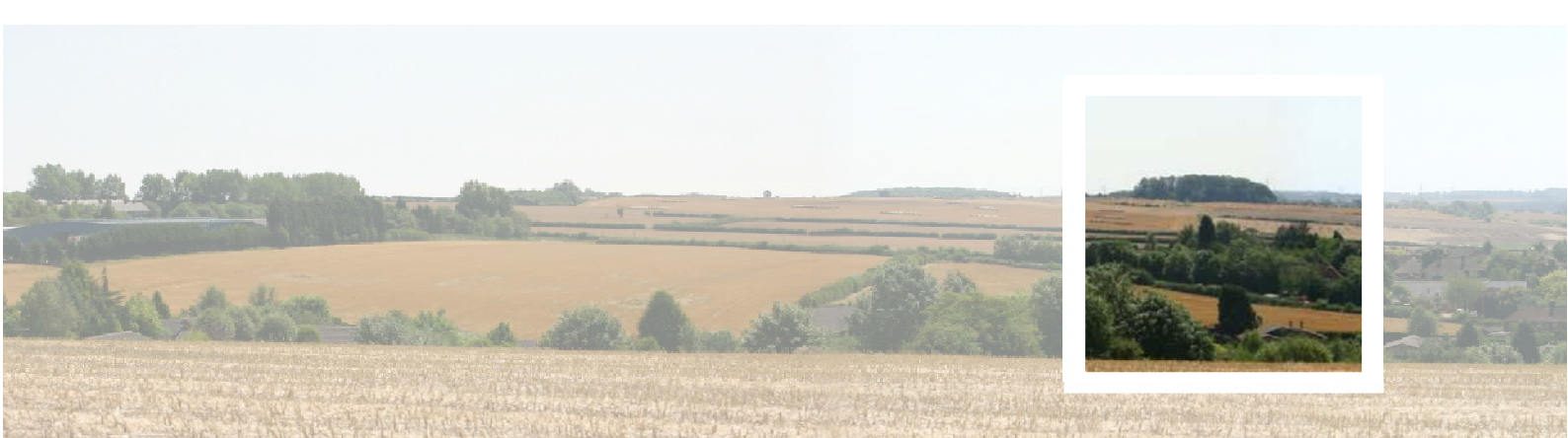




South Kesteven Landscape Character Assessment

January 2007





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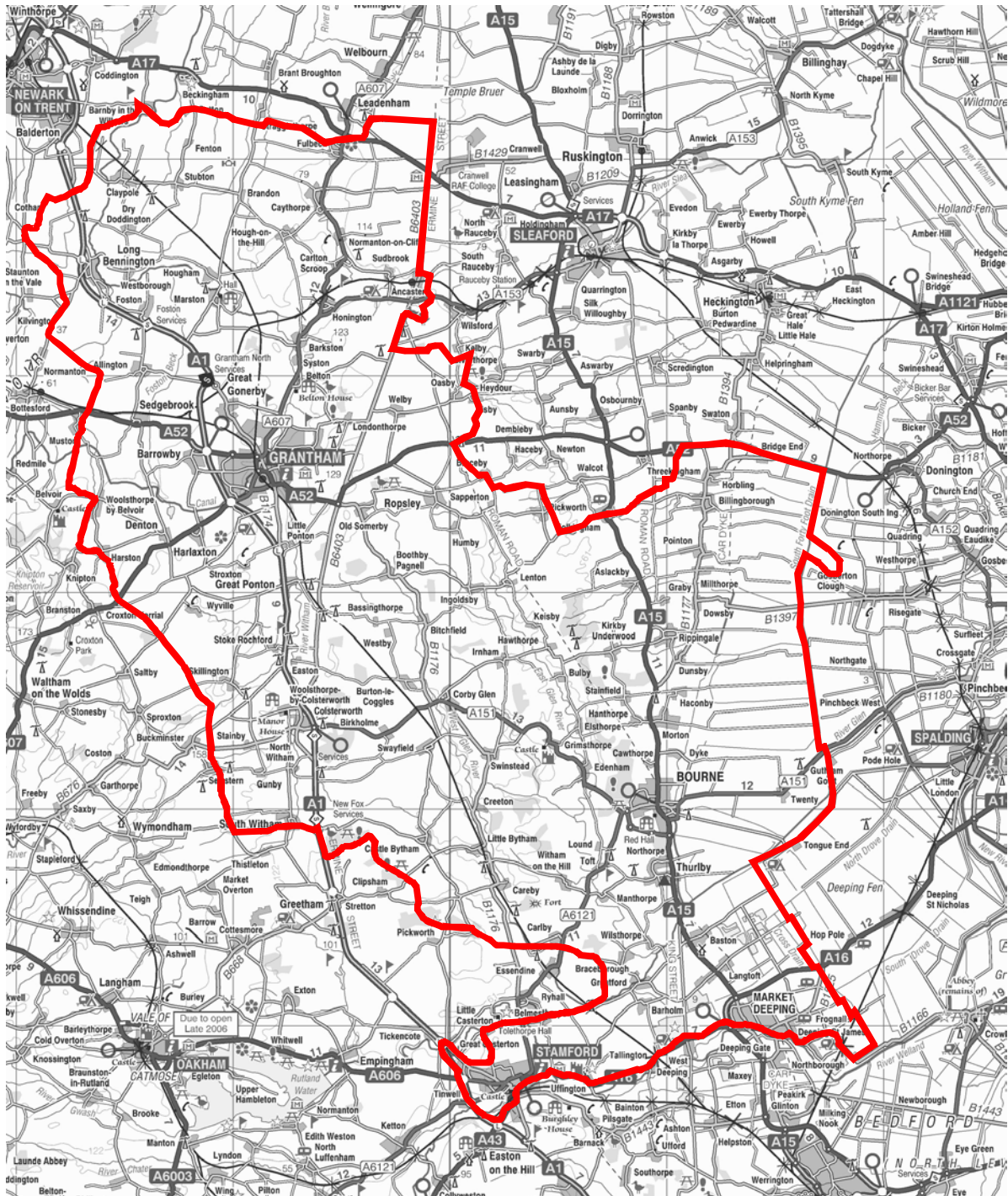
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INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 South Kesteven in Lincolnshire covers an area of nearly 943km² and is very fortunate in the range and diversity of the landscapes found within its boundaries. The District includes the market towns of Grantham, Stamford, Bourne and The Deepings, with many smaller villages.
- 1.2 The 20th Century has witnessed a degree of change in landscape fabric and character prompted by the emphasis on maximising agricultural production and development pressures. Fortunately, the importance of unique local landscape distinctiveness has now been recognised at a national level, with policy advocating the protection and enhancement of landscape resources on a comprehensive basis.
- 1.3 In response to this guidance, in 2005 South Kesteven District Council commissioned a full assessment of landscape character to be carried out to coincide with the preparation of the District Local Development Framework.
- 1.4 Landscape Character Assessment is a tool used to define areas in the landscape which are distinctly different from one another by looking at a combination of geology, landform, soils, vegetation, landuse and human settlement. The assessment process involves a desk based study and field assessment to identify distinct features within the landscape and this baseline information is then analysed and used to identify the current key characteristics and variation found across the District.
- 1.5 The Landscape Character Assessment should provide an understanding of the landscape, its history and future pressures and is designed to provide guidance for future management strategies which will help secure the unique qualities and subtle idiosyncrasies which make South Kesteven special. This can then be used to ensure that sensitive areas are protected and also that opportunities for improving the landscape character are highlighted.
- 1.6 The 21st Century will no doubt continue to witness gradual landscape evolution, things never simply stand still. Climate change will pose a significant challenge, although it is extremely difficult to be certain about the nature of that change and the ability of the landscape and its wildlife to adapt to differing conditions. Whilst some existing species may struggle, others will welcome the new opportunities which develop, perhaps resulting in subtle shifts in overall biodiversity.
- 1.7 The District-wide Landscape Character Assessment aims to provide a bench mark document against which future trends can be measured. The benefits of the latest environmental stewardship agricultural measures can be assessed to monitor whether they succeed in enhancing landscape and habitat features. It can also provide a tool to guide future development pressures and to ensure that these are in harmony with prevailing landscape character, local distinctiveness, and a sense of place.
- 1.8 The Regional Forestry Framework, 'Space4Trees' may also contribute to the restoration of a more wooded character across large parts of the District reinforcing the beneficial characteristics already found around South Kesteven.
- 1.9 This document is intended to be the start of a continuing process of landscape character assessment. The District Council welcomes input from the community at large, and trusts that this document will stimulate stakeholder involvement in landscape enhancement and wildlife conservation.



KEY
District Boundary



South Kesteven Landscape Character Assessment

LOCATION MAP

Figure 1

July 2006

OBJECTIVES OF ASSESSMENT

1.10 The aims of this assessment are to provide a thoroughly researched landscape study upon which the planning system can :-

- Base criteria-led policies which will protect and enhance the unique locally distinctive landscape characteristics of the District.
- Address issues including environmental improvements, regeneration, nature conservation and sustainable land management.
- Ensure that appropriate future development is successfully integrated within the environment.

1.11 The main objectives of the assessment are as follows :-

- To identify the Landscape Character Areas within the District.
- To provide guidance that can be used to develop policy that will encourage landscape character and local distinctiveness to be reflected in new development.

METHODOLOGY

1.12 Guidelines for carrying out a landscape character assessment have been clearly outlined by the Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural heritage (2002). The urban assessment follows guidance within the 'Landscape Character Assessment Guidance for England and Scotland'. The basic work stages are outlined as follows :-

Inception and Data Review

1.13 Relevant background data was received and reviewed, and preliminary site reconnaissance carried out to allow familiarisation of the Study area.

Desk Study and Initial Mapping

1.14 Available published literature and mapping relevant to the District was collated, reviewed and analysed, including District Council information and plans, historic maps, heritage information, ecological sites and data, regional landscape appraisals and soil and geology survey data of the District.

1.15 The context for the district-wide study was defined through a desk based study of broader landscape character information including, importantly, the "Landscape Character Map of England" (Natural England), and also a study of Landscape Character Assessments completed for adjacent Counties and Districts.

1.16 The information was then combined through initial mapping and layering and areas of similar or common character were provisionally identified.

Field Survey Landscape Character

1.17 A comprehensive field survey was carried out, based on the initial character area mapping from the desk study, to identify consistent landscape character areas.

Classification, Description and Management Strategy

1.18 Character areas were then classified through the combination of professional judgement, results of the field survey work and the physical mapped data.

Landscape Character Areas were identified for the whole of the District and are clearly described and their key characteristics identified for each of the areas.

LANDSCAPE SENSITIVITY

1.19 Following the classifications and description for each character area, an assessment of landscape sensitivity has been made. This assesses how each character area could accommodate change without adverse impacts on character. This mostly involves decisions about whether or not significant characteristic elements of the landscape will be liable to loss, whether the characteristics could easily be restored and whether important aesthetic aspects of character will be liable to change. Consideration is also given to the addition of new elements. The assessment considers three factors;

- The elements that contribute to landscape character, their significance and vulnerability to change.
- The overall quality and condition of the landscape.
- Aesthetic aspect of landscape character.

1.20 Within South Kesteven, pressure for change arises from a range of proposals. These include wind energy proposals, new housing and employment development. For each character area an assessment of sensitivity to these potential developments has been carried out. The criteria for landscape sensitivity is outlined below :-

Landscape Sensitivity

High - Landscape areas with particularly distinctive or positive characters or with valued landscape features. The areas may be sensitive to relatively small changes.

Medium Landscape areas with reasonably positive character, but with evidence of alteration or degradation of the character or features. Potentially tolerant of some change.

Low Landscape areas with a weak character or relatively few features of value, potentially tolerant of significant change.

Policies and Recommendations

1.21 Once the character areas have been classified and described, the Character Assessment will be used as a basis for the development of a number of criteria led policies for the Local Development Framework.

Reporting the Outputs

1.22 The Assessment has been produced in a form which is intended can be extended and updated in the future to take account of changes in the District, and to allow opportunities to add more detailed tiers of data and related information at a later date.

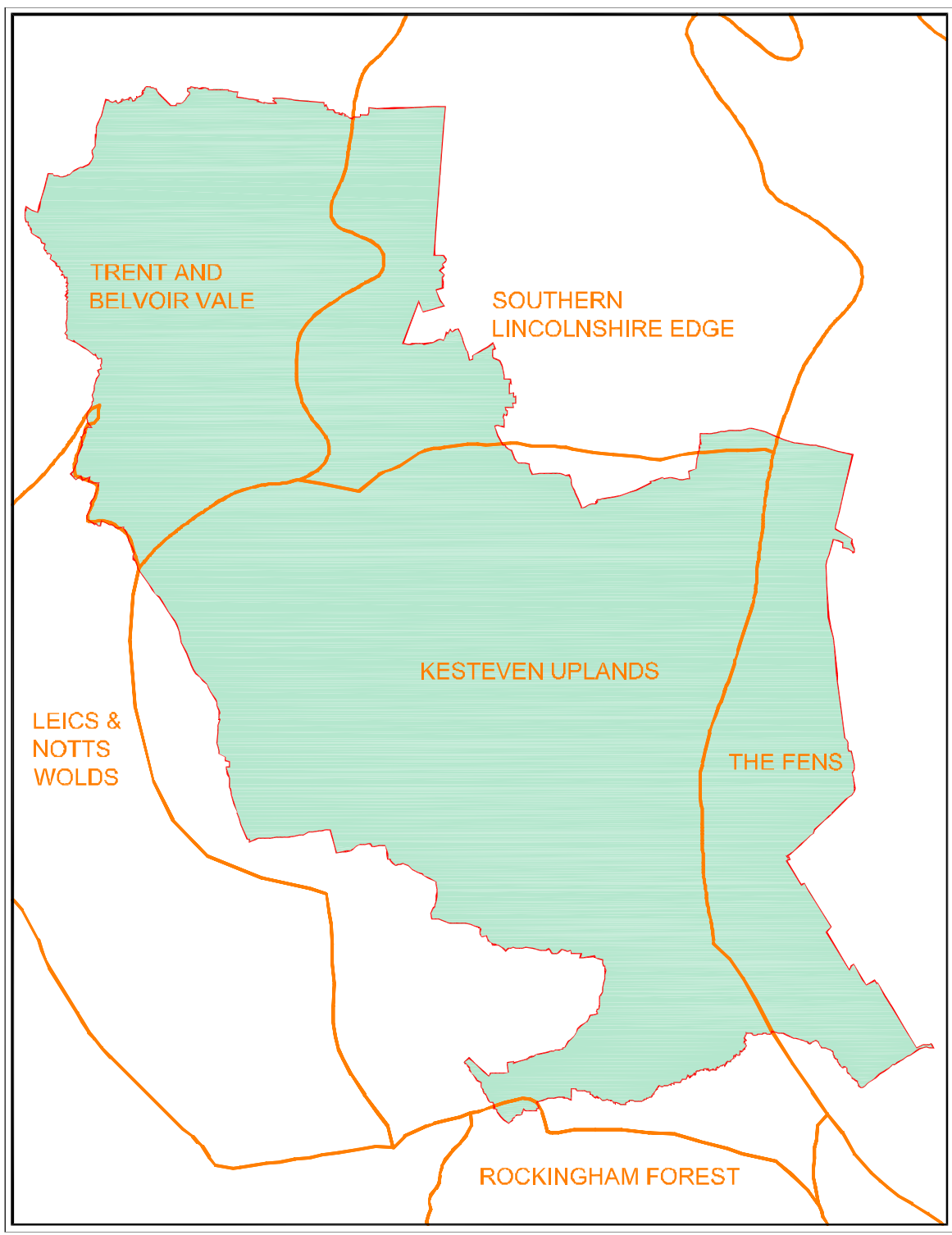
LANDSCAPE CONTEXT

1.23 The District of South Kesteven is predominantly rural, with areas of open farmland and small towns and villages.

The Natural England Character Map of England

1.24 Natural England is concerned with the whole of England's countryside and has produced the Landscape Character Map of England. This defines national character areas where publications have been produced which included detailed descriptions of the areas as well as explanations of how the character had arisen and how it is changing.

1.25 The District of South Kesteven is located within the East Midlands region (Countryside Character Volume



KEY
District Boundary
Character Area Boundary

South Kesteven Landscape Character Assessment
COUNTRYSIDE AGENCY CHARACTER AREAS

Figure 2

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English Nature Datasets

4, 1999) and is largely covered by four different character areas. In addition, two very small areas extend into other character areas. These areas are shown on figure 2 and are briefly described as follows :

Area 75 Kesteven Uplands

- 1.26 This character area covers the central part of the district and is the largest character area within the district.
- 1.27 This is a medium-scale, undulating, mixed farming landscape dissected by rivers Witham and East and West Glen. Enclosure is generally by hedgerows and, more locally, by stone walls to the south. There are significant areas of woodland, including semi-natural and ancient woodland, and a high concentration of historic houses and associated parklands. There is generally a dispersed but nucleated settlement pattern, with picturesque villages constructed in local limestone. These include distinctive collyweston slate roofs to the south and pantiles to the north.

Area 48 Trent and Belvoir Vales

- 1.28 This area lies to the northwest of the District. It is described as a gently undulating landform, with shallow ridges dropping down gently to broad river valleys. It is an open, arable or mixed, farmed landscape, strongly rural in feel, with trimmed hedges and few hedgerow trees; woodlands are only locally significant. These are frequent nucleated villages with red brick houses, roofed with pantiles, and spired churches prominent in long views.

Area 47 Lincolnshire Edge

- 1.29 This area, which lies to the north east of the District is described as a Large-scale 'upland' arable escarpment. The open landscape has rectilinear fields

and few boundaries. Where enclosure is still present, there is a mixture of limestone walls, discontinuous hedges and shelter belts. There is sparse settlement on top of escarpment.

Area 46 The Fens

- 1.29 To the east of the District the land descends to the Fens. This is a large-scale, flat, open landscape with extensive vistas to level horizons and huge skies. A hierarchy of rivers, drains and ditches provides a strong influence throughout the area. Embanked rivers and roddons create local enclosure and elevation. Woodland cover is sparse.
- 1.30 A very small area of land south of Stamford lies within the Rockingham Forest Character Area (92). This area is so small and marginal that it is not of significance to this study.

