

Cambridgeshire Green infrastructure Strategy Appendix 9 Landscape

Note: To be revised and clarified.

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1 Introduction

This section identifies the baseline datasets and relevant policies for the Green Infrastructure Theme 'Landscape', which is an important component of Green Infrastructure in Cambridgeshire. These are drawn together to identify the general and spatial issues that relate to this Theme. Conclusions are then made about how the issues can be mapped and overlaid to highlight the opportunities that exist.

The spatial analysis of Landscape information and opportunities was combined with the other six Themes, as well as other important issues and assets in Cambridgeshire, to inform and develop the Strategic Network of Green Infrastructure.

Definition

For the purpose of this Strategy we have used the European Landscape Convention, landscape definition:

“An area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors.” (Council of Europe 2000).

2 Baseline information and datasets, including policy

Policy

Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 7: Sustainable Development in Rural Areas

PPS7 sets out the Government's planning policies for rural areas. A key objective of PPS7 is to raise the quality of life and the environment in rural areas through good quality, sustainable development that respects the local distinctiveness and the intrinsic qualities of the countryside.

Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 1: Delivering Sustainable Development

PPS1 sets out the overarching planning policies on the delivery of sustainable development through the planning system. It does not specifically reference Green Infrastructure, however, it requires planning authorities to ensure that development integrates urban form and the natural environment and creates and sustains an appropriate mix of uses, including green space.

Planning Policy Statement: Climate Change - Supplement to PPS 1.

The supplement to PPS1 sets out how planning should contribute to reducing emissions and stabilising climate change. In particular, it states that when selecting land for development planning authorities should take into account "the contribution to be made from existing and new opportunities for open space and green infrastructure to urban cooling, sustainable drainage systems, and conserving and enhancing biodiversity".

Planning Policy Statement: Eco Towns - Supplement to PPS 1.

Although there are currently no short-listed eco-towns in Cambridgeshire, and the standards set out in this supplement are more demanding than would normally be required for new development, it provides a useful overview of the role of Green Infrastructure:

"Forty per cent of the eco-town's total area should be allocated to green space, of which at least half should be public and consist of a network of well managed, high quality green/open spaces which are linked to the wider countryside. Planning applications should demonstrate a range of types of green space, for example community forests, wetland areas and public parks. The space should be multi-functional, e.g. accessible for play and recreation, walking or cycling safely, and support wildlife, urban cooling and flood management. Particular attention should be given to land to allow the local production of food from community, allotment and/or commercial gardens".

Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) 2: Green Belts

PPG2 defines the role of green belts. The fundamental aim of green belt policy is to protect the countryside by preventing urban sprawl and encouraging sustainable patterns of urban development and the Green Infrastructure Strategy may help deliver these objectives.

Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 12: Local Spatial Planning

PPS 12 highlights the importance of spatial planning in ensuring the necessary social, physical and Green Infrastructure is delivered. It defines Green Infrastructure as “*a network of multi-functional green space, both new and existing, both rural and urban, which supports the natural and ecological processes and is integral to the health and quality of life of sustainable communities*”.

European Landscape Convention¹

Article 5 of the European Landscape Convention is as follows:

Each Party undertakes:

a) To recognise landscapes in law as an essential component of people's surroundings, an expression of the diversity of their shared cultural and natural heritage, and a foundation of their identity;

b) To establish and implement landscape policies aimed at landscape protection, management and planning through the adoption of the specific measures set out in Article 6;

c) to establish procedures for the participation of the general public, local and regional authorities, and other parties with an interest in the definition and implementation of the landscape policies mentioned in paragraph b above;

d) To integrate landscape into its regional and town planning policies and in its cultural, environmental, agricultural, social and economic policies, as well as in any other policies with possible direct or indirect impact on landscape.

As the policy has been ratified in the UK and should be used to develop landscape policy (under supervision from Defra and NE) would it be worthwhile making reference to the GI Strategy's role in protecting, managing and promoting the value of (all) landscapes.

Local Development Framework Documents

The Planning and Growth technical appendix includes full references to emerging Local Development Frameworks for each of the Cambridgeshire Districts and how they address Green Infrastructure and Landscape.

¹The [European Landscape Convention](http://conventions.coe.int/Treaty/en/Treaties/Html/176.htm) - also known as the Florence Convention, - promotes the protection, management and planning of European landscapes and organises European co-operation on landscape issues. <http://conventions.coe.int/Treaty/en/Treaties/Html/176.htm>

Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape SPD 2007

This Supplementary Planning Document provides information on the visual character of Huntingdonshire's landscape and market towns. It was prepared following a detailed landscape townscape assessment carried out by Landscape Design Associates in 2001. Huntingdonshire District Council hope that the material contained in the SPD will raise the general level of awareness and understanding of the special qualities of the district, and assist Huntingdonshire District Council and others in considering future priorities for the conservation, enhancement and regeneration of the area's countryside, villages and towns.

The SPD provides a detailed analysis of the landscape character of Huntingdonshire. It identifies individual landscape character areas and describes these in terms of their history, character and sensitivity to change. In addition, landscape conservation and management priorities are identified in response to the intrinsic character of each area. For instance, small villages are distributed fairly evenly throughout the district, and most are nucleated in form, clustered around a church and village green. The SPD comments that The Ouse Valley is a landscape, which is under pressure, in particular, from recreational pressures and development. Future management should focus upon the protection and enhancement of the river channel and its floodplain. This should include Protection and enhancement of a 'Green Corridor' along the river Great Ouse, particularly where it passes through settlements.

In St Neots, the 'Hen Brook' character area includes the open space on either side of the brook, St Neots Cemetery, allotments and areas of public open space to the north east. Together, these areas provide an important network of green spaces within the heart of the residential area, which is well used by local residents both as a means of access and for informal recreation. Priory Park is a large park situated on rising land to the north eastern fringe of the town. The park contains numerous magnificent mature trees principally Oak and Lime set within an undulating landscape that falls significantly toward the urban edge of St. Neots to the south. The park is segregated from the adjacent urban edge by a belt of dense tree and shrub planting along the western boundary.

