Rolling Valley Farmlands

Key Characteristics

- Gentle valley sides with some complex and steep slopes
- Deep well drained loamy soils
- Organic pattern of fields smaller than on the plateaux
- Distinct areas of regular field patterns
- A scattering of landscape parks
- Small ancient woodlands on the valley fringes
- Sunken lanes
- Towns and villages with distinctive mediaeval cores and late mediaeval churches
- Industrial activity and manufacture, continuing in the Gipping valley
- Large, often moated, houses

Location

This landscape character type occurs in two main parts of the county:

- The Stour valley from Cattawade and Manningtree upstream to Haverhill and Kedington, including the tributary valleys of the Newmill Creek (to Little Wenham), the Brett (to Hitcham and Thorpe Morieux), the Brad (to Lavenham), the Box (to Edwardstone), the Chad Brook (to Brockley) and the Glem (to Wickhambrook)
- The valley of the lower Gipping from Sproughton upstream to the southern edge of Needham Market, and those of its western tributaries: the Belstead Brook (including the Spring and Flowton Brook, to Elmsett) and The Channel (to Great Bricett)

Geology, landform and soils

These landscapes occur on the sides of the valleys that cut through the thick layer of chalky till deposited by the retreating icesheet of the Anglian Glaciation. Chalk underlies the whole area, but there are only a few places

where it outcrops on the valley sides, as at Great Blakenham or Ballingdon, near Sudbury, where there are disused 19th century chalk pits and lime kilns. The valleys themselves are filled with gravel, sand and silt deposits left by torrential glacial meltwaters. At Little Cornard, south of Sudbury, clay laid down in meltwater lakes at the beginning of the Hoxnian interglacial were exploited in the 19th and 20th centuries for making white bricks. Basal deposits of 'Lower London Tertiaries' were also used for making red bricks while London Clay deposits are used for the Bulmer Brickworks.

Topography is mainly formed by the sloping valley sides, usually relatively gentle, but sometimes with surprisingly complex and steep slopes, as at Shelley in the Brett valley. The soils are mainly well-drained deep loams of the Ludford series, overlying glaciofluvial drift. In places there are patches of the heavier Melford loams, while on the upper slopes and in the upper valleys there are deep clay soils of the Hanslope series. All have a good arable potential.

Landholding and enclosure pattern

This landscape has small and medium sized fields on the valley sides with an organic form which was created by the piecemeal enclosure of common arable and pasture lands. There was also parliamentary enclosure that included some common arable at Haverhill (1853 and 1857), Kedington (1853) and at Cornard (1813), which created areas of more regimented and systematic field patterns. As with the other valley side landscapes the field size tends to increase on the upper sides and plateaux edges of these valleys. The overall impression in the landscape is of sinuous and organic boundaries around the anciently enclosed fields. There are only limited areas of common arable fields enclosed systematically.

The easily worked soils were exploited for farming rather than the creation of parkland, Tendring Park at Stoke by Nayland is one of the more significant exceptions. Moderate-sized parks also exist at Denston and Boxted in the Glem valley, Chadacre in the Chad valley, Gifford's Hall, Polstead and Chelsworth in the Brett valley, and formerly at Bramford and Sproughton in the Gipping valley.

There has been little in the way of common pasture in this landscape because of the quality of the soils and now only small "village" greens such as at Long Melford tend to remain. Where common pasture existed at all it was found in valley floor locations such as at Little Blakenham but historically any other reference to commons in this landscape usually refers to former common arable land, such as Kedington Common, Southfield Common and Welchmere Common as well as Baylham Common.

Settlement

Overall the growth and development of villages and small towns in this landscape has been driven by the quality of the land and the agricultural

prosperity that it brought. The area also benefits from the steepest and fastest flowing rivers in the county, an important and reliable source of power.

There is abundant evidence of early settlement in these river valleys: for example at Stratford St Mary on the Stour there is an important complex of cropmarks of Neolithic monuments; further cropmarks at Bures and numerous rings indicative of flattened Bronze Age burial mounds along the Stour valley and in the Brett and Gipping valleys. There were Roman villas at Capel St Mary, at Wixoe in the upper Stour valley, and at Hadleigh in the Brett valley. At the aptly named Blood Hill at Bramford in the Gipping valley two Bronze Age burials were found in 2006 beside three Roman graves, one of which contained a murdered woman and her two children dating from the time of civil unrest and Saxon raids in the late Roman period (*c.*AD 350-80).

