Hemplow Hills, Cottesbrooke and Brington Special Landscape Area
Position Note
edp5285_r001b_161118

1. Introduction

1.1 This Position Note has been prepared by The Environmental Dimension Partnership (EDP) on behalf of HBB (J16) LLP, a joint venture between Hampton Brook and db symmetry, (the client) and provides a review of the South Northamptonshire: A Review of Special Landscape Areas (June 2017), undertaken by Quartet Design on behalf of South Northamptonshire Council.

1.2 This review focuses on land within the Hemplow Hills, Cottesbrooke and Brington Special Landscape Area falling within the district of South Northamptonshire (the SLA). As illustrated on Plan EDP 1, the SLA forms a relatively small part of the northern area of the South Northamptonshire District, then extending across a large part of the neighbouring Daventry District to the north.

1.3 EDP is an independent environmental planning consultancy with offices in Cirencester, Shrewsbury and Cardiff. The practice provides advice to private and public sector clients throughout the UK in the fields of landscape, ecology, archaeology, cultural heritage, arboriculture, rights of way and masterplanning. Details of the practice can be obtained at our website (www.edp-uk.co.uk). EDP is a Registered Practice of the Landscape Institute specialising in the assessment of the effects of proposed development on the landscape.

2. Policy Context

2.1 The SLA, which is a non-statutory local landscape designation, was designated under Saved Policy EV7 (criterion (iii)) of the 1997 South Northants Local Plan.

2.2 As set out within the Northamptonshire Current Landscape Character Assessment (NCLCA), undertaken in 2003, a secondary objective of it was to “replace Special Landscape Area local designations with a more objective character based assessment”. This approach is different to the approach taken to landscape value as part of the 1997 local plan, which failed to account for the full range of criteria defined in current best practice guidance to determine landscape value (refer to paragraph 3.2 below).

2.3 South Northamptonshire Council are currently undertaking consultation on their ‘South Northamptonshire Local Plan (Part 2): Regulation 19 Publication’. Being informed by its evidence base documents, it identifies the SLA within proposed Policy NE2 – Special Landscape Areas, essentially continuing the local landscape designation from the 1997 Local Plan.

1 LI Practice Number 1010
2.4 The South Northamptonshire: A Review of Special Landscape Areas (RSLA) was produced as part of the evidence base for the South Northamptonshire Local Plan (Part 2) and seeks to “carry out an assessment of the current landscape qualities within the district”. The RSLA states that (with EDP emphasis) “The existing Special Landscape Areas will be re-assessed to inform an up to date documented review whilst noting any change, or any changes that might need to be documented or the amendment of the Special Landscape Area boundary.”

3. Hemplow Hills, Cottesbrooke and Brington Special Landscape Area

3.1 The relevant sections of the RSLA, including a description of the special qualities according its own criteria, are included at Appendix EDP 1 and discussed further below.

Methodology: Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (GLVIA3)

3.2 In the conclusion, the RSLA states (with EDP emphasis) that “…criteria was established for the extensive assessment of the existing special landscape areas and others potential areas identified following an overview of the District”. However, while the criteria used within the RSLA does cover areas including landscape quality, perceptual aspects and cultural associations, it is not based on best practice guidance; in this respect, EDP would expect that any assessment of landscape value should comply with the most up to date best practice guidance published by the Landscape Institute and IEMA, specifically the following current best practice professional guidelines: Landscape Institute and IEMA (2013) Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment – Third Edition (GLVIA3).

3.3 The RSLA provides a set of criteria on which they have based their assessment, including ‘Distinctiveness’, ‘Perceptual character’, ‘Landscape and scenic quality’, ‘Natural Character’, ‘Cultural character’ and ‘Function’. However, across their assessment, the RSLA review appears to focus heavily on ‘broad’ and ‘strong’ views across many of these categories, and while it reiterates the ‘special qualities’ of the SLA, it fails to consider the representativeness of it against published landscape character assessments, and does not identify how and why the SLA would be considered of greater value than that of the local undesignated landscape context. In addition, as recommended within current best practice guidance, it fails to fully consider other factors that may influence landscape value, including rarity, conservation interests and recreation value. As such, it is not considered that the RSLA has provided a full assessment of the factors that are generally agreed to influence landscape value, nor has it been based on the most up to date best practice guidance (GLVIA3).