Godmanchester contains a 'Northern Green Fringe'. The landscape setting to the northern periphery of the town located between the recent residential development at Pavilion Close and Fox Grove, and the A14. The area contains a number of rural edge uses and a network of landscape and public open space. The Green Fringe provides a valuable buffer between the A14 and the northern edge of Godmanchester and should be protected from large scale development.

St Ives contains Warner's Park, a small area of distinctive character which provides an important area of greenspace within the urban fabric of the town.

Also the River Great Ouse and its extensive flood meadows are key features of the southern gateway to the town and provide a green setting for the town.

2003 Landscape Character Assessment for Cambridge

The Cambridge Landscape Character Assessment was adopted by Cambridge City Council as a material consideration for planning in January 2003. The Character Assessment aimed to understand and identify the 'Defining Character' of Cambridge and present this as areas of defining character. Green Infrastructure is a dominant part of the Cambridge landscape; two of the defining character areas were "Green Corridor" and "River Corridor".

The Character Assessment is a robust part of the evidence base showing the importance of Green Infrastructure for Cambridge and suggesting ways in which new development and Green Infrastructure can be considered together.

The Character Assessment identifies five Green Corridors in Cambridge, each with its own character and all of which contribute to the character of the City. These Corridors are significant elements of the landscape of Cambridge. The Character Assessment goes on to address local open spaces, woodland, and hedgerows. It also identifies the Cam river corridor as an integral part of Cambridge and its character.

The Character Assessment maps and describes much of the Green Infrastructure within Cambridge, makes an assessment of the current function and importance of this Green Infrastructure and how it relates both to existing and planned development. For each of the "Character Areas", a vision, issues and opportunities are presented. These considerations will have informed the current (i.e. 2010/11) Green Infrastructure issues and priorities for Cambridge (Chapter 6 of the Strategy). The Character Assessment is a powerful tool both in informing the development of the Green Infrastructure Strategy and in guiding implementation of parts of the Green Infrastructure Strategy.

Geology

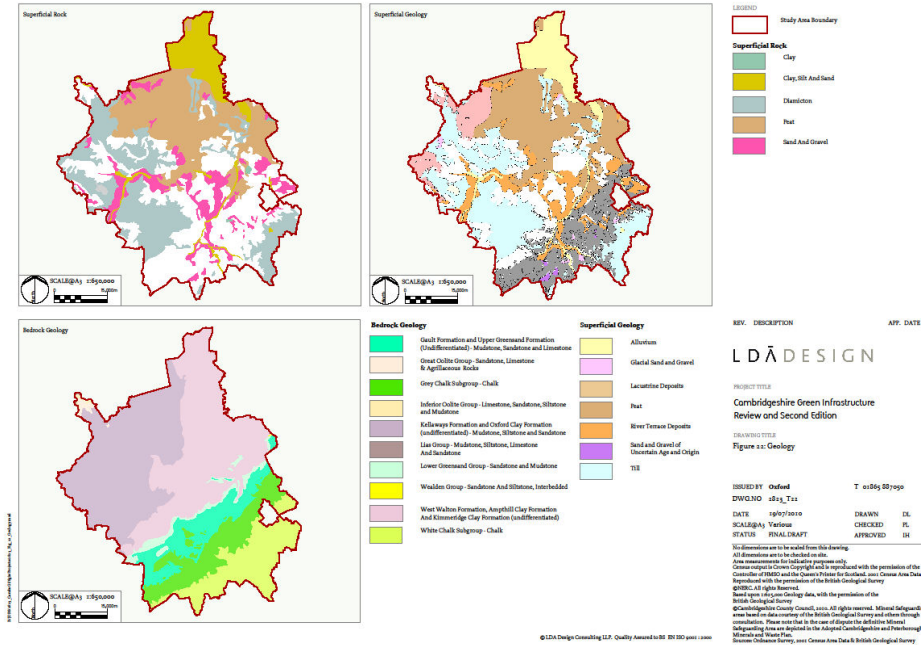


Figure 9.1 Geological conditions underlying Cambridgeshire

Figure 9.1 shows the geological conditions underlying Cambridgeshire. Solid geologies range from the various Clay formations that underlie much of Huntingdonshire to the Chalk that characterises the upland areas of South Cambridgeshire. The solid geology is overlain by thin drift deposits of Quaternary age, either associated with glacial, interglacial and periglacial phases, such as the Boulder Clays covering much of the west of the county, and those that formed in post glacial periods, including the alluvial deposits flooring the river valleys and the estuarine clays and silts laid down across the north of the county.

Landscape Assessments

The diversity of Cambridgeshire’s landscape has been captured in landscape character assessments undertaken at national, regional and county scale.

National Scale Assessment and Landscape Change

National Character Areas (NCAs), available in series of regional volumes² or on the Natural England Website, are subject to a programme of review; the Countryside Quality Counts (CQC) initiative³. This provides a systematic assessment of how the countryside is changing and helps us to understand where change is occurring to inform decision making and policies for achieving sustainable development and to help maintain and enhance the character and quality of the countryside.

Table 9.1 summarises the CQC findings for the main NCAs in Cambridgeshire.

Table 9.1 Countryside Quality Counts findings for main National Character Areas in Cambridgeshire.

NCA No.	Type	Overall Assessment	Comment
46	The Fens	Enhancing	Although development continues to transform the character of the area locally, enhancements in woodland, agriculture, coastal and other aspects of character suggest that overall the character of the area has been strengthened.
53	Bedfordshire Greensand Ridge	Maintained	The character of the farmed landscape continues to weaken, and these pressures are added to by those arising from locally concentrated development. However, woodland character has been stable. The character of the area has probably been maintained or is weakening only slowly.
85	Breckland	Maintained	Changes in agriculture, semi-natural habitats and woodland suggest that the overall character of the area has been maintained or strengthened. However, development is significant and may be weakening character locally.
86	South Suffolk and North Essex Clayland	Maintained	Although development has had a major impact throughout, the characteristics of the farmed

² The Countryside Agency, Countryside Character Volume 6: East of England, 1999

³ <http://countryside-quality-counts.org.uk>

			landscape and woodlands have been maintained or possibly strengthened. The overall assessment is that character has been maintained.
87	East Anglian Chalk	Maintained	Although development has had a major impact throughout the characteristics of the farmed landscape and woodlands have been maintained or strengthened
88	Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire Claylands	Maintained	Although development has had a major impact throughout, the characteristics of the farmed landscape and woodlands have been maintained or strengthened
89	Northamptonshire Vales	Neglected	Changes in agriculture are now slower than before 1999, suggesting that character is more stable but weakened. However, the impacts of development and changes in the elements associated with rivers are continuing to transform the character of the landscape. While woodland planting and management has strengthened this resource, overall the character of the area appears to remain weakened.