Clare was one of the early centres of Suffolk's medieval wool trade and that trade was responsible for the growth of many towns and villages in the Stour valley and its tributaries. Their medieval and Tudor prosperity shows in their exceptionally rich heritage of fine timber-framed houses and magnificent churches – the latter often termed 'wool churches' in recognition of the industry that paid for them. Hadleigh, in the Brett valley, was a royal residence (*villa regia*) in AD 890 when the Viking king, Guthrum, was buried there. It was later given by Ealdorman Brithnoth of Essex to Canterbury Cathedral and the cathedral priory continued to be the lords of Hadleigh through the Middle Ages. Lavenham, in the upper Brett valley, was granted a market in 1257 and was Suffolk's leading wool town in the late 15th and early 16th centuries, and the 15th wealthiest town in England. The centres of all these towns and villages have retained their much of their mediaeval structure, and the majority of expansion and change has occurred on the periphery. The exception to this is Hadleigh where there has been, more change in later periods as the town continued to be more economically active than places such as Lavenham or Bildeston.

Hall and church complexes that did not expand into large settlements abound in these landscapes, often architecturally significant and frequently visually stunning, for example at Wissington, on the Stour; at Polstead, on the Box; and at Little Wenham, on the uppers waters of the Newmill Creek.

There is a preponderance of former manorial halls, many of which show their status by being moated, for example at Brockley, on the Chad Brook; Smallbridge Hall, the Tudor brick mansion of the Waldegrave family at Bures on the Stour; and Shelley Hall in the Brett valley. Not moated, but with an imposing brick gatehouse giving access to an enclosed courtyard, Gifford's Hall in Stoke-by-Nayland was described by Pevsner as 'one of the loveliest houses of its date in England'.

Past industrial land uses are evident in many ways, some surviving in part, others long gone: the numerous flour or fulling watermills that lined these valleys, including the iconic Flatford Mill in East Bergholt that was painted by John Constable; the former Ballingdon Grove Works, where a grouping of 19th-century chalk pits, lime kilns, a maltings and a brickworks were linked by

the Ballingdon Cut to the Stour; the late-19th-century xylonite works at Brantham; several chalk pits in Great and Little Blakenham, Baylham and Barking; and a cement works beside the railway at Great Blakenham, drawing on the local resources of chalk and clay.

Trees and woodland cover

Ancient woodland is mainly confined to the upper slopes of the valleys and is mostly in relatively small parcels. Three significant large woods partly in this landscape are the adjacent Lineage Wood and Spelthorn Wood in Long Melford (both recorded by name from the 14th century), and Middle Wood in Offton.

At Polstead, the decaying remains of its famous Gospel Oak lie between the church and the Hall. Reputed to have been the oldest living in Suffolk, it collapsed in 1953. Polstead was also reputed for its cherries (Polstead Blacks) by the early 19thC, few cherry orchards now remain, though they are still commemorated in local place-names: Cherrytree Farm, Cherry Billy's Lane and Cherry Meadow.

Visual experience

This is a rich and varied landscape with it's concentration of prosperous mediaeval towns and villages, contrasting with the smaller and less glamorous settlements of the surrounding plateaux. The steeper valleys and sunken lanes contrast clearly to most of the other valley networks in the county.

This landscape type embraces some of the most famous views and sites of Suffolk, East Anglia and England. The Stour valley is internationally renowned as 'Constable Country', being the inspiration for many of the landscape paintings of John Constable. The landscape has also inspired other artists, such as Thomas Gainsborough, Sir Alfred Munnings, Sir Cedric Morris and John Nash. This artistic legacy led to its designation as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty in 1970. The Constable-related complex at Flatford Mill features on many tourist itineraries, as do the timber-framed buildings of Lavenham, the monumental 'wool churches' and picturesque villages such as Cavendish, Kersey and Nayland.