3.4 Within the neighbouring authority of Daventry, a more detailed assessment of SLAs was undertaken in 2017 (TEP, March 2017), effectively covering the same SLA but within a different district. Being based on best practice guidance set out by the Landscape Institute (GLVIA3), the Daventry Study acknowledges that in some cases (with EDP emphasis) “It is recommended that the existing SLA boundary is amended to include those areas that reflect distinctive and unique characteristics in the context of the district and remove those that do not or have been
influenced by urbanising features and agricultural intensification.” This is not an exercise that is undertaken by the RSLA. As such, the designation of the SLA within South Northamptonshire has been defined on different assessment criteria, which is not considered to be based on best practice guidance, to that of the same SLA falling within Daventry, resulting in inconsistency in the designation of local landscape value.

3.5 It is pertinent to note that, although the RSLA states that an “extensive assessment of the existing special landscape areas” was undertaken, in no instance throughout the whole of South Northamptonshire does it propose that any areas of the SLA are to be removed from the designation. This would suggest that, according to the RSLA, all areas of the SLA exhibit the same special qualities and characteristics displayed over 20 years ago when the designation was implemented as part of the 1997 Local Plan.

3.6 EDP would expect that over the intervening period, any assessment of landscape character and/or value would, at the very least, include the consideration of whether parts of the SLA are now influenced by recent development or a change in agricultural circumstances to the extent that parts of it would no longer meet the criteria of being within the SLA.

**RSLA Assessment**

3.7 The ‘Statement of Significance’ provided by the RSLA states that the SLA (with EDP emphasis) “is a pocket of tranquillity in the close context of urban development of Northampton. Its varied qualities as it blends the boundaries of the Northamptonshire Vales and the Northamptonshire Uplands, creating views of high scenic quality that are of rarity. The richness of the visual textures in the landscape with the scattering of mature trees, established hedgerows, the distance views of the attractive undulating hills and agricultural land.”

3.8 The RSLA summarised the special qualities of the SLA as:

- “The rich blend of the South Northamptonshire Vales and the Northamptonshire Uplands.
- A high-quality field pattern in areas and quality landscape features supported by long distance views into Daventry.
- Visual containment of the urban developments of Northamptonshire.
- Contains a historic Roman settlement.”

3.9 According to the RSLA, “The area offers a strong visual and scenic landscape character whilst creating a sense of place between the Daventry District and the urban Northampton...”. As such, the RSLA recommends that the SLA, and all six of the SLAs within the South Northampton district, continues to meet the criteria for SLA designation.
3.10 Following EDP’s appraisal (discussed further below), it was acknowledged that a large industrial and warehouse development is under construction immediately to the south of the SLA (refer to Appendix EDP 2). Panattoni Park is a major general industry/storage/warehousing development (Application Ref. S/2016/0400/EIA) which was allocated under Policy E8: Northampton Junction 16 Strategic Employment Site of the JCS and was granted planning permission in September 2016, prior to the completion of the RSLA. In fact, at the time of writing, three of the five Panattoni Park warehouses already have Reserved Matters approval and are due to commence construction in 2019.

3.11 Similarly, as illustrated on Plan EDP 1, further development is allocated within the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy Local Plan (Part 1) within the northern areas of the SLA, namely Northampton West Sustainable Urban Extension (JCS Policy N4) and Norwood Farm/Northampton Upton Lodge Sustainable Urban Extension (JCS Policy N9A).

3.12 As such, it is surprising that the RSLA’s assessment of the SLA, which post-dates both the consent and allocation of large areas of land in and around the SLA, maintains that “views are of high scenic quality…” and “…of rarity”, and the description takes no account of development which would, no doubt, have a defining influence on local landscape character.

4. EDP’s Appraisal

4.1 In order to test the findings of the RSLA, EDP has undertaken its own brief assessment of landscape value. However, it should be noted that for the purposes of this Position Note, EDP has not undertaken a comprehensive review of the SLA in question, focusing largely on the robustness and outcomes of the RSLA in so far as it relates to the SLA within South Northamptonshire.

4.2 The southern areas of the SLA are located immediately to the north of J16 of the M1 and comprise a number of irregular field parcels enclosed by mature, sometimes gappy, hedgerows. A watercourse runs along the eastern boundary of the SLA, itself being aligned by mature tree cover (as illustrated in Image EDP 1).
Image EDP 1: View looking south-west from outside the SLA boundary, which is formed by a well-treed water course in the foreground. Infrastructure associated with the M1 is visible in the view. From this context, the M1 has both a visual and audible presence within the local context.