Regional Scale Assessment

Landscape East (formerly known as the East of England Landscape Forum) published an Agreed Landscape Character Assessment for the East of England region in January 2009. This sits between the NCAs and more detailed landscape character assessments, such as found in the Cambridgeshire Landscape Guidelines. The regional typology is most useful for

- Advising reviews of regional strategies and maps
- Assisting with monitoring of landscape change in the region
- Providing some additional perspective on the rarity and importance of some local types and areas
- Helping architects of agri-environment schemes to better understand how to design those schemes for landscape benefits
- Providing an agreed basis for some potentially contentious studies e.g. concerning the sensitivity of landscape to development, sea-level rise and other major changes.

County Scale Assessment

Cambridgeshire County Council published a landscape character assessment for the county in 1991⁴. The assessment identifies and describes eight landscape character areas found in various parts of the county and sets out Principles for Landscape Improvement and Management and Plant Species Guidelines for each of these. It provides guidelines on how the landscape should be restored, enhanced and maintained and how development can mitigate against its impact on landscape character. A brief summary of the landscape character areas within the study area is set out in Figure 9.2.

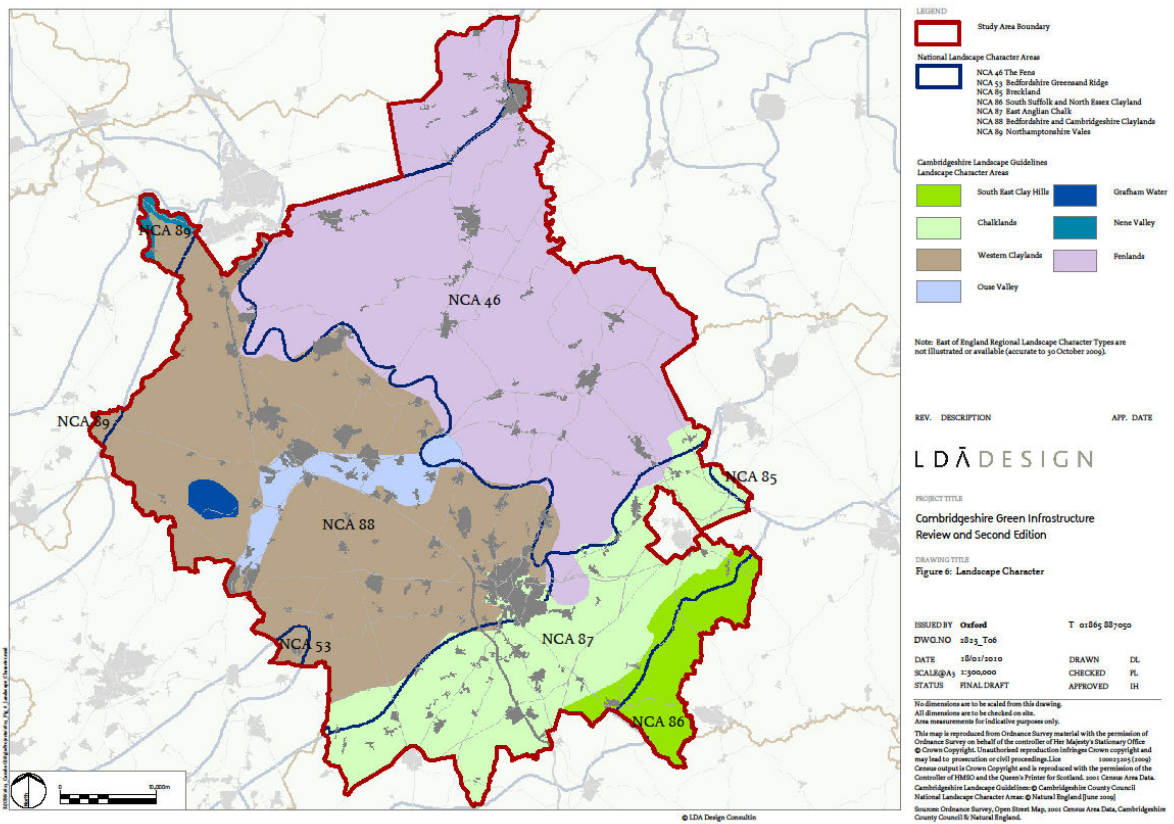


Figure 9.2 Landscape character assessment for Cambridgeshire

⁴ Landscape Design Associates, Cambridgeshire Landscape Guidelines, Cambridgeshire County Council, 1991

Area 1: South East Clay Hills

An undulating area at about 100-120m above sea level running across the elevated hilltops. Small villages and hamlets have developed in more sheltered locations, usually along the spring-line in the shallow valleys. Landscape character derives from the scattering of farmsteads and small settlements interspersed with farm woodlands. Field sizes are large but are united by the gently rolling landform and woodlands.

Principles for landscape improvement and management include:

- Management of existing woodlands
- Creation of new woodlands
- Planting woodland belts and widened hedgerows
- Hedgerow management
- Enhance village edges
- Footpath corridor improvements

Area 2: Chalklands

The area is characterised by smooth rolling chalk hills sometimes retaining impressive historic monuments and routeways including three great linear dykes which span the chalkland from the fen edge to the higher claylands. The hills are dissected by the two gentle valleys of the Granta and Rhee, which converge to form the River Cam just south of Cambridge. The area was used for sheep farming well into the nineteenth century, leading to the creation of botanically rich grasslands which now only survive in well-protected locations.

