

# STRATEGIC LANDSCAPE CAPACITY STUDY

For

**S O U T H**



**H O L L A N D**  
**DISTRICT COUNCIL**



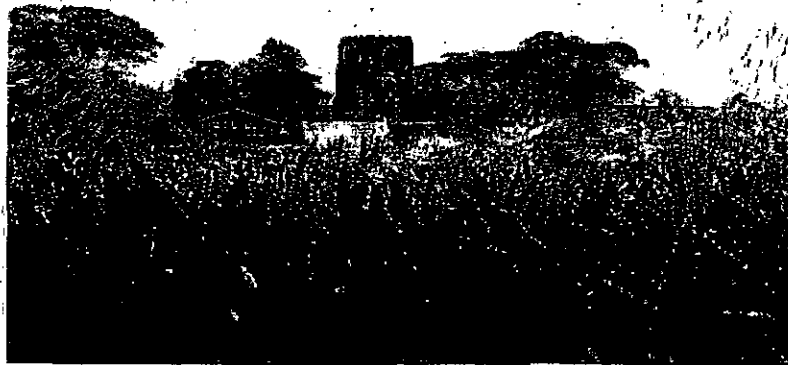
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# STRATEGIC LANDSCAPE CAPACITY STUDY

for

**SOUTH HOLLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL  
LINCOLNSHIRE**



by

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July 2003

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## INTRODUCTION

1.1 South Holland covers the south eastern corner of Lincolnshire, and extends across 280 square miles, almost wholly of fens. It extends from a boundary with Boston Borough in the north to borders with North and South Kesteven Districts to the west and, in the south, to county boundaries with both Norfolk and Cambridgeshire.

1.2 This study is confined to the South Holland District. However, it is important to note that the Fens landscape is very similar across the northern and southern boundaries of the District. As such, this study has taken cognisance of similar work currently being undertaken on behalf of King's Lynn and West Norfolk District Council, and has used a similar approach. However, the landscape of South Holland is much simpler in character than that of its Norfolk neighbour, so direct comparisons in approach and outcomes cannot be made.

## BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

2.1 This study was commissioned following the outcome of a Public Inquiry in March 2003 into the refusal of planning consent by South Holland District Council for the development of a cluster of eight 100-metre high wind turbine generators at Deeping Fen, near Deeping St Nicholas, to the south of Spalding. The Appeal was upheld.

2.2 In the course of preparing the case for the Appeal, the Council's officers, the leader of the Council and the member with responsibility for the planning portfolio came to the conclusion that a strategic landscape assessment of the whole of the South Holland District in relation to wind turbine locations was required, in order to avoid the *ad hoc* contesting of possible future planning appeals solely on the basis of current and emerging Local Plan policies. This study would need to take account of Regional Planning Guidance with regard to the government's renewable energy targets. It would need to be carried out at the District (Local Authority) scale of assessment, in keeping with current national guidelines, and would seek to examine the landscape of South Holland in detail. This study would also seek to achieve a detailed substantiation of the view held by the Council at the Deeping St Nicholas Public Inquiry that The Fens Landscape Character Area is not homogeneous, and that some areas are more suitable for the construction of wind turbines than others, in terms of their landscape and visual impact.

2.3 The Inspector at the Deeping St Nicholas Appeal referred to discussions during the proceedings relating to the case for a strategic approach based on the capacity of the landscape to 'absorb' wind turbines. He also mentioned the related exercise of preparing Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG). In his Appeal Decision, he

*"...did not dispute that the preparation of SPG could be a helpful exercise for the District and, indeed, for prospective developers. Detailed work at a District level might usefully supplement the broader brush studies at the regional scale and it might also help inform and refine future targets in respect of renewable energy."*

2.4 It was therefore decided that a Strategic Landscape Capacity Study for the South Holland District would be required. The results of this study would form the basis for Supplementary Planning Guidance drafted to deal specifically with the matter of the consideration of wind turbine developments, in support of the current and emerging Local Plan policies.

## THE REGIONAL LANDSCAPE CONTEXT

3.1 The Countryside Agency is the government's statutory advisory body on countryside and landscape matters. Recent developments in the characterisation of the countryside of England have culminated in the publication by the Countryside Agency – of the *Character Map of England*. This has classified the whole country by describing *Landscape Character Areas (LCA's)*, defined as:

*"...single unique areas and are the discrete geographical areas of a particular landscape type."*<sup>2</sup>

3.2 The South Holland District lies wholly within the large area of low-lying land which has been classified as *The Fens (LCA No.46)*<sup>3</sup>. A vivid pen picture of The Fens LCA appears in the introduction to Volume 6 of *Countryside Character*, produced by the Countryside Agency, illustrating how the key characteristics of the East of England landscape combine to create character areas. It reads as follows:

*"Sky, soil and water combine in geometric patterns to give The Fens its distinct and cohesive character. Dramatic cloudscapes and huge skies dominate the extensive views that the flat low-lying land of the area affords. The tilling of the rich and varied soils and the harvesting of abundant crops are often the only activities to be seen in an empty, open landscape, occasionally punctuated by an isolated farmstead or a cluster of trees. The*

<sup>1</sup> Appeal Decision APP/A2525/A/02/1099738; paragraph 36, p.7

<sup>2</sup> *Landscape Character Assessment – op.cit.*; s.2.8, p.9.

<sup>3</sup> *Countryside Character Volume 6: East of England*, The Countryside Agency, 1999.

*embanked rivers and drains that have transformed this area from its flooded origins provide the only elevation. Around the Wash lies an arc of more ancient character, irregular mediaeval field patterns and much denser settlement, clinging to the high ground which once stood out of the marsh. Major buildings such as Ely Cathedral and the 'Boston Stump' can be seen for miles around."*<sup>4</sup>

3.3 The Fens LCA is by no means homogeneous. *Countryside Character Volume 6* acknowledges this fact, observing that:

*"Although at first acquaintance the Fens can seem monotonous, there are marked variations and graduations as one moves from fen to fen and, more noticeably, between areas with different lengths of settlