Landscape Character Assessment
for
Foxton Parish, South Cambridgeshire

Prepared in autumn 2017 as part of the evidence base for Foxton’s Neighbourhood Plan
Acknowledgements

This report was written by Catherine Cairns, B.Sc (Hons), M.Sc and former Associate of the Landscape Institute with assistance from James Lord BA (Hons) BLA CMPLI. The Landscape Character Assessment process and fieldwork was carried out by 16 Foxton residents, trained and led by an independent consultant Alison Farmer BA (Hons) MLD CMLI. The author gratefully acknowledges the assistance of James and Alison, together with Jill and Simon Buggey, Jenny and Liam Elliott, Tessa and Peter Howell, Berent Kofter, Bob Pettigrew, Jon Cairns, Ian Sanderson, Gill Shapland, Andre Neve, Linda Smith and Michele Martin. Dudley Pusey and Ian Sanderson provided further information on local archaeology and history.

The final draft report has been scrutinised and independently verified by Alison Farmer as conforming correctly to the recognised methodology for Landscape Character Assessment.

Photo credits: Simon Buggey, Berent Kofter, Peter Howell, Andre Neve, Catherine Cairns, Jon Cairns and Jack Cox.
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1. Introduction

1.1 Background
Foxton parish lies seven miles south west of Cambridge, on East Anglian Chalk. The landscape is predominantly agricultural, with the village at its heart dating back many centuries. The population is <1300, and the village is bisected by main road and rail links to London. The Parish Council decided to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan in 2015 in the wake of external development pressures, brought on through a lack of an up to date Local Plan. The first task was to gather evidence to support potential parish-level policies. It became clear from an all village questionnaire survey that Foxton’s rural character and landscape character were one of the most valued aspects for local people. It was therefore decided to commission a community-led Landscape Character Assessment for the parish.

1.2 Objectives
The objectives of the LCA were twofold:
- To identify and collect objective and visual information on the parish landscape and village of Foxton through the identification of local landscape character areas
- To use this information as a basis for evaluation and analysis to determine key constraints and opportunities for development as well conservation and enhancement of valued characteristics of the Parish and/or the creation of new features and assets.

1.3 Scope of work
The LCA work took place in summer 2017 and covered the whole parish. The Neighbourhood Plan working group decided to make it a community-led project, overseen by two landscape professionals on the working group. The community-led approach was adopted to try and engage more local people in the NP process, to give them a meaningful and achievable role, leading to the production of valuable and professionally-scrutinised documentary evidence. This evidence will support relevant neighbourhood plan policies and inform the assessment of future planning applications. A grant application to support the employment of a landscape consultant specialising in LCA work, including community-based training, was successful.

1.4 The Neighbourhood Plan and policy background
Foxton’s Neighbourhood Plan process has been progressing steadily during 2016 and 2017. It is being led by a working group of local people, on behalf of Foxton Parish Council, with assistance from a planning consultant. By November 2017, a vision and objectives had been agreed and draft planning policies are in preparation. A second phase of public consultation is taking place in January 2018. It is hoped to complete the draft Neighbourhood Plan by mid 2018, ready for scrutiny and further formal consultation.

The agreed vision ‘To retain and enhance the unique rural character and community spirit of Foxton’ and four of the 13 proposed objectives reflect the importance of Foxton’s historic and rural nature, its landscape character and its biodiversity assets. The policies being developed will reflect the local importance of these issues, over and above the relevant policies in South Cambridgeshire District Council’s emerging Local Plan.
1.5 Landscape Character Assessment methodology and approach

A local landscape architect Alison Farmer, who specialises in LCA work, was commissioned to carry out initial research, plan and deliver the training day, including various resources, to advise on the report structure, and to scrutinise the final draft. Her time was funded through a grant from Locality, as part of the neighbourhood planning process. The training and approach adopted by those involved in the character assessment were in accordance with ‘Guidance on Landscape Character Assessment’ (Natural England and Scottish Natural Heritage 2002)(reference 1) and Natural England’s more recent publication titled ‘An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment 2014’(reference 2).

The training day was widely advertised in Foxton, and it generated good interest, with 16 local people able to participate on the day. They brought together a range of skills and expertise in analysis, environment, archaeology and local history, photography and art. The consultant led a morning session outlining the background to LCA, its methodology and application. She prepared maps showing draft boundaries for four local landscape character areas, and seven village character areas.

Participants were split into five groups for an initial desk based exercise followed by fieldwork, each group looking at the different local landscape and village character areas. LCA survey sheet proforma (reference 3) were completed for each landscape area and most village character areas, together with photographs and some sketches. There was a focus on the landscape character areas, as the village character areas were already the subject of a new draft extended Conservation Area Appraisal. As well as gathering this information, participants also made suggestions for refining the precise boundaries of the four different character areas, based on their fieldwork.

This information was then collated and used to prepare the character area descriptions set out in this report. In addition, a display of selected photographs and sketches, together with text describing the draft local character areas was prepared for the annual village show in early September. The purpose was to raise awareness of the neighbourhood planning process, the much-valued local landscape and the contribution of those who took part in the community project. Feedback from this consultation has been fed into this report.

The community led survey work did not include a detailed evaluation of peripheral sites surrounding Foxton village. Further work was therefore undertaken in order to assess different areas, utilising the LCA assessment, and to make judgements on the sensitivity and the capacity of the landscape to accommodate development as well as any opportunities for enhancement of the area's character and valued assets. These were discussed and agreed by the Neighbourhood Plan working group, and are set out in the paragraph 5.4.
2. The evolution of the parish

NB Information for this section has been taken from the draft Conservation Area Appraisal. Both documents should be read in tandem, as their contents are complimentary (reference 4).

2.1 The Parish (geographical features, geology, landscape, ecology, water and Green Belt)

Foxton parish (figure 1) lies to the south of the River Rhee, a tributary of the Cam. The northern half of the parish is low-lying (15 metres) and relatively flat, bounded to east and west by small streams feeding into the River Rhee. The land rises gradually to the south to a notable hill at a height of 34 metres just south of the village, and dropping to 25 metres at its southern boundary near Fowlmere. To the north of the village is the A10 which connects Cambridge to Royston and the mainline railway between Cambridge and London. Foxton Station lies at the intersection of the two.

The geology (figure 2) is Upper Cretaceous Middle Chalk, part of the ridge that runs SW to NE across southern England. The chalk has superficial areas of River Terrace Deposits of sand and gravel, with Alluvial Fan Deposits lying close to the water courses. There is a distinct local geological boundary running along the High Street. The bedrock of this boundary line is a narrow band of Totternhoe Stone, dating from the Lower Chalk formation. To the south of the band lies Melbourn Rock chalk, with the exception of Chalk and West Hill that are both comprised of Holywell Nodular Chalk. To the north, the bedrock is Zig Zag Chalk with some superficial river terrace deposits of sand and gravel.

The landscape of the parish and its surrounding area is typical of the East Anglian National Character Area, East Anglian Chalk, with an open agricultural landscape. The chalkland is smooth and gently sloping away from the river valleys, rising to the highest point in the parish at Chalk and West Hills. These are now planted with woodland typical of this landscape type, namely predominantly beech with associated shrub under planting. Elsewhere in the parish, there are occasional remnants of more substantial hedgerows with isolated clumps of mature trees. There are important tree belts in the valley bottoms, alongside the water courses of the Rhee, Hoffer and Shep. These tree belts define the edges of the parish.

Chardle Spring feeding Hoffer Brook (north east parish boundary) provides a reliable natural water source in a landscape otherwise devoid of surface water. The River Rhee (becoming the River Cam) forms the northern parish boundary. The Shep tributary to the west was the water source for the town brook, vital to the growth of the village, and immortalised in Roland Parker’s book ‘The Common Stream’ (reference 5).

The majority of the parish is grade 2 agricultural land, and there are no ecological designations. The whole parish is designated as a nitrate vulnerable zone for groundwater and surface water, and it lies within the Environment Agency’s River Rhee catchment management area.

There are Entry Level and Higher Level Stewardship Agreements in place on the land east of the Fowlmere Road and three other very small areas elsewhere.

To the north and east of the village, and abutting it, lies the outermost boundary of the Cambridge Green Belt (figure 3).
Figure 1: Neighbourhood Plan Area

Key

Parish Neighbourhood Plan Area

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Figure 2: Geology

Key

**Solid Geology**
- Zig Zag Chalk Formation
- West Melbury Marley Chalk Formation
- Holywell Nodular Chalk Formation

**Superficial Deposits**
- River Terrace Deposits
- Alluvial Fan Deposits
- Alluvium
Figure 3: Local Plan Policy Designations

Key
- Parish Neighbourhood Plan Area
- Conservation Area (1972)
- Green Belt
- Listed Buildings
- Development Framework

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Listed Buildings © Historic England 2017. The Historic England GIS Data contained in this material was obtained on 20 December 2017. The most publicly available up to date Historic England GIS Data can be obtained from http://www.HistoricEngland.org.uk.

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2.2 The evolution of Foxton village

There is evidence of prehistoric settlement within the parish area from lower Palaeolithic to late Neolithic times. (500,000 BC – 2,201 BC). Human settlement occurred in Foxton, possibly as early as the late-Neolithic age (2,900 - 2,200 BC), on a site close to Foxton/Shepreth, brook, near where there are Bronze-age and Iron–age settlements, and a large Romano-British settlement. There is a scheduled monument, titled ‘settlement site SE of West Hill’ that dates back to the late Iron Age. It is a large site, north and east of the brook forming the western parish boundary and comprises field systems and trackways, recorded through cropmark evidence.

Archaeological evidence has been unearthed in various parts of the village. These and written evidence from late-Saxon, Norman and Medieval times, reveal a simple, but very well-connected, community engaged predominantly in arable farming. It appears to have evolved as a continuum of earlier nearby Bronze-age, Iron-age, Belgic, and Romano-British farmsteads and settlements, which changed during the late Saxon-Norman period when Foxton village was built.