The majority of the chalkland is devoted to growing cereal crops, despite the frequently poor, thin soils. It is a broad scale landscape of large fields, low mechanically trimmed hedges and few trees. The eastern part of the area has a number of woodlands and shelter belts which help to break up the long distance views and give some form and character. Certain high points have beech 'hangers' which are prominent and characteristic features in the open landscape.

The essentially geometric pattern of hedged enclosures is further subdivided to the south west of Newmarket, where the racehorse industry has imposed a distinctive pattern of small, tree-lined paddocks which imparts a well wooded character locally.

Principles for landscape improvement and management include:

- Planting new beech hangers
- Management and creation of chalk grasslands
- Management of existing shelter belts
- Planting new mixed woodlands and shelter belts
- Creation of landscape corridors along river valleys
- Hedgerow reinforcement and management
- Footpath corridor improvements

- Road corridor improvements
- Conservation of linear dykes

Area 3: Western Claylands

Dense woodland and heavy soils are thought to have deterred prehistoric farmers, and even Roman settlements are not common in the landscape. During the medieval period, population pressure and improved plough technology led to more significant levels of settlement, many of which have since been deserted or have shrunk to tiny hamlets or single farms. As such ridge and furrow, deserted medieval villages and other settlement earthworks are features of this now sparsely populated landscape.

The landscape is gently undulating and is subdivided by the shallow Ouse Valley. It is characterised by large scale arable farms with open fields, sparse trimmed hedgerows and watercourses often cleared of bankside vegetation. Scattered woodlands are also frequent, and a considerable number of these are ancient semi-natural woodlands and of considerable importance in the county context. Increased mechanisation has led to the removal of hedgerows and amalgamation of fields. In addition, marginal land has been brought into production by drainage and other improvements. Larger farm units have also led to the need for large storage buildings that can be prominent in the landscape. Small villages and hamlets are scattered through the landscape, often with grass paddocks on their fringes.

Principles for landscape improvement and management include:

- Management of existing woodlands
- Creation of new woodlands
- Planting of woodland belts
- Creation of landscape corridors in valley bottoms
- Hedgerow reinforcement and management
- Management of road margins
- Footpath corridor improvements
- Enhancement of village approaches
- Urban fringe enhancements

Area 4: Ouse Valley

Light well drained gravel soils along the valley and the importance of rivers as transport corridors resulted in the Ouse being the focus of settlement from the prehistoric period up until modern times. The meandering river in its shallow valley bisects the claylands that form the western edge of Cambridgeshire. The margins of the river consist of a mosaic of flood plains and grazing meadows, working and disused gravel pits and lakes, sprawling housing areas and industrial estates.

Principles for landscape improvement and management include:

- Creation of a riverside landscape corridor

- Plantations of riverside willows and poplars
- Pollarding of bankside willows
- Planting small copses and large hedgerows
- Creation of meadows
- Woodland planting along edges of development

Area 5: Grafham Water

Grafham water is an example of a major new man-made landscape feature. It was created by flooding a shallow valley and is now one of England's largest man-made lakes; a locally important centre for water-based recreation. The reservoir retains a secluded character and is separated from the surrounding area by low, intensively farmed hills and small woods which are not sufficient to create a sense of concealment or mystery about the size of the lake.

Principles for landscape improvement and management include:

- Linking together existing woodlands
- Management of existing woodlands
- Creation of sheltered margins and reservoir sides
- Creation of marginal meadows and copses
- Stream corridor enhancement
- Footpath corridor improvements
- Enhancement of public car parks and picnic areas

Area 6: Nene Valley/ Peterborough Gravels

Like the Ouse Valley, the Nene was an important focus for early settlement, reaching national significance in the Roman period. The character of the Nene Valley changes as it moves through from the shallow undulations of the clay/limestone junction west of Peterborough to the flatter fen edge to the east. Generally field patterns are still evident with a fairly good cover of hedgerows and trees. Riverside vegetation of trees and diverse marginal and aquatic plants are to be found, notably in the backwaters. East of Peterborough the landform flattens and the river has been adapted to the rectilinear drainage patterns of the Fens. The old course of the Nene meanders south to disappear in a series of small drains around Farcet, whereas the new cut heads directly east across the Fens. The fen edge consists of large open arable fields with sparse tree cover.

Principles for landscape improvement and management of the Nene west of Peterborough include:

- Management of Existing Woods
- Creation of small copses
- River corridor improvements
- Railway corridor improvements
- Footpath corridor improvements

Area 8: Fenland

The Fens are a complex landscape covering several hundred square miles in the north and east of the county. The area has undergone continual transformation

since the last ice age 10,000 years ago, as with each relative change in sea level the balance between saltmarsh, fen, bog and woodland has altered. Large scale drainage work in the Fenland stems from the human desire to manage these potentially productive lands, and has been undertaken in three principal phases spanning the last 2,000 years.

Fen islands and edges are exciting archaeological areas because their build up of peat has protected earlier sites. The lowest levels are still wet and therefore preserve organic materials and other evidence, stretching back to the prehistoric communities that exploited the rich natural resources.

Fenland is a landscape of contrasts and variety. Superimposed on the regimented and highly organised drainage patterns is a more haphazard pattern of settlement and tree cover. It is a large open landscape and although appearing monotonous is in fact characterised by continuous change as the visual characteristics of one fen merge into the next. The open landscape provides distant views where the scattering of clumps and individual trees merge together to produce a feeling of a more densely tree-covered horizon. There are also many 'islands' which rise above the Fens. These range in size from the dominant Isle of Ely to much smaller features that are elevated by just one or two metres. These islands are significant, as the focus of settlement and are made more prominent by their associated tree cover.

Principles for landscape improvement and management include:

- Tree and hedge planting around agricultural buildings and farmsteads
- Planting isolated trees and clumps
- Planting avenues and tree belts
- Planting new woodlands on fen islands
- Enhancement of settlement fringes
- Management of dykes and drains to enhance landscape and conservation value and creation of linear corridors
- Recreating wet fenland

Additional information and data

The following information and data was also considered relevant for landscape.