4.3 The topography of the southern areas of the SLA is generally undulating, with land rising from the northern boundary towards Glassthorpe, Hill which serves to separate it from the wider SLA within Daventry (illustrated on Plan EDP 1). Although limited public rights of way enable access, there are long views from privately owned agricultural land looking across the well-settled landscape to the south of the M1. The northern areas, as illustrated on Plan EDP 1, are perceived as a plateau, with external views often being screened by mature vegetation within the SLA. As illustrated on Plan EDP 3, much of the SLA is oriented either south or east, with views looking over the built-up areas of Northampton such that Daventry, and its landscape context, cannot be seen.

4.4 The presence of mature landscape features within an undulating landscape, and on the plateau to the north, serve to provide an element of visual screening to many parts of the SLA in views from the surrounding context. However, higher ground on Glassthorpe Hill is considered to be more prominent. It is questionable whether the lower lying land within the SLA, including the northern plateau areas, are considered to play a key role in the “visual backdrop and boundary between rural and urban landscapes”, as referenced by the RSLA.

4.5 There is little in the way of built form within the SLA, being limited to few farmsteads and a water tower. In addition, in some parts of the SLA, mature field boundary vegetation does provide some visual screening to a major road corridor immediately to the south. However, where land within
the SLA enables views of the adjacent landscape, there are many urban detractors within the local context, including the M1 and construction activity associated with Panattoni Park.

4.6 In summary, the main character and valuable fabric of the SLA is to be found along the hedged agricultural field boundaries, which include a number of mature trees. From a sensory perspective, the SLA appears to be consistent with its near and more distant context to the north, east and south, being relatively unremarkable within the landscape. With the exception of higher ground on Glassthorpe Hill, it does not form a prominent, or important, part of the appreciation of the wider landscape, and is perceived as agricultural field parcels of limited interest, in close proximity to major road corridors and consented industrial development. It is, however, acknowledged that land on Glassthorpe Hill would be considered to be more prominent in local views (refer to Image EDP 2), being identified as part of a “pronounced series of hills” identified by published character assessments².

Image EDP 2: View looking north-west from a bridge over the M1 to the south-east of the SLA. Although much of the SLA is barely perceptible in local views, land to the north on Glassthorpe Hill is visible. In addition, construction works associated with Panattoni Park are deterring features.

² Northamptonshire Current Landscape Character Assessment (http://www.rnrenvironmentalcharacter.org.uk)
Value of the Landscape

4.7 When considering landscape value, GLVIA3 advocates that the starting point should be a review of existing landscape designations, including those at a local and national level. Being within a local non-statutory landscape designation, designated for its quality, aesthetics or condition, infers in a broad sense that the landscape has a level of inherent value and sensitivity not present in undesignated landscapes.

4.8 It is important to understand how the land in question might contribute to this defined sensitivity or perceived value. With reference to accepted guidance, GLVIA3 confirms this at paragraph 5.23, where it states (with EDP emphasis):

“If a project subject to LVIA is in or near to one of them [a designated landscape], it is important that the baseline study should seek to understand the basis for the designation and why the landscape is considered to be of value. Great care should be taken to understand what landscape designations mean in today’s context. This means determining to what degree the criteria and factors used to support the case for designation are represented in the specific study area.”

4.9 The reason why this local study should be undertaken is further set out at paragraph 5.24:

“But sometimes, at the more local scale of an LVIA study area, it is possible that the landscape value of that specific area may be different from that suggested by the formal designation. Fieldwork should help to establish how the criteria for designation are expressed, or not, in the particular area in question.”