Today the village reflects its Saxon origins, with its location and position in the landscape shaped by the lie of the land and drainage. The rising hill (West Hill and Chalk Hill) to the south sheltered the village from prevailing winds and the local geology and drainage enabled water to be diverted along a man-made rill alongside the village street in medieval times.

The church dates back over 1000 years, and is a Grade 1 listed building.

Foxton parish church at the heart of the village and a prominent landmark
The village was historically linked to arable agriculture, and many buildings date back to medieval times. The historic core followed the line of the town brook (The Common Stream) and was made up of timber-framed buildings and associated agricultural buildings, developed in a characteristic linear form between two medieval farmsteads at each end of the village. This remains clearly legible. Similarly the connectivity of the village to ancient tracks and routes is still evident in the village form.
The population of Foxton and the limits of the village by the late 15th Century remained relatively constant for around 350 years, until the early 19th Century. The 1886 OS map (figure 4) shows that apart from Georgian and a few early Victorian buildings, the village form was very similar to that of early Tudor times. This was largely due to the rebuilding of earlier dilapidated dwellings. The dwellings along the main street were set back from the road on both sides and of irregular size and spacing. This loose arrangement of dwellings enabled the wider landscape to penetrate into the heart of the village through gaps in the built form. They had unique set-backs, roof forms and chimneys.

The village began to grow more rapidly from Victorian times onwards, with the coming of the railway in 1864 (figures 5 and 6). Infill development occurred along High Street, Station Road and Fowlmere Road. This infill changed the historic rural character of the village, and resulted in fewer gaps along the street and lanes, restricting views out to the countryside. Foxton House was built in 1825 within a parkland setting, and a Wesleyan Methodist chapel (1880) and a purpose-built school (1883) were both built on Stockers Lane, now Station Road.

In the early 20th Century, the University Tutorial Press buildings on Station Road were built, along with 16 new houses for the key workers on Stockers Lane. In the 1920s, the Rural District Council built some early council houses on Station Road (figures 7 and 8).

Modern estate developments in the form of cul de sac roads off the main street were built from the mid 1950’s, following the installation of mains water and then mains sewerage. These new roads have changed the size and edges of Foxton village, but the historic core remains distinct. Some of these houses were built to a higher density than appropriate for an historic village, and the narrow neighbourhood roads and inadequate parking provision have created problems. This late C20th century growth has inevitably altered the form of the village, and its historic character, although the village core remains intact with a strong sense of place.
Figure 4: 1886 OS map of village
Source: OS County Series Maps 1:2500
Figure 6: 1903 OS map of northern part of Foxton parish
Source: Historic Maps Scotland
Figure 7: 1926 OS map of central part of Foxton parish
Source: Historic Maps Scotland
Figure 8: 1926 OS map of northern part of Foxton parish
Source: Historic Maps Scotland
2.3 Historic landscape influences

The geology (figure 2) has had the most significant effect on the landscape of Foxton parish. This influenced prehistoric and subsequent settlement patterns, and land uses. There is evidence of prehistoric routes, from Shepreth over West Hill towards Fowlmere. An ancient road from Royston via Melbourn towards Cambridge crosses the parish at the railway crossing, now the A10.

Figure 9 shows how the parish was divided into many smaller fields by the 1820 Inclosure Act. It is apparent that over the last 200 years, and particularly the last 50 years, the many small fields have been lost west of Fowlmere Road, close to the village core and in the north of the parish. The eastern half of the parish has retained the wide open fields that existed 200 years ago.
Figure 9: Foxton Inclosure Award Map 1830
Source: Cambridgeshire Archives Shire Hall P73/26/1
3. Understanding landscape character

3.1 National Character Areas and the East of England Typology

Nationally, Natural England has developed national character areas (NCA) across England (reference 6). These NCA profiles are guidance documents which can help communities 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 wider landscape scale, and 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 the landscape, 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. They offer guidance on critical issues, which could help to achieve sustainable growth and a more secure environmental future.

Foxton parish lies within NCA 87 East Anglian Chalk. As stated in 2.3, the local Foxton landscape is typical of the NCA. Appendix 1 contains more information together with a list of generic environmental opportunities for NCA 87, many of which are relevant to Foxton. Here are listed some of the landscape attributes typical of these landscapes, and relevant to Foxton:

- The chalk ridge is distinctive, open, variable topography that is a continuation of the Chilterns
- The valleys of the rivers Granta, Rhee and Cam have a contrasting small-scale intimacy
- Chalk pits are scattered throughout the area (e.g. clunch pit on Chalk Hill)
- The large-scale fields are often very open but in some parts of the area are divided by low thorn ‘gappy’ hedges
- It is still an important area for farmland birds including grey partridge, with a stronghold around Royston
- Localised and modified chalk streams. Chalk streams and associated wetland habitats occur in an otherwise dry landscape and support a high diversity of plants and animals
- Since the 1950s, tranquillity has declined around the urban centres and the transport routes, especially around the M11, A505 and A10
- With the intensification of agriculture in the last 50 years there has been a large decline in species numbers. The NCA has experienced dramatic land use changes in past and recent times. These changes have influenced the present nature, location and extent of the wildlife resource. There is recognition of the importance of the remnant habitats, sometimes confined to roadside verges. The small scale of these sites makes management – and therefore maintenance of biodiversity value – very difficult.
Figure 10: Landscape Character Types

Key
- Parish Neighbourhood Plan Area
- Lowland Village Chalklands
- Valley Meadowlands
- Lowland Village Farmlands

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Landscape typology derived from Landscape East - http://landscape-east.org.uk/map.html
The East of England Typology for landscape types identifies three types relevant to Foxton parish as shown in figure 10 (reference 7):

- **Valley meadowlands:**
  Flat, low lying valley floors supporting a pastoral land use, associated with notable watercourses/rivers. Generally unsettled, with occasional carr woodland and gravel extraction lakes, or ancient meres.

- **Lowland village farmlands:**
  This is a well-settled, low lying landscape which is often crossed by major river corridors. The high density of settlement, intensive agriculture and major transport infrastructure means that this is often a busy, rural landscape.

- **Lowland village chalklands:**
  Low lying, but gently rolling arable landscape, dissected by small streams, with a distinctive pattern of nucleated villages and a patchwork of woodlands and shelterbelts.

### Community landscape assessment

Natural England in a separate document (reference 2) provides detailed guidance on Landscape Character Assessment. The methodology and its application were summarised for participants at the community landscape assessment day on 8th July 2017 by the landscape architect leading the training. All work undertaken in the community led LCA has been undertaken in accordance with Natural England’s guidance.

Landscape Character Assessment is ‘the process of identifying and describing variation in character of the landscape’. LCA documents identify and explain the unique combination of elements and features that make landscapes distinctive by mapping and describing character types and areas.’

**Landscape Character Types** are generic terms, so they can occur in different places. They allow different landscapes to be compared, and have descriptive names such as valley meadowlands.

**Landscape Character Areas**, by contrast, are unique and specific to one place. They focus on difference and distinctiveness, and are given a specific place name, such as the Rhee Valley. A local Landscape Character Area may comprise more than one landscape types, for example Foxton village character area lies partly within the lowland village farmland type and partly within the lowland village chalkland type.

A landscape can be classified at different scales from the national to the local. As noted above Foxton parish falls within the National Character Area 87 East Anglian Chalk, and comprises three landscape types as defined in the East of England Regional Typology (para 3.1). The local assessment set out in this report defines local character areas and has been informed by these broader studies and nests within them.

The approach adopted for this LCA comprised a series of distinct stages:

- defining the area and scope
- undertaking desk study
- field assessment
- describing the character, ensuring it was value free
• evaluation i.e. making judgements.

For the desk study, various mapped data of the area were gathered, existing assessments and documents were referred to and draft character areas were marked up on maps, with initial information about each area recorded on survey sheets.

Data sources included geology and designations, National Landscape Character Areas, Regional Landscape Typology, Cambridgeshire Landscape Guidelines (reference 8), Cambridgeshire Green Infrastructure Strategy (reference 9), Foxton Conservation Area Appraisal and Historic Landscape Characterisation (reference 4).

The standard survey sheets provided a checklist for gathering data and a consistent form of recording data. One or more survey sheets was completed for each proposed local LCA, supplemented by photographs, sketches and annotated maps.

Factors which influence and have informed landscape character include physical Influences such as geology, soils, topography, hydrology; and human Influences such as land use, vegetation cover and field patterns. Also important are views and perceptions, scale, enclosure, diversity, balance, tranquillity and key views.

The landscape assessment also included the settlement character. Information on the history and evolution of the village, its current form and layout, setting, approach and gateways, edge character, areas with distinct character, and key qualities were all assessed.

The characterisation evidence gathered on the community assessment day, together with other additional information-gathering was then used to inform the evaluation process. This included making judgements about the landscape including condition and intactness, role and function, value and sensitivities.

Finally, the assessment drew on all the information gathered to summarise what matters and why for the different local character areas within the parish. It summarised the special qualities to be retained such as sensitive areas, edges and views; sites where there are opportunities for improvement and areas with the capacity for development.

The outputs from the community LCA day were on display at the annual village show in early September, with people on hand to explain the proposed character areas and their special characteristics.

3.3 Community questionnaire

In February 2017, the Neighbourhood Plan (NP) working group distributed a questionnaire to all the houses in the parish, around 540. The purpose was to inform everyone of the neighbourhood planning process and to invite them to share their views on important aspects of living in Foxton, as part of the NP evidence base. 162 questionnaires were returned, the majority from older residents. A summary of the consultation findings can be found at www.foxtonparishcouncil.gov.uk (reference 10). Respondents were asked to give their spontaneous positive feelings about living in the village. The third most frequently mentioned topic (22%) after its community spirit and friendliness was that the village has a rural feel and is surrounded by open countryside. 10% also valued its
peacefulness/tranquility. In answer to a more targeted question describing Foxton, 85% described it as rural and 69% as attractive. No negative feelings on landscape issues were received.