Natural Areas

- 1.31 Natural England, formerly known as English Nature, has developed a series of 'Natural Areas' for the Country. These are areas with characteristic associations of wildlife and natural features. They provide a way of interpreting the ecological variations of the country in terms of natural features, illustrating the distinctions between one area and another. Each Natural Area has a unique identity resulting from the interaction of wildlife, landforms, geology, land use and human impact.
- 1.32 Whilst many of the natural area boundaries correspond with the landscape character areas, there are differences. Figure 3 shows the natural areas across South Kesteven District. To the north, the Trent Valley And Rises natural area corresponds with the Trent and Belvior Vale landscape character area. To the south west, the Fens form a distinctive natural area

and landscape character area. The central part of the district is described as the Lincolnshire and Rutland Limestone Natural Areas. This covers the Kesteven Uplands and Southern Lincolnshire Edge landscape character area.

The natural areas are summarised as follows:

Area 38 Lincolnshire and Rutland Limestone

- 1.33 The Lincolnshire and Rutland Limestone Natural Area has a lot of woodland, particularly on the boulder clay on the Kesteven Plateau. Broadleaved woodland, scrub and wood pasture can all be found. Small pockets of calcareous grassland are scattered about the Natural Area, mainly within protected sites and roadside verges, and these support a high diversity of wildlife. Freshwater habitats in the Natural Area include rivers and streams and a few flooded sand and gravel pits. The gravel pits support important populations of breeding birds. Farming is the principle land use of the Natural Area, and the farms have some habitats important for wildlife including unimproved grasslands, hedges, streams, ponds and woodland copses.

Area 33 Trent Valley and Rises

- 1.34 Most of the Natural Area comprises a geology that produces a fertile soil ideal for agriculture. Despite a large part of the area being under intensive agriculture, there are a number of important habitats remaining. These include neutral grassland, which is the most common type of unimproved grassland, and a number of acidic and calcareous grassland sites associated with local differences of geology.

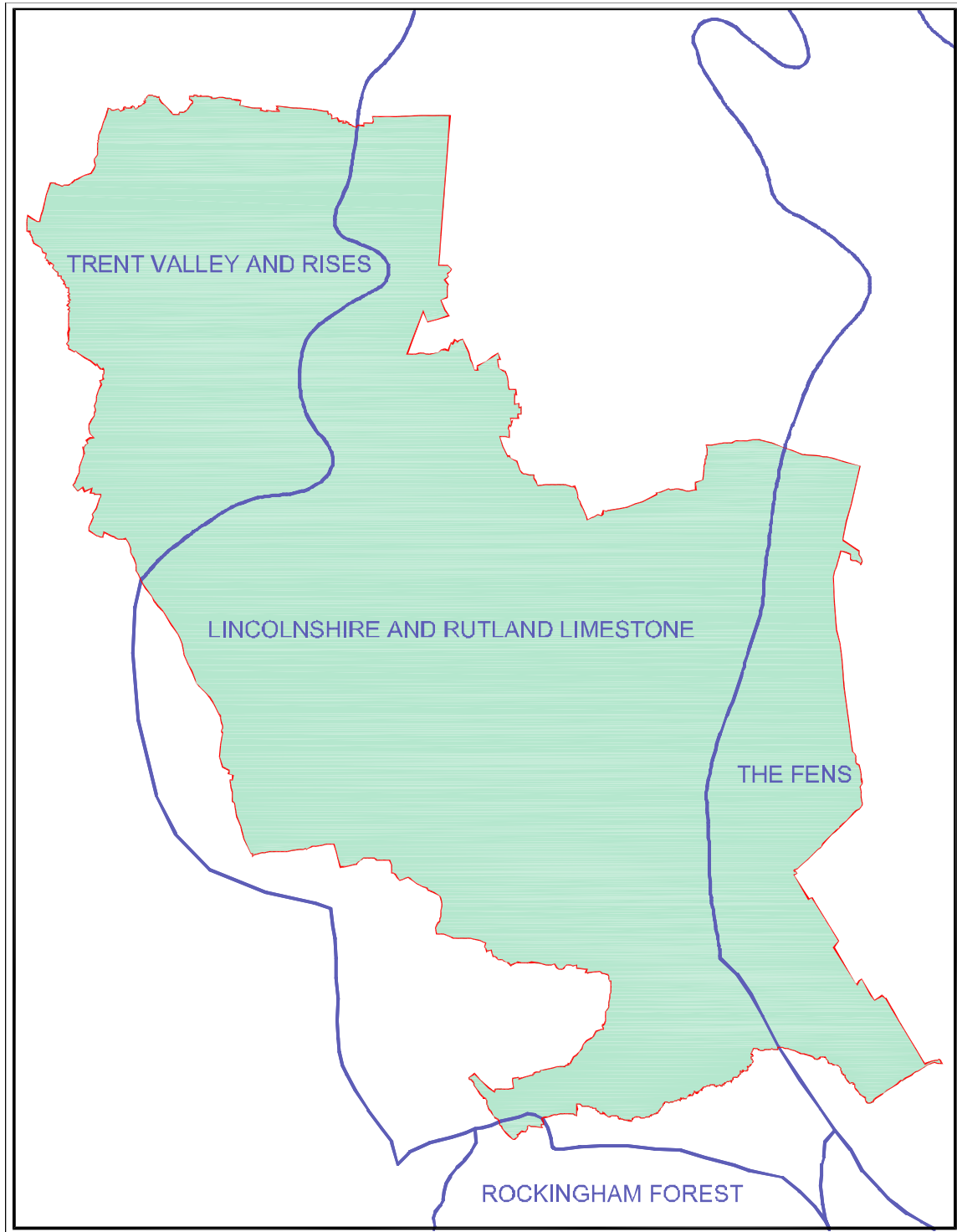
Area 37 The Fens

- 1.35 The Fens Natural Area is a low-lying, level terrain which rarely reaches 10m above sea level, except for fen 'islands' such as the Isle of Ely. The land is

predominantly cultivated with little natural or semi-natural habitat remaining. Rich soils and varied intensive agricultural use emphasise the scale and geometry of the land and produce strong seasonal colour changes within the landscape. Woodland cover is very sparse with the majority of trees found lining roads and villages and shelterbelts. Marshes, swamps and fens add a distinct character to the area and provide outstanding habitats such as swamps, fen meadow and neutral and improved grasslands.

Other Landscape Assessment Work

- 1.36 The District of South Kesteven lies on the south-eastern edge of Lincolnshire, and borders Nottinghamshire, Leicestershire, Rutland and Cambridgeshire. Whilst at the time of the study there was no published landscape character assessment for Lincolnshire, most adjacent Counties/Districts have carried out landscape assessment. The adjacent character areas have been reviewed and have provided context to the South Kesteven study.
- 1.37 Landscape character rarely changes abruptly across District boundaries, so the existing work published by the adjacent authorities has provided useful background.



KEY
District Boundary
Natural Area Boundary

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English Nature Datasets



South Kesteven Landscape
Character Assessment

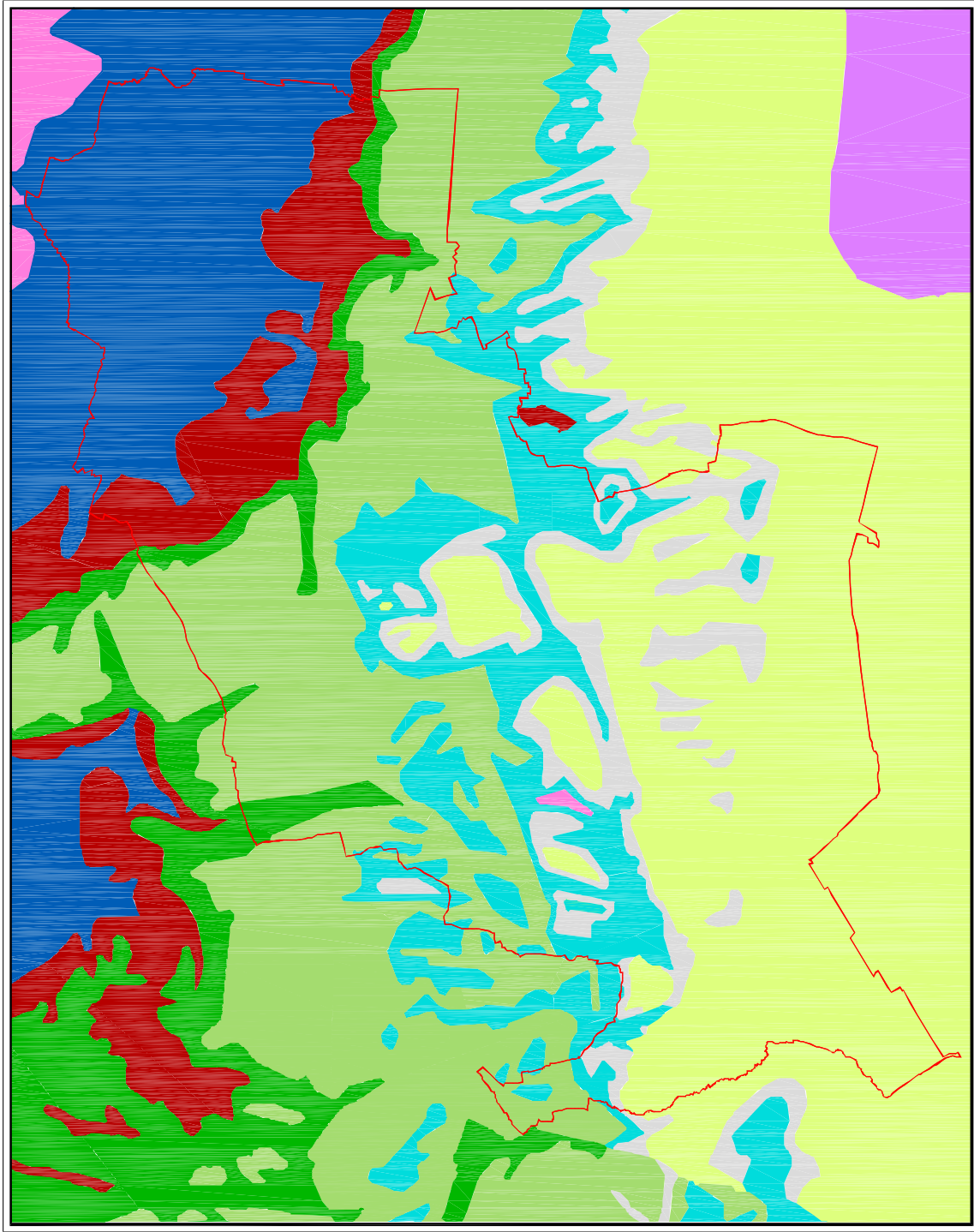
**ENGLISH NATURE
NATURAL AREAS**

Figure 3

July 2006

GEOLOGY AND SOILS

- 2.1 The geology and soils across the district broadly follow the three natural areas described in Section 1. The solid geology is shown on Figure 4 and the Superficial Deposits on Figure 5. The northern and western part of the district comprises the Trent and Belvoir Vales. The solid geology in this area is dominated by the mercia mudstones. The superficial geology is complicated by extensive deposition of glacial debris, producing local clays and glacial pebbles.
- 2.2 The central part of the district comprises almost entirely Jurassic limestone rocks. Some significant areas are covered by glacial boulder clay drift. Highly calcareous loams are found mainly on the steeper slopes.
- 2.3 The eastern part of the district lies within The Fens. The underlying geology comprises Oxford clay, overlain with river terrace deposits and alluvium. This has given rise to some highly fertile soils.



KEY

- | | |
|--|---|
|  District Boundary |  Upper Lias |
|  Corbrash |  Inferior Oolite |
|  Great Oolite |  Ampthill Clay, Kimmeridge Clay & Corallian |
|  Oxford Clay & Kellaways Beds |  Lower Lias |
|  Middle Lias |  Triassic mudstones (inc. Keuper marl, Dolomitic Conglomerate and Rhaetic) |

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British Geological Survey

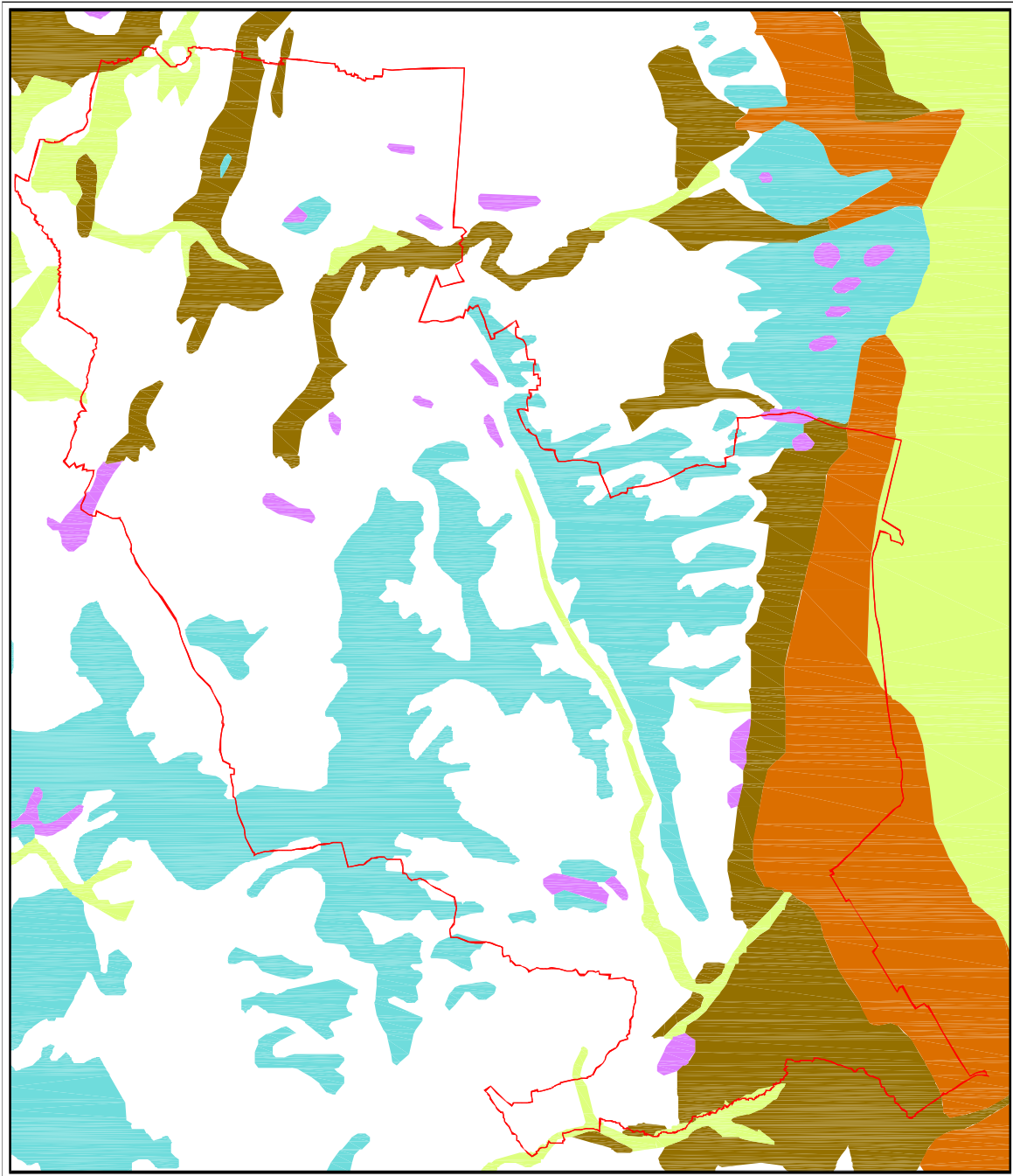


South Kesteven Landscape
Character Assessment







SOLID GEOLOGY

Figure 4

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KEY

-  District Boundary
-  Glacial Sand and Gravel
-  Till
-  Alluvium
-  Peat
-  River Terrace Deposits (Undifferentiated)