Natural Areas

Natural Areas are sub-divisions of England, each with a characteristic association of wildlife and natural features. Each Natural Area has a unique identity resulting from the interaction of wildlife, landform, geology, land use and human impact.

Living Landscapes

In response to the threat that climate change represents to plants and animals, The Wildlife Trust has published a report that captures a new and ambitious approach to landscape scale conservation and enhancement.

The Wildlife Trust is identifying key areas to protect for wildlife by enlarging, improving and joining them up. There are currently over 100 Living Landscapes schemes around the U.K. Five major schemes have been identified within Cambridgeshire.

50 year Vision

The Biodiversity Partnership for Cambridgeshire has produced a 50 year wildlife vision to show how they hope the county will look in 2050. It identifies areas of large-scale habitat creation to support (Biodiversity Action Plan) BAP habitats and species.

For a more detailed description of the above please see the Biodiversity appendix.

Minerals and Waste

Mineral extraction presents an opportunity to enhance landscape character and provide Green Infrastructure assets through post-extraction restoration. Restoration can be back to farmland or other pre-extraction uses, and this can be enhanced through appropriate landscape planting (such as hedgerows) and management. Identifying mineral extraction sites or clusters of sites allows areas where landscape character can be enhanced to be identified.

3 What this information tells us

The diversity of the Cambridgeshire landscape is a result of the complex interplay of a wide range of physical and cultural influences.

The geological structure of the county, including the range of solid geological formations and superficial deposits that are present, and the effects of geomorphologic processes, are the principal factors in determining the character and diversity of the landscape. In addition to shaping the physical and hydrological structure of the county, this 'geo-diversity' has also had a significant effect in influencing the county's economy and patterns of settlement, industrial, agricultural and cultural activity. For example, the built character of the region's towns and villages, as well as the range of wildlife habitats and farming regimes can all be attributed, to varying degrees, to variations in the underlying geology.

The information provides guidelines on how the landscape should be restored, enhanced and maintained.

The information tells us that the distinct patterns in the landscape that have been shaped by man and nature.

The information tells us that biodiversity has adapted to and become established in Cambridgeshire's landscapes.

The information tells us that the Cambridgeshire landscape as it is at present is important.

4 Spatial analysis

The above landscape information together with the following baseline information maps has informed development of the landscape theme map.

Landform:

Figure 9.3 illustrates the landform of Cambridgeshire. Landform influences and reflects the landscape character of an area and so the mapping of Cambridgeshire's landform provides additional context for the county's landscape character.

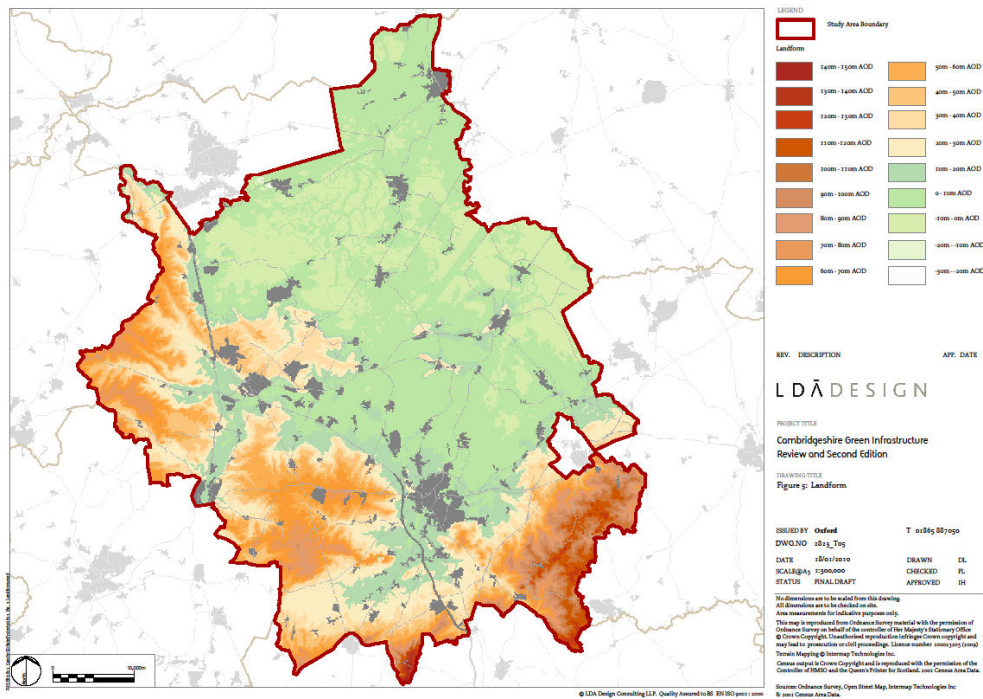


Figure 9.3 Landform features in Cambridgeshire

Natural Areas:

Figure 9.4 illustrates the extent of different Natural Areas in the County. Natural Areas relate strongly to landscape character and so their identification across Cambridgeshire provides additional context for the county's landscape character.