There was overwhelming support for the proposed Neighbourhood Plan vision ‘To retain and enhance the unique rural character and community spirit of Foxton’. Looking forward 15 years, environmental themes came out as the most important with preserving the character of our village and conservation area scoring the highest at 85%, the local countryside environment at 82% and ensuring noise and pollution levels do not increase at 78%.

These findings confirmed the importance of landscape and village character to local residents, and provided justification for gathering detailed objective evidence through this Landscape Character Assessment.

A second residents’ questionnaire survey is taking place in late January/early February 2018, with a consultation event on 30th January. The results from the consultation will help refine the key issues for residents and inform the draft planning policies. Four objectives in the draft Neighbourhood Plan focus on environment and character.
4. Other relevant reports, initiatives and planning policies

It is important to understand whether there are any other relevant sources of information affecting the Foxton landscape, as well as ongoing and proposed local initiatives.

4.1 Conservation Area

Of particular relevance is the ongoing work to update and extend the existing 1972 Conservation Area boundary, defining four new Conservation Area Character Areas (figures 11 and 12, reference 4). The Parish Council has been leading the work, in partnership with South Cambridgeshire District Council (SCDC), who will designate the new area. A local consultation on a further draft took place in late November 2017, and the formal public consultation is taking place from December to February 2018. SCDC has been consulted regarding this Landscape Character Assessment, and they have advised that the reports should be separate but complementary. There is strong compatibility between the proposed boundaries of the four proposed Conservation Area Character Areas and the seven village character areas identified in this report (figure 13), with the main difference being scale. The four proposed Conservation Area Character Areas all lie within the LCA’s High Street Village Character Area.

4.2 Cambridgeshire Green Infrastructure Strategy

In 2011, a Green Infrastructure Strategy for Cambridgeshire was published by the Green Infrastructure Partnership (reference 9). This was endorsed by all the local authorities, including South Cambridgeshire District Council. The purpose of the strategy was to help achieve four objectives:

- To reverse the decline in biodiversity
- To mitigate and adapt to climate change
- To promote sustainable growth and economic development
- To support healthy living and well-being.

Foxton parish lies within one of six strategic areas (Cambridge) where projects for enhancement are identified. These include the chalk rivers project, woodland linkage and chalk grassland enhancement. Under landscape, it states the need to improve and maintain key habitats across the area.

The GI strategy also refers to the standard for accessible natural green space, known as ANGST. The area to the south, west and east of the city is deficient in accessible natural green space over 500ha in size and >100ha and >2ha to the south of Cambridge (reference 11, and appendix 10 of reference 9). There is therefore strong evidence for creating more publicly accessible natural greenspace in Foxton parish.

The GI strategy chapter on South Cambridgeshire includes proposals for:

- All new developments to incorporate and link to existing GI networks
- Connecting and reinforcing habitats and landscape features
- Conserving, enhancing and increasing the enjoyment of the district’s rural and historic character
Figure 11: Proposed Conservation Area, Listed Buildings and Tree Preservation Orders
Figure 12: Conservation Area Character Areas and Village Photograph Locations
Figure 13: Village Landscape Character Areas
- Improving access to GI across the district
- Engaging with and supporting people, groups and initiatives to help deliver GI
- Making real improvements to places and quality of life
- Reducing the causes and impacts of climate change.

The recommendations of this strategy should therefore be taken into account in assessing potential landscape enhancement projects and the creation of additional accessible natural green space areas in Foxton parish, as part of this LCA study. Appendix 4 contains an extract setting out the proposed Strategic Area projects for the Foxton area.

4.3 Cambridgeshire Landscape Guidelines

In 1991, Cambridgeshire County Council published an innovative manual for management and changer in the rural landscape, titled Cambridgeshire Landscape Guidelines (reference 8). The report’s partners included South Cambridgeshire District Council and the Countryside Commission. It was used a supplementary planning guidance and its recommendations are still relevant nearly three decades on. The chapter on the ‘Chalklands’ describes their character in a similar way to the more recent National England description of National Character Area 87 (see para 3.1), and it sets out principles for landscape improvement and management. Those relevant to Foxton parish are reproduced in appendix 2, and should be referred to by all those designing and implementing future landscape enhancement in the parish. Appendix 3 reproduces the section on planning and development with guidance for developers.

4.4 Other local initiatives and community projects

At the time of writing there are several relevant projects that are either ongoing, have happened recently or have been suggested through the Neighbourhood Plan consultation process. These are:

- Ongoing management of the Dovecot meadow in the heart of the village, organised by the Friends Group and funded by the Parish Council. Over the last 11 years, since a 25 lease was agreed with Cambridgeshire County Council, a number of one off and regular management tasks have been carried out. The principle aim is to increase the ecological value of the meadow and its boundary hedgerows. The wildflower diversity and frequency is increasing as a result, and this will in turn benefit the invertebrate population. There have also been small archaeological excavations in the meadow at known medieval building sites.
Management works along the Hoffer Brook organised and funded by the Wildlife Trust and SCDC took place in 2015 and 2016. The purpose was to open up the tree canopy and improve the flow and condition of the brook, a chalk stream. Volunteers from Foxton have helped with the work.

The urgent need to manage the community woodland on the chalk hill to the south of the village, and so vital to its setting and character, was identified in the community consultation responses in spring 2017. The two areas of woodland, Chalk Hill and West Hill, were planted on Cambridgeshire County Council land 20 years ago in the mid 1990’s. Many people from the village helped with the planting that was supported by a Forestry Commission grant. The predominantly beech woodland with its associated shrub understorey has received almost no management since planting. The maturing trees are closely spaced, and urgently require thinning, with glades created to open up the woodland floor, and increase biodiversity.

A small orchard has been planted by a private individual on a small field adjacent to Shepreth Road, by the junction with the A10.

The Foxton Gardens Association manages several of the more naturalised open green areas in and around the village, including the planting of thousands of daffodil bulbs on the historic wide verges approaching the village from the A10/Shepreth and Fowlmere. These are much-loved amenity features that enhance the local landscape in spring.

The parish council manages the more formal Recreation Ground and its tree covered boundaries, as well as the smaller green spaces, and trees adjacent to roads and on the small areas of green space so important to the character of the village.
4.5 Planning policies

It should also be noted here that the emerging Local Plan for South Cambridgeshire (*reference 12*), which has been through inquiry by Planning Inspector’s, has a number of policies relevant to this report:

- NH/2 Permits development only where it respects and retains or enhances the local character and distinctiveness of the local landscape and of the individual national character areas in which it is located on landscape character.
- NH/4 Generic policy to enhance and add to existing biodiversity assets
- NH/6 Green infrastructure
- NH/8 Mitigating the impact of development in and adjoining the Green Belt
- NH/12 Local Green Space
5. Characterisation and Evaluation

5.1 Introduction

This section establishes the current landscape baseline of the parish. The local landscape character areas are described, followed by the village landscape character areas. Key views and landmarks are then identified. From analysing this information, an evaluation of each local character area seeks to identify its condition, role and function, value and sensitivities. Paragraph 5.4 seeks to identify the Foxton landscape’s potential to absorb future growth and in paragraph 6.3 environmental initiatives are suggested, both based on the evidence collected through the LCA. An assessment is made of the sensitivity and capacity of each LCA to accommodate future housing growth and other development.

5.2 Landscape Character Areas. NB Positions from which photographs A to X were taken are marked on figures 12 and 14

The desk and field work carried out at the community landscape assessment day identified four local landscape character areas unique to Foxton (figure 14). These are:

- **Rhee Valley and its tributaries**, a fairly narrow strip of water meadows south of the River Rhee and the tree-lined river banks alongside the River Rhee and its tributaries Hoffer Brook and the River Shep
- **Foxton Farmlands**, gently sloping agricultural land between the village and the Rhee valley, bisected by the A10 and the railway line and their associated development
- **Foxton Village**, encompassing all of the village south of the A10, sloping up to and including Foxton Woods on the skyline
- **Foxton Chalklands**, covering the agricultural lands sloping south and east of the village.

A. View north from Shepreth Road towards Barrington church, quarry and ridge. A10 road behind the hedgeline
Figure 14: Landscape Character Areas, main landscape and built features and rural photograph locations
The main landscape characteristics of these four areas can be described as follows:

**Rhee Valley and its tributaries Character Area**

The valley of the River Rhee defines the northern boundary of Foxton parish, and its tributary Hoffer Brook runs along much of the north eastern boundary. The narrow stream known as the River Shep defines the western boundary of the parish, in this character area and also the other three. This character area forms the key separation between Foxton and Barrington villages, and Foxton and Harston.

The grassland water meadow to the south of the River Rhee close to Barrington village provides a tranquil setting for the adjacent parish. The river itself is quite narrow, rising in depth after rain. Its banks are lined with native waterside trees, predominantly willow. Further east, the river flows through arable farmland and is a less distinct landscape feature.

Hoffer Brook joins the Rhee at Hoffer Bridge, under the A10 road. In contrast to the rest of this character area, the brook and its associated tree belt (mainly willow, alder and oak) forms a very distinctive and important landscape feature, bordering very large and flat arable fields. The tree belt is clearly visible from the A10 and the railway line. There are no water meadows in the valley away from Barrington, with the trees the key distinguishing feature.
This area is characterised mainly by flat open arable fields, with the landscape offering pleasing views to the wider landscape, such as Barrington ridge, together with wide skies. Stream-side tree belts, hedgerows and scattered mature trees form boundaries to the extensive fields. The character area merges seamlessly with the River Rhee and Foxton Chalklands character areas to north and south, as the land is low lying and very gently sloping. There are known archaeological settlements in the west of the area, close to the Shepreth parish boundary.
A dominant feature of the central part of this landscape character area, abutting the Foxton village character area, is the visual intrusion of the railway and its associated infrastructure, together with the very noisy A10 trunk road. The outskirts or gateway to village edge at the intersection of the road and railway is defined by commercial buildings and open parking areas. This location lacks legibility and structure, and the buildings do not reflect the local vernacular. In addition to the assorted light industry, there are a few houses adjacent to the A10, north of Foxton station.