South Kesteven Landscape
Character Assessment

**SUPERFICIAL
DEPOSITS**

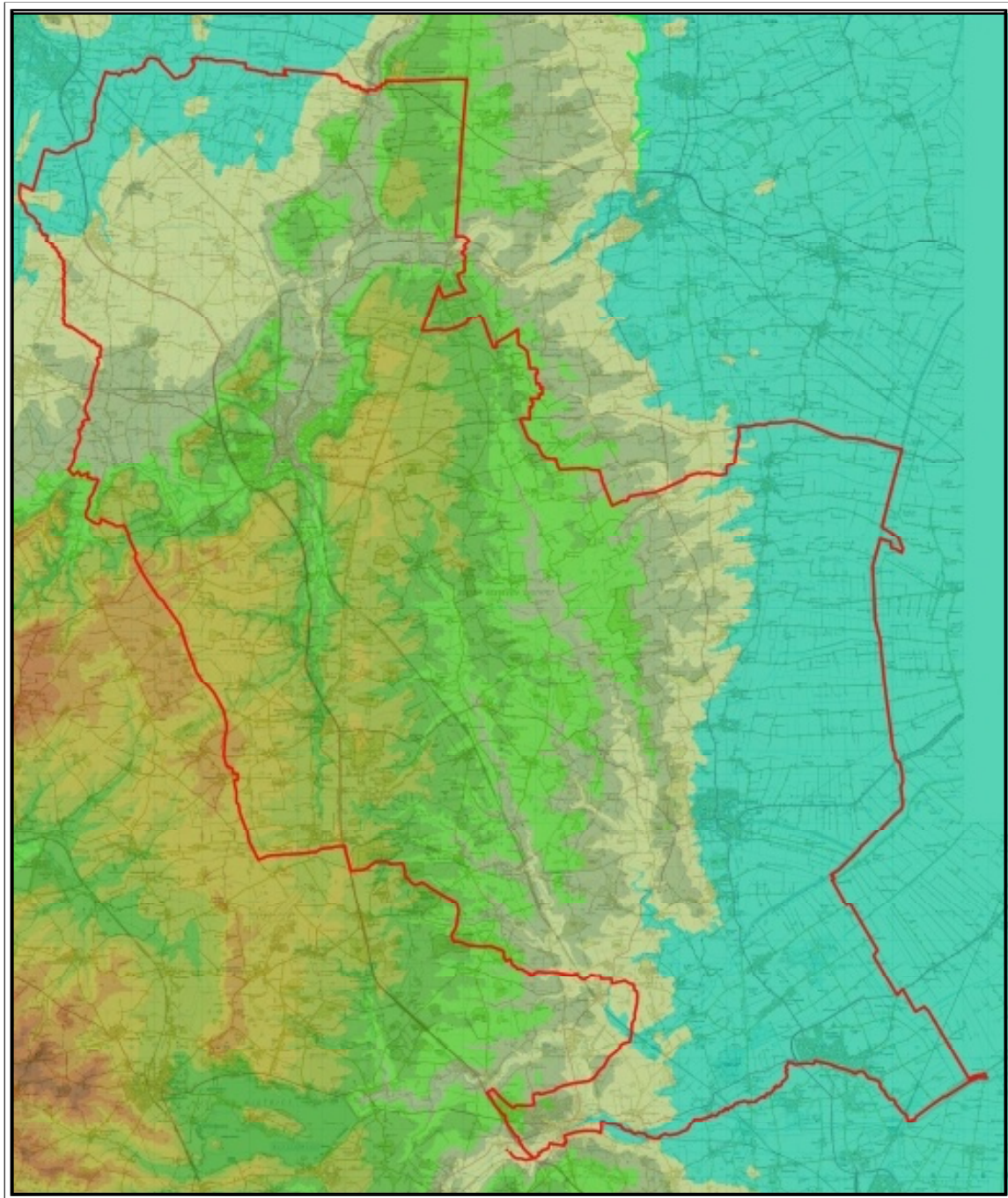
Figure 5

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










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British Geological Survey

TOPOGRAPHY

- 2.4 Topography plays an important role in determining landscape character across South Kesteven. Figure 6 shows the topography of the District. The central part of the District is characterised by higher land, typically between 100m and 140m above ordnance datum (AOD). This area corresponds with the Natural England 'Kesteven Uplands' and 'Southern Lincolnshire Edge' character areas. This upland area is dissected by three valleys which generally run in a north/south direction. The valley of the River Witham extends to the north through Grantham. The valley of the East and West Glen Rivers extend to the south opening out on to The Fens. The Fens are typically flat and low lying less than 20m AOD.
- 2.5 Land to the north-west of the District lies in the Trent and Belvoir Vales Natural England character area. This area is very gently undulating and generally lies between 20m and 80m AOD. The area around Grantham has a more complex topography, with a series of hills and valleys, with the majority of the town lying on the lower ground between the surrounding hills.



KEY

 District Boundary	 100-120m
 0-20m	 120-40m
 20-40m	 140-160m
 40-60m	 160-180m
 60-80m	 180-200m
 80-100m	



South Kesteven Landscape
Character Assessment

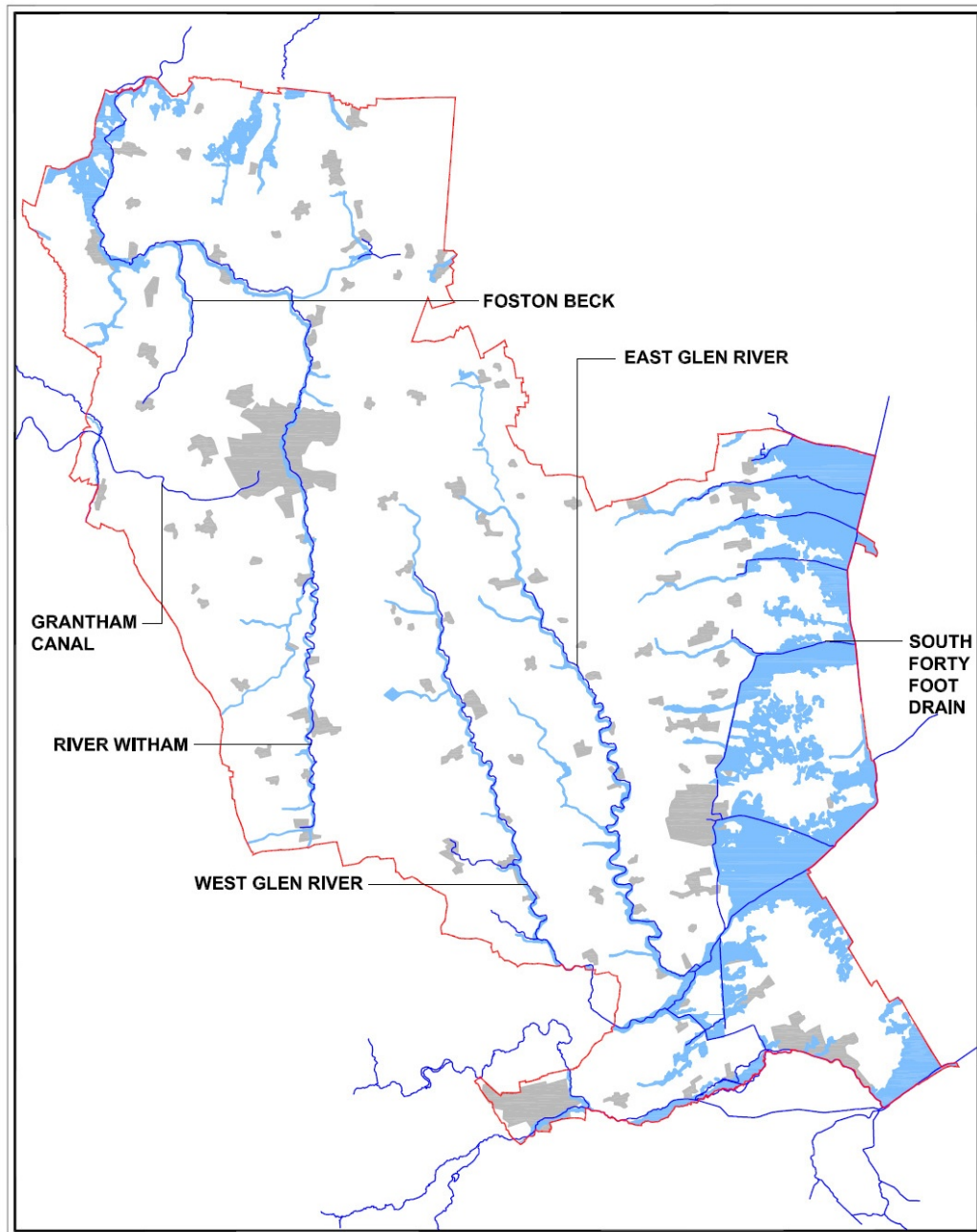
TOPOGRAPHY

Figure 6

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HYDROLOGY

- 2.6 The hydrology of the District is closely related to the topography and the geology of the area. The main watercourses are shown on Figure 7. The River Witham runs north through Grantham with the East and West Glen Rivers running to the south. Whilst the topography and hydrology plans demonstrate that these rivers have determined the form of the central part of the District, the rivers themselves are not so dominant 'on the ground'. The limestone geology of the area results in these rivers being modest features in the landscape. The rivers are often bounded by hedgerows and trees, and it is sometimes difficult to discern them from other field boundaries.
- 2.7 To the south east of the District there is an obvious change in hydrology with the east/west running drains across The Fens. These drains feed into the 'South Forty Foot Drain', which forms the District boundary. The River Witham extends east through Stamford to the south of the District.
- 2.8 To the north west of the District the Foston Beck runs north into the River Witham, which extends across the Vale of Belvoir.



- KEY**
- District Boundary
 - Settlement
 - Main Water Courses
 - Approx. Floodplain Extent

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South Kesteven District Council | GIS Data | Environment Agency Flood Map



South Kesteven Landscape
Character Assessment

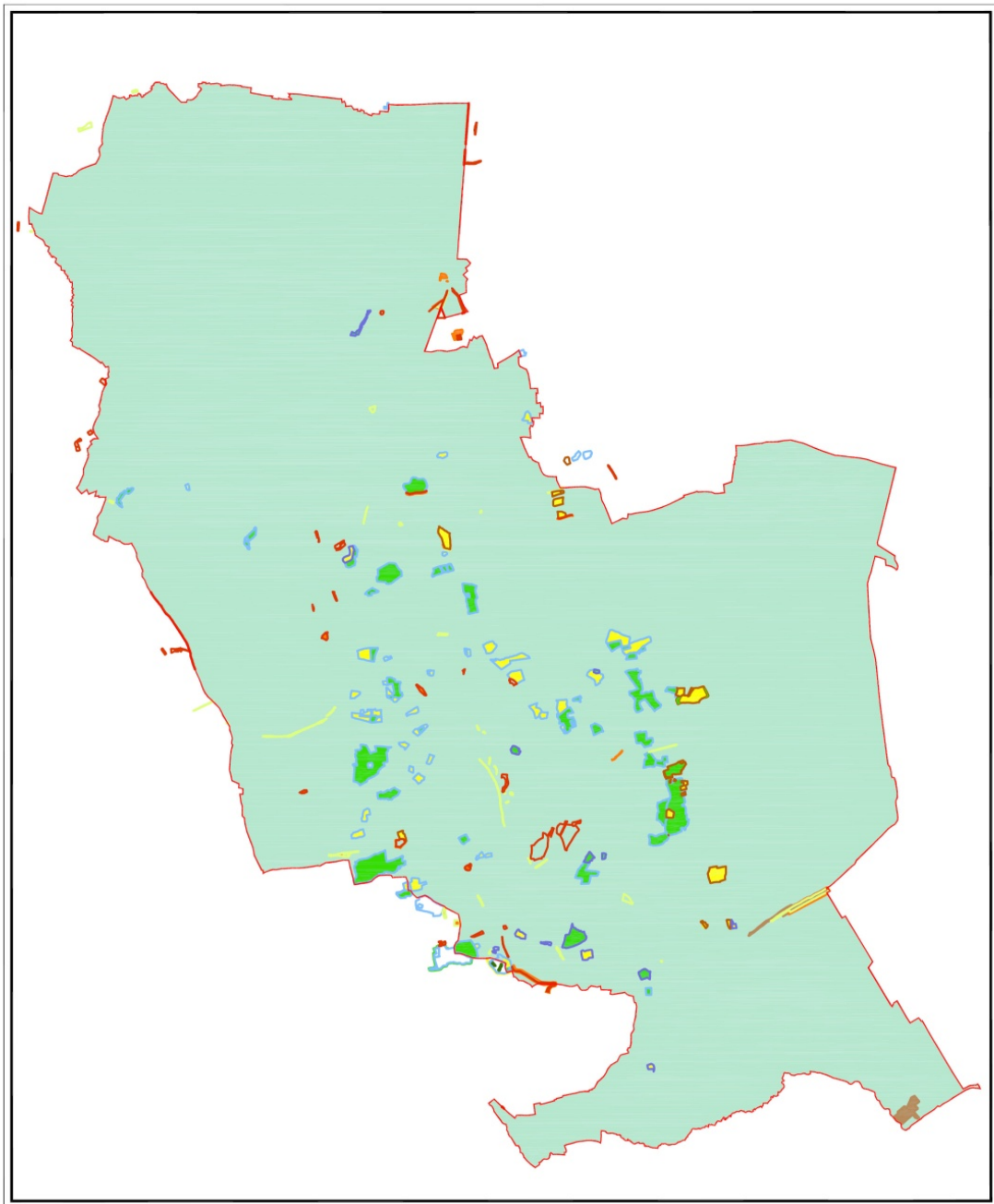
HYDROLOGY

Figure 7

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BIODIVERSITY

- 2.9 Biodiversity across the district varies significantly from one area to another. Figure 8 shows designated areas for biodiversity across the district. The plan shows that the central part of the District within the 'Kesteven Uplands' contains the highest proportion of woodlands, but also important grassland sites. There are few significant areas of importance to the north and east of the district in the Vales or Fens.
- 2.10 The Kesteven Uplands include a high proportion of ancient woodlands, both semi-natural and replanted. There are also areas of calcareous grassland; within protected sites and on road verges. Hedgerows, streams and ponds provide other features of conservation importance. The River Witham supports important native crayfish.
- 2.11 Within the fens, ecological interest is concentrated around the drainage ditches, which can support a range of wetland species. A significant area of reedbed exists east of the Deepings.
- 2.12 There are relatively few features of ecological value within the Trent and Belvoir Vale, although local interest is provided by the Grantham Canal, woodlands and hedgerows.



KEY

- | | |
|--|--|
|  District Boundary |  Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland |
|  Ancient Replanted Woodland |  Reedbeds |
|  Ancient Semi-natural Woodland |  Undetermined Grassland |
|  Grassland Inventory Site |  Undetermined Woodland |
|  Lowland Beech and Yew Woodland |  Wet Woodland |
|  Lowland Calcareous Grassland | |



South Kesteven Landscape Character Assessment

BIODIVERSITY

Figure 8

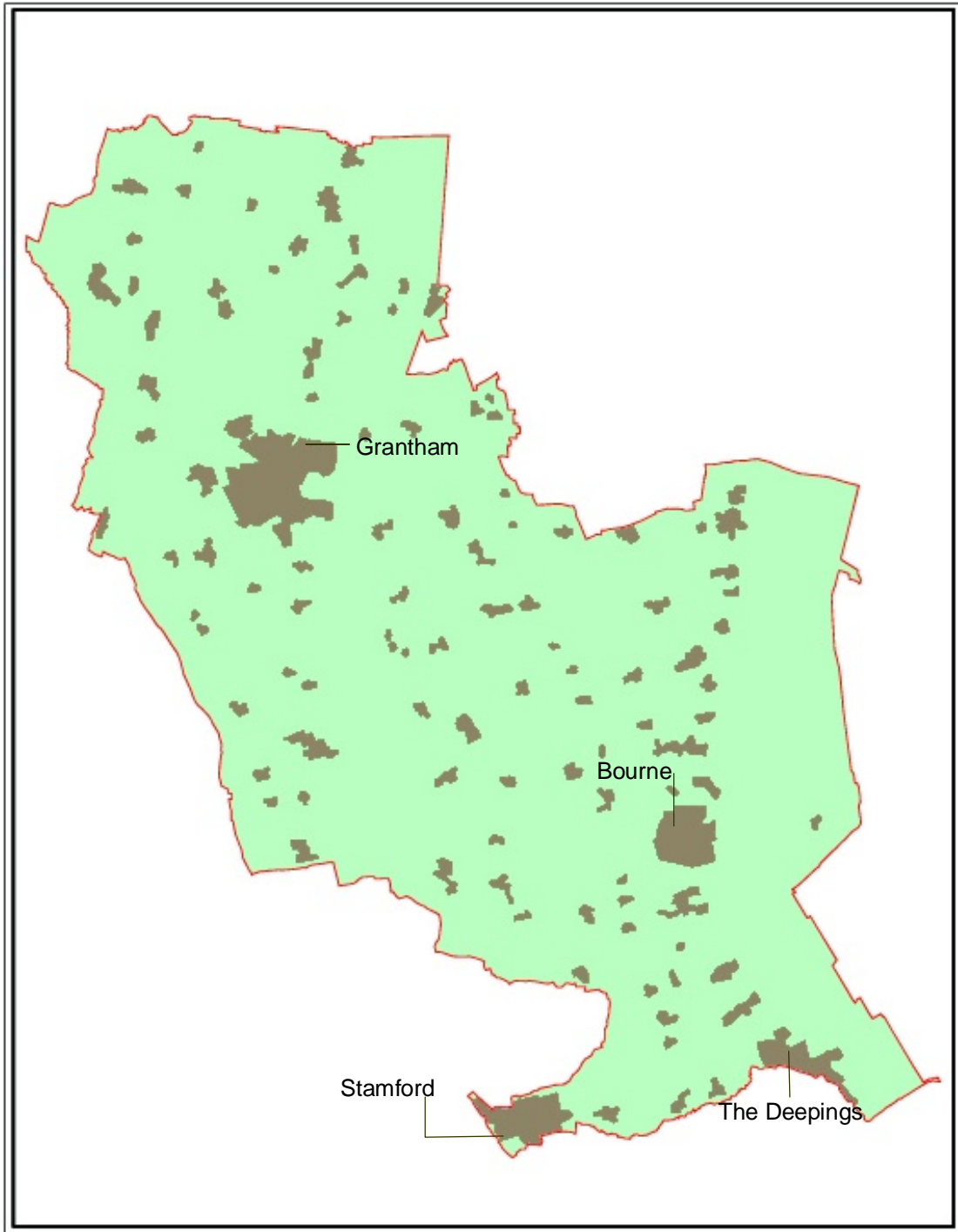
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SETTLEMENT AND COMMUNICATIONS

- 3.1 The settlement and communications pattern of roads and railways across the district largely follows the topography and land use. The settlement and communication links are shown in Figures 9 & 10. The principle settlement in the district is Grantham, which has developed along the Great North Road (The A1), a historic route between London and the north. Grantham was mentioned in the Domesday Book, and became a preferred stopping place for Kings and Gentleman as they travelled up and down the country. The Angel and Royal hotel was originally a court of King John. Grantham contains some fine stone buildings, including St Wulfrains Church, with its 282ft spire. Belton House, a fine example of a neo Caroline English Country house lies north of the town. Grantham also has an industrial/engineering heritage.
- 3.2 Stamford, in the very south-west of the District was described by Sir Walter Scott as 'the finest stone town in England'. Stamford was another popular stopping point along the Great North Road, and retains some fine coaching inns, including the George Hotel. Stamford also has a more recent industrial past.
- 3.3 Bourne lies towards the east of the District, on the edge of the Fens. Bourne is a red brick market town that has been settled since Roman times and was reputedly the birthplace of Herward the Wake.
- 3.4 The Deepings lie to the south of the District. The name reflects the low lying nature of the land. The area has been inhabited since prehistoric times and contains some fine stone buildings. The Roman Carr Dyke passes through the town.
- 3.5 In general the settlement and communication pattern follows the topography, with towns and villages in the valleys, and with a more remote settlement pattern on the higher ground. Most of the central parts of the District have a north/south and east/west communications pattern. The Fens are accessed by a series of east / west tracks with virtually no settlement, access is restricted by the network of dykes and drains.
- 3.6 Many of the villages include vernacular buildings. In the central part of the District these are mostly built of limestone, giving way to brick in the north towards the Trent Valley and to the east in The Fens.