4.10 GLVIA Box 5.1 on page 84 of GLVIA3 identifies eight criteria relevant to the judgements about local value, and which form the basis for objective landscape assessment. These criteria are reproduced in Table EDP 4.1 below, with observations alongside that are relevant to the SLA within South Northamptonshire. For each of the eight criteria, the SLA is judged on the basis of a range from ‘good’, through ‘ordinary’ to ‘poor’.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Value Driver</th>
<th>SLA Valuation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>(1) Landscape Quality (condition)</strong></td>
<td><strong>Value: Ordinary</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>A measure of the physical state of the landscape.</td>
<td>The SLA comprises relatively simple parcels of agricultural land separated</td>
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<tr>
<td>It may include the extent to which typical character is</td>
<td>by mature, and sometimes gappy, hedgerows. Large tree cover within the SLA is</td>
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<td>represented in individual areas, the intactness of the</td>
<td>also generally limited to those found within field boundary hedgerows. As</td>
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<tr>
<td>landscape and the condition of individual elements.</td>
<td>such, the main character and fabric of the SLA is to be found within the field</td>
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<td></td>
<td>boundaries. The southern boundaries of the SLA align major road corridors,</td>
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<td></td>
<td>which are aligned with poor quality scrub and tree cover.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Value Driver</td>
<td>SLA Valuation</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>(2) Scenic Quality</strong>&lt;br&gt;The term used to describe landscapes that appeal primarily to the senses (primarily but not wholly the visual senses).</td>
<td><strong>Value: Ordinary</strong>&lt;br&gt;Due to topography, views from within the southern areas of the SLA, as illustrated on Plan EDP 3, are limited to those looking south and east; any long-distance views to the north are terminated a combination of higher ground and mature field boundaries. Although the RSLA states that there is an “absence of incongruous features”, EDP found that views looking south encompass large urban areas, major road corridors, and a large construction site immediately to the south-east of J16 (Refer to Image EDP 1). As illustrated on Plan EDP 3, much of the SLA is oriented either south or east, with views looking over the built-up areas of Northampton. From within the SLA, again due to topography, EDP could not find any views that would meet the criteria of the “broad views to the Daventry landscape” as described by the RSLA. As such, while there are short-distance views of rural elements, views of the immediate and distant landscape include numerous urban detractors. Importantly, the scenic quality of the landscape will be further degraded following the completion of Panattoni Park, a logistics and industrial site, located immediately to the south-east of J16, and allocated development within West Northampton.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>(3) Rarity</strong>&lt;br&gt;The presence of rare features and elements in the landscape or the presence of a rare Landscape Character Type.</td>
<td><strong>Value: Ordinary</strong>&lt;br&gt;The SLA is influenced by the surrounding highways infrastructure and urban form, becoming more so once Panattoni Park and large areas of land are developed for residential use at the western edge of Northampton. Given the enclosure created by built form and mature landscape features, with the exception of Glassthorpe Hill, the SLA is relatively unremarkable within the landscape. While higher ground to the north of the SLA is prominent within local views, the larger part of the SLA does not form a prominent, or important, part of the appreciation of the wider landscape.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value Driver</td>
<td>SLA Valuation</td>
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</table>
| **(4) Representativeness**   | **Value: Ordinary**  
Mature hedgerows and trees within the SLA contribute to the ‘rural’ character of the wider context. The SLA is considered to be representative of the “pastoral farmland in fields of varying size” referenced by published landscape character assessments (LCA 13b: Bugbrooke and Daventry). In addition, higher ground to the north of the SLA would be considered representative of “well-treed field boundaries also contribute to the overall woodland cover and often emphasise the undulating landform”. However, land in closer proximity to the M1, and more level land within the northern areas of the SLA, was found to be more enclosed, with a greater relationship to existing urban form. Similarly, land within the SLA was not found to include areas of woodland cover, with larger landscape features generally being limited to field boundaries. |
| **(5) Conservation Interests** | **Value: Ordinary**  
Given the SLA’s predominant agricultural use, the central areas of it are likely to have a low biodiversity value. At this stage, there are no known features of heritage or archaeological interest to add value or importance to the SLA. There are no conservation areas or listed buildings within the SLA.                                                                                                                                 |
| **(6) Recreation Value**     | **Value: Ordinary**  
The SLA has little recreational value, being privately owned and inaccessible to the public. However, there are two public rights of way that enable access within the southern areas of the SLA. In addition, the Northamptonshire Round promoted route provides access between Harpole and Norbottle. Despite the presence of this promoted route, EDP would not agree that the SLA supports the “strong network of public rights of way” referenced by the RSLA.                                                                                                                                 |
| **(7) Perceptual Aspects**   | **Value: Ordinary**  
The SLA is perceived as a number of agricultural field parcels of limited interest, with the southern areas being located in close proximity to a major highway route and the northern areas being related to existing and proposed residential uses with little, if any, views to the wider context and, especially, Daventry. However, mature field boundaries and some tree cover do contribute to the wider rural context. That said, elevated ground on Glassthorpe Hill serves to separate the southern areas of the SLA with the wider context to the north. This results in limited intervisibility and relationship with the valued SLA to the north, and a greater relationship to urban elements immediately to the south and east. |
4.11 In support of the above, Plan EDP 2 shows the environmental planning context of the SLA and, with regard to landscape and visual issues, those designations that may influence value. Although ecological and heritage designations are not landscape designations per se, they do on occasion serve to influence the value of the landscape. In addition, Plan EDP 3 illustrates the orientation of land within the SLA, confirming that much of it faces south and east with any views towards Daventry being screened by Glassthorpe Hill. As such, owing to topography throughout the SLA, the “long distance views into Daventry” are simply not available.