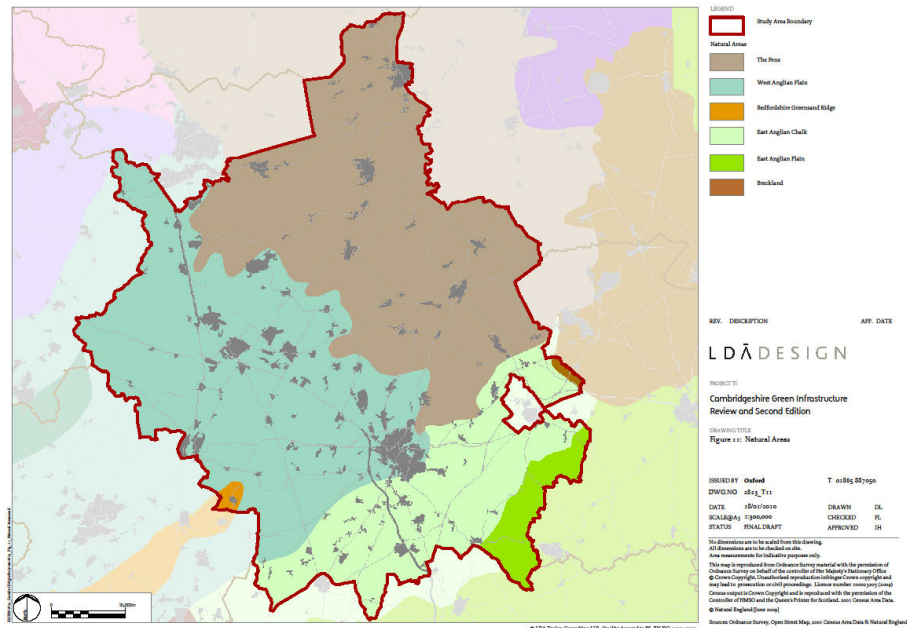


Figure 9.4 Natural areas in Cambridgeshire

Wildlife Trust's Living Landscapes Projects and Biodiversity Partnership's 50 Year Vision (Figure 9.5):

The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Biodiversity Partnership has identified areas of large-scale habitat creation to support Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) habitats and species – reflecting in part the location of existing habitats. The Wildlife Trust has identified similar areas called 'living landscapes'. These show where large-scale habitat creation would be best located, based on the existing habitats in Cambridgeshire. Large-scale habitat improvement and creation provides benefits to landscape character as the natural habitats in a particular area are part of, and contribute to, the landscape character of that area. Therefore in improving and creating new habitats and links between them, landscape character can be improved.

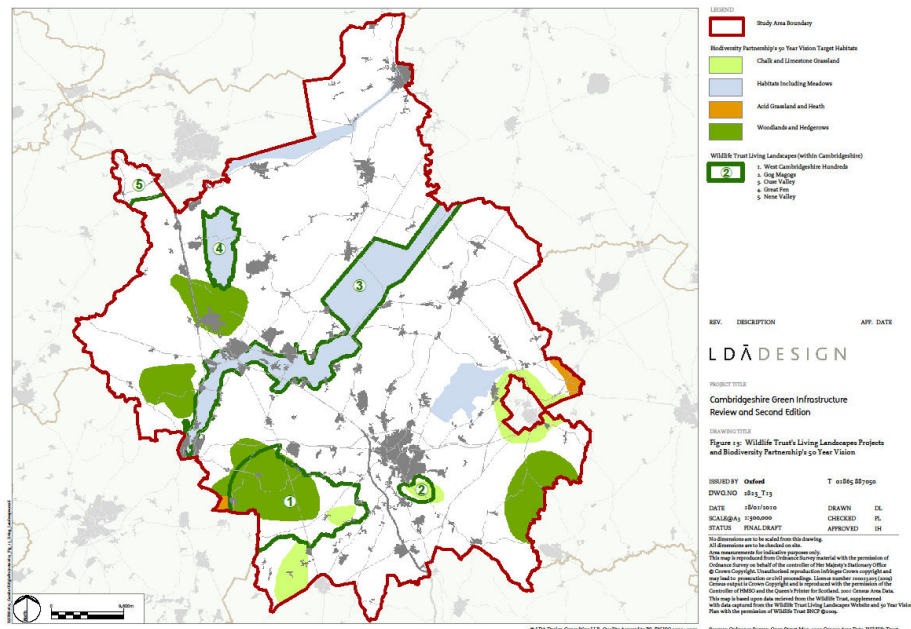


Figure 9.5 Wildlife Trust's Living Landscape projects and Biodiversity Partnership's 50 Year Vision

Major Development:

Although development results in a substantial change to the area in which it occurs, the design, landscaping and Green Infrastructure provision for a development can be used to enhance landscape character. Areas of landscaping often have multi-functional roles and can therefore also provide wider Green Infrastructure benefits such as public access and biodiversity. Figure 9.6 illustrates major development areas (as of late 2009) and therefore highlight those areas where opportunities exist for enhancing landscape character.

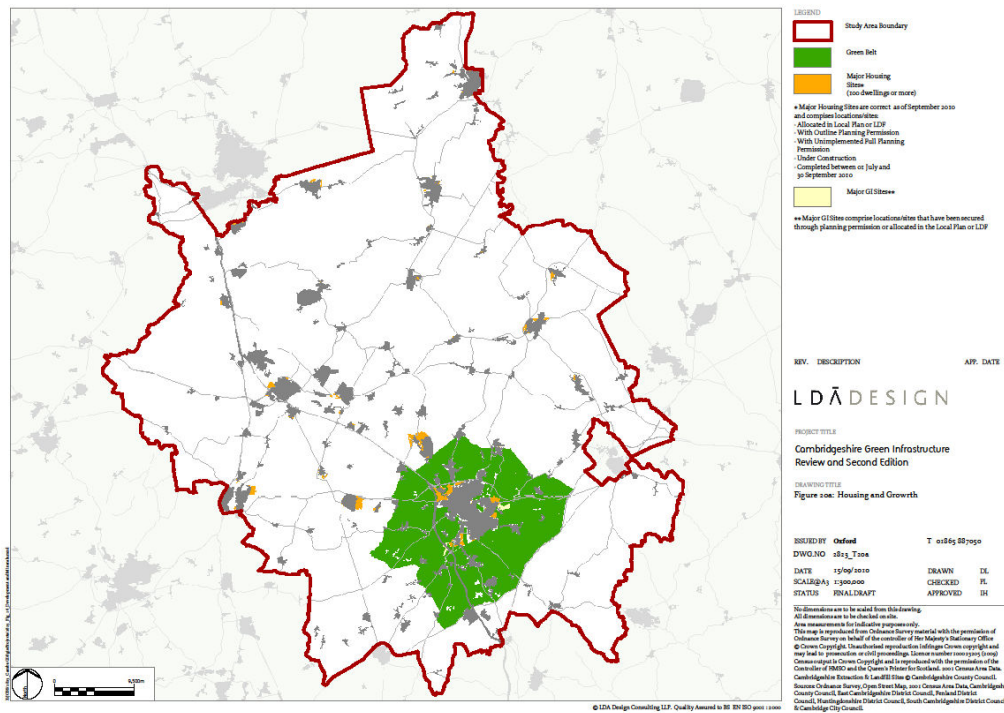


Figure 9.6 Major development sites and Cambridge Greenbelt

Minerals and Waste:

Mineral extraction presents an opportunity to enhance landscape character and provide Green Infrastructure assets through post-extraction restoration. Figure 9.7 shows minerals and waste sites within Cambridgeshire. Restoration can be back to farmland or other pre-extraction uses, and this can be enhanced through appropriate landscape planting (such as hedgerows) and management. Restoration can also create substantial areas of new wildlife habitat, for example at Needingworth Wet Fen. Waterbodies can also be created, and these often have a good amenity value through fishing and/or watersports. Both these types of restoration can have positive benefits for landscape character. Identifying mineral extraction sites or clusters of sites allows areas where landscape character can be enhanced to be identified.

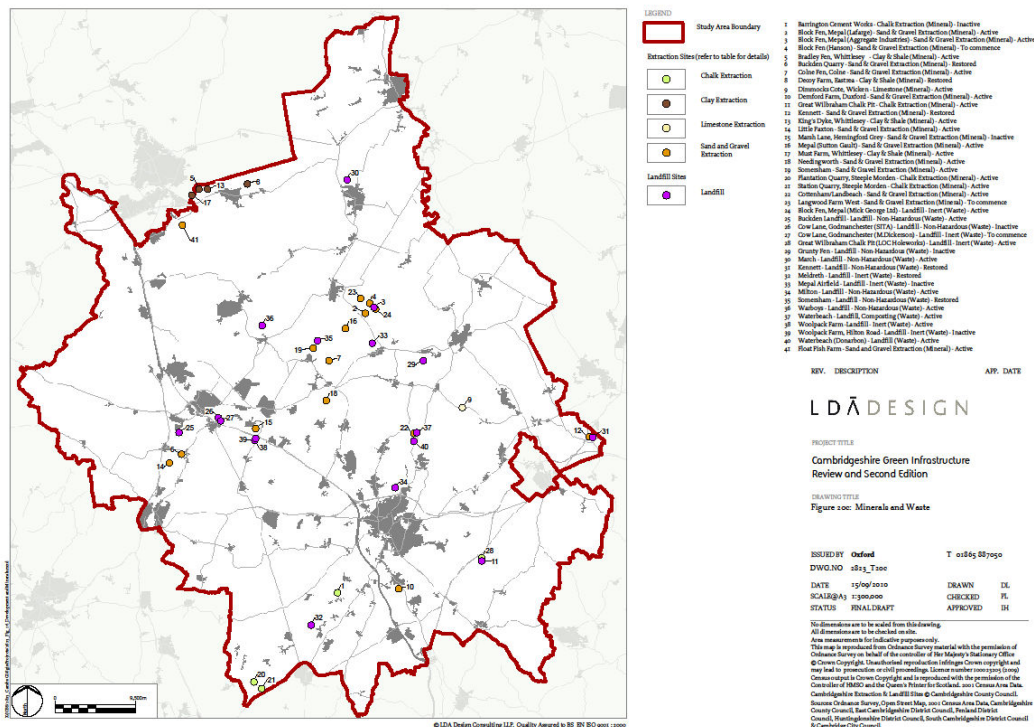


Figure 9.7 Minerals and waste within Cambridgeshire

The landscape theme was developed by examining these key baseline datasets. Figure 9.10a and Figure 9.10b show the outputs from this analysis. Analysis highlighted where landscape character could be enhanced by the following:

- Areas of major housing growth and development
- Areas of mineral extraction
- Areas of targeted biodiversity and habitat improvement through the Biodiversity Partnership's 50-year Vision

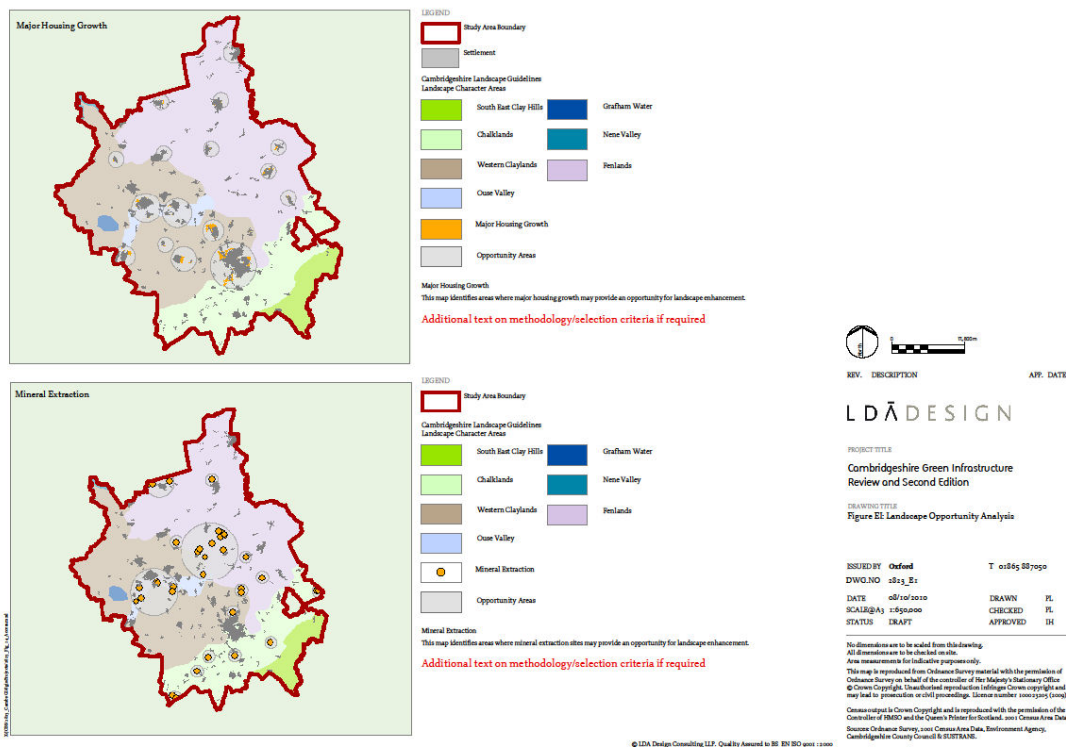
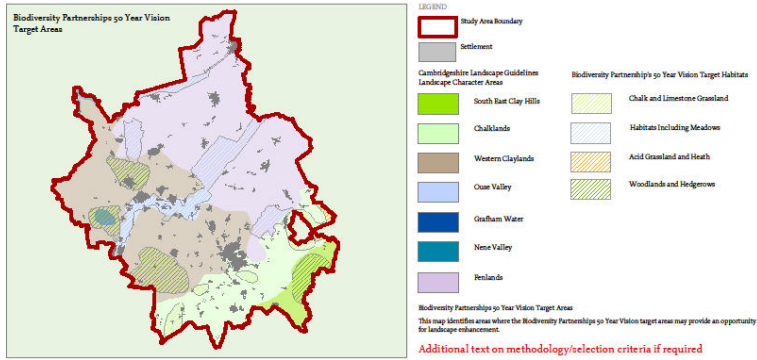