KEY

-  District Boundary
-  Settlement

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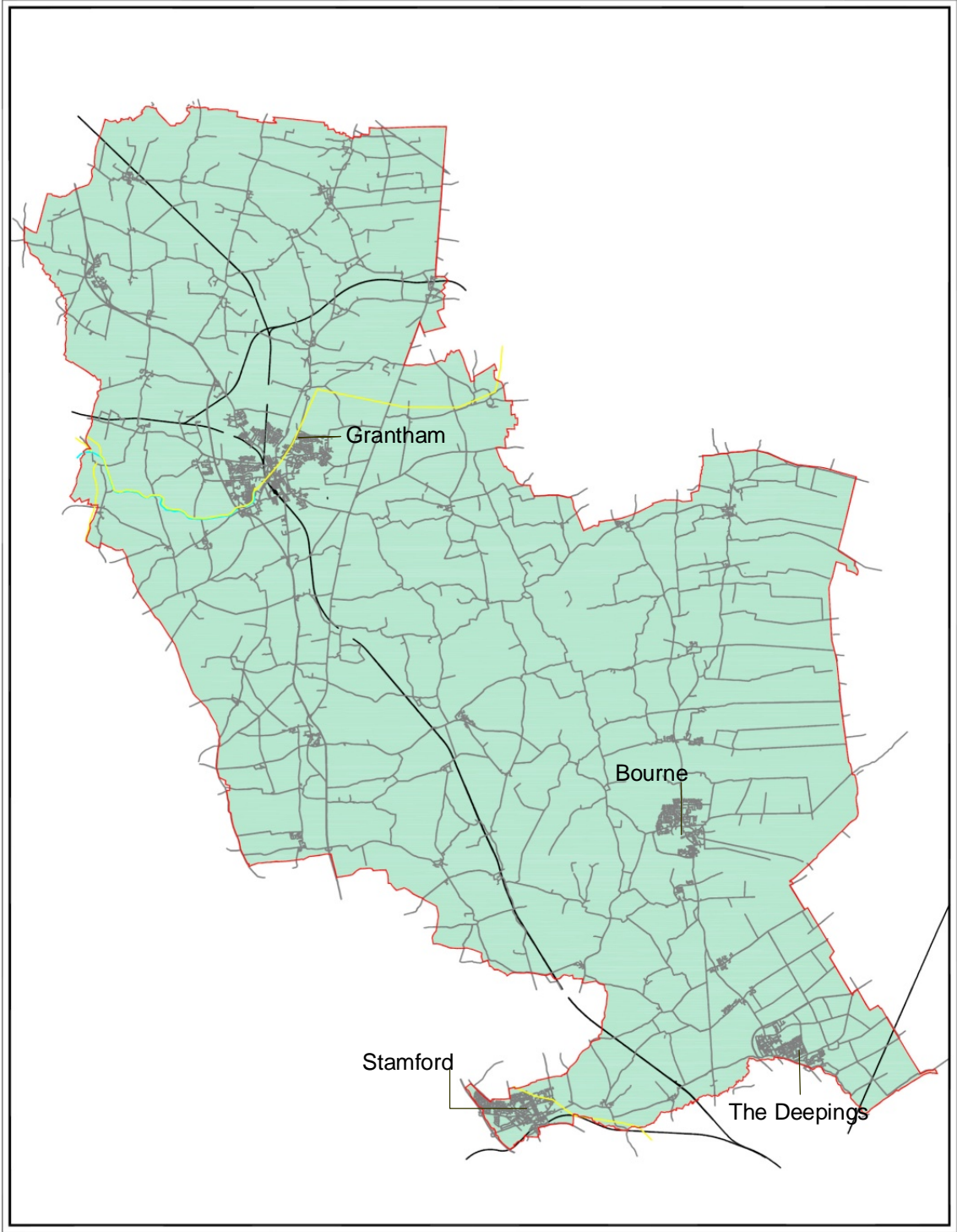


South Kesteven Landscape
Character Assessment

SETTLEMENT


Figure 9

July 2006



KEY

 District Boundary	 Cycle Network
 Roads	 Grantham Canal
 Railways	

 South Kesteven Landscape Character Assessment

COMMUNICATIONS

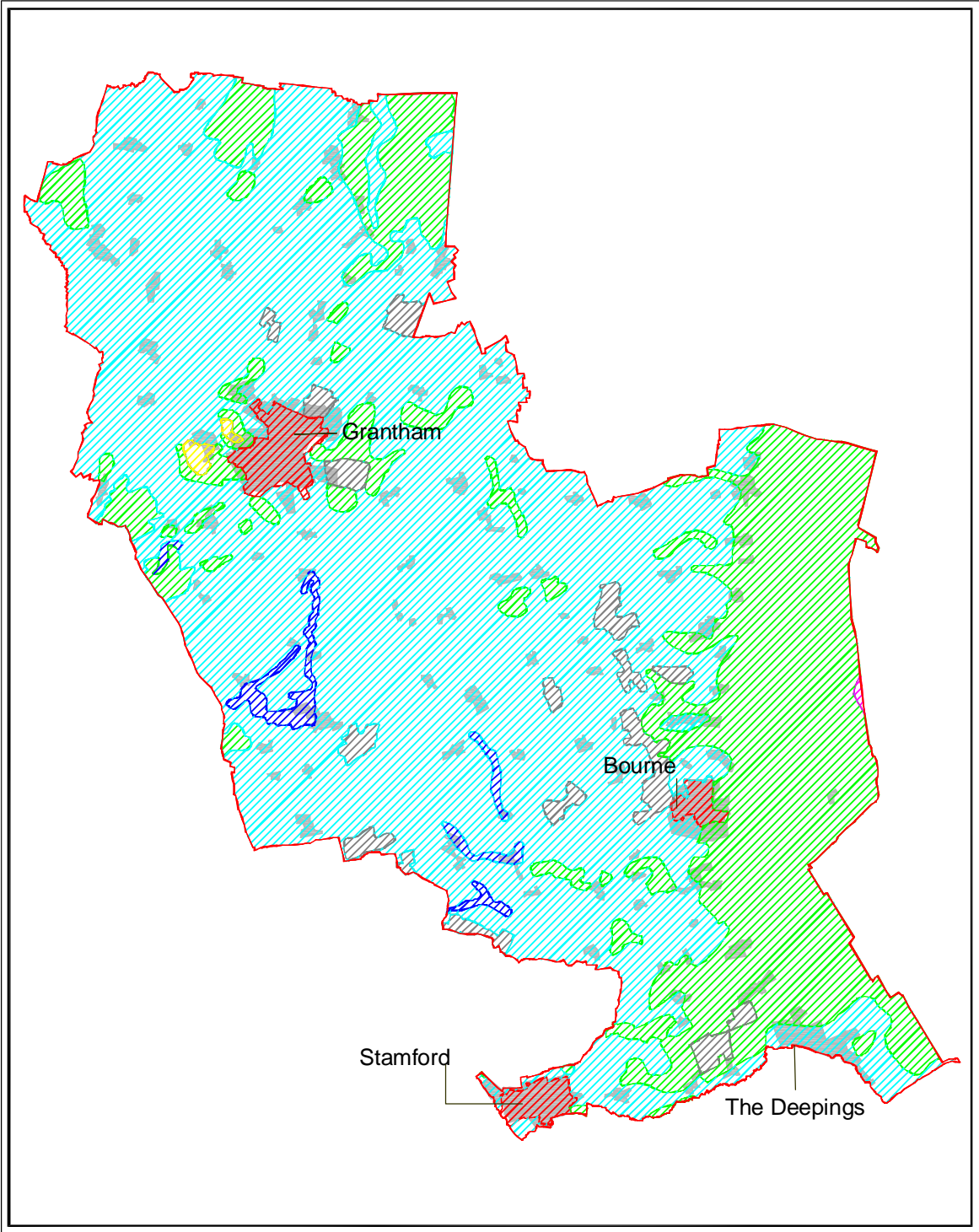
Figure 10

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







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AGRICULTURE

- 3.7 The agricultural use of the District is closely related to the topography and soils. The agricultural land quality is shown on Figure 11. To the north of the District in the Trent and Belvoir Vale, and on the Southern Lincolnshire Limestone Edge, the land is mainly Grade 2 and 3, providing high quality agricultural land.
- 3.8 The central part of the District, within the 'Kesteven Uplands' is mostly Grade 3 agricultural land. This slightly lower quality of agricultural land may have resulted in the survival of a greater proportion of woodland than otherwise exists across the District.
- 3.9 The Fens to the east comprise virtually all Grade 2 land reflecting the highly productive soils.



KEY

 District Boundary	 Grade 2 Agricultural Land
 Urban	 Grade 3 Agricultural Land
 Settlement	 Grade 4 Agricultural Land
 Grade 1 Agricultural Land	 Non-Agricultural Land

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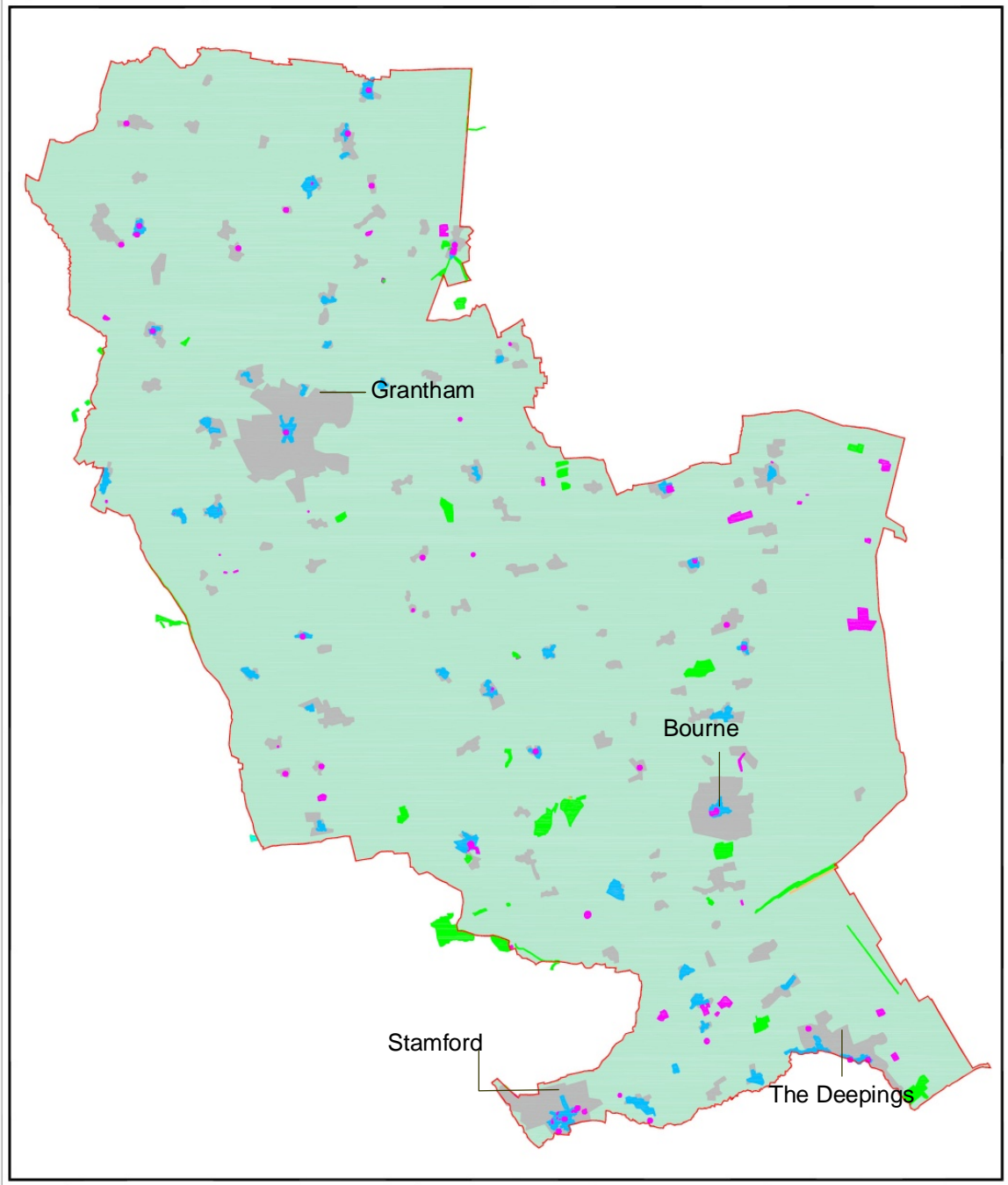
LAND USE

Figure 11


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ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGNATIONS

- 3.10 Environmental survey and appraisal work across the District carried out by South Kesteven Council and other external agencies has built up a base of information over the years. This work includes the designation of nationally important areas and sites such as Sites of Special Scientific Interest, Ancient Monuments and Historic Parks and Gardens. These areas are shown on Figure 12.
- 3.11 In summary, the plan shows a concentration of Nature Conservation Designations across the central part of the District. Many of the villages include Conservation Areas. The Fens and the Trent and Belvoir Vales contain relatively few designated areas.



- KEY**
-  District Boundary
 -  Ancient Monument
 -  Area Conservation
 -  SSSI
 -  Special Area of Conservation
 -  NNR (Outside district boundary)
 -  Settlement

 South Kesteven Landscape Character Assessment

ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGNATIONS AND POLICIES

Figure 12

July 2006

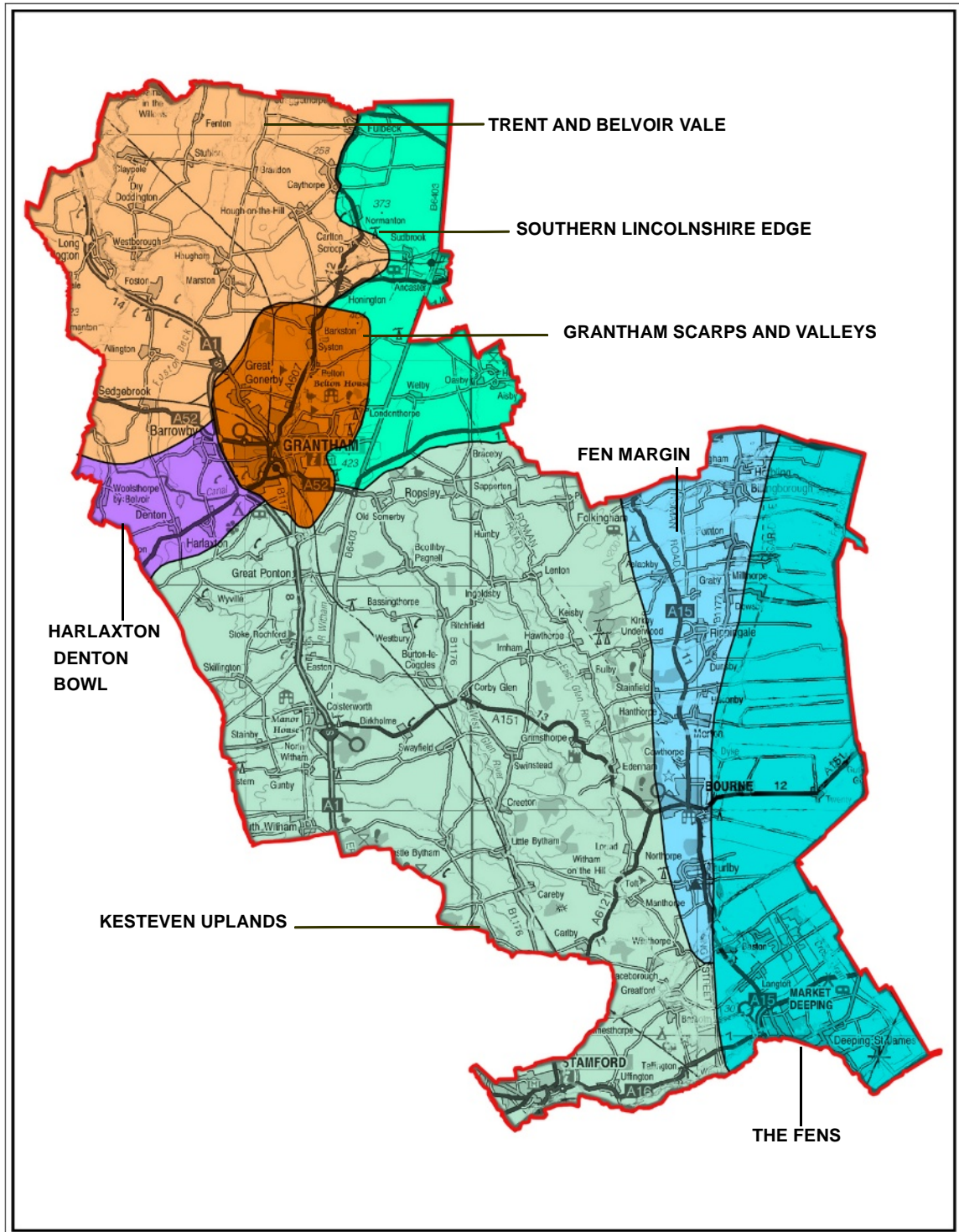
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INTRODUCTION



- 4.1 Landscape character areas are broad geographic areas with a distinct pattern of elements that occur consistently in a particular type of landscape. This arises from the combination of geology, topography, soils, land use, field patterns and human settlement. These create distinctive landscapes and places of individual character.
- 4.2 Landscape character assessment can be applied at a variety of scales from the national level, to the county, district or parish level. This district scale assessment provides an approach to identify the key variations in character that occur within South Kesteven. It is not a detailed record of every individual woodland field, lane or village.
- 4.3 This assessment builds upon the national assessment of landscape character completed by Natural England. In some instances, for example the Kesteven Uplands, the character area name is unchanged from that identified within the Natural England assessment, although the boundary of the area has been amended as a result of more detailed assessment. In other areas, the countryside character areas have been subdivided to reflect local variations in character, for example the Fen Margin and the Harlaxton Denton Bowl, where new character areas have been identified as part of this assessment. A total of seven district landscape character areas have been identified as follows;

1	Kesteven Uplands
2	Trent and Belvoir Vale
3	Southern Lincolnshire Edge
4	Harlaxton/Denton Bowl
5	Grantham Scarps and Valleys
6	Fen Margin
7	The Fens

- 4.4 The boundaries of each character area are identified on Figure 13. A detailed description of each character area is provided on the following pages.
- 4.5 In some instances, the boundaries between individual landscape character areas are clearly defined and easily recognisable on the ground. For example, the boundary between the Fens and Fen Margin landscape character areas is clearly defined by a marked change in visual enclosure. In other locations, such as the boundaries between the Kesteven Uplands and the Southern Lincolnshire Edge, the change in the landscape is more subtle and the boundaries are less distinct. No definitive line can be drawn between areas and the boundaries illustrated should be considered loosely defined.