The non-residential sites are not visually attractive as one approaches the village. It gives the impression of a transport rather than a village gateway. From the A10 and the railway platform, the church tower is a significant landscape feature visible in the distance above the trees, along with the signal box. The church tower is the local landmark that indicates the presence of a village across the fields. The houses along Station Road and the new barn conversions opposite the church merge well with the landscape, especially in summer with the many mature trees forming the northern village edge.

To the north of the road and railway, the landscape is flat and gently sloping arable farmland with visible field and ditch boundaries. There is a sharp edge outside the boundary of the housing along
Barrington Road. This edge forms the outer extent of the Cambridge Green Belt. The trees lining Barrington Road screen and enhance the mainly 1920’s housing, which form a small ribbon development. This part of the village is physically separated from its historic core, found to the south of the railway line and main road. The landscape feels much more peaceful and rural the further away one gets from the vehicle and train noise, but it lacks visual distinctiveness.

Two small village outliers – land between Foxton House and the A10, and Mortimer’s Farm, also lie in this character area. The former is a predominantly open parkland landscape, previously comprising the grounds to the listed Foxton House, and an important setting for that property. It is well-screened by mature beech, lime, horse chestnut and holm oak trees along the road verges and in adjoining private gardens. These contrast with the willows and alders along the River Rhee. The two pasture fields to the west of the parkland border Shepreth Road, providing a rural gateway to the village. Mortimer’s Farm is historic with the remains of a moat. The grounds comprise parkland, well-screened by a mature native hedgerow separating it from the arable fields south of the railway.

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**Evaluation:** these farmlands provide the traditional rural well-managed agricultural setting for the village, separating it from the main transport arteries, and the neighbouring parishes and villages of Barrington, Shepreth and Harston. Its value is in its land use, its sense of rurality, space and open views. This character is impacted visually and aurally by the realities of the modern transport network that bisect it, and yet this also affords views to those passing through in cars and on the train.

The views south into the village from the railway and road are key sensitivities in this character area. The church tower is especially valued, reinforcing Foxton’s sense of place. The fields south of the station and their tree belt backdrop provide the setting for the church and historic village, forming a rural gateway accessed along the public footpath. Similarly, the parkland between the A10, Shepreth Road and Foxton House is valued for providing the landscape setting for the grade 2 listed property.

The character would be changed, and potentially improved, should proposed alterations to the Foxton level crossing and road alignment eventually happen. In the meantime, there are opportunities for landscape enhancement through further tree planting, of appropriate species. This would help screen infrastructure such as the railway yard fencing and the commercial buildings off the A10, as well as to strengthen existing roadside planting to screen the traffic and absorb its noise.
Foxton Village Character Area (to be read in conjunction with the more detailed 2018 Conservation Area Appraisal)

This landscape character area forms the heart of the parish. It can be sub-divided into seven village landscape character areas, as shown on figure 13, reflecting the age of the housing and its associated landscape features. The historic village core, spread along the line of the Common Stream/High Street, is characterised by predominantly old buildings of various vernacular styles, set back from the road.

Mature trees are key features that help frame views, along with the wide verges and four small triangular greens. These verges are mainly grassed but sometimes comprise private front gardens.

There are many attractive buildings that draw the eye, including thatched and timber-framed cottages, the old maltings and dovecot, and the grade 1 listed parish church on rising ground south of the High Street. There are only two points along the High Street where one can now look outwards towards open countryside and the hill-top woodland, at field gateways. One, in the heart of the village, leads to the meadow with its C18th restored thatched dovecot. This is a very important natural greenspace, bisected by a path to the school and village hall beyond.
There are two village landscape character areas on either side of Shepreth Road, at the western end of the village. The open parkland adjacent to Foxton House and Park is historic having formed the setting for this grade 2 listed building. There are a handful of modern houses to the north of the wide verge, and adjacent to the A10 lies Villiers Park, a garage and other commercial buildings. West Hill Road is a cul de sac of 1960’s housing.

The remaining few gaps, such as the dovecot meadow, are therefore very important in retaining the rural feel of the village.

The feel of the High Street landscape character area changes at the intersection of the High Street with Station Road. The early C20th print works and the Victorian chapel and school define this transition zone. To the north, on the western side of Station Road, there are four rows of old print workers cottages set far back from the road by grassy banks, with mature and newer trees, forming an important local green space. On the opposite side of the road lies a small terrace of cottages and two thatched properties with frontages close to the road. These border a farmhouse and buildings, with views out into the Foxton Farmlands through a gateway.

A separate village character area is formed of the remaining part of Station Road. Along the western side are more modern bungalows with deep front gardens, and then several large beech and oak trees, framing the view towards the station and A10. On the eastern side, north of the old school, there is a mix of housing styles, reflecting the growth of the village after the railway arrived. On towards the station are brick-built 1920’s houses, again set well back from the road. Approaching the station, there is a prominent stand of mature beech trees that contributes to the quality of the views approaching and leaving the village. These are amongst many trees covered by Tree Preservation Orders (figure 11).
Two further village character areas are located around the station and along Barrington Road. These are described in the Foxton Farmlands section.

Further along the High Street from the print works and still within the High Street village character area, the view is again of wide verges and properties set well back, including the old manor house and the church and church yard, with their prominent old walls. The rural feel is helped by old barn conversions, and new housing mimicking this style. There are no views out to the wider landscape along this stretch of road.

A cul de sac opposite the old manor house leads to the early C21st school, village hall and sports pavilion, and is framed by modern housing, with an old thatched property on the corner. In the distance, the woodland is visible.

These new houses together with the Recreation Ground, school and village hall are included in the Fowlmere Road village character area. Where the High Street becomes Fowlmere Road, on the bend, the character changes, and this is another boundary with the Fowlmere Road village character area. Still within the historic core, an attractive historic lane framed by grass verges runs from the corner towards Mortimer’s Farm. The corner is marked by an attractive small old green, village pump and thatched cottages. The Fowlmere Road then turns south with a mixture of ages and housing styles, with again most properties set back from the road behind front gardens and grassy banks. The road slopes uphill with several residential cul de sacs of varying ages leading off. There are no views out to the wider agricultural landscape until one meets the brow of the hill.

The other key element of this landscape character area is the land between the southern edge of the village and the highest point of the parish, Foxton Woods, and the juxtaposition of these two landscape features. The twenty year old predominantly beech woodland, so characteristic of chalklands, frames the views out of the village at many points. The wooded ridge and adjacent fields are probably the most important features in the parish landscape, and they enclose the village core. The woods are publicly accessible and well used by local people, as is the public footpath linking the High Street to Fowlmere. The footpath and woods afford attractive, 360 degree panoramic views, much-loved by many. The woods were planted by local people, adjacent to an existing mature copse
(West Hill) and encompassing the old clunch pit on Chalk Hill to the east. The woodland is also important for biodiversity, but badly needs management to secure a healthy future, and better ecological value.

The land between the woods and the village edge comprises sloping farmland and a barn, the allotments, dovecot meadow, school playing fields and Recreation Ground, all affording views inwards and outwards.

These four areas provide very important village facilities for sport, play, health and wellbeing, as well as biodiversity. The agricultural land merges northwards into the Foxton Farmlands character area, and is visible from several points in the village, giving a sense of openness and rurality, framed by the woodlands on the crest of the hill.
S. View southeast on emerging from Caxton Lane along the public footpath towards Foxton Woods
Evaluation: the village landscape retains its historic feel along its linear through road. Over the last 60 years, several residential cul de sacs have been built mainly to its south. Views out of the village to the open countryside beyond have become limited as the village has grown, with those remaining assuming great value and importance.

The publicly accessible and locally planted woodland on the chalk ridge is an extremely important feature, both for the landscape and the community. It is beautiful and tranquil. The woodland encloses the settlement, drawing the eye towards it from all sides, and affording panoramic views from it southwards to the wider rolling chalklands. The core village mostly abuts farmed land with residential gardens backing onto the fields. The settlement edge is irregular. It has expanded and changed a number of times over the last 60 years from its earlier historic core. The many garden boundaries are planted with hedges and trees of various sizes and ages, softening the view into the village from the hill. The area between the woods and the village has a natural feel despite it being primarily arable fields as wild flowers border the agricultural land and birds fly overhead.

There are sensitivities along other parts of the village character area boundary. These include the two small areas of historic parkland to the north in the Foxton Farmlands character area. The Cambridge Green Belt boundary lies at the north eastern and eastern side of the settlement, as a well-defined edge. The new development on Fowlmere Road creeps over the defining ridge, and intrudes visually into the rolling agricultural chalk landscape beyond, the Foxton Chalklands. The open green spaces of varying scales and naturalness within the village are all important landscape features, and opportunities should be taken to enhance and expand them. The Cambridgeshire Accessible Natural Greenspace Standards show a deficiency in three size categories in this area, providing evidence of the need to create more such areas.

T. View from footpath between the wooded areas at the top of the hill, looking towards Foxton
Foxton Chalklands

This character area to the south of the village is an open rolling arable landscape that emphasises the rural setting of the village. It lies entirely on chalk geology giving rise to freely drained soils and hence good quality agricultural land. The land slopes gently south and east, and it provides separation from adjacent villages, not just Fowlmere to the south, but also Newton to the north east and Thriplow to the south-east, all just visible thanks to their church towers.