Condition

Much of this landscape retains it historic patterns, of both the agricultural and built environment. However, the Gipping valley has been a focus of economic activity and as such has been subject to transport and industrial developments. Conversely the Stour and its tributaries have been subject to some gentrification, with significant changes in land use, such as the increase in horse pastures and the loss of much commercial orchard production.

Rolling Valley Farmlands

Landscape Sensitivity & Change

This is a sloping valley side landscape largely associated with the rolling and undulating farmlands south of the river Gipping, not with the clay plateau landscapes north of the Gipping valley. These valleys are distinct, in terms of both cultural pattern and history, from the clayland valleys north of the River Gipping

The Rolling Valley Farmlands are generally comprehensively settled with substantial villages, such as Lavenham, Bildeston and Clare, that can have the character of small towns. These villages have distinctive and often dense late mediaeval cores, containing large numbers of high quality medieval buildings and more ornate churches than those found in north Suffolk. The Rolling Valley Farmlands are also the location of the towns of Hadleigh, Sudbury and Haverhill, which are subject to pressure for settlement extension.

These south Suffolk valleys are locally distinctive and even the areas outside “Constable Country” such as the villages of the Brett valley, have some of the highest national profiles of any Suffolk landscape.

The surrounding landscapes are rolling, sometimes steeply in the west of the county, with blocks of ancient woodland being a consistent feature. This woodland frames the valleys and is often present on the upper slopes.

The spatial relationship of this landscape to the adjacent valley floor means that change and development here can have a profound visual impact. In addition, some of this landscape is adjacent to or within the Dedham Vale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). This is an additional sensitivity in a landscape that is already highly sensitive because of the landform and the particularly rich built heritage.

Key Forces for Change

- Expansion of settlements.
- Construction of large agricultural buildings.
- Expansion of garden curtilage.
- Change of land use, especially the creation of horse paddocks.
- Impact of deer on the condition of woodland cover.
- Mineral extraction.

Development management

Exaggerated visual impact of the height of buildings and structures
In these valley side landscapes, the visual impact of new vertical elements is increased by the landform. Therefore new buildings are likely to have a significant impact on both the character and visual amenity of valley floor and valley side

landscape types. The setting of specific features and elements of these landscapes, such as small-scale enclosure patterns or historic buildings and monuments, can also be significantly damaged.

The majority of development will, to some degree, be subject to this problem. Therefore, it is essential to manage this issue effectively, taking every opportunity at the earliest stages of the development of the proposal to modify and improve it or to be clear with the applicant that the impact of the proposal is unacceptable or may be at a high risk of refusal due to landscape impacts.

Settlement form and expansion
Valley side landscapes have historically been a focus for settlement. However, large-scale expansion should be confined to the adjacent plateau. In this location the landscape and visual impact can be more easily mitigated with effective planting and design.

Settlement extension in a valley side landscape is likely to have a significant visual impact and adversely affect the character of the landscape, including that of the adjoining valley floor. A comprehensive Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment is essential to identify the risks and the options for mitigation. These developments tend to create a highly visible new “roofscape” on the sides of valleys. The effect of this can be partially mitigated by planting within the development as well as on the perimeter and offsite. It is essential to ensure that there is sufficient space within the development for effective planting, and that any requirement for offsite planting is considered at the earliest stage. The proposals for mitigation planting must always be commensurate with the scale of the development and the capacity of the landscape to absorb the development without damage to the landscape character.

It is important to maintain the existing pattern of settlement clusters on the valley sides and minimise visual intrusion on the very sensitive landscapes on the valley floor. New building here needs to be carefully located; it must be of appropriate scale and style as well as being integrated into the existing pattern of vegetation and settlement. There may also be specific styles related to a particular landed estate, which should be considered as a design option. Avoid, wherever possible, ribbon development on valley sides and slopes when this will cause settlement clusters to merge.

Large-scale agricultural buildings on or near valley sides
The siting, form, orientation and colour of these buildings make a considerable contribution to mitigating their impact. However in a valley side situation, especially if located on the skyline, they will have a considerable visual impact. It is preferable to seek a location outside the valley where the visual impact of this type of development can be mitigated much more effectively.