KEY

-  District Boundary
-  Character Area Boundary



South Kesteven Landscape Character Assessment

CHARACTER AREAS

Figure 13

July 2006



4.6 Key Characteristics

- A relatively unified, simple, medium-scale agricultural landscape, with a high proportion of historic woodland.
 - Undulating landform based around the valleys of the Rivers Witham and East and West Glen and the Welland to the south.
 - Picturesque villages built of local limestone, with collyweston slate roofs to the south, and pantiles to the north.
- High concentration of houses and parks, with areas of farmland under estate management.
 - A dispersed, nucleated settlement pattern, mostly following the river valleys.
 - Enclosed mostly by hedgerows, with hedgerow trees.
 - Modern human influences include airfields and the A1, Great North Road.

4.7 Location and Boundaries



4.8 The Kesteven Uplands share its name and most of the same geographic area with the Natural England character area number 75. Differences to the boundaries occur to the north around Grantham and Harlaxton and to the south west where the area meets the Fens. This District character assessment includes additional character areas in these locations and amends

the countryside agency boundaries.

4.9 The Kesteven Uplands extend from Grantham in the north, covering a large part of the District to the south. The District boundary forms the western and southern boundary to this character area. The eastern boundary extends north to south, broadly in a line between Folkingham through to Thurlby, where the upland character gives way to a transitional zone with the Fens.

Physical Influences

4.10 The landform rolls very gently with the three north/south valleys of the Rivers Witham, East and West Glen providing the main topographic features. The rivers meander through their valleys. The River Welland runs to the east through Stamford creating a valley to the very south of the character area.



Stamford

4.11 The underlying limestone geology provides free drainage over much of the area. The rivers themselves are mostly small in scale, and the East and West Glen Rivers in particular are rather hard to discern in the wider landscape. Scattered swallow holes exist along the West Glen River.

4.12 The underlying limestone generates and supports a sheltered well-drained loam, but there are also areas of clay which are less permeable and seasonally waterlogged.

Human Influences

4.13 The word 'Kesteven' comes partly from the Celtic word 'coed' meaning wood, and much woodland still occurs across the area. This is particularly evident in Figure 8 which shows the contrast with the surrounding areas. Much of the woodland is established on the higher wetter ground. The Roman Road 'Ermine Street' passes through the area, and part of the route is now followed by the A1, Great North Road. There are monastic influences in the area, and the medieval farmed landscape can still be seen in places with regular field boundaries.

4.14 Settlement is dispersed, with small traditional villages, mostly following the river valleys, though a few are located in the valley bottom. Traditional buildings are generally constructed with the warm honey-coloured local stone, and to the south with 'colleyweston' slate, which is actually a slightly sandy limestone. The town of

Stamford has some particularly fine buildings and is noted for its architecture and unspoilt medieval and Georgian character. To the north of the Kesteven Uplands, brick and pantile become more frequent building materials alongside the stone.

4.15 The landscape contains a number of historic parks and houses, including Stoke Rochford and Grimsthorpe. The parkland character of the sites contributes positively to the wider landscape.

4.16 Alongside forestry, agriculture is the main land use in the Kesteven Uplands. The higher ground is dominated by arable land, pylons in large side fields, enclosed by hedgerows with intermittent trees. Pasture fields are more common in the valleys. Farms are generally medium in size with a range of traditional and modern farm buildings. Large areas of land appear to be managed by estates, particularly Stoke Rochford and Grimsthorpe. These areas combine forestry, farming and parkland, and have a well tended appearance.

4.17 The woodlands vary but most are medium in size, with a good proportion of deciduous and ancient woodland, alongside some more commercial plantations.

4.18 Modern human influences include the A1 and the East Coast Main Line Railway. These are both locally dominant features, and the traffic on parts of the A1 can be seen over a relatively wide area. Other modern human influences include powerlines, airfields and

occasional industrial complexes such as at Easton. Overall however, these are minor elements in the wider predominantly rural landscape.

Landscape Character

- 4.19 The physical and human characteristics combine to create a distinctive and mostly unified and consistent landscape character. This is a mostly harmonious rural landscape, with farmland, woodland and parkland with small stone-built villages. Where the undulations are more pronounced, with small woodlands and fields, it is a relatively small-scale intimate landscape. The higher land tends to be more open with bigger fields and woodland blocks creating a larger scale yet simple rural landscape.
- 4.20 The character of the Kesteven Uplands merges gently to the north with the Lincolnshire Edge, and with the more complex landscape around Grantham and Harlaxton.
- 4.21 To the east, the land descends, giving way to a less undulating landscape with fewer woodlands in the Fen Margins. This area is less scenic than the area of the Kesteven Uplands to the east.
- 4.22 The south-eastern corner of the character area near Tallington has a less defined character as the landscape merges with the Fens to the east. This landscape is less undulating, with a greater proportion of human influences including mineral works.

Settlement

- 4.23 Settlement is dispersed across the Kesteven Uplands, with a series of mainly small villages, with a high proportion of traditional buildings. The villages often follow the river valleys, but are not necessarily in the valley bottom.
- 4.24 The villages are mostly nucleated with a simple street layout. There are few sizeable public spaces or villages

greens. Within the historic centres of the villages, properties frequently front directly onto the streets, with minimal or no front gardens. Some properties are set back further, with garden enclosure formed by stone walls or hedges.

- 4.25 Building materials are predominantly warm honey-coloured local stone and roofing materials are mainly red clay tiles and pantiles, with some 'collyweston slate' to the south of the area.
- 4.26 The settlement edges are typically varied often with lower density development. Some properties are set within large gardens, which allow trees to develop providing a softer edge and transition to the often wooded landscape.
- 4.27 The villages contain some more modern developments. These are often sympathetically incorporated at an appropriate scale to the surrounding landscape. The villages contain few significant areas of modern development.
- 4.28 The town of Stamford is located to the south of the character area. Stamford was described by Pevesner as "The climax (of Lincolnshire) in terms of historical as well as architectural significance." The town of Stamford dates back over 1000 years. It thrived under the



Local stone buildings in Stamford

Corby Glen



Ropsley



Corby Glen

Normans with an economy based on wool, with good communication provided by the Great North Road, and via the River Welland to the north sea. By the 13th Century Stamford was one of the 10 largest towns in England, and many buildings still survive from this period.

4.29 The town prospered further during the Georgian period and the fabric of the town today reflects this history. The centre of the town, protected by Conservation Area status retains a strong historic character. The valley of the River Welland extends into the town and provides a valuable open space and fine views to some of the churches.

4.30 More modern development exists around the edge of the town, including residential and employment development. The settlement edges are varied, some providing a soft planted edge, and other areas that are more stark and regular. Any new development on the edge of town should present a varied settlement edge including landscape treatment. Views towards the town centre and the church

towers and spires should be protected.

Landscape Sensitivity

4.31 The landscape of the Kesteven Uplands is medium in scale with a strong landscape pattern of woodland and hedgerows. It contains areas of sensitive landscape including the historic parks and areas around the edge of the often picturesque villages. Away from the main transport corridors it is a relatively tranquil landscape.

4.32 Landscape sensitivity to new employment or residential proposals is likely to be **medium to high**, because of the high proportion of valuable landscape elements and relatively undisturbed character. The strong landscape pattern including many woodlands could, however, in places be beneficial in assimilating new development.

4.33 Landscape sensitivity to wind energy proposals is also



Stamford



Great Casterton

likely to be **medium** to **high** to large scale proposals. Proposals are likely to be difficult to accommodate in this medium-scale landscape with its high proportion of valuable landscape elements.

4.34 The landscape management objectives for the Kesteven Uplands include:

- Protect and improve field boundary condition.
- Protect existing hedgerow trees.
- Plant new hedgerow trees.
- Maintain important grassland areas.
- Protect important and distinctive woodland cover.
- Protect historic parkland.
- Protect field trees, particularly in parkland and in large arable fields.
- Maintain traditional village forms.
- Use of limestone for new construction in the villages and countryside.
- Use of new planting to minimise the visual impact of major roads and industrial buildings.
- Pay special attention to sensitive spaces around the edge of historic towns such as Stamford and the villages.
- Maintain open areas that extend into the towns and villages.



4.35 Key Characteristics

- A relatively simple, medium to large-scale, open arable or mixed farming landscape.
- Flat or very gently undulating topography
- Simple regular fields enclosed by hawthorn hedges.
- Relatively few hedgerow trees and virtually no woodland.
- Small villages typically located on slightly rising land.
- Church towers and spires visible across the landscape.
- Buildings styles vary, but a high proportion of brick with dark red pantiles

4.36 Location and Boundaries



4.37 The Trent and Belvoir Vale character area lies to the north-west of the District. The southern boundary is formed by the undulating and rising ground that extends from south of Woolsthorpe by Belvoir, to the north of Barrowby and Great Gonerby and on towards Barkston. The eastern boundary is formed by the rising ground east of Barkston and Fulbeck. The western and northern boundaries of the character area are formed by the district boundary, although the Trent and Belvoir Vale

extends beyond the district boundary into Leicestershire and Nottinghamshire.

Physical Influences

4.38 Within South Kesteven, the vale overlies Lower Lias triassic clays, with alluvium and river terrace deposits, forming the superficial deposits. The vales are generally flat or gently undulating, with land typically between 20m and 40m AOD. Glacial activity has influenced the landform and soils of the area. Deposits from the glacial lake which formed in what is now the Vale of Belvoir forced the River Trent to take a northerly course.

4.39 Where the soils overlie the clay without the glacial deposits they tend to be heavy and poorly drained. This land is often under pasture. Where the patchy deposits of glacial materials including sand and gravel overlie the clay, thinner free-draining soils occur which are more commonly under arable cultivation.

4.40 The River Witham is the main watercourse across the



vale, flowing north from Grantham, past Barkston and through Marston and Long Bennington. The Witham eventually reaches the Lincoln Gap. There are a number of smaller watercourses including Foston Beck. The watercourses tend not to be prominent in the landscape.

Human Influences

- 4.41 There is little evidence of early use of settlement in the area, probably because the heavy soils would have been covered by dense damp woodland making the area relatively inaccessible. Roman activity is evident, however, with the Great North Road which extends between Grantham and Newark. Once cleared and drained the land was reasonably productive, and in recent history the area has always been reasonably wealthy. The pattern of small villages and larger market towns developed during the medieval period.
- 4.42 Enclosure of the area was relatively early, beginning in the Vale in the 16th century. By the 1800's most of the land was enclosed.
- 4.43 Settlement comprises a network of small clustered villages dispersed through the area. The settlements are initially all located on areas of slightly rising ground, where better drainage improved agricultural productivity, and livestock could graze on the lower lying areas. This characteristic is particularly noticeable at Dry Doddington.
- 4.44 Building styles vary but there is a large proportion of brick, with dark red pantiles and tiles or slate. Stone is limited in use to churches and other major buildings. There are a

few major urbanising influences in the area. The A1 passes through the area and is locally noticeable. Major powerlines also extend from the power stations (beyond the District) along the Trent Valley.

Landscape Character

- 4.45 The gentle landform, and open or arable or mixed farmland, creates a strongly rural feel. The landscape is medium to large in scale, with relatively simple regular fields, frequently enclosed by hawthorn hedgerows. The hedgerows are in places fragmented. There are relatively few hedgerow trees and virtually no woodlands. Tree cover is most noticeable around the villages, which are typically situated on slightly rising ground.
- 4.46 The villages with their church towers and spires are noticeable in the views across the landscape and provide character. The villages include a range of traditional brick buildings and some more modern housing. Most, however, are small in scale and are in keeping with the traditional form of the settlements.
- 4.47 Within South Kesteven the vale contains no power stations or major areas of mineral extraction, helping to maintain a rural feel compared with the wider Trent Valley to the north. The Trent Valley power stations are visible at a distance in clear conditions.

Settlement

- 4.48 Settlement across the Trent and Belvoir Vales comprises small to medium sized villages, distributed relatively evenly across the area and connected via a network of roads and lanes. Many villages are situated in slightly

rising land that historically would have been better drained than the surrounding vales. Churches within these villages can provide elevated landmarks across the wider landscape, and the distinctive leaning spire at Dry Doddington is a good example.

4.49 The smaller villages tend to have a core of vernacular buildings, with modern infill. Typical building materials comprise red brick and clay pantile. A distinctive English bond within the local brickwork, sometimes using different coloured bricks for the headers and stretches is characteristic of the area. Stone is usually reserved for churches and major houses. To the east of the area, within villages including Hough on the Hill and Caythorpe, stone becomes a more commonly used building material.



4.50 Most villages follow a nucleated form, some with small greens in the centre. Building densities are generally low.

4.51 Larger villages include Allington and Long Bennington, and these contain some larger areas of twentieth century development, including detached houses and

bungalows, which are not always locally distinctive.

4.52 Any new development in the villages should be consistent with established character. This should be sympathetic to the generally low density of development, and provide a varied edge to the settlement, including some tree planting.

Landscape Sensitivity

4.53 The landscape of the Trent and Belvoir Vale is medium to large in scale, with a simple and sometimes weak landscape pattern. There are few woodlands, which ensures open views are possible. Powerlines and the A1 ensure human influences. There are few landscape features of intrinsic sensitivity.

4.54 Landscape sensitivity to new employment and residential proposals is likely to be **medium**. Whilst the landscape itself contains relatively few sensitive features, there is little structure to help assimilate new development. Woodlands and trees in the landscape are typically associated with the settlement, so new development assimilated within existing settlement edges, could be mitigated by appropriate landscape proposals in keeping with the established character.

4.55 Landscape sensitivity to wind energy proposals is likely to be **medium**. Whilst there are few features of intrinsic landscape sensitivity, the open visual character of the landscape would ensure extensive visibility. Locations away from sensitive settlements, and close to existing human influences such as the A1 and power lines are likely to offer the more appropriate locations. The open nature of the landscape would mean that the cumulative impact of any proposals should be considered so that the character of the landscape does not become dominated by any wind energy proposals.

4.56 The landscape management objectives for the Trent and Belvoir Vale include;

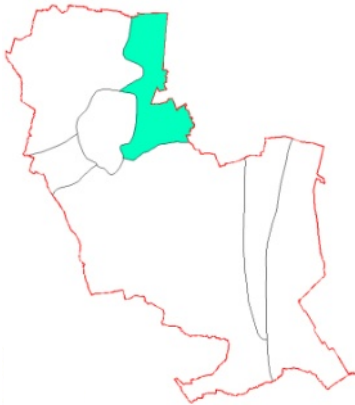
- Maintain and improve field boundary condition.
- Retain ditch patterns.
- Maintain wet grassland areas.
- Protect any woodland cover.
- Maintain existing hedgerow trees and plant new hedgerow trees.
- Provide new woodland planting with any new large-scale agricultural buildings.
- Maintain views to elevated villages and churches.



4.57 Key Characteristics

- Large-scale open arable landscape.
 - Dominant western scarp slope known as the 'Cliff'.
 - Large rectilinear fields with some fragmented hedgerows and shelterbelts.
- Sparse settlement pattern on top of the escarpment.
 - Active and redundant airfields.

4.58 Location and Boundaries



4.59 The Southern Lincolnshire Edge lies to the north and east of Grantham, The western boundary generally follows the A607 through Belton, Barkston and Normanton. The A52 broadly defines the southern boundary where the character area merges with the Kesteven Uplands character area. The district boundary forms the northern and eastern limits of the character area, which extends beyond the district boundary into North Kesteven.

Physical influences

4.60 Within South Kesteven the Southern Lincolnshire Edge forms the base of a distinctive spine of limestone that extends north from Grantham, beyond the district, eventually to Whitton on the Humber Estuary. The limestone also extends south, but as a more undulating landscape described as the 'Kesteven Uplands'. The higher ground contrasts with the lower lying vale to the west.

4.61 The limestone spine forms a distinctive western scarp slope known as the 'Cliff'. Within South Kesteven this is not so pronounced as it is to the north. Between Leadenham and Grantham the scarp comprises a two-tier arrangement with the upper limestone scarp and lower ironstone scarp. A noticeable gap in the higher land occurs at Ancaster, at the head of the river Sleas.

4.62 The land descends gently to the east from the crest of the Cliff (which is typically at 120-130m AOD), creating an open area of upland, with occasional dry valleys.

4.63 The soils developed over the limestone are generally thin and well-drained. Heavier clays with poorer drainage

occur on some of the slopes.