4.12 Having briefly assessed the SLA in accordance with GLVIA3 Box 5.1, while there are landscape features within it that may contribute to the local landscape context, EDP find no reason to conclude at this stage that, with the exception of high ground on Glassthorpe Hill, the SLA could be deemed more than ‘ordinary’ or that it has any elevated landscape value or importance above the rest of the wider undesignated context. Furthermore, following both desk-based study and a field-based review, EDP find no reasoned justification within the RSLA that would suggest that the SLA offers “a strong visual and scenic landscape character whilst creating a sense of place between the Daventry District and the urban Northampton”, nor were there found to be “broad views into the Daventry landscape”, “Hilltop woodlands” or “strong views across the Northampton shire Uplands”.

4.13 In addition, the RSLA simply does not account for recent consented and allocated development areas within the South Northamptonshire District, nor those strategic residential areas identified within the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy Local Plan Part 1. As such, the RSLA is not considered to provide a full assessment of the SLA in today’s context, as advocated by the most up to date best practice guidance (GLVIA3).

4.14 However, it is acknowledged that, as land to the north of the southern areas of the SLA rises toward Glassthorpe Hill, land would be considered more representative of the “attractive undulating hills and agricultural land” referenced by the RSLA.

5. Conclusions

5.1 EDP consider that the RSLA does not provide a robust assessment of landscape value within the local context, nor is it based on accepted guidance. Despite the “extensive assessment” put forward by the RSLA, it does not identify key visual detractors, including those either consented or under construction that would undoubtedly lead to areas of the SLA becoming not so representative of the published special qualities. As such, it does not clearly show in today’s
context, as advocated by the most up to date best practice guidance (GLVIA3), why the landscape is considered to be of value over and above the surrounding undesignated context.

5.2 Due to the orientation of the SLA within South Northamptonshire and its current planning context, EDP would not agree that it affords long distance views to Daventry, views of high scenic quality that are of rarity and nor any views of attractive undulating hills and agricultural land, as reported by the RSLA. Following EDP’s overview of the SLA, there is little evidence to conclude that the SLA within South Northamptonshire is more than ‘ordinary’ or that it has any elevated landscape value or importance above the rest of the wider undesignated context.

5.3 Overall, although the RSLA claims to provide justification for the addition of new areas to be included within the designation, in no instances throughout the whole of South Northamptonshire does it propose that any areas of the SLA are to be removed from the designation. This would suggest that, according to the RSLA, all areas of the SLA exhibit the same special qualities and characteristics displayed over 20 years ago when the designation was implemented as part of the 1997 Local Plan. However, as identified above, recent consented and allocated development prior to the undertaking of the RSLA, not considered within the RSLA assessment, will undoubtedly have a detrimental effect upon local landscape character such that it should lead to the removal of areas from within the SLA designation.
Appendix EDP 1
Relevant Sections of the Review of Special Landscape Areas
2.0 METHODOLOGY

2.1 Method

The process to review and assess the Special Landscape Areas will follow this format:

**Stage One:** A comprehensive desktop study will be carried out analysing existing information and documentation for South Northamptonshire as a whole. This process included a GIS database analysis analysing the contours, typography and geology of the landscape.

A review of existing studies, such as, South Northamptonshire Landscape Character Assessment, The National Character Areas, The East Midlands Regional Landscape Character Assessment, Northampton Green Infrastructure Plan, South Northamptonshire Historic Landscape Character Assessment, OS maps.

**Stage Two:** The information collated from Stage One is recorded onto plans and assessed as a whole to give the full context of the South Northamptonshire landscape.

Unmarked areas on the review plan will illustrate areas assessed with an initial desktop study and a visual overview survey.

**Stage Three:** A visual survey is carried out based on information documented from Stage One and Two. Consideration is taken that the desktop results do not have a physical experience or presence, i.e. a review of the landscape from a desktop or photograph may not have the information for a full 360 degree experience. The information gathered from the visual survey becomes a documented record.