Barn conversions and extensions
These proposals require careful consideration and considerable attention to the detail of form and styling. Redevelopment proposals should also enhance the contribution these historic sites make to the wider landscape. In this landscape type much of the stock of barns and associated buildings are especially large and striking because of the long history of profitable arable farming

Specifically, any new building should usually be close to the existing cluster of buildings and should be subordinate in size to the principal buildings. The design, including the finishes such as tiles, brickwork, mortar, or wooden cladding should be appropriate for the style of buildings present. Staining used for exterior boarding should be capable of weathering in the traditional way, as a permanent dark or black colouring is not locally appropriate. As farmsteads in this landscape have usually developed over an extended period there may be a range of styles on site.

The change of land use, especially to residential curtilage, can often be more disruptive to the wider landscape than modifications to the buildings. The changes to the surrounding land from agricultural to residential use, which entails the introduction of lighting and other suburban features, can be extremely intrusive. Unless the site is well hidden, it may be necessary to impose clear conditions relating to the extent of garden curtilage and how this is screened from the wider landscape. Usually the risk of new domestic curtilage damaging the visual amenity and character of a valley side landscape is significant because of the shape of the land.

Manage the expansion of garden curtilage

The expansion of a garden which is not in keeping with the existing local pattern has a significant impact on the local character and form of the built environment, as well as on historic patterns of field enclosure. The visual impact of domestic clutter and garden paraphernalia can be particularly intrusive in these sloping landscapes. New or expanded curtilage should always be designed to fit into the local context and respect the established pattern.

In many cases the extent of gardens in a village or cluster within a parish is relatively uniform, with all gardens following a defined boundary with agricultural land. If settlement expansion is required then the local pattern must be respected wherever possible. However, new garden curtilage may be required in other situations, such as in association with barn conversions, or dwellings for agricultural workers in open countryside.

If a large area of agricultural land is to be attached to a domestic dwelling the planning authority should define the extent of the garden curtilage. The objective is to create a clearly defined and agreed distinction between the wholly domestic areas and, for example, land to be used as a paddock.

Effective boundary planting is essential for reducing the visual intrusion of garden extensions into the open countryside. This should be conditioned as part of the change of land use and is especially important when a section of arable land is taken in, because in these cases there are often no existing hedgerows or other boundary features present.

The style of boundary fencing and hedging to be used can have a significant impact. The use of appropriate low impact materials, such as post and wire fencing is preferable to close boarded fencing or fence panels. If the latter are required they should be screened by appropriate hedging. The use of locally appropriate hedging species including hawthorn, field maple, dogwood and other typical clayland species

should be specified in preference to non-native plantings such as leylandii or laurel for example.

Change of land use to horse paddocks
The proliferation of post and rail fencing and subdivision of land into small paddocks using temporary tape can have a significant negative landscape impact. In ecologically sensitive areas the impact on the quality and condition of grassland can be adverse. Mitigation strategies in terms of design, layout and stocking rates should be employed where possible.

It may be possible to screen the site with an effective and appropriate planting scheme. However, it may also be necessary to specify the type and extent of fencing to be used. On a sloping site post and rail or white tape can be particularly intrusive. If necessary brown or green fencing tapes should be conditioned and planting should be required to soften the impact of the post and rail fencing. Furthermore the location of field shelters and material storage areas should be specified, to minimise the landscape impact of these activities.

Opportunities should also be taken to design a field layout that is in keeping with the local field pattern or the historic pattern of boundaries.

Impact of deer on the condition of woodland cover
Large-scale deer control should be supported and individual sites may require deer fencing. New woodland plantings, as well as screening and mitigation schemes, will require effective protection from deer to support their establishment.

Mineral extraction and post working uses
As the location for mineral operations is dictated by the availability of economically viable aggregates, alternative siting is not an option. However, careful design and mitigation proposals during extraction, together with effective management and oversight of the restoration of sites, can minimise the impact of mineral extractions.

The post extraction uses of minerals sites can often be problematic. They can make ideal recreation centres, often based around fishing, but these can neutralise the wildlife benefits and be a source of intrusive landscape clutter on the valley side. In some cases former mineral workings can be the focus for large-scale development because the land is perceived to be of low value. The visual impact of such developments can be very significant in a confined valley landscape.