Human Influences

4.64 The area has been settled since the Bronze Age, with archaeological evidence present along the edge. Roman settlement occurred at Ancaster on the Roman road Ermine Street. The area was farmed during the Medieval period. The villages are mainly located along the west of the Edge on the lower lying ground. The higher eastern slopes contain very few settlements, with only some isolated farms and properties. The buildings comprise a mixture of stone and brick-built buildings with tile or pantile roofs.

Landscape Character

4.65 The overall character is of a large-scale, open, arable landscape. The west-facing scarp contains some small areas of woodland along the steeper slopes, but it is mostly open. The higher land on top of the escarpment comprises open rectilinear fields under arable cultivation, with some fragmented hedgerows, and few hedgerow trees. There are some shelterbelts. The farmsteads are isolated, with some containing large scale agricultural buildings. Airfields are a characteristic element in the landscape; Barkston Heath remains as an active airfield, but others such as Spitalgate airfield, next to the Prince William Barracks in Grantham are now disused.

4.66 Syston Park, and the associated woodland and parkland adds variety in the landscape, and extends across the western scarp slope.

4.67 Overall it is a remote and relatively simple agricultural landscape. The large rectilinear arable fields allow extensive views, limited by distant woodlands or the overlapping of hedgerows. There is a sparse settlement pattern. The airfields provide activity in an otherwise

relatively quiet landscape.

Settlement

4.68 The Southern Lincolnshire Edge is a sparsely populated area. Settlement is mostly concentrated along the western edge of the character area at the boundary with the Trent and Belvoir Vales. These villages include Fulbeck, Caythorpe and Honington.

4.69 The villages are mostly small and of varied form, some with closely developed centres to the villages, whilst others are looser collections of properties. The villages are typically developed around a number of streets, none have notable areas of village greens.



4.70 Typical building materials include limestone, with pantile or slate roofs for the older properties. Brick has been used for most of the twentieth century infill development.

4.71 There are a number of new stone houses and barn conversions. Building densities vary in the villages, although many properties are set within large gardens. The larger plots have allowed mature gardens to develop, and these soften the boundaries between the villages and the surrounding open arable land.

4.72 Any further built development in the villages should respect and reinforce this characteristic and should

maintain the shape and form of the villages.

Landscape Sensitivity

4.73 The Southern Lincolnshire Edge is a large scale relatively open, landscape, with a simple pattern of fields and lanes. Woodland is orientated on the scarp edge to the west of the area and there is little settlement. Airfields provide a human influence.

4.74 There are few features of intrinsic sensitivity, and few detracting elements. The landscape is mostly rural and remote.

4.75 Landscape sensitivity to new employment and residential proposals is likely to be **medium to high**. Whilst the landscape itself contains relatively few sensitive landscape features, the remote and rural character suggests that large-scale new built development would be inappropriate. Large-scale agricultural buildings linked to existing farmsteads would be more easily accommodated if accompanied by an appropriate landscape scheme.

4.76 Landscape sensitivity to wind energy proposals would be **medium**. The open nature of the landscape would result

in long range views of any turbines, but there are relatively few sensitive landscape features, and little settlement. The large scale and nature of the landscape, and simple topography, could accommodate turbines more easily than the smaller-scale landscape in other parts of the district.

4.77 **The landscape management objectives for the South Lincolnshire Edge include;**

- Retain and enhance traditional field boundaries including hedgerows and limestone walls.
- Maintain field sizes, avoiding rationalisation into larger fields.
- Protect and enhance shelterbelts and woodland.
- Protect historic parks.
- Maintain traditional village forms.
- Use of limestone for new construction in the villages or countryside.
- Large-scale agricultural buildings could be acceptable if carefully designed with appropriate landscape schemes.



4.78 Key Characteristics

- Varied topography, hills, slopes and valleys.
- Small to medium-scale landscape.
- Patchwork of land use including woodlands, arable and pasture land.
- Historic parkland at Harlaxton, and tree lined roads associated with other estates.
- Villages with stone built or brick properties, with some distinctive properties associated with the estates.

4.79 Location and Boundaries



4.80 This character area lies to the east of Grantham and encompasses the villages of Woolsthorpe by Belvoir, Denton, Harlaxton and Barrowby. The northern boundary lies north of Woolsthorpe and Barrowby, where the character area gives way to the flatter topography of the Vale.

4.81 The A1 and Grantham form the eastern boundary. The District boundary forms the western edge of the character area, west of Woolsthorpe, although a similar landscape character exists to the west beyond the District boundary, encompassing Belvoir Castle, within Melton Mowbray Borough.

4.82 The southern boundary is formed by the scarp of land south of Harlaxton and Denton, where the land rises to become the Kesteven Uplands character area.

Physical Influences

4.83 Most of the character area overlies middle lias, overlain with glacial till, which gives rise to a variety of soils. There is some high quality agricultural land. The topography of the area is quite varied, which is one of the distinguishing features from the Vale of Belvoir to the north and the Kesteven Uplands to the south.

4.84 A broad scarp of high land typically between 120 and 140m AOD extends east/ west, to the south of Harlaxton and Denton, which descends to a valley or bowl of lower ground typically between 60m and 80m AOD including Harlaxton and Denton.

4.85 The land then rises again to the north, reaching 115m AOD east of Woolsthorpe, and rises separately to the north east, to reach 100m at Barrowby. Woolsthorpe village lies on lower ground hill, typically at 60m AOD.

These valleys, hills and slopes create a fairly small-scale landscape distinctive from the land around to the north and south.

Human Influences

4.86 The land use within the area follows the topography and soils that underlie it. Much of the steeper valley slopes support deciduous woodlands, which are particularly noticeable on the rising land. The areas of higher and flatter land are typically under arable cultivation, although many of the field boundaries are still maintained by hedgerows, with a good proportion of hedgerow trees. Some of the lower-lying land and small-scale fields around the villages are under pasture.



Woolsthorpe

4.87 There is a nucleated settlement pattern, with the villages of Woosthorpe, Harlaxton and Denton generally nestled within the valleys. These villages contain many older properties, often associated with the Bevoir and Welby estates, which control much of the land within the area. The older properties are often constructed of local limestone or ironstone, which has a distinctive orange colour. Roofing materials include tile and pantile. There are also a number of brick-built houses, and properties constructed of both brick and stone. The villages of Harlaxton and Denton contain some large impressive properties associated with the estates.

4.88 Barrowby lies on the higher land west of Grantham and

has a small core of vernacular properties. It also has a much larger area of 20th century housing, that is not locally distinctive.

4.89 Harlaxton Manor, now part of the University of Evansville, forms a dramatic feature in the landscape. The towers and spires of the Manor rise against the wooded slopes overlooking Harlaxton Park.



Denton



View along driveway leading to Harlaxton Manor

4.90 There are no major roads crossing the area, but historic transport routes including the Grantham Canal and dismantled railway lines cross the landscape. These are frequently lined by hedges and trees, and contribute to the small-scale wooded character of the landscape, as well as providing opportunities now for walking and cycling. A number of roads have avenue planting alongside, probably associated with the local estates. Denton reservoir, constructed to supply the Grantham Canal, now provides an area of open water and offers an opportunity for recreation.

Landscape Character

4.91 The character of the landscape arises from the physical characteristics, including the small-scale variations in topography, combined with the varied landcover and distinctive villages. The Belvoir and Welby estates also appear to have significant influence on the landscape character, through consistent management of the land and high proportion of woodland and tree cover. The area also provides a transition between the larger-scale, flatter and more open landscape of the Vale of Belvoir to the north, with its brick and tile buildings, and the Kesteven Uplands to the south, with its more wooded character and stone properties.

4.92 Within the Denton Harlaxton Bowl there are few detracting landscape features. The A607 passes through the area, and the A1 forms the western boundary, but the influence of these roads on overall landscape character is limited. A number of overhead powerlines cross the area but are mostly sensitively sited to minimise adverse landscape impacts. There are longer-range views across the landscape to Belvoir Castle which lies west of the District.

4.93 Overall it is a landscape of high scenic value, with a variety of landscape elements including farmland, woodland, water and historic parks. There is a good network of accesses to the countryside, and the villages add to the character of the countryside, particularly with their 'historic estate character'.

Settlement

4.94 Settlement in the Harlaxton Denton Bowl comprises small villages, with building styles influenced by former or existing estate management. Woolshorpe, Denton and Harlaxton contain a high proportion of orange 'ironstone' buildings, with pantile roofs. There are also red brick properties. Buildings include simple cottages and some

grand individual houses. Harlaxton has a nucleated form, whilst Denton and Woolshorpe follow a more linear arrangement along the main street. The estate management results in a number of properties having consistent building details and colours, providing an attractive unity. The villages also contain more modern houses and conversions, but overall an attractive consistent character remains.



Harlaxton



Harlaxton

4.95 Building densities vary, and the built form includes properties at the back edge of footways, along with houses set within larger gardens. The varied layout adds to the character of the villages. Boundary treatments include stone walls, hedges and some fences.

4.96 The villages tend to have varied settlement edges, with some gardens including mature trees and hedgerows. This arrangement generally provides a successful transition to the rural area beyond the village. Any new or infill built development should respect this characteristic.

4.97 Barrowby is larger village, with a small core of vernacular buildings and some more extensive areas of twentieth century development. Parts of the village edge have a more abrupt boundary with the adjacent countryside. Any further built development should provide a more varied settlement edge and a softer transition with planting.

Landscape Sensitivity

4.98 The Harlaxton Denton Bowl is a small to medium-scale landscape, with a varied topography and landcover. The landscape contains some important elements including Harlaxton Park, tree avenues and woodlands and a number of attractive villages. It is a landscape of high scenic value with important views to Belvior Castle which lies outside the District.

4.99 Landscape sensitivity to new employment and residential proposals is likely to be **high**. The scale of the landscape and range of landscape elements would make it difficult to assimilate major development within most of the character area. The eastern edge of the character area adjacent to Grantham and the A1 may, however, provide some opportunities if new landscape planting associated with new development is used to soften the existing urban edge.

4.100 Landscape sensitivity to wind energy proposals would be **high**. Wind turbines are likely to be on a scale that would be difficult to assimilate in this landscape. Views across the landscape are also important to Harlaxton Manor, Belvior Castle and the villages. Wind turbines could detract from these existing landmarks and are, therefore, likely to be unsuitable.

4.101 The landscape management objectives for the Harlaxton Denton Bowl include;

- Maintain the variety of land uses, with mixed farmland, woodland and parkland.
- Protect and enhance the woodlands.
- Resist the development of large-scale agricultural buildings, unless very carefully sited and designed.
- Protect and enhance ditches watercourses and the Grantham canal.
- Maintain expansive views from the rising land.



4.102 Key Characteristics

- Built development in Grantham is generally on the lower lying land in the valleys.
- Steep scarp slopes to the east and south, with woodland or pasture cover.
- Generally medium-scale arable fields, with relatively few hedgerow trees to the west and north.
- Small-scale hedged pasture fields with hedgerow trees to the east and south.
- Attractive parkland with attractive woodland and parkland trees at Belton.
- Small villages, separated from Grantham town by narrow areas of open countryside.

4.103 Location and Boundaries



4.104 Grantham lies at the junction of a range of landscape areas, with the Trent and Belvoir Vales to the north and west, the Lincolnshire Uplands to the east and the Kesteven Uplands to the south. The town of Grantham has grown up broadly following the valley of the River Witham, which flows to the north, and on other generally lower lying land at the junction of these character areas. The landscape and the town combine to influence the character of the wider landscape. The urban influences, and agricultural landscape, combine to create a distinct landscape character area with its own characteristics and

landscape issues. Inevitably with a character area at the junction of other distinct areas, the boundaries are not easy to define. However, for the purpose of this study the boundaries of this character area are established to the north by Great Gonerby and Belton, to the west by the A1, to the south by Gorse Lane, and to the east by the rising land at Halls Hill /Londonthorpe Wood.

Physical Influences

4.105 Physically this character area is influenced by the surrounding areas. The higher land to the south east is situated on the limestone and contains some free-draining loams. Higher land over limestone occurs to the east and north at Great Gonerby and towards Barrowby. The valley of the River Witham and its tributaries contain river deposits and the majority of the town is developed on these.

4.106 Topography is one of the most important physical influences on the character of the area, with the valley of the River Witham extending to the north towards

Barkston. Other smaller watercourses extend from the east, creating tributary valleys that feed into the Witham.

4.107 The land rises quite sharply to the east at Somerby Hill, Halls Hill towards Harrowby and Londonthorpe.

4.108 The land also rises steeply to the south towards Gorse Lane.

4.109 To the west of Grantham, construction of the A1 during the mid 20th century took the main through traffic out of the town itself. The new road is mostly “in cutting” as it passes the town, reducing its physical influence. Industrial and residential development now extends to the A1.

4.110 The historic Belton House and Parkland lies immediately north of Grantham, and the Parkland provides an attractive edge to the town. Free pedestrian access to the park is possible from Grantham, with paying visitors entering through Belton village.

4.111 The more recently planted parkland west of Belton, at Belton Country Club and Golf course, extends the parkland character.

4.112 The open areas around the town have a variety of uses. The steeper slopes tend to be wooded, or under pasture, such as at Londonthorpe Wood and Halls Hill. Some of the less steep slopes are under arable cultivation, such as the land north of the A52. Across other areas of land the topography is less dramatic, but it rises towards the A1 and Great Gonerby. The surrounding higher land characterises Grantham and has undoubtedly shaped the form of the town today.

Human Influences

4.113 Grantham developed along the Great North Road and the town centre contains a range of fine stone buildings, including coaching inns. The East Coast Main Line also

passes through the town, and the good communications led to a range of industrial and commercial development. Most of the historic development in the town lies in the valley bottom.



Manthorpe



Manthorpe

4.114 The town saw a more rapid expansion during the twentieth century with some larger housing estates and industrial development spreading out along the valleys, and in some cases up the surrounding slopes. The town has now extended towards Great Gonerby, Belton and Barrowby, although the villages do retain their separate identities, and some relatively small areas of open landscape between the villages and Grantham town itself. Many of the 20th Century housing areas are not particularly locally distinctive.

Landscape Character

4.115 The landscape character varies around the town, with the physical and human influences. In general the character

is defined by the residential and industrial development in Grantham following the base of the valleys with rising ground beyond.

- 4.116 Built development on the rising ground is generally avoided, which gives the town an enclosed character.
- 4.117 In some of the older parts of town, such as at Somerby Hill, relatively low density housing with mature gardens gives a wooded feel to the valley bottom, with more open arable land in the higher slopes.
- 4.118 Some more recent higher density development, such as at Gonerby Hill Foot, provides a stark edge to the town, and the housing contrasts with the countryside beyond.
- 4.119 In general, however, keeping the development to the lower slopes has maintained a rural feel to the higher land, and has contained the urban influence on the wider landscape.
- 4.120 The parkland at Belton House and Belton Country Club is also distinctive, and a positive influence on the surrounding landscape character.

Settlement

- 4.121 The town has developed in the valley of the River Witham, with the core of historic development on the lower lying ground. The town centre comprises some fine stone buildings, and St Wulframs Church, the spire of which is visible over a wide area. The good communications provided by the Great North Road and the East Coast Main Line, (formerly the Great Northern

Railway) have led to more recent expansion. Some 20th Century residential areas, and employment development, have spread along the valleys and in some cases up the surrounding slopes.

- 4.122 The town of Grantham now includes the once separate village of Manthorpe, which lies to the north. Manthorpe nevertheless retains a distinct character, with a range of stone and brick-built properties extending along the A607.
- 4.123 To the north west of the town 20th Century development has extended up the valley slopes at Gonerby Hill Foot. A small open area of land separates Gonerby Hill Foot from the village of Great Gonerby, which is located on a crest of higher land, and retains its distinct identity with its own church and community facilities. Great Gonerby includes a core of older properties, constructed of stone and brick, with extensive surrounding areas of more recent residential development of less distinctive character. The context of the village on the higher land contrasts with Grantham in the valley bottom and the separate identity should be maintained.
- 4.124 To the west of the town residential and employment development has extended towards the A1. Much of the A1 is in cutting and is enclosed by mature highway planting. This provides a firm boundary to the town. There are currently areas of open land along the western edge of town.



4.125 Some open areas are farmed, such as north of the A52, and some are unmanaged such as at Fairview Farm south of the A52. These areas of landscape are influenced by the residential areas adjacent to them and do not make a significant contribution to the setting of the town. Stubbock Hill to the north of the A52 is an area of higher land and is more important in containing the town in the valley, following the established character.

4.126 The land rises abruptly to the south and west of the town and urban development has extended to the base of the slopes. The rising land, which is partly wooded, provides a context to the residential and employment area. Some of these areas are developed to a relatively low density, with mature trees established in the gardens. This provides a soft character to the areas and helps to assimilate the urban areas with the more rural countryside on the higher land.

4.127 An area of employment land, including car showrooms is established on the higher ground south of Grantham along the B1174. The large-scale buildings in this location fit with the larger-scale flatter landscape. Whilst the buildings are visible, the relatively flat landform restricts visibility to the front buildings.

4.128 The village of Belton and Belton House lies north of Grantham. Belton House is owned by the National Trust and is a fine example of a neo Caroline Country House. Belton village itself contains some fine stone built houses and cottages, of character consistent with Belton House. The village and immediate surroundings are a high quality environment where it is important to retain the existing character.

4.129 The valley of the River Witham extends into the town from the north, and provides an important green space within the urban area. To the north the valley is farmed. As the valley extends into the town, it includes sports

pitches and areas of parkland, with a more intensively-managed character.

4.130 To the north of Great Gonerby, the land descends towards the Trent and Belvoir Vale. An area of land with an established urban character has developed at Gonerby Moor. This includes large-scale employment and retail development set against the backdrop of rising land. The area includes modern large-scale metal-clad buildings and extensive parking areas. There is little landscape structure and the area would benefit from a stronger green infrastructure to assimilate the area within the wider landscape.