**Stage Four:** A draft report is prepared and reviewed before the final draft is issued.

2.2 Guidance

The existing Special Landscape Areas will be re-assessed to inform an up to date documented review whilst noting any change, or any changes that might need to be documented or the amendment of the Special Landscape Area boundary. This review is based on the existing Special Landscape Areas of South Northamptonshire whilst taking an overview to assess the overall landscape of South Northamptonshire as a whole. With the aim of ensuring that an unbiased analysis is carried out and where new potential Special Landscape Areas are viewed, that they are recommended in this document. The written review will define the special qualities and values of the South Northamptonshire’s locally designated landscape.
### 2.3 Criteria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria and rationale</th>
<th>Factors to consider</th>
<th>Evidence base</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Distinctiveness</strong></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>The quality and distinctiveness of an areas landscape character that gives identity and sense of place.</td>
<td>• Coherent landscape character conferring a recognisable sense of place.</td>
<td>• Landscape Character Assessment (LCA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Distinct landform or typography forming a discrete and recognisable area.</td>
<td>• Visual survey</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>• Rare / unique landscape type or landscape features / elements in the local context.</td>
<td>• Heritage designations</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Typicality - characteristics or landscape elements are strongly representative or distinctive of South Northamptonshire’s landscape.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Strong character linked to particular natural / cultural associations e.g. art / literature.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Perceptual Character</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The qualities of the landscape experienced.</td>
<td>• Tranquillity, relative remoteness and lack of intrusion.</td>
<td>• LCA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Strong sensory impacts including movement, colour and texture.</td>
<td>• Visual survey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Special perceptual qualities may be the result e.g. the level of enclosure / scale, combinations of elements or contrasts of features.</td>
<td>• OS maps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Landscape and scenic quality</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The distinct scenic and aesthetic qualities which add value to the area and associations with special landscape and visual qualities associated with the local landscape.</td>
<td>• Strong visual character with memorable, important or distinctive views.</td>
<td>• LCA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• An intact landscape with characteristic elements in good condition.</td>
<td>• Visual survey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Absence of incongruous elements or incongruous features not visually intrusive.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Dramatic features, visual</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
contrasts or a special combination or pattern of landscape elements / features that create high aesthetic quality or sense of place.

### Natural character

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Special natural characteristics/ designations which add value to the landscape</th>
<th>Strong character linked to natural factors.</th>
<th>Natural heritage/ wildlife designations (e.g. SSSI)</th>
<th>Visual survey</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strong degree of naturalness contributing to landscape quality - habitats / land cover.</td>
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</table>

### Cultural character

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Landscape value which is enhanced through special cultural characteristics and designations.</th>
<th>Strong character linked to cultural factors - which contribute to understanding of its historic character and wider cultural record e.g. archaeology, built heritage.</th>
<th>Cultural heritage designations (e.g. Conservation Area, listed buildings)</th>
<th>Visual survey</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A landscape with particular associations for example with representation in art, music, literature, language or folklore.</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Function

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Features and aspects that contribute or give character to the local landscape context.</th>
<th>Special function as a setting to designated landscapes or cultural / natural features.</th>
<th>LCA</th>
<th>Visual survey</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Visual backdrop.</td>
<td>Open gap.</td>
<td>OS maps</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aspects of the landscape which hold particularly special value for recreation and amenity.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
2.4 **Structure of the assessment**

The special qualities that contribute and give distinction and identity to the Special Landscape Areas are detailed in the pages to follow. The format layout of each Special Landscape Area in the assessment is as follows:

A selection of illustrative diagrams and maps displaying the Special Landscape Area, its context and location within the district, and a reference to key landscape features such as woodlands, water courses, historic features.

A supporting statement giving detail to the importance and special qualities of the designated area, which aims to encapsulate its special landscape character and give it identity to its overall value and distinctiveness.

A list of Special Qualities that provide a summary as to why and what is valued about the designated landscape.

A table summarising the extent of the area, a short overview and the correlation to the landscape character assessment.

A summary description table with an evaluation of the areas key characteristics, qualities and valued features against each of the criteria. This supplements information in the list of special qualities.

2.5 **Recommendations**

Potential sites that should be considered to be classed as a Special Landscape Area will be given judgement and reviewed on whether the area is worthy of the landscape designation. The judgement will be based on the criteria used for the assessment. Main considerations taken into account are whether the area contains a number of valued characteristics and qualities and whether these characteristics and qualities were reviewed to be of importance that they warrant the need for protection and the classification as a Special Landscape Area.
4.4 Hemplow Hills, Cottesbrooke & Brington

Summary

Extent of area

The Hemplow Hills, Cottesbrooke & Brington SLA is situated in the Northern limb corner of the South Northamptonshire district, where Northampton, Daventry and South Northamptonshire meet. The site runs North East to South West framed by the county borders, the M1 and the A4500, Harpole is not included in the SLA.