The woodlands of Chalk Hill and West Hill are the key landscape feature, framing the view looking south and east, as well as north and west across the village. The views from the woods and public footpath are expansive and ever-changing. The Royston to Heydon chalk ridge is clearly visible on the skyline, capped in places by woodland stands. As well as farmland birds, aircraft from nearby Duxford airfield are often to be spotted in the skies overhead. Other landscape features important to this character area include the brook-side native tree belt along Hoffer Brook, intermittent roadside planting and other occasional hedging and mature trees such as beech. These are remnants of earlier hedgerows and field boundaries, and are now helping to break up the open landscape of very large fields.

Archaeological evidence, gathered in advance of the recent ridge-top housing being built, has revealed a linear double ditch crossing the Fowlmere Road at Chalk Hill. Crop markings visible on aerial photographs back up this discovery. It is thought to have provided a defensive structure in the Iron Age, linking Hoffer and Shep brooks. So the importance of the chalk ridge in the landscape was recognised many thousands of years ago.
The chalk landscape has the occasional agricultural building and the road interrupting its openness and tranquillity. The small 2016 housing development on the brow of the hill, at the southern edge of the village, also provides some visual intrusion. Its siting bears no relationship to the chalk landscape, and it creates a new village edge escaping over the brow of the hill from the otherwise hidden settlement. External tree screening may in time ameliorate its visual impact.

Evaluation: the Foxton Chalklands are highly characteristic of the wider National Character Area. It is a productive, well-managed agricultural landscape, in which there lies a patchwork of small historic villages. Its principle value, apart from producing food, is its wide open vistas, its rurality and feeling of tranquillity. Any new residential development, extending the village southwards, would have a detrimental impact on the landscape quality, and historic settlement pattern. Any new agricultural or employment buildings would severely detract from the landscape quality, openness and uninterrupted skylines. Any such development could not easily be ameliorated by screening. There are opportunities to improve biodiversity networks along verges and hedgerows through suitable native planting.
5.3 Key views, landmarks and gateways

As has been described earlier, Foxton parish has four distinct landscape character areas within its elongated northwest/southeast alignment. The landscape is gently sloping towards the River Rhee in its northern half, rising southwards to the chalk ridge, before sloping away south towards the villages of Fowlmere and Thriplow. In its wider landscape setting, there are expansive views south towards the higher chalk ridge from Royston to Chishill.

Within the parish, the key views are those from and towards the wooded chalk hill which provides the backdrop to the historic village (see figure 15). These woodlands are visible from open gateways, roads and footpaths in the southern half of the parish and the village.

Other views towards the village from the river valley emphasise its rural agricultural setting. The low, flat landform, together with roadside mature trees, do not give views towards the historic village from Barrington Road.

Buildings such as the church and farm barn are the only visible signs of the village as one approaches along the A10. Closer to the level crossing, the commercial buildings and railway infrastructure are more dominant, but this transport gateway gives no hint of the attractive, long-established village just 500 metres away.
The Shepreth Road approach to the village south east from the A10, flanked by pasture fields and a small orchard, is characterised by historic wide grass verges, full of spring colour, and these more intimate views raise expectations of an attractive village settlement to come.

Western gateway: approaching Foxton along Shepreth Road, with wide verges, hedgerows and mature trees
The western edge of the village is sensitive in landscape terms with housing quite well-screened.

Similarly, the road approach from Fowlmere is characterised by wide grass verges planted with spring flowers, and intermittent hedgerow shrubs and trees. Until the new housing on the ridge was built, one came upon the village only when one crested the hill.

Within the village, there are several prominent landmarks and features (figure 14). These include the triangular old village green surrounded by very old houses and the Maltings; the early print works and neighbouring print cottages; small triangular greens; the C18 dovecot; the Grade 1 listed church on rising ground; the many character houses along the High Street; and the small green and water pump on the corner of Mortimer’s Lane. More information on the valuable contribution of these and other village features is given with the 2018 Conservation Area report.

5.4 Foxton landscape’s potential to absorb future growth

This landscape character appraisal has collected objective information on the landscape features and form that make up the landscape of the parish, supported by a range of evidence such as environmental data, historical maps, relevant strategies and designations, photographs and sketches. This detailed work has been supported by the generic descriptions and advice in supporting strategies and policies. The report has also been guided by the results of the community questionnaire, which showed how much residents value Foxton’s rural and tranquil setting and its historic character. The Neighbourhood Plan working group has considered the landscape sensitivities, constraints and opportunities set out in the report and illustrated on figure 15. It has reached consensus on the parts of the parish where any new development would have least impact on landscape quality.
Figure 15: Landscape Sensitivities, Constraints and Opportunities

Key
- Parish Neighbourhood Plan Area
- Green Belt
- Development Framework
- Conservation Area (1972)
- Listed Buildings
- Sensitive urban edge to be retained
- Recent housing
- Outline Planning Permission 2017
- Sites with minimal landscape constraints
- Key views across parish
- Key views out of village
- Potential biodiversity enhancement area

Foxton Neighbourhood Plan
Landscape Character Assessment
December 2017
Four distinct local landscape character areas have been identified and verified with fieldwork. Earlier in this section a summary evaluation of the landscape value and sensitivities of each is set out. All this information has been scrutinised to try and identify any sites in the parish where it is considered that the landscape could absorb some future development, in what form and any necessary amelioration and enhancement measures.

Figure 15 illustrates the key sensitivities, constraints and opportunities for potential new development. The following factors are identified on the map:

- Important views that must be safe-guarded, both into and out of the main village settlement
- Village edges that must be retained/enhanced in landscape terms
- Green Belt boundary
- Proposal that most new sustainable development should be located within easy walking or cycling distance of the village heart, where amenities and facilities are located, and also to local public transport
- Locations where new development may be appropriate, if it meets other planning criteria and has a landscape scheme to enable it to blend into its local landscape character area
- Landscape/biodiversity enhancement to reinforce sense of place, gateways, biodiversity and enjoyment.

Sensitivities, constraints and opportunities in the Foxton Farmlands Character Area

Land close to the station and A10

The landscape of the area north of the railway line and east of the A10 is flat, with railway infrastructure, light industrial units, a redundant petrol station, and coach parking between the railway line and the road. There are also several residential properties, mostly along the road but including two within the coach park. The Green Belt boundary abuts the eastern edge of this triangular site behind the station, and continues north of the A10 along the eastern boundaries of the Barrington Road houses. The Green Belt land is grade 2 quality agricultural land.

This part of the parish is physically separated from the historic core settlement, indeed the village is not visible from the station area or A10 except for the church tower. As the site is mostly brownfield land, there is potential for redevelopment as a mixed use site, with enhanced landscaping to soften the existing hard and only-partly-screened Green Belt edge. The station platforms have recently been extended and the Greater Cambridgeshire Partnership has identified Foxton as a rural transport hub, with new car parking and cycle storage.
It would be important to design and implement appropriate planting to screen and soften any redevelopment, indeed it would be advantageous to plant a native hedgerow with trees and remove existing conifers along the northeast boundary of the current site. This site is highly visible to people passing through by car, especially those queuing as they approach the closed level crossing, or by train approaching Foxton station. Guidance on implementing planting appropriate to this landscape type is contained in the appendices 2 and 3.

**Land between the railway line and the High Street northern village edge**

The land between the station and the village is crossed by a well-used public footpath, and in location terms would be a potential site for some limited land use change. Most is in agricultural production, with two fields used as horse pasture in its south-west corner. The site is physically and visually separated from, but close to, the historic core, with important views out from a gateway on the High Street and where the public footpath opens onto the field. The land is Green Belt and highly visible from the railway line, so any land use change would need to conform to Green Belt restrictions. There is a significant tree-lined edge at the boundary of the fields with the properties.
lying north of the High Street, which it is important to retain. This area is also valued for its rural character and tranquillity. So the landscape character of this wider belt of land between the railway and the settlement edge is important to retain. However, there is potential scope for some limited change close to the urban edge and village centre, perhaps new publicly accessible amenity land with enhanced biodiversity in the form of a community orchard, retaining views to the church. Foxton historically had a number of orchards, as shown on figure 7. This would help meet the deficit in accessible natural greenspace within Foxton parish, as shown by Natural England’s Accessible Natural Green Space Standards.

Land between the A10 and railway south-west of the station

To the south of the level crossing, there is also scope to plant native trees and hedging along the northern boundary of the railway storage yard, to hide the existing metal fence. Some hedgerow planting has been carried out in recent years. However, there is scope to thicken the fragmented hedgerow trees and shrubs and create improved wildlife corridors along existing field boundaries across this character area. Guidance on this is contained in the appendices.

Foxton House parkland and adjacent fields

Another part of this local character area, between the A10 and Shepreth Road, has an historic parkland character, providing the setting for the grade 2 listed Foxton House. There has been a recent planning application and subsequent unsuccessful appeal to build on this land, unsuccessful because of its landscape quality in juxtaposition to Foxton House. This parkland is of considerable value and important to retain.

The fields to the west, either side of Shepreth Road, from the A10 junction, are also valuable as providing the rural gateway to the village from the west. Extensive views across the fields eastwards to the wooded chalk ridge, and northwards to Barrington village and ridge are evident, especially when the trees are bare of leaves.
Land to west of Station Road

One site lying just within the Foxton Farmlands character area, and abutting the village west of the Print Cottages on Station Road received outline planning permission for up to 22 dwellings in March 2017. It is hidden from view from most angles, except importantly from the neighbouring properties along the High Street. The site is however accessed off Station Road, severing a locally important grassy bank with occasional small trees. The outline permission is for part of the site, and in landscape terms there is considered to be scope to develop the rest of the site for both higher density housing and for additional employment use (on the part of the site west of the existing employment area). The site is close to the heart of the village, with easy pedestrian access to key facilities. There is existing tree cover but any new development would require landscape enhancement.