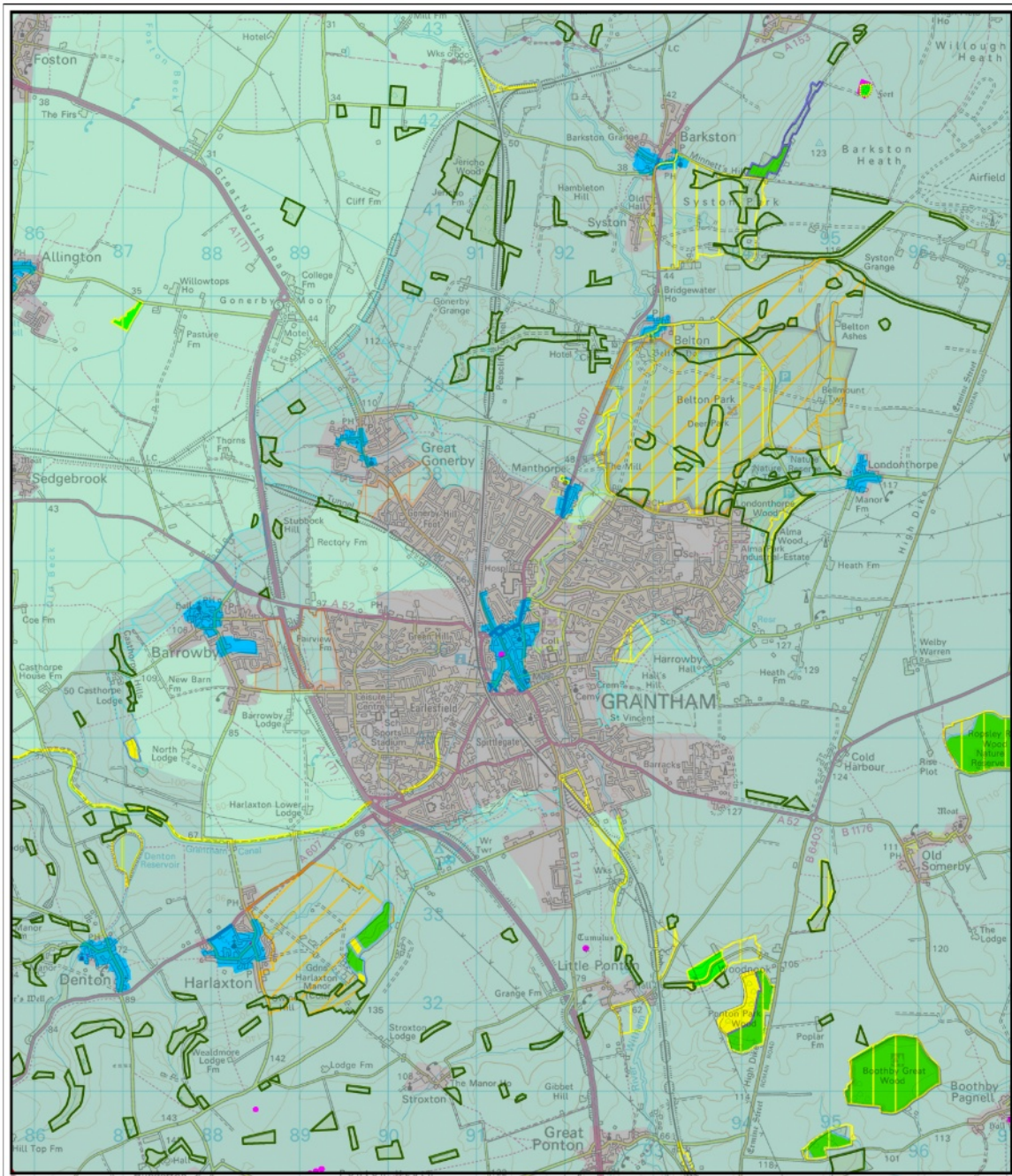
Landscape Sensitivity

4.131 The Grantham Scarps and Valleys character area is a complex area influenced by the surrounding character areas, and depending on the topography, landscape and human influences. The landscape is generally small in scale, and areas of particular sensitivity includes the historic Belton Park and the wooded and parkland slopes to the east of the town. There are some areas closer to the edge of town, containing little of intrinsic landscape interest, that would offer the scope for development. New development and associated landscape planting could soften some of the existing hard urban edges to the town. Other areas are of medium sensitivity because of the landscape elements, visibility or general character. These areas may offer some scope for development if sensitively designed and mitigated. The plan at Figure 17 shows a broad area of sensitivity to new employment and residential purposes. Sensitivity would range from **low to high**, depending on the nature of the site, and the scale and type of the development proposal. In general terms, new development should avoid the higher valley slopes, and should not establish new built development on the skyline.

















4.132 Landscape sensitivity to wind energy proposals would be **high** across the whole of the character area. The small scale of the landscape, the complex landscape elements and the proximity to settlement would make it unlikely that any major turbines could be accommodated.

4.133 **The Landscape Management Objectives for Grantham Scarps and Valleys include;**


- Protect and enhance woodlands and parklands.
- Protect and manage field boundaries and hedgerow trees.
- Protect and enhance watercourses.
- Soften harsh urban edges by new woodland planting.
- Avoid built development encroaching on the higher scarp slopes, or 'skylining'.
- Use new development, and associated structural landscape, to soften existing harsh urban edges.
- Maintain a varied urban edge with fringes of countryside extending into the town.
- Consider opportunities for enhanced access to the countryside around the edge of town.
- Protect gaps between Grantham and adjacent villages.
- Where existing development occurs on higher ground such as at Gonerby Hill Foot, consider tree planting proposals to soften the roofscapes on the skyline.



KEY

- | | |
|---|--|
|  District Boundary |  Area Conservation Policy C9 |
|  Prominent Areas for Special Protection EN4 |  SSSI |
|  Prevention of Coalescence EN5 |  Settlement |
|  Historic Parks and Gardens EN7 |  Ancient Replanted Woodland |
|  Protection of Wildlife and Geological Sites EN6 |  Ancient Semi-natural Woodland |
|  Area of Great Landscape Value EN3 |  Lowland Beech and Yew Woodland |
|  Ancient Monument C1 |  Undetermined Woodland |
|  Open areas important to character and setting of built-up areas EN6 |  Wet Woodland |

Disclaimer:
 This information has been gained from the sources below. Accuracy of information cannot be guaranteed.
 Magic.gov.uk Datasets ; English Nature Datasets ; South Kesteven District Council GIS Data

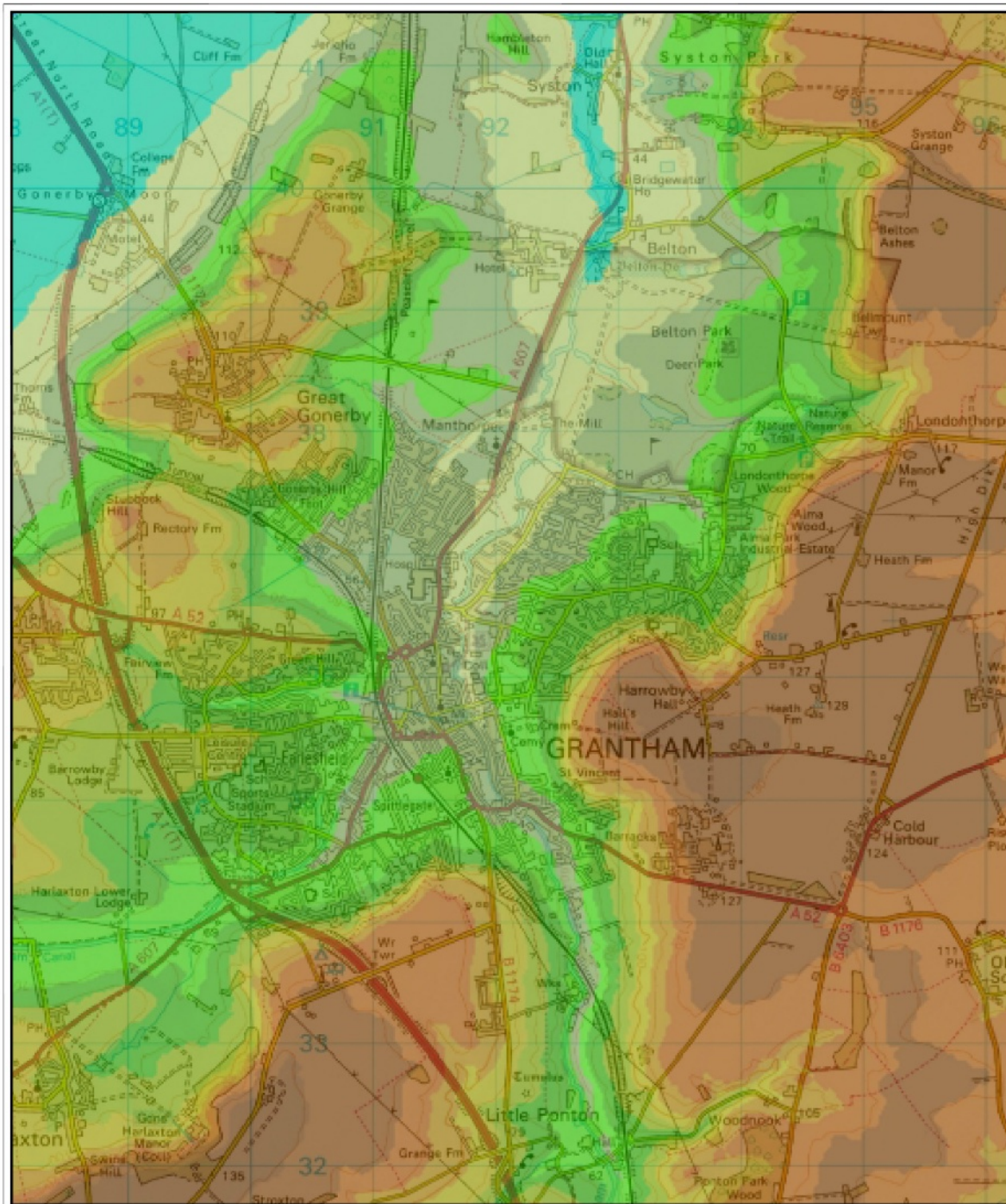
 South Kesteven Landscape Character Assessment

ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGNATIONS AND POLICIES AROUND GRANTHAM












Figure 14

July 2006

GRANTHAM SCARPS AND VALLEYS CHARACTER AREA 4



KEY

 30-40m	 90-100m
 40-50m	 100-110m
 50-60m	 110-120m
 60-70m	 120-130m
 70-80m	 130-140m
 80-90m	



South Kesteven Landscape
Character Assessment

**TOPOGRAPHY
AROUND GRANTHAM**

Figure 15

July 2006



4.134 Key Characteristics

- A transitional area between the wooded Kesteven Uplands and the flat open fens.
- Broad east-facing slope, with local variations in topography.
- Medium-scale rectilinear fields with some hedgerow trees and a variety of farming uses.
- High proportion of settlement along the A15 and B1177 roads provides activity in the landscape.

4.135 Location and Boundaries



Physical Influences

4.136 Physically, the area comprises the east-facing slopes descending from the Kesteven Uplands. Oxford clay is overlain by glacial till, forming land that generally descends to the east with a series of east-facing minor valleys. The slope gives way to the flat topography of the Fen east of B1177 and the A15. The valley of the East Glen River lies to the west and a series of minor watercourses drain east onto the Fens.

Human Influences

4.137 The location of the rising land next to the Fens has led to the establishment of a line of settlement benefiting from

the higher dryer ground, and the proximity to the Fen. Bourne comprises the largest settlement, with smaller villages including Morton, Haconby, Dunsby, Rippingale, Ponton, Horbling and Billingbough. These villages lie along the A15 and B1177.

4.138 The villages contain a variety of properties, with some older limestone and brick properties alongside a variety of modern construction. Many of the newer buildings do not demonstrate a distinct sense of place.

4.139 The land is under a variety of farming uses, with pasture and arable land enclosed by medium-scale hedged fields.

Landscape Character

4.140 The character of the Fen Margin arises from it being a transitional area between the Kesteven Uplands to the west and the Fens to the east. The area demonstrates characteristics evident in both these areas, but at the same time is not typical of either of them.

4.137 The topography is less varied and the landscape generally less scenic than the true Kesteven Uplands to

the west. There is, however, a higher degree of enclosure, with more hedgerow and tree cover than is typical of the Fen. Fields tend to be medium in scale and rectilinear in shape. The high proportion of settlement and the A15 and B1177 roads provides a higher level of activity in the landscape than exists either to the east or west.

4.141 The rising land to the west, on the edge of the Kesteven Uplands, contains a high proportion of woodland. Whilst most of this lies outside the Fen Margin character area, views are possible across the landscape to it. This edge helps to characterise the landscape.

4.142 Whilst the Fen Margin contains few detracting elements, it contains little of intrinsic character or quality either. It is a transitional landscape, borrowing characteristics from adjacent areas. It is also, however, a landscape containing many small settlements, with a number of important routes passing through it. It is, therefore, an area requiring sensitive management.

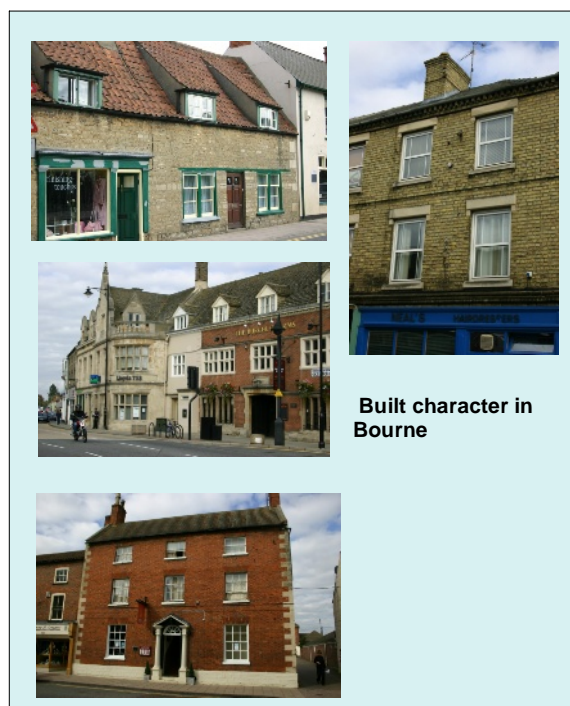
4.143 This transitional landscape between the Kesteven Uplands and the Fens is medium in scale with a high proportion of settlement, and a varied level of enclosure. There is little of intrinsic landscape interest, but also no major detractors. Long views across the landscape are possible to the rising land to the west and the open landscape of the fens to the east. The settlements also influence landscape character, and in places some have stark edges against the open agricultural land. Some development could provide the opportunity to provide a more successful urban edge.

Settlement

4.144 The largest settlement within the Fen Margin is Bourne which lies at the base of the rising land which extends to the Kesteven Uplands. Bourne Wood lies to the west of

the town on the rising land and provides a valuable landscape, ecological and recreational resource.

4.145 Bourne contains an attractive core of historic buildings and the centre is designated as a Conservation Area. Building materials include stone and brick. Bourne Castle lies to the south-west of the town centre. The perimeters of the settlement contain a range of more modern residential and employment development.



4.146 A series of smaller villages and hamlets extends through the fen edge landscape character area. These villages include some of the townscape character of villages further west in the Kesteven Uplands. Overall, however, these settlements have a much more varied mix of building ages and styles and materials.

4.147 The villages generally have a linear form following the main roads that run through the villages. Some villages exhibit a denser urban form close to the village centre, near the church, with a more open or fragmented form towards the village edge. Other villages have a loose

urban form throughout.

4.148 Red brick with clay or concrete tile is the dominant building material, but buff brick and render are also common. There are a limited number of stone buildings.



4.152 Landscape sensitivity to new employment and residential proposals is likely to be **low** to **medium**. Opportunities could exist in certain locations around the edge of existing settlements for limited new development. Large-scale proposals within the rural area are unlikely to be successfully assimilated.

4.153 Landscape sensitivity to wind energy proposals would be **medium**. Whilst the landscape contains relatively few features of intrinsic landscape interest, the scale of the landscape and the relative proximity of settlements are likely to make it difficult to find locations to successfully accommodate wind turbines.

4.149 The village edges are varied with some soft edges formed by trees and shrubs and other edges much more open, with exposed garden fences.

4.150 In some cases this presents a rather scruffy appearance. Any new development within or around the villages should consolidate the existing urban form, and provide a sensitive edge to the countryside, including planting.

Landscape Sensitivity

4.151 The Fen margin comprises a narrow triangular wedge of land extending north from near Baston to Horbling and Folkingham, between the Kesteven Uplands and the Fens. This is a transitional zone with a landscape borrowing characteristics from the very different landscapes that exist to the east and west.

4.154 **The landscape management objectives for the Fen Margin include;**

- Careful design and new planting to development on the edges of villages.
- Maintain and enhance hedgerow boundaries.
- Protect sensitive woodlands.
- Consider new woodland planting on the higher ground.
- Maintain open views towards the rising land to the west.
- Protect and manage ditches and dykes.



4.155 Key Characteristics

- Low flat terrain, level horizons and large skies.
- Large-scale open rectangular fields, divided by drainage ditches and embanked rivers.
- Sparse trees and woodland cover.
- Little settlement apart from individual farmsteads, often with large-scale agricultural buildings.

4.156 Location and boundaries



4.157 Within South Kesteven, the Fens extend east from the Car Dyke to the South Forty Foot Drain. The Fens continue to the east beyond the district boundary. To the west of the Car Dyke lies a transitional area to the Kesteven Uplands, described as the 'Fen Margin'.

Physical Influences

4.158 The Fens are a complex landscape formed by the draining of land over the last 2000 years, but with most land drained during the last 150 years. Within South Kesteven the Fens comprise peat, overlying Oxford Clay. The land only exists because of man's intervention, and continued management, to prevent inundation. Within

this area the land lies below 5m AOD, typically at 2-3m above sea level. The land is drained by a series of east/west drainage ditches, such as Haconby Lode and Rippingale Running Dike, which are pumped into the South Forty Foot Drain, which lies to the east and forms the District Boundary.