Description

The Hemplow Hills, Cottesbrooke & Brington SLA contains rolling undulations blended with the mature hedgerow form lined with mature trees accompanying the feature hilltop woodlands. The SLA contains a complimentary blend of the Northamptonshire Vales and the Northamptonshire Uplands.

Statement of Significance

The Hemplows Hills, Cottesbrooke and Brington SLA is a pocket of tranquillity in the close context of urban development of Northampton. Its varied qualities as it blends the boundaries of the Northamptonshire Vales and the Northamptonshire Uplands, creating views of high scenic quality that are of rarity. The richness of the visual textures in the landscape with the scattering of mature trees, established hedgerows, the distance views of the attractive undulating hills and agricultural land.

Special Qualities

- The rich blend of the South Northamptonshire Vales and the Northamptonshire Uplands.
- A high quality field pattern in areas and quality landscape features supported by long distance views into Daventry.
- Visual containment of the urban developments of Northamptonshire
- Contains a historic Roman settlement.

Landscape Character Context

NCA - 95 Northamptonshire Uplands
NCA - 89 Northamptonshire Vales
LCA - 13b Bugbrook to Daventry - Undulating Hills and Valeys - Page 136
LCA - 18b/c Broad River Valley Floodplain - River Valley Floodplain - Page 171-172
Nobottle belt / Nobottle wood - Harpole Covert -

Criteria

Distinctiveness

- Broad views to the Daventry Landscape.
- Undulating landscape towards the Daventry border.
- Hilltop woodlands.
- High scenic qualities of the landscape into Daventry and of the Northamptonshire Claylands.

The pocket of rural landscape that divides Daventry on the fringe of Northampton contains high quality scenic views across the landscape, to the North where Daventry sits and with its strong qualities of the Northamptonshire Uplands and to the West the views across Bugbrooke towards Litchborough and Canons Ashby.
Perceptual Character

- Encased by the M1 and Northampton and the A4500
- Strong views North into the Daventry area of undulating landscape
- A pocket of tranquillity framed by a major roadway and urban Northampton
- A rural retreat so close to Northampton

The immediate change in the landscape from urban Northampton to the rural landscape gives greater quality to the designated area, the immediate change in view and the quality of the mature hedgerows and tree form, enhanced by the contours of the landscape create a strong feeling of tranquillity and respite.

Landscape and Scenic Quality

- Strong views to the Daventry District Council area framed by road infrastructure and Northampton
- Gateway into Daventry area with a bold entrance into the rolling landscape
- Strong wide landscape views
- Field form lined with mature trees
- Strong views of Bugbrooke to the Daventry area of undulating hills and valleys
- Looks out to Nobottle belt / Nobottle wood / Harpole covert.
- Soft undulating landscape lined by mature flourishing native broadleaved trees accompanied by pasture and arable farming creating an attractive patchwork.
- Country lanes lined by strong verges of wild planting.

The Landscape of Hemplow Hills, Cottesbrooke and Brington acts as a strong viewing platform to the landscape around it, with its quality views to the North and the East. The richness of the maturity and landform of the designated landscape and its blend of pasture and arable farming creates a small pocket of quintessential landscape.

Natural Character

- Hilltop villages.
- Pockets of woodlands.
- A rich tapestry of wildlife from bird species to invertebrates and insects supported by the country lanes along the wildlife planting.
- Distance views of mixed mature woodlands of Daventry.
- Blend of landscapes with undulating forms from the Northamptonshire Uplands and Northamptonshire Vales.

Function

- Public rights of way.
- Visual backdrop and boundary between rural and urban landscape.

Serves a strong network of public rights of way that connect with the surrounding network. Fringes on a Nene Valley Improvement Area.

Key Guidelines for landscape management in the Hemplow Hills, Cottesbrooke and Brington area

- The preservation of the strong distance views into the Daventry area enhanced by the landform of the area giving shelter from the visual intrusion of Northampton.
- Reinstatement and replacement of hedgerow trees.
(Continues on next page)
Recommendation

The Hemplow Hills, Cottesbrooke & Brington as outlined by drawing QD_100_01_Special Landscape Area Review is recommended for designation. The area offers a strong visual and scenic landscape character whilst creating a sense of place between the Daventry District and the urban Northampton as described in detail in this section.

- Broad views to the Daventry landscape
- Hilltop woodlands
- Strong views across the Northamptonshire Uplands.

As part of the assessment of this area it was considered and identified that the addition of the indicated area in yellow reflected the character of the SLA and met the criteria and should be included within the SLA designation.