Villiers Park

Developers consulted on proposals for new housing on land within Villiers Park in summer 2017. This site lies south of the A10 and north of the site described in the previous paragraph. It is currently well-screened by mature trees, and is adjacent to an employment site to the south-west. Any development on this site should provide pedestrian and cycle links to the village core, and incorporate appropriate landscape enhancement.

Foxton Chalklands

This open gently sloping chalkland landscape, forming the southern half of the parish and encircling the village to the south and east, is prime agricultural land. There is a Green Belt designation on the land east of the Fowlmere Road. The recent, internally attractive, new small development lies atop the ridge and is clearly visible on the skyline when approaching Foxton from the south. It illustrates the visual impact on the landscape that even small numbers of housing can make. It has altered the
perception of the historic location of the village nestled to the north of the hills. This development extends housing onto higher land which traditionally has not been developed, and has also extended the village gateway from the south. It is therefore strongly recommended that no further development takes place in this character area, as any building will have a detrimental visual impact on the open landscape, and the traditional setting and form of the settlement.

The farmland to the east of the Fowlmere Road has been covered by an Environmental Stewardship Agreement. There is perhaps scope to discuss further future environmental enhancements with the landowner, Thriplow Farms, to enhance biodiversity networks along field margins and verges. Guidance on appropriate species and form is contained in the appendices 2 and 3. The landowner already allows permissive access along several field boundaries and this enables local people to walk in an attractive and quiet rural landscape, with extensive views.

**Foxton Village**

The historic village, lying at the heart of the parish, has many special qualities associated with its history and landscape setting. The form of development alongside an old water course, with buildings set back and wide verges providing separation from the road, is very important, as are the views out to its rural surroundings from a few now limited locations. The community woodland on the low chalk hill to the south is a key landscape feature, enclosing the village and providing a very visually appealing view on the horizon. Many trees and hedgerows within the settlement also enhance the quality of the local environment, both visually and for their ecological value. The green spaces, large and small, are key landscape features, with the several small triangular greens and the larger spaces at the Recreation Ground and the dovecot meadow providing significant and much-valued local amenities. Taken altogether, this combination of green spaces and trees gives the village landscape a very green and attractive appeal.

Since the 1950’s, a number of residential cul de sacs have been built off the main village spine, all but one to the south of the road. In addition, the village has benefitted from C21st investment in community facilities through the primary school, village hall, sports pavilion, skateboard park, children’s playground and allotments. The dovecot and its surrounding meadow have been restored, with a new access path to the school and hall. These are all located in the heart of the village character area, with wide open skies and views southwards. The combination of these developments has created a jagged southern edge to the settlement and its boundary with two large agricultural fields on land sloping uphill and southwards towards the community woodland. These developments show that with boundary planting of indigenous trees and hedgerows, it is possible incrementally to provide screening and amelioration when the village is viewed from the Foxton Woods.

This would suggest therefore that there is scope in landscape terms for some limited land use change adjoining the village edge to the south. Any development would need to be on the flat land nearest the village, sited so that it does not obstruct views in and out of the village, in particular towards the woodland horizon from the Recreation Ground and dovecot meadow. It would also need to be of appropriate scale (small) and form to integrate with existing development. Appropriate planting of indigenous trees and shrubs would need to be set out in a detailed landscape plan, and access and visual links to the surrounding land designed in.
A small piece of land, at the northern corner of the school playing fields and adjacent to the dovecot meadow, is currently not actively managed or used. This has potential for biodiversity enhancement or possibly a small community orchard.

Looking at this site between the village edge and the woodland in a more long term and visionary way, the existing agricultural land sloping up to the woods would make a wonderful chalk grassland area with public access. This, combined with a well-managed maturing wood, would create a small country park type facility for the benefit of local people and wildlife (see figure 15). The 2010/11 Cambridgeshire Accessible Natural Greenspace Standards report by Natural England has identified a deficit in large accessible natural green spaces in South Cambridgeshire, and the 2011 Cambridgeshire Green Infrastructure Strategy recommends a number of enhancement projects that such an initiative would fulfil. There is space also to include some additional more formal green areas as playing fields on the lower slopes, to satisfy a deficit in playing field space already identified.

Within the village development framework itself (see figure 3), the scope for absorbing any new development is limited by the few potential sites available, although there is considered to be scope for additional dwellings within existing large residential plots, as has been achieved in the Church View development. Any proposal coming forward for an existing residential plot should ensure it integrates into the village character area, as well as the site itself, and respect the form of wide verges, trees, scale and so on.
6. Vision for Foxton

6.1 Introduction

Foxton Parish Council embarked upon the neighbourhood planning process in order to prepare a land use and enhancement plan for its parish through to 2031, within the context of significant development pressures on this part of South Cambridgeshire resulting from the continued growth of Cambridge. This landscape character assessment is a key piece of the evidence base that will be help inform the policies in the 2018 Neighbourhood Plan for Foxton. Community feedback has reinforced what is so special about the village and its surrounding parish land. It is its rural yet accessible location, and its community spirit. This systematic and objective appraisal of the local landscape has resulted in a valuable record of what is there, what is special and what must be conserved and retained.

Foxton is essentially a rural agricultural parish, bisected by major transport arteries. The local landscape must be viewed in both its wider context, and its very local attractiveness and distinctiveness. There are up to date recommendations on how its quintessential chalkland landscape could be enhanced through the National Character Area 87 report, the Green Infrastructure Strategy, the Cambridgeshire Landscape Guidelines and the Natural Accessible Greenspace Standards report for Cambridgeshire.

6.2 Special qualities to retain

Foxton parish and its village have many special qualities that must be retained. These are set out in more detail in sections 4 and 5. In essence, Foxton is an attractive historic village set within a productively-farmed agricultural chalkland landscape of valley and gentle slopes. Views in and out of the village and from the higher ground are very important in landscape terms and for local people. The associated wildlife and the tranquillity of much of the parish are also highly valued. By contrast, the fact that the village is closely connected to major road and rail links is important to its residents, yet these provide the major detracting factors in the landscape. They also highlight opportunities for improvement.

6.3 Environmental initiatives

Paragraph 4.3 details the various environmental initiatives that are current or have been implemented recently. The major need in future is to bring the community woodland planted in phases by local people in the mid 1990’s into proper management, which in turn could open up opportunities for greater educational use. The landowner, Cambridgeshire County Council, has carried out some very limited thinning of the closely planted trees and shrubs, although it does maintain the well-walked woodland paths. The trees are maturing fast and urgently need significant thinning. The thinning would create well-formed mature beech trees so typical of hill tops and ridges in rolling chalkland. This, together with associated understorey and open glades, would encourage biodiversity. It is proposed that permission be sought from the landowner to start some management, initially involving local volunteers. There is also interest from the community in using the woodlands for educational use, for example through a Forest School.
The longer-term landscape-scale vision of linking the woodlands to the village edge by converting the existing cereal fields to open chalk grassland is set out in paragraph 5.5.

There is also scope to enhance the gateways to the village through additional planting on boundary edges and roadside verges, conforming to the recommendations of the report for NCA 87 and the Cambridgeshire Landscape Guidelines.

In addition, potential sites for a community orchard, bringing back a landscape feature that was traditional in the parish, and enhancing biodiversity, have been identified.

6.4 Opportunities for growth

The neighbourhood planning process recognises the need for some limited and appropriate growth in Foxton parish, based on evidence of need and community feedback. There are significant landscape constraints on growth, as evidenced in this landscape character assessment report. However, the neighbourhood plan offers the opportunity for the parish council with referendum support from the community, to propose one or more potential development sites. The neighbourhood plan, backed by this report, will set out the detail of how these might be integrated within the locally-special Foxton landscape.
References

3. Landscape Character Assessment field survey sheet
4. Foxton Conservation Area (South Cambridgeshire District Council and Foxton Parish Council, currently in draft)
5. The Common Stream (Rowland Parker, 1975)
9. Cambridgeshire Green Infrastructure Strategy (Cambs Green Infrastructure Partnership, 2011)
10. Foxton Parish Council website (www.foxtonparishcouncil.gov.uk)
12. South Cambridgeshire Local Plan (expected adoption spring 2018)
Appendix 1

National Character Area 87 profile:

Statement of Environmental Opportunity (SEO) 1: Maintain sustainable but productive agricultural land use, while expanding and connecting the chalkland assemblage of semi-natural grasslands, for example by sensitive management of road verges and extending buffer strips along field margins to benefit soil and water quality, reduce soil erosion, strengthen landscape character and enhance biodiversity and pollinator networks.

For example, by:

- Encouraging resource-efficient farming where risks are identified and can be managed to reduce negative impacts. For example, arable reversion should be targeted in areas of high soil erosion risk and fertiliser use minimised where infiltration into the aquifer is rapid.
- Conserving and maximising the soil resource, aiming particularly to avoid deterioration of soils with high Agricultural Land Classification grades.
- Encouraging sheep grazing on biodiverse grasslands to bring benefits to biodiversity and sense of place. Advise longer growing periods between grazing and increase sward diversity in leys to improve root penetration and soil stability.
- Seeking opportunities for restoration and creation of low-input and unimproved grassland and creation of buffer strips for wildlife where appropriate within catchments in the National Character Area (NCA). This will reduce run-off and provide improvements in water availability from the rivers and the main aquifer, as well as providing networks of habitats for pollinators.
- Optimising benefits for farmland birds and rare arable plants by maintaining stubble and cultivated and uncropped field margins to provide winter food and safe nesting habitats.
- Lowering the nutrient input and ensuring grazing or cutting after flowering by the horse-racing industry. This could significantly expand the species-rich grassland area.
- Establishing a resilient ecological network, identifying and addressing gaps and building core areas, particularly in relation to chalk grassland and flood plain habitats.
- Promoting and enhancing management of road verges for high-quality grassland habitat.
- Exploring and realising opportunities for restoration and creation of favourably managed wetland habitats along the flood plains of the rivers Cam, Granta and Rhee.

