape by linear belts of mature woodland. In northern and western parts of the area, part enclosure of the land has allowed medium sized estates to develop around large houses and halls, such as Beeston Park, Salhouse Hall, Rackheath Hall and Woodbastwick Hall, in several places with their associated Historic parkland. These are smaller and less dramatic than those in the north of the district, but comprise a similar parkland character.

3.8.37 Northern and western parts of the area comprise a different settlement pattern and built character, which reflects a long history of development.
Here, strings of historic settlements, scattered with historic halls, villages and isolated farmsteads are nestled against the wooded slopes that fall away to the Broads. These settlements, such as Woodbastwick, have hardly expanded in recent years. They comprise a strong local vernacular, including traditional buildings clustered around a historic core. Shaped gables, steep pitched pantile roofs, brick barns and flint walls are key characteristics. The architecture and landscape of the historic halls and houses are important features within northern and western parts of the area, and strongly contribute to a rich and distinctive character in these parts. Linear coniferous tree belts and the development of an industrial estate, has resulted in hedgerow loss in central parts of the area, diluting the rural landscape character in this part.

**Evaluation**

**Inherent Landscape Sensitivities**

3.8.38 The following inherent landscape sensitivities have been identified:

- Mosaic of parkland, arable fields and woodland, providing a diverse and interesting landscape character, particularly in northern and western parts;
- Mature landscape structure including blocks and belts of woodland, copses of mature trees and intact hedgerows, providing a robust visual mosaic, particularly in eastern parts;
- Landscape setting of historic houses, halls and churches;
- Architectural and landscape features of houses and halls, including scenic parkland landscapes rich in idyllic components such as rides, parkland trees and lakes;
- Linear hamlets with a strong historic core;
- Landscape setting of hamlets and villages;
- Rich historic character and a strong sense of place, particularly in northern and western parts;
- Characteristic northerly views over descending wooded slopes to the Broads, and associated close wooded horizon;
- Historic buildings and settlement character within Salhouse and Woodbastwick (recognised by designation as a Conservation Area).

**Landscape Planning Guidelines**

3.8.39 The following Landscape Planning Guidelines apply to Rackheath and Salhouse Wooded Estatelands Landscape Character Area:

- Seek to conserve and enhance the landscape structure within the area, including blocks and belts of woodland, copses of mature trees, mature parkland trees and intact hedgerows.
- Seek to conserve the diverse and interesting landscape character, particularly in northern and western parts.
- Seek to conserve distinctive, historic architectural and landscape features including historic parkland landscapes and their setting, which contribute to the area's rich historic character and strong sense of place, particularly in northern and western parts.
- Seek to ensure the sensitive location of development involving further
tall structures (such as steel pylons and telecommunication masts) in
relation to prominent skyline locations both within the character area and
within adjacent character areas.
- Seek to ensure that potential new small-scale development within villages
is consistent with the existing settlement pattern, density and traditional
built form.
- Seek to conserve the landscape setting of villages, such as
Woodbastwick, Rackheath and Salhouse and seek to screen (where
possible) harsh settlement edges and existing visual detractors.
- Seek to promote use of local vernacular buildings materials, including red
brick, flint and pantiles.
- Seek to conserve the landscape setting of historic houses, halls (including
Beeston, Salhouse and Rackheath) and churches;
- Seek to conserve the interesting landscape pattern of parkland, arable
fields and woodland.