- No extension potential identified
Special Landscape Areas:

1. Castle Ashby & Yardley Chase
2. The Tove Valley
3. Whittlewood Forest and Hazelborough Forest
4. Hemphowe Hills, Cottesbrooke & Brington
5. Catesby, Fawsley, Miatfdor & Lichborough
6. Aynho, Cherwell Valley & Eyton
7. Bulgrave and Grand Central Railway

This plan is to be read in conjunction with the report.
Special Landscape Areas:
1. Castle Ashby & Yardley Chase
2. The Tove Valley
3. Whittlewood Forest and Hazleborough Forest
4. Hemplow Hills, Cottesbrooke & Brington
5. Catesby, Fawsley, Maidford & Litchborough
6. Aynho, Cherwell Valley & Eydon
7. Sulgrave and Grand Central Railway

This plan is to be read in conjunction with the report.

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Disused railway lines

Grand Union Canal

Recommended SLA

SNC boundary

HS2 indicative route

HS2 Tunnel

HS2 indicative location

HS2 Viaduct

HS2 indicative location

HS2 Road changes

indicative location

Significant corridors:

1. Great Central Railway - Marylebone to Liverpool via Brackley & Woodford Halse
2. Branch Line - Bedford to Stratford upon Avon via Towcester
3. Branch Line - To Banbury via Towcester
4. Branch Line - Brackley to Banbury via Farninghoe
5. Branch Line - Banbury to Woodford Halse
6. Branch Line - Bedford to Northampton via Great Houghton
7. Grand Union Canal

This plan is to be read in conjunction with the report

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PROJECT

South Northamptonshire: Review of Special Landscape Areas

CLIENT

SNC

DRAWING

Strategic Significant Corridors

DATE

DRWG No.

SCALE

N/A QD69_100_03 -
Appendix EDP 2

Panattoni Park (Major general industry/storage/warehousing development (Application Ref. S/2016/0400/EIA))
The tree planting strategy will reinforce the street hierarchy and provide legibility throughout the site. Proposed trees will include:

- Mixed scale trees to reinforce and complement existing vegetation at the boundaries and within the ecological mitigation land
- Small scale trees selected for form and seasonal colour within parking areas;
- Medium scale trees more informally arranged along access roads;
- Large scale trees with an upright and formal habit to frame views; the approach to the site along the A4500 and from higher ground to the north.

Native in character with the entrances and gateways defined by specimen trees. Other vegetation across the site will removed and reinstated as subject to a long term management plan.

Existing trees, hedgerows and vegetation at the eastern and western boundaries will be retained and enhanced as part of the ecosystem protection strategy. Existing vegetation will be retained to ensure existing biodiversity is maintained.

The tree planting strategy has highlighted four separate character areas within the site: "these each have an individual design (discussed below) and have been defined as:

- Northern boundary / Footage
- Eastern and south-west boundary
- Green corridors
- Nene Valley Ecological Area

The design of these areas have been developed to respond to and enhance the existing landscape context. Existing vegetation will be reinforced by new strategic planting and will enhance connectivity within the site.

The estate corridor, will comprise of alluvial with an avasure of nature trees. Planting will be outside of the existing easements.

The River Nene corridor (incorporating the floodplain) is to be enhanced through improvements to the existing natural. Sustainable and associated vegetation management will be used to promote ecological connectivity. Strengthening tree planting will incorporate marginal planting, riparian and associated vegetation management. Trees which will strengthen the identity and presence of the watercourse and will provide opportunities for further strategic tree planting to reinforce vegetation along the boundaries and within internal spaces. Trees which will provide a strategic buffer to development in views from the south, and will be selected to long-term management plans.

Within the development areas, strategic native planting will be used to further integrate the buildings with the landscape. Existing trees will be maintained and enhanced where possible. The estate corridor and key entrances will be enhanced with specimen trees. Wildlife habitats will also provide opportunities for further strategic tree planting to reinforce vegetation along the boundaries and within internal spaces. Trees which will provide a strategic buffer to development in views from the south, and will be selected to long-term management plans.

Lego Valley Ecological Area

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**Plan EDP 1**  
SLA Context and Local Topography  
(edp5285_d002b 15 November 2018 BC/CJM)

**Plan EDP 2**  
Environmental Planning Context  
(edp5285_d001b 15 November 2018 BC/CJM)

**Plan EDP 3**  
Land Aspect  
(edp5285_d003a 15 November 2018 BC/CJM)