Figure 9.10a Landscape opportunity analysis



REV.	DESCRIPTION	APP.	DATE
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LD A DESIGN

PROJECT TITLE
**Cambridgeshire Green Infrastructure
 Review and Second Edition**

DRAWING TITLE
Figure E: Landscape Opportunity Analysis

ISSUED BY	Oxford	T	01845 887950
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DATE	08/10/2010	DRAWN	PL
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STATUS	DRAFT	APPROVED	DH

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Figure 9.10b Landscape opportunity analysis

In bringing these together on a single map areas of concentration can be identified – Figure 9.11 shows the combined landscape opportunities: the darker the highlighted area the more opportunity there is for Landscape enhancement.

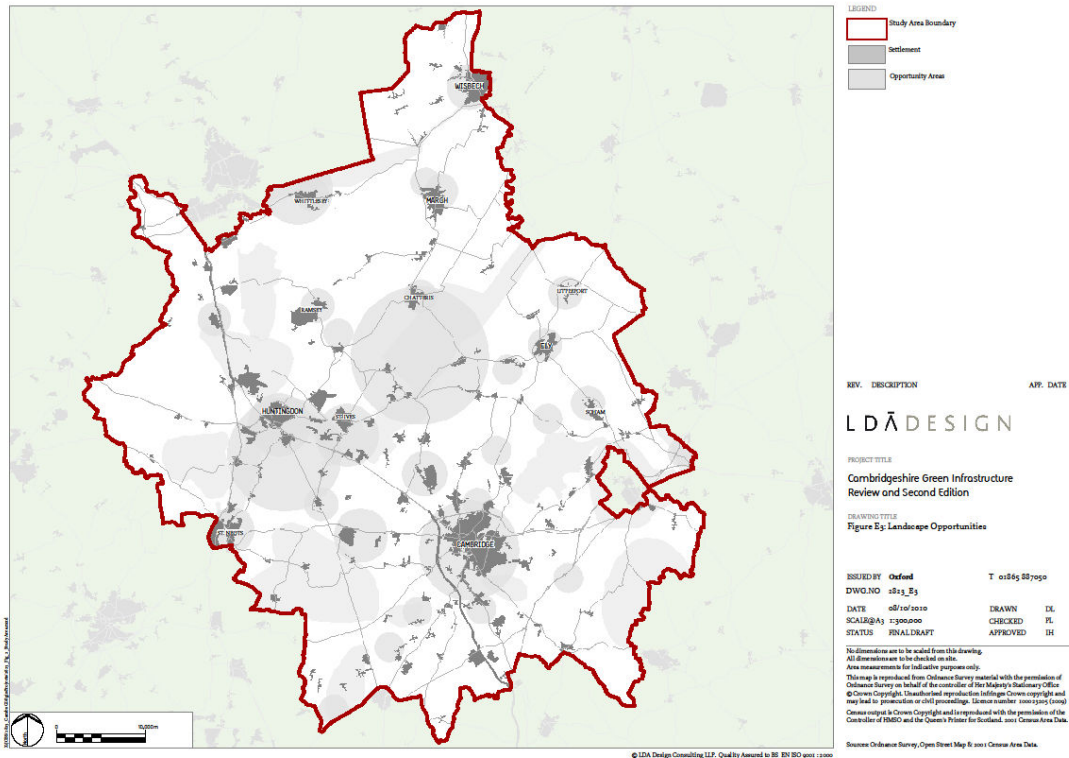


Figure 9.11 Combined landscape opportunities

5 Issues and opportunities

Long-term investment is required in Green Infrastructure to achieve landscape-scale benefits. One way to achieve this may be through making the most of the opportunities presented by new developments.

Green Infrastructure planning and design presents an opportunity to respond to Countryside Quality Counts (CQC) findings at the strategic level through the promotion of initiatives that plan positively for landscape change over the long-term. The long-term intention should be to bring all landscapes in the county into a favourable and improving state based on CQC criteria.

Changing land uses and new development in both rural and urban contexts can threaten and erode landscape character at both the macro and micro scale. However, both can strengthen landscape character and create new landscapes ensuring that key landscape characteristics are protected and enhanced.

There are benefits in aligning with other initiatives such as the RSPB's Futurescapes⁵ or Wildlife Trust's Living Landscapes. This would provide more opportunities for funding.

There are no designated special landscapes in Cambridgeshire, which does make it challenging to develop a landscape focused project.

⁵ "Futurescapes is the RSPB's contribution to landscape-scale conservation, a growing movement among UK conservation groups to provide more rich habitats for wildlife and diverse, green spaces for people to enjoy in our countryside, not only in protected areas but far beyond" (<http://www.rspb.org.uk/futurescapes/>)