Land Management Guidelines

- Reinforce the historic pattern of sinuous field boundaries.
- Recognise localised areas of late enclosure hedges when restoring and planting hedgerows.
- Maintain and increase the stock of hedgerow trees.
- Increase the area of woodland cover; siting should be based on information from the Historic Landscape Characterisation and in consultation with the Archaeological Service.
- Maintain and restore the stock of moats and ponds in this landscape.

Undulating Ancient Farmlands

Key Characteristics

- Undulating arable landscape
- Field pattern generally a random ancient pattern with occasional areas of regular fields associated with former mediaeval deer parks.
- Oak, ash and field maple as hedgerow trees
- Substantial open areas created for airfields and by post WWII agricultural improvement
- Studded with blocks of ancient woodland
- Dispersed settlement pattern of loosely clustered villages, hamlets and isolated farmsteads
- Villages often associated with greens or former greens
- Rich stock of mediaeval and Tudor timber-framed and brick buildings and moated sites
- A large scale landscape with long undulating open views trees, either in hedges or in woods, are always a prominent feature
- In the undulating landscape, crop production, especially oilseeds can be visually prominent

Location

This landscape type only occurs in one place, which is an area of clay ‘upland’ bordering the Stour and Glem rivers in south-west Suffolk. The area lies between Clare and Cowlinge in the west and Shimpling and Lawshall in the east, extending northwards as far as Chedburgh.

Geology, landform and soils

Depden, in the northern part of this area, at 128m OD, is the highest point in Suffolk. The elevated plateau of chalky clay till laid down by the Anglian glaciation is, however, much dissected by small valleys, giving a markedly undulating landscape with some quite steep slopes. The sloping land, combined with the high chalk content of the glacial till, has created a large area of clay soils of the Hanslope series that are good for arable farming, (in contrast to the more difficult to cultivate Beccles series found on the clay plateau of High Suffolk).

Landholding and enclosure pattern

This is predominantly an area of 'ancient enclosure', with an irregular pattern of fields bounded by large, long-established hedges. There are a few localised patches of more regular fields in areas like Hundon where three large medieval deer parks were enclosed in the post-medieval period. The construction of WWII military airfields at Chedburgh and at Stradishall has also affected the historic field patterns.

Settlement

The settlement pattern is one of dispersed farmsteads and hamlets, scattered between moderately sized green-edge settlements. Some of the greens are well preserved, as at Depden, but many of the others were enclosed or in-filled with housing in the 18th and 19th centuries, as at Lawshall and Chedburgh, and survive only as names. There are only occasional larger villages, as at Wickhambrook, Chedburgh or Glemsford.

There is a rich stock of medieval and Tudor timber-framed and brick buildings, some of which lie within moated sites, eg Depden Hall and Giffords Hall in Wickhambrook, or on the green edges, as is the case of the important mid-13th century house at Purton Green in Stansfield.

The utilisation of parts of the former airfield at Chedburgh for industrial units has had a noticeable affect on the landscape, as has the use of the Stradishall airfield, on the edge of this landscape, for a prison. Large agricultural buildings are a recurring feature, often associated with non-native screening trees such as poplar.

Trees and woodland cover

The area is well stocked with ancient woods of moderate size, usually situated on the tops of the more poorly drained clay hills. The long-enclosed nature of the landscape has helped to preserve the woods by excluding the grazing livestock that would otherwise have diminished the resource.

Visual experience

In general there are long open views across this undulating landscape in which trees, either in hedges or in woods, are always a prominent feature. This is in direct contrast with the plateau claylands of High Suffolk where the views, although open, are of gently rolling farmland on which woodland is almost entirely absent.

There are a few areas where woodland is more clustered and the effects of agricultural rationalisation are not so apparent, such as the view to the south-west from Whepstead. Here the landscape feels smaller and is confined by woods and hedges.

Condition

The historic pattern of field boundaries has been degraded through 20th century agricultural rationalisation that has resulted in a large number of hedges being removed, as at Rede or Mickley Green. Furthermore, inappropriate tree planting on greens has also

had an adverse effect on the character of the historic landscape. However, despite these changes the landscape maintains much of its historic character.

Undulating Ancient Farmlands

Landscape Sensitivity & Change

This is a landscape of undulating clay farmland, with frequent low hilltops dissected by small streams flowing south into the river Stour.