Human Influences

4.159 The whole landscape of the Fen is directly attributable to human influences, as discussed in the previous section. The landscape exists because of the draining of the land from the fen, turning bog, woodland and rough ground to create productive agricultural land. The drainage of the land resulted in the shrinking of the peat fen, further reducing the levels of the land and increasing the need for drainage. Historically this required windmills to lift water from the low lying drains into the more major drains and rivers. Today electric pumps continue this work, as the peat continues to shrink and be eroded by the wind.

4.160 The Lincolnshire Fens were some of the last to be drained, and the Fens within South Kesteven contain few older buildings, and no villages. The Fens are accessed by a series of lanes or 'Droves', which extend east from the B1177 and the B1394. These lanes serve individual

farmsteads. Most lanes are dead ends, limited by the South Forty Foot Drain. The Fens within South Kesteven contain no significant woodlands, historic parks or houses, ecological conservation areas or nationally designated areas of wildlife value. They are a working landscape based on intensive agricultural production.

Landscape Character

4.161 The character of the Fens is determined by the level low lying terrain. The man-made rectangular fields are large in scale divided by drainage ditches, with virtually no trees or woodland. This results in an open landscape of huge scale, with enormous skies which have a significant influence on the character of the landscape. The open fields are punctuated only by the groups of individual farm buildings spread along the Drovers. Most of these include large-scale agricultural buildings with some scattered trees amid the farms themselves. The rising land to the west of the Kesteven Uplands provides enclosure and visual diversity in this direction. The Fens continue to the north, east and south of the District boundary, adding to the large-scale open character of the landscape. Distant vertical interest in the landscape is provided by wind turbines beyond the District boundary.

4.162 The distinctive landscape of the fens draws a varied human response. Some find the openness uplifting and dramatic, while others find the landscape oppressive and intimidating. Whatever response, the landscape remains distinctive and a contrast to much of the rest of the District.

4.163 The western edge of the character area is more

influenced by settlements such as near Tallington. Here the character merges with the Kesteven Uplands to the west.

4.164 The lack of communities or settlements provides a character that is remote and isolated, though punctuated by intensive activity depending on the season and agricultural activity.



Settlement

4.165 Settlement within the Fens is generally sparse and restricted to isolated farms and houses. The farms



often contain some large-scale metal-clad agricultural buildings.

4.166 The main settlement is located on the edge of the Fen at Market Deeping and Deeping St James. These settlements merge with each other. Vernacular buildings in the village centres are mostly constructed of limestone, often with collyweston slate roofs.

4.167 Many properties appear Georgian in age, with some older smaller buildings. Building characteristics are similar to the southern part of the Kesteven Uplands to the west, from where the building materials would originate. The settlement centres are typically linear, with more extensive areas of modern development beyond. These are typically brick-built, of varying age and style.

4.168 With few notable landscape features in the surrounding fen landscape, there is little to dictate the form of the settlement. The towns appear to have expanded along the roads and where space was available. The towns do not, therefore, have a distinctive form. Some settlement edges within the wider fen are quite abrupt, perhaps marked by a boundary hedgerow. Any new development around the settlement should carefully consider the settlement edge. In some places it may be appropriate to have properties looking out over the countryside and in other areas to have areas of planting. Back fences backing onto open countryside would not be appropriate.

Landscape Sensitivity

4.169 The large-scale of the fen landscape, and the lack of trees and woodlands, creates a very distinctive landscape. The features of value in this landscape include the ditches and watercourses and the wide open views. There is little settlement and few well used roads and lanes.

4.170 Landscape sensitivity to new employment or residential provisions would be **low to medium** and at the edge of the

existing settlements. Large-scale development would not, however, be appropriate in the more remote parts of The Fens. Any major proposals within this remote and open landscape would be highly visible and would interrupt the openness of the landscape. Agricultural buildings at existing farmsteads could, however, be assimilated, building on the existing landscape pattern.

4.171 Landscape sensitivity to wind energy proposals would be **low to medium**. The scale of the landscape, and the relative lack of features of intrinsic landscape value, would mean that some wind turbines may be accommodated.

4.172 Wind turbines are relatively visually permeable, and a limited development would allow the overall character of the landscape to be maintained. Acceptability in the landscape would, however, depend on the detailed siting and design, and overall cumulative impact with any other proposals within the district or surrounding areas. Locations close to existing large-scale human influences such as electricity lines, are likely to be most appropriate. Locations near to larger settlements are not likely to be appropriate.

4.173 The landscape management objectives for The

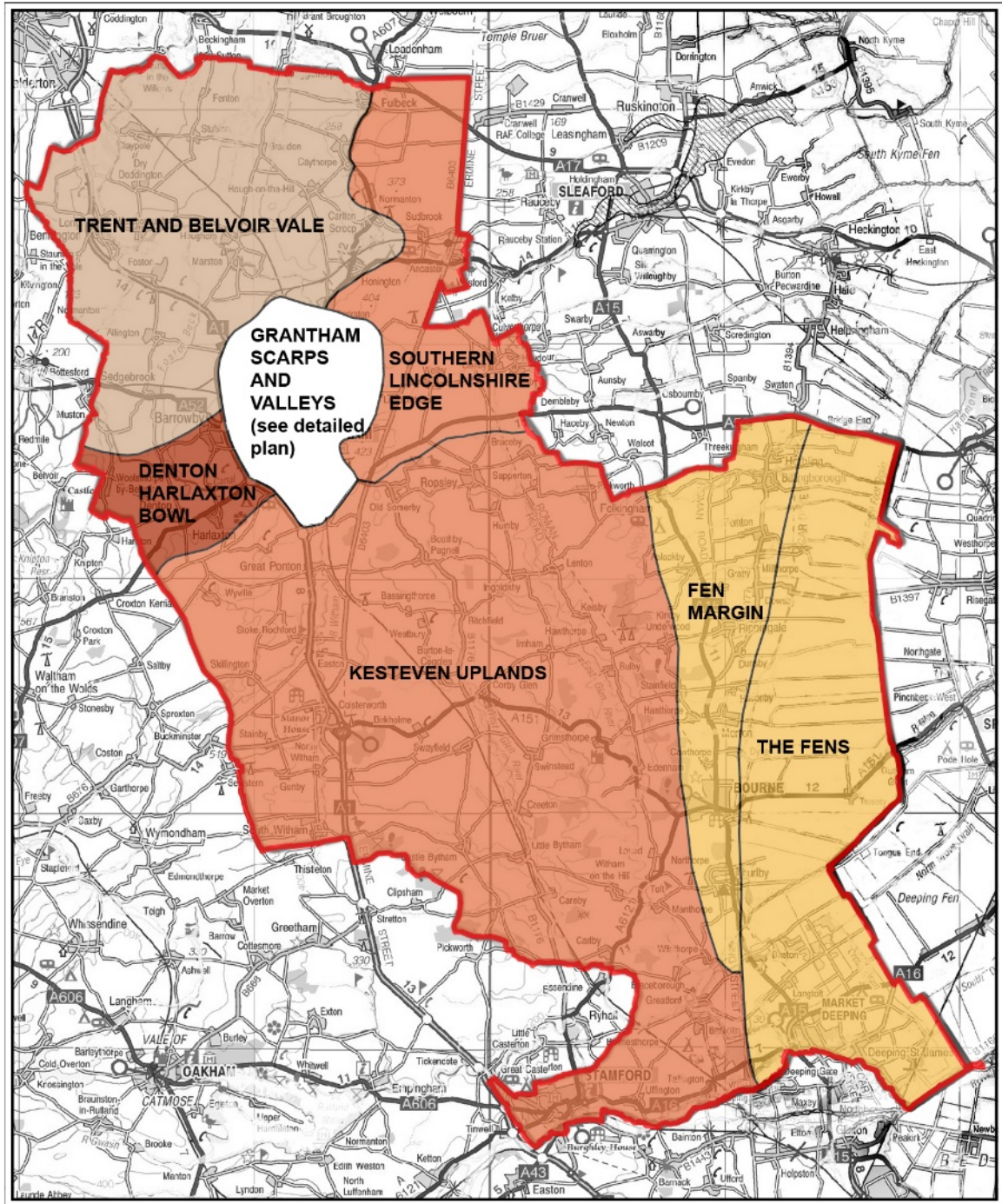
Fens include;

- Maintenance of field boundaries, including ditches and dykes.
- Phased management of the ditches and dykes to minimise wildlife disturbance.
- Protection of historic and archaeological sites.
- Conservation and management of grazing marsh.
- Protection of water quality.
- Consider the scale and design of new farm buildings.
- Concentrate new planting around farms and large-scale farm buildings.








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Summary Landscape Sensitivity

- 4.174 Landscape Sensitivity to different types of development would vary from character area to character area. The plans at Figures 16 and 17 summarise the sensitivity across the district to residential and employment land development. The plans are based on the potential of the landscape to accommodate new development because of the established character, visibility and type and distribution of landscape elements. A more detailed plan for the area around Grantham is shown at Figure 17. The justification for the sensitivity of the different character areas is contained within the text for each character area.
- 4.175 Figure 18 shows the sensitivity of the different character areas to potential wind energy development. In general terms, the larger-scale, more open and flatter landscapes are most appropriate for this type of development. The actual impact of any key proposal would, however, depend on the detailed location, design and potential cumulative impact of each proposal.



KEY

- | | | | |
|---|-------------------------|---|-------------------------|
|  | District Boundary |  | Medium Sensitivity |
|  | Character Area Boundary |  | Medium-High Sensitivity |
|  | Low Sensitivity |  | High Sensitivity |
|  | Low-Medium Sensitivity | | |

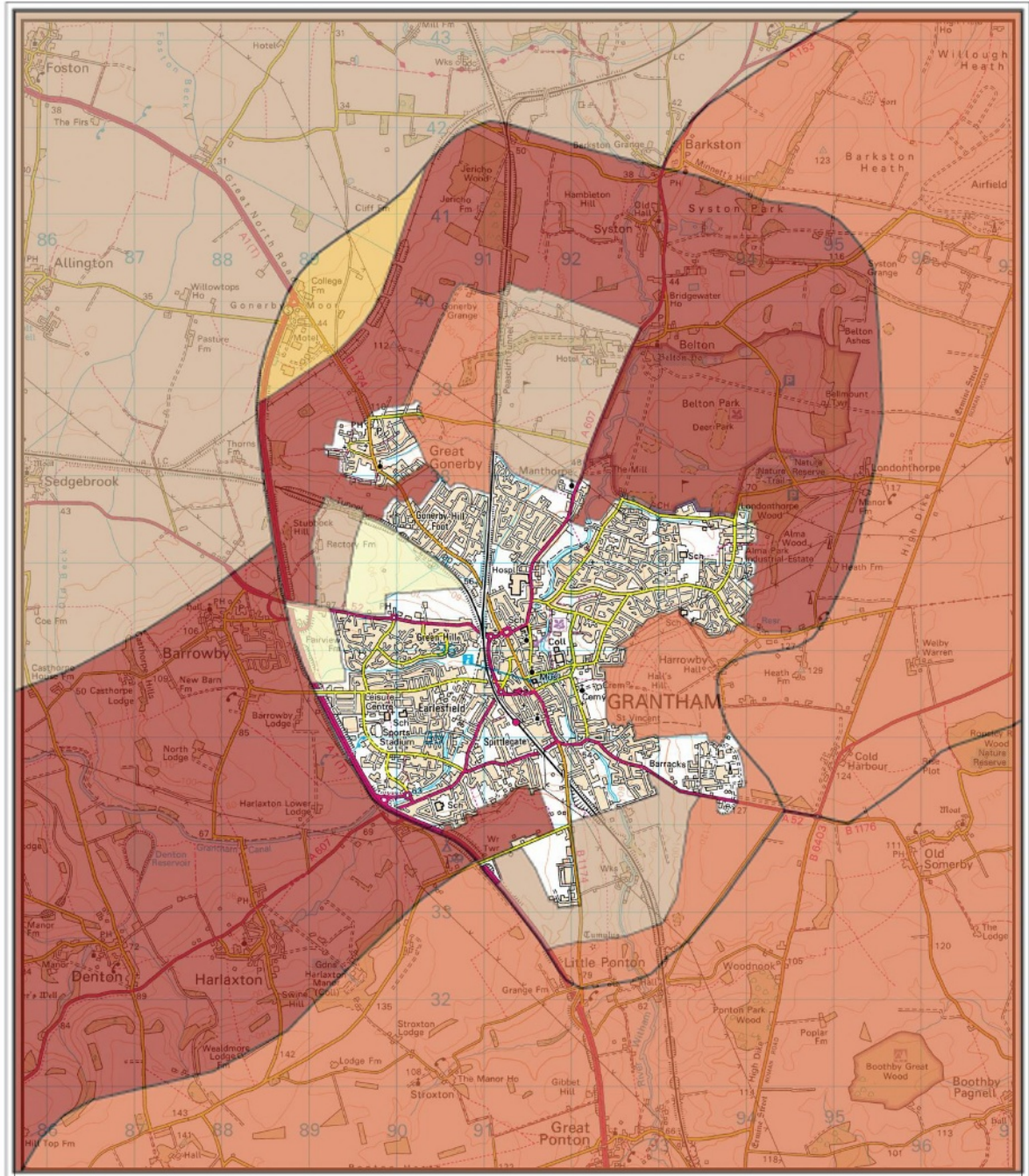


South Kesteven Landscape Character Assessment







LANDSCAPE SENSITIVITY FOR EMPLOYMENT AND RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

Figure 16

September 2006



KEY

- | | | | |
|---|-------------------------|---|-------------------------|
|  | Character Area Boundary |  | Medium Sensitivity |
|  | Low Sensitivity |  | Medium-High Sensitivity |
|  | Low-Medium Sensitivity |  | High Sensitivity |

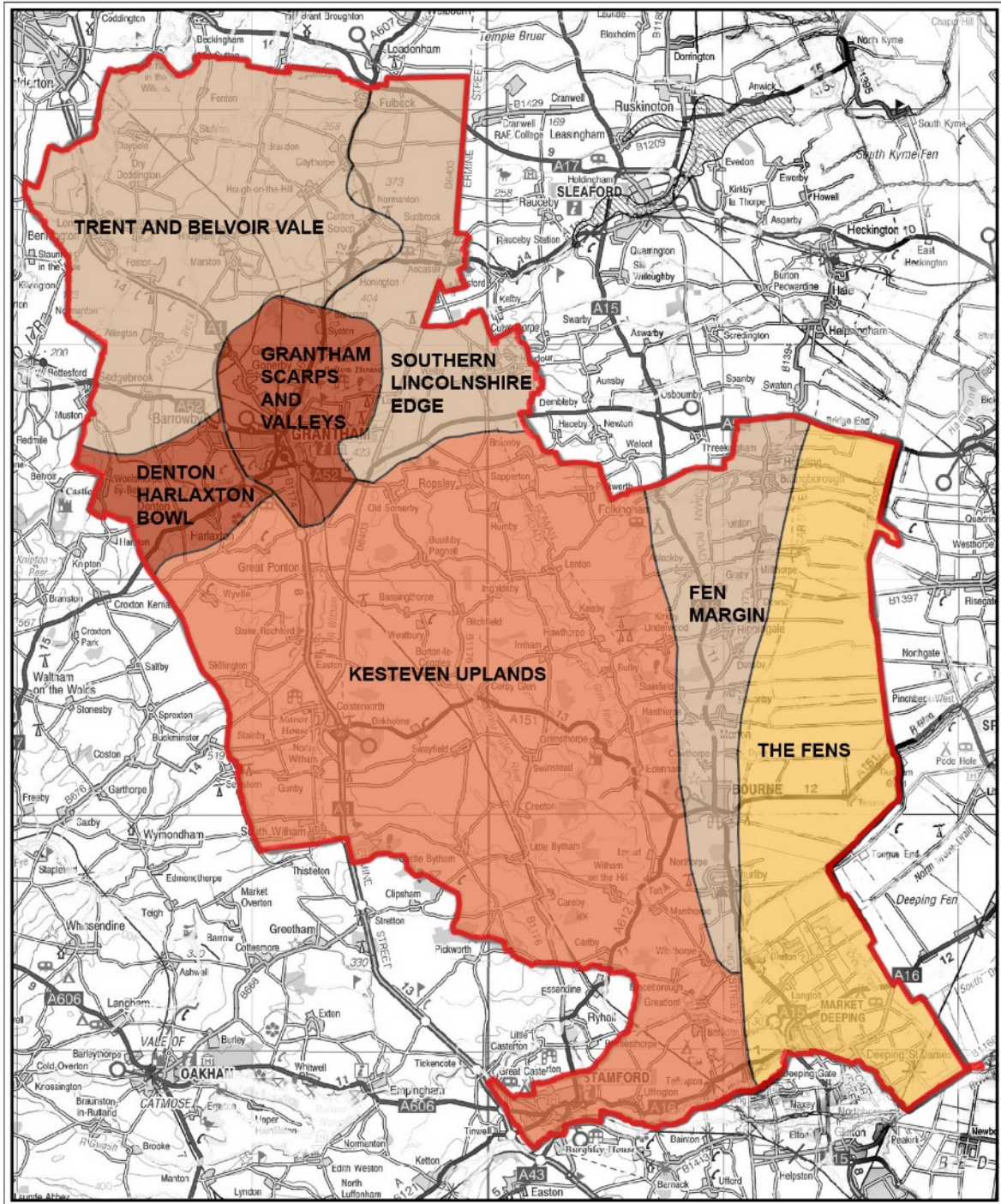


South Kesteven Landscape Character Assessment

LANDSCAPE SENSITIVITY FOR EMPLOYMENT AND RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT AROUND GRANTHAM

Figure 17

September 2006



KEY

- | | | | |
|---|-------------------------|---|-------------------------|
|  | District Boundary |  | Medium Sensitivity |
|  | Character Area Boundary |  | Medium-High Sensitivity |
|  | Low Sensitivity |  | High Sensitivity |
|  | Low-Medium Sensitivity | | |



South Kesteven Landscape Character Assessment

LANDSCAPE SENSITIVITY FOR WIND ENERGY DEVELOPMENT

Figure 18

September 2006