SEO 2: Conserve the regionally important East Anglian chalk groundwater resource, by working in partnership to ensure that an integrated catchment scale approach is secured for its enhanced long-term management, including the chalk streams, for the benefit of biodiversity, landscape character and recreational experience.

For example, by:

- Working in partnership with water companies across the water supply network area to replace or prevent/limit damaging abstraction and consumption, including engaging water consumers about negative impacts of unsustainable abstraction on East Anglian chalk streams.
- Exploring opportunities for the expansion of semi-natural wetland habitats along the flood plains of the rivers Cam, Granta and Rhee, including reedbeds next to watercourses to act as nutrient sinks.
- Engaging communities in better understanding of the relationship between geodiversity, the underlying aquifer, water quality and availability, and soils and the natural processes that limit available resources.
- Creating grassland buffer strips running across slopes within catchments to reduce sediment and nutrient run-off into adjacent watercourses, thereby improving the quality of the rivers and their flood plains. Also restore river character, for example pollarding willows.
- Maintaining and restoring semi-natural habitats and woodlands to intercept and infiltrate surface water down into the aquifers.
SEO 3: Conserve and promote the landscape character, geodiversity, historic environment and historical assets of the chalklands, including the open views of undulating chalkland, large rectilinear field pattern and linear ditches, strong equine association and the Icknield Way prehistoric route. Improve opportunities to enhance people’s enjoyment of the area while protecting levels of tranquillity. For example, by:

■■ Protecting and appropriately managing the historic environment for its contribution to local character and sense of identity and as a framework for habitat restoration and sustainable development, and enhancing biodiversity.
■■ Managing and conserving the area’s heritage assets as an integral part of its distinctive landscape, while recognising the potential for undiscovered remains, including those revealed through agricultural change.
■■ Minimising and – where possible – eliminating risk to Scheduled Monuments and nationally significant archaeology, including through arable reversion, shallow cultivation or minimum tillage agriculture, and encouraging uptake of agri-environment schemes to fund such work.
■■ Maintaining, developing and improving the rights of way network and access to sites and areas of interest.
■■ Raising the profile of the strategic importance of the Icknield Way by promoting it as the link between the existing Peddars Way and The Ridgeway National Trails.
■■ Engaging with communities and owners of historic features in celebrating and conserving the historic environment, including developing skills in historic environment conservation and traditional building skills and conservation.
■■ Ensuring that the distinctive elements of the chalk landscape, flowing water and rural scene are conserved and managed to retain and enhance the strong sense of place.
■■ Encouraging and supporting traffic-calming measures and non-car travel at popular countryside destinations, to improve tranquillity and recreation experiences generally.
■■ Working with the horse-racing industry and major landowners of historic properties to expand the area of species-rich grassland through appropriate management techniques.
■■ Encouraging geo-conservation, working with local geology groups and geologists, connecting with the Chalk East initiative and strengthening the link between geodiversity and the character and landscape of the NCA.
■■ Promoting the use of white and yellow brick and thatch in the north and west and red brick and flints in the east as traditional building materials. Encourage local councils to grant planning permission for small-scale extraction of chalk ‘clunch’ for repairing historic buildings and building new structures of conservation value.

SEO 4: Conserve the settlement character and create or enhance sustainable urban drainage systems and green infrastructure within existing and new developments, particularly in relation to the urban fringe and growth areas such as south-east Cambridge, to provide recreation opportunities, increase soil and water quality and enhance landscape character. For example, by:

■■ Avoiding or minimising further erosion of tranquillity by ensuring that development is appropriate to the setting and incorporates suitable measures, such as tree planting or green buffers.
■■ Supporting, creating and improving links between recreational assets and settlements, particularly where growth is planned.
■■ Improving green infrastructure within settlements and through new development, particularly in relation to urban fringe and growth areas such as south-east Cambridge, by providing accessible greenspace and potentially creating new biodiverse grasslands.
Targeting the development of sustainable urban drainage systems and greenspace within urban centres to filter pollutants. This will be increasingly important as building continues to expand the commuter villages and towns.

Conserving and enhancing historic earthworks and routes that evidence past settlement by scrub removal. This will also provide access to and enhance biodiversity corridors, for example Icknield Way, Worsted Street and Fleam Dyke.

Encouraging further provision of cycle routes and, exploring the feasibility, in the long term of new rail routes.

Engaging with communities and owners of heritage features in celebrating and conserving the historic environment, including developing skills in historic environment conservation, historic landscape management and conservation.

Exploring opportunities to enhance the setting, interpretation and visitor facilities of heritage assets, for example the historic dykes and other earthwork monuments.

Landscape opportunities

- Protect the character and integrity of the rural landscape by conserving its mosaic of cultural heritage and natural assets, semi-natural habitats and historic buildings and archaeological features.
- Identify and conserve views to and from key viewpoints and landmarks by careful design and vegetation management, minimising the visual impact and effects of development, woodland planting and scrub encroachment.
- Conserve and enhance the land use pattern, valued farmland species and productivity of the landscape by securing sustainable forestry and agricultural activity. This includes conservation of small farm woodlands, historic hedgerows, farmland birds and arable weeds.
- Plan and manage private and public spaces for recreation such as golf courses and restored chalk pits, so that their design and their features contribute positively to landscape character. Seek the conservation, restoration and creation of natural and cultural features in these landscapes.
- Secure sustainable development which also reflects traditional local building styles and materials. Where landscape character and features are degraded by development, identify opportunities to redevelop areas and infrastructure. Encourage the widespread use of red brick and other local building materials and styles through the use of design guidance and strict planning control. Create strong visions in the urban fringe as it is developed, as this will contribute positively to the sense of place.
- Seek to reduce threats to natural and historic features by conserving or restoring their setting, addressing the problem of fragmentation particularly associated with chalk grassland. Work at a landscape scale which reflects the ecosystem approach, ecological network approach and historic character.
- Conserve, enhance and create new public access infrastructure, access links and accessible natural and cultural features, especially near settlements, in order to enhance the transitional areas between urban landscape and countryside. For example, develop the Icknield Way as the link between the Peddars Way and The Ridgeway National Trails and improve provision for cycling through this NCA.
- Undertake appropriate visitor management to ensure sustainable visitor pressure at all sites but particularly focus upon ‘honey pot’ sites and those sites near new development. Identify and promote alternative greenspaces and entry points to reduce visitor pressure.
- Plan for the regeneration and replanting of existing, predominately small, hill-top beech plantations. Make sure that the resilience of woodland to climate change impact is understood and acted upon; particularly the valued beech woodland which is vulnerable. Consider new species compositions and secure woodland across a variety of aspects.
- Conserve ancient routeways across the landscape to maintain biodiversity and routeways to restore historic patterns and enhance connectivity.
- Carry out targeted surveys and possible Local Wildlife Site designation to
conserve species-rich hedgerows and identify hedgerow trees of significant landscape and biodiversity value.

- Protect and enhance chalk streams and wetlands in both their rural and urban settings. Manage the flood plain of chalk streams, including historic features such as watercress beds and channels, in order to conserve and create wetland habitat. In the urban environment, seek to restore degraded channels and extend the areas of greenspace surrounding rivers for biodiversity and public access benefits.

- Manage recent change in the landscape by establishing dialogue with growing stakeholder groups, particularly hobby farmers, horse owners and non-farmers owning significant areas of land and valued features. Develop best practice management guidance to disseminate to these growing audiences. Build on existing community interest and activity around chalk streams and common land to secure further improvements.

- Encourage local geo-conservation projects between wildlife trusts and local geological groups; manage local geological sites with the beneficial side effect of maintaining local biodiversity.
Appendix 2

Cambridgeshire Landscape Guidelines extract on the ‘Principles and management in the Chalklands’

The future pattern is for large-scale landscape defined by Rolling hills, large fields, bold shelter belts, sweeping masses of woodland and occasional beech hangers.

1. Planting new beech hangers: could be placed on suitable, carefully sited knolls, hilltops and scarp-tops; these would form focal points to reinforce the local chalklands landscape character.
2. Management and creation of chalk grasslands: the majority of the grasslands should remain open and uncluttered. The promotion of species-rich grassland on thin chalk soils would provide visual and wildlife vale. Road verges should also be managed to promote plant diversity and interest.
3. Management of existing shelter belts: these should be restocked to encourage young tree growth and fill gaps.
4. Planting new mixed woodlands and shelter belts: carefully sited to enclose large tracts of rolling farmland and emphasis landform.
5. Creation of landscape corridors along river valleys: the valleys of the Rovers Granta, Rhee and Cam have a distinct small-scale intimacy which contrasts well with the surrounding chalklands. Small woods and wetland meadows could be supplemented with copses, lines of willows to be pollarded, and areas of marginal aquatic vegetation.
6. Hedgerows: selected hedgerows should be reinforced, or managed for particularly significant impact, based upon their visual and wildlife potential. Historically significant hedgerows should be carefully conserved, and new hedges planted to emphasise the existing landscape.
7. Footpath corridor improvements: the Roman Road is an important route across the chalk landscape. Planting small woodlands at selected locations such as hill tops or to frame views, as well as carefully managing the existing rich flora, would enhance the route. A similar approach could be adopted for other footpaths in the area, concentrating on a small number of linked corridors.
8. Road corridor improvements: the M11 has had minimal planting to soften its impact on the landscape. The planting of selected embankments and adjacent field margins with native trees and shrubs would provide interest for those using the road as well as helping to integrate the road with the surrounding countryside.

Plant species guidelines for the Chalklands

Trees: beech, ash, small-leaved lime, hornbeam, wild cherry, yew and field maple
Shrubs for woodland edges: hazel, hawthorn, elder, wild privet and wayfaring tree
Hedgerows: hawthorn, hazel, blackthorn, field maple, dog rose, wild privet and wayfaring tree
Trees in avenues and hedgerows: ash, beech and field maple
Appendix 3
Cambridgeshire Landscape Guidelines extract on Planning and Development
PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

NEW SETTLEMENTS AND MAJOR TOWN EXPANSIONS
Proposed new settlements and major expansions of urban areas are likely during the 1990s in Cambridgeshire. Developers face the challenge of satisfying more environmentally aware purchasers, increased expectations from the public and media, and tougher planning requirements from the planning authorities. They will need to respond with positive and creative proposals which 'put something back' into the landscape.