The characteristic land cover is arable farmland divided by an irregular sinuous field pattern, and scattered with ancient woodland. The historic field pattern is often degraded by later boundary rationalisation. There are a few discreet areas of regular fields arising from the enclosure of mediaeval deer parks.

Ancient woodland is a significant feature within this landscape and tends to be in the form of quite large isolated blocks. The extent of tree cover is now generally stable but much of this resource is at risk from inappropriate management and neglect including a lack of deer control.

Settlement is scattered widely throughout this landscape, with parishes tending to have multiple built clusters of various sizes: large groups often elongated; outlying groups often based on green-side settlement; and wayside settlements and farmsteads. These historic patterns within parishes are easily lost to infill and ribbon development.

This landscape contains an important array of moated sites and farmsteads, usually multi-period ad-hoc collections of buildings. These are often the focus for redevelopment and modification. As well as the loss of characteristic features on individual buildings, the associated development of garden curtilages and paddocks has a significant impact on the wider landscape, which increases with the frequency of such conversions.

Although most greens and commons in this landscape have been enclosed, they remain as important open spaces that shape the relationship of buildings to each other and define the form of settlements. Intake of such land into gardens, or a change of use, has a significant impact on the wider landscape.

Developments in agriculture have increased the demand for large-scale buildings, such as those associated with poultry production. These can cause considerable intrusion, *especially in this undulating landscape*, if the siting, finish and planting are not appropriate to mitigate their visual impact.

Key Forces for Change

- Expansion of garden curtilage
- Change of land use to horse paddocks and other recreational uses
- Settlement expansion eroding the characteristic form and vernacular styles
- Conversion and expansion of farmsteads for residential uses
- Impact of deer on the condition of woodland cover
- Large-scale agricultural buildings in open countryside
- Development of wind turbines

Development Management

Manage the expansion of garden curtilage

The expansion of a garden which is not in keeping with the existing local pattern has a significant impact on the local character and form of the built environment, as well as historic patterns of field enclosure. New or expanded curtilage should always be designed to fit into the local context and respect the established pattern. Furthermore, the visual impact of domestic clutter and garden paraphernalia on the wider countryside is often highly significant.

In many cases the extent of gardens in a village or cluster within a parish is relatively uniform, with all gardens following a defined boundary with agricultural land. If settlement expansion is required then the local pattern must be respected wherever possible. However, new garden curtilage may be required in other situations, such as in association with barn conversions, or dwellings for agricultural workers in open countryside.

If a large area of agricultural land is to be attached to a domestic dwelling the planning authority should define the extent of the garden curtilage. The objective is to create a clearly defined and agreed distinction between the wholly domestic areas and, for example, land to be used as a paddock.

Effective boundary planting is essential for reducing the visual intrusion of garden extensions into the open countryside. This should be conditioned as part of the change of land use and is especially important when a section of arable land is taken in, because in these cases there are often no existing hedgerows or other boundary features present.

The style of boundary fencing and hedging to be used can have a significant impact. The use of appropriate low impact materials, such as post and wire fencing is preferable to close boarded fencing or fence panels. If the latter are required they should be screened by appropriate hedging. The use of locally appropriate hedging species including hawthorn, field maple, dogwood and other typical clayland species should be specified in preference to non-native plantings such as leylandii or laurel for example. However, in some locations the influence of a landed estate may mean

there is a locally distinctive tradition of non-native tree or hedge planting.

Change of land use to horse paddocks
The proliferation of post and rail fencing and subdivision of land into small paddocks using temporary tape can have a significant landscape impact. In ecologically sensitive areas the impact on the quality and condition of grassland can be adverse. Mitigation strategies in terms of design, layout and stocking rates should be employed where possible.

It may be possible to screen the site with an effective and appropriate planting scheme. However, it may also be necessary to specify the type and extent of fencing to be used. On a sloping site post and rail or white tape can be particularly intrusive. If necessary brown or green fencing tapes should be conditioned and planting should be required to soften the impact of the post and rail fencing. Furthermore the location of field shelters and material storage areas should be specified, to minimise the landscape impact of these activities.

Opportunities should also be taken to design a field layout that is in keeping with the local field pattern or the historic pattern of boundaries.