Landscape criteria for new developments include:
- minimising impact on existing landscape qualities and features including habitats of value;
- contributing positively to landscape quality, the potential for enjoying the countryside, creative nature conservation and environmental education opportunities;
- ensuring new landscapes are endowed with sufficient management resources for securing long-term care.

Landscape design criteria should form a key aspect in the layout, form and urban...
design qualities of new developments. In many situations, landscape criteria may well dictate the main form of a development proposal. Whilst every situation is unique, it is expected that developers, together with their professional advisers, should:

- consider important existing views from roads, paths and public areas towards features such as church spires, fine buildings or wider landscapes, including off-site views where these may be affected by the development; avoid spoiling fine views; and consider framing or creating new views;
- pay special attention to the edges of new developments, especially where adjoining the countryside; avoid a clutter of back-garden fences, bland or repetitive building compositions and stark large-scale building masses; endeavour to achieve well-designed compositions of buildings/walls/landmarks/planting, etc. on the edges of development, including the provision of effective hedge and woodland screens;
- reflect local landscape character, particularly in the treatment of edges of developments, through the choice of appropriate native species, the pattern of woodlands/copse/hedgerows, the use of the landform and avoidance of harsh lines and the use of local materials for walls and buildings;
- seek opportunities for creative habitat enrichment e.g. through the use of open watercourses for surface water drainage in place of underground pipes and dense native species hedgerows with trees rather than ornamental shrubs or coniferous hedging.

The environmental proposals will need to be secured as part of the development through appropriate planning conditions, design briefs, masterplans and legal agreements with the local planning authorities.

The following plans or ‘models’ illustrate examples of how major residential and industrial developments can relate to the surrounding countryside. The models are clearly not, however, representative of all possibilities, and developers should recognise and respond to the uniqueness of each individual situation.

**Residential**

Edges to new residential developments can be treated positively in landscape terms.

- visually diverse and attractive edges;
- habitat gain;
- countryside recreation opportunities;
- links with the wider landscape;
- farmland protected from ‘urban blight’.
Industrial
When designing new industrial buildings, consider siting, massing, form and colour and the impact this will have on the wider landscape. If this is achieved satisfactorily then planting and other landscape works will enhance a good scheme. However, the only approach may be screening with dense, well-designed woodland.

attention to the design of edges, especially where they form the outer perimeter of a town or village; sometimes complete screening by means of a broad hedgerow with trees or a wider woodland belt will be an appropriate solution, but where an especially fine architectural solution can be offered, it may be appropriate to avoid screening and use planting as a foil or frame for walls, houses and other built forms.

Developers should offer appropriate on-site or off-site ‘gains’:
- enhance approach roads by avenue planting, for example, or use hedges as a means of screening unattractive village or town margins;
- seek opportunities for habitat creation, especially along edges to the development, e.g. in the form of hedges, copses, ditches, and ponds.

OTHER DEVELOPMENT IN THE OPEN COUNTRYSIDE
Despite the general aim of planning policy to restrict new development in the countryside, the requirements of agriculture, mineral working and waste disposal, and the demand for golf courses, etc. must be met.

Since each project is likely to present a different landscape challenge, it is not possible to offer specific guidelines which meet every case. However, the guidelines set out for housing, industry, roads, etc. may be used selectively and the guidance about landscape character in Chapter 4 will certainly apply.

Remember that new development in the countryside, although potentially damaging (especially in its early stages), can often yield positive benefits. There may
Creating attractive village edges – the sensitive integration of new development.

Harsh, poorly integrated new development.

New development integrated by means of copse, hedgerows, trees and selected views of houses.

Selected views of well-designed new housing balanced by trees, hedges and walls.

Views of well-designed houses and walls.

Woodland screens housing estate.

Existing tree retained.

View to church retained.

Pond and associated habitat.

A well-designed margin between the countryside and towns and villages, combining the screening effect of woodlands and hedgerows with good architectural design and habitat gain.
New housing poorly integrated on the perimeter, Leverington, near Wisbech.

DEVELOPERS
Respond to local character when developing in and around small towns and villages.

be opportunities to create a virtually new landscape or special features. Mineral workings and landfill, for example, involve a lot of earth moving which may offer possibilities for creative design.

CHECKLIST
Developers should:

- seek professional landscape and, where appropriate, ecological or archaeological advice at an early stage when considering new proposals; it is important to consider landscape, ecological and archaeological criteria at the site selection stage;
- conserve existing special features of landscape or nature conservation value;
- create new landscape features and wildlife habitats either on- or off-site, including earthworks, tree and shrub planting, woodlands, wetlands and grassland;
- ensure major developments offer environmentally based features as an integral part of the scheme. Possibilities include: woodlands, pocket parks', country parks, off-site landscape improvements, nature reserves, environmental teaching areas close to schools, land for informal and formal recreation and links to the countryside via existing rights of way or newly created footpaths;
- prepare management plans for landscape areas indicating requirements such as thinning regimes, intended long-term species composition and structure for new woodland areas, wetland habitat management and methods for diversifying habitats and encouraging wildlife.
Improving the approaches to existing towns and villages.

Above: a bleak approach road and harsh edge to new development detracts from the approach to village.

Below: planting along the approach road conveys a sense of arrival and retains views to significant village landmarks.
Appendix 4
Relevant extract from GI strategy
**Strategic Area Projects:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Project</th>
<th>Cambridgeshire Chalk Rivers Project</th>
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| **Summary of Project and Core Objectives** | Chalk rivers are a habitat of national importance. They often contain good water quality with a reliable flow and are not just important in their own right, but also because they provide habitat corridors through the south of the county. They provide suitable conditions for species of conservation importance such as water voles, otter, wild brown trout and water crowfoot. Cambridgeshire has a number of chalk rivers, many of which are in need of conservation work to optimise their habitat, amenity and land drainage value. The main chalk rivers are the Cam, Granta and Rhee Smaller tributary rivers include the Mel, Shep, Snail and Wilbraham Rivers, Hobson’s Brook, Hoffer Brook, Guilden Brook, Cherry Hinton Brook and Bassingbourn’s Well Head Springs. There are opportunities to undertake significant river restoration work to reverse the effects of past river engineering works and while access along the full length of these rivers would be detrimental to their role as wildlife habitats, there are opportunities for localised access enhancements linked to settlements. There are a growing number of local conservation groups implementing improvements from a bottom-up approach. With greater support it is felt that these groups could achieve even more and act as a catalyst for further action. Project objectives include to:  
- enhance the habitat and amenity value of the Cambridgeshire chalk rivers; and  
- work in partnership with landowners, local groups and parish councils in the protection, enhancement and restoration of chalk rivers. |
• undertake monitoring to identify watercourses worthy of designation as County Wildlife Sites.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Funding (Partners and Mechanisms)</td>
<td>Phase 1 (to commence autumn 2011) aims to deliver selection of “quick wins” funded through capital grant schemes such as Awards for All, Sitta, Biffa or HLF. Phase 2 (to commence 2012 for 2yrs) seeks to part fund a project officer to deliver capital improvement works fund as well as securing additional external funding for capital works.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ball Park Costs (capital and operational expenditure where known)</td>
<td>£16,000 salary for part-time officer for 2yrs £32K Cost to hosting organisation unknown Travel costs £4K Site monitoring costs (for experts services) £4K Data capture by Cambs ERC £2K Equipment and training £1K Flow modelling and expert project dev input £20K Capital improvement works £50K Project promotion (website/leaflet) £2K Project management costs £5K Total (2yrs) £120,000 Contingency @ 10% £12,000 Grand total £132,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delivery Timetable</td>
<td>Jan 2012 to Jan 2014 (of phase 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outputs (quantified where possible e.g. ha species rich grassland)</td>
<td>500m of habitat enhancement and/or restoration of in channel features annually. Appropriate vegetation management regimes on specific reaches of rivers. 500m of improved riverside access (where appropriate) annually. Promotion of a simple monitoring regime that can be undertaken by local people. A significant contribution to county and national BAP, especially for rivers and</td>
</tr>
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</table>
**Name of Project** | **Fowlmere Nature Reserve extension and development of facilities**
--- | ---
**Summary of Project and Core Objectives** | The extension of Fowlmere Nature Reserve and the development of facilities to facilitate enjoyment of the site by an already increasing number of visitors, and in anticipation of further increases resulting from growth in the South Cambridgeshire area.

**Lead Delivery Agents and Partners** | RSPB
South Cambridgeshire District Council, Natural England

**Outputs (quantified where possible e.g. ha species rich grassland)** | Acquisition of c.10ha of adjacent agricultural land and plantation to develop species rich grassland c.6ha and wet woodland/fen c.4ha
Provision of replacement hides and viewing facilities and building of new visitor reception and educational facility.

**GI Outcomes (which GI objectives is it hitting - in order of importance)** | Objective 1: Reverse the Decline in Biodiversity.
Objective 4: Support healthy living and wellbeing.

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**Name of Project** | **Linear monuments**
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**Summary of Project and Core Objectives** | The ancient monuments of the Devil’s Ditch, Fleam Dyke and Roman Road cut across the chalk of south-east Cambridgeshire. As well as their intrinsic heritage and biodiversity value they are public rights of way and as such act as multi-functional green corridors.

**Outputs (quantified where possible e.g. ha species rich grassland)** | Devils’ Dyke restoration project
Fleam Dyke & Roman Road management
Fleam Dyke / Roman Road access project
Chalk grassland habitat linkages across the