Impact of deer on the condition of woodland cover
Large-scale deer control should be supported and individual sites may require deer fencing. New woodland plantings, as well as screening and mitigation schemes, will require effective protection from deer to support their establishment.

Settlement expansion eroding the characteristic form and vernacular styles
Parishes in this landscape tend to consist of multiple clusters of varying sizes. The release of land for development should, if at all possible, reflect the local pattern. Ribbon development destroys this pattern and can have a considerable impact on the wider landscape. When vernacular styles and detailing are used for housing or other development the choice should echo that of the immediate locality or the specific cluster in which the development is proposed.

Conversion and expansion of farmsteads for residential and other uses
These proposals require careful consideration and considerable attention to the detail of form and styling. Redevelopment proposals should also enhance the contribution these historic sites make to the wider landscape.

Specifically, any new building should usually be close to the existing cluster of buildings and should be subordinate in size to the principal buildings. The design, including the finishes such as tiles, brickwork, mortar, or wooden cladding should be appropriate for the style of buildings present. Staining used for exterior boarding should be capable of weathering in the traditional way, as a permanent dark or black colouring is not locally appropriate. As farmsteads in this landscape have usually developed over an extended period there may be a range of styles on site.

The change of land use, especially to residential curtilage, can often be more

disruptive to the wider landscape than modifications to the buildings. The changes to the surrounding land from agricultural to residential, which entails the introduction of lighting and other suburban features, can be extremely intrusive. Unless the site is well hidden, it may be necessary to impose clear conditions relating to the extent of garden curtilage and how this is screened from the wider landscape.

Large scale agricultural buildings in open countryside
The right choice of siting, form, orientation and colour of these buildings can make a considerable contribution to mitigating their impact. There are also opportunities to design locally appropriate planting schemes to reduce the visual impact further.

Specifically, the siting of buildings should relate to an existing cluster of buildings whenever possible. Usually, although not in all cases, some shade of the colour green is preferred as this will integrate well with vegetation. The correct orientation of the building can also significantly change the visual impact of the development, and this consideration should always be explored.

In addition to new planting to mitigate the impact of a development, the option to modify the management of existing hedgerows should also be explored. There are often significant opportunities to retain these boundary features at a specific height. Furthermore, the location of the development in relation to existing trees that act either as screening or as a backdrop should be carefully considered. The planning authority should ensure that these trees are retained for the lifetime of the development.

New planting should be designed to integrate the development into the character of this landscape, and may consist of both backdrop and screening planting. Although there should be a preference for native tree species other options should not be overlooked, especially if they can act as nurse trees, or are likely to prove successful in difficult conditions.

The care and maintenance of the planting should be made a condition of these developments. In many cases the landscape impact of these projects is only acceptable if it is mitigated by effective planting. The applicant should therefore provide a detailed scheme of planting and aftercare, which can form the basis of a condition. Furthermore, depending on the risks to be controlled, the planning authority may need to consider a 106 agreement to secure the landscaping and design requirements for an extended period.

Development of large-scale wind turbines
These developments have a significant local visual impact that cannot be effectively ameliorated, however, they usually take place in those areas that are the most open and lacking in tree and hedgerow cover. An opportunity therefore exists to generate long-term landscape enhancement through extensive hedge planting schemes, which will provide a positive landscape legacy beyond the lifetime of the turbines. To achieve this, applicants should explore opportunities to manage funds generated by

the income from the development to improve the condition of the landscape. Such a scheme is likely to cover an area within 4-6km of the site. The principal objective is to compensate for the landscape impact of the development by providing a long-term legacy of landscape *compensation*. There is little scope for planting to act as *mitigation* except at locations more distant from the turbines, when their scale in the landscape is reduced. In these more distant locations planting can be used to remove turbines from the views of specific receptors or from the setting of listed buildings. This work can also be included in an off-site planting scheme.

Land Management Guidelines

- Reinforce the historic pattern of sinuous field boundaries
- Recognise localised areas of late enclosure hedges when restoring and planting hedgerows
- Maintain and restore greens and commons
- Maintain and increase the stock of hedgerow trees
- Maintain the extent and improve the condition of woodland cover with effective management
- Maintain and restore the stock of moats and ponds in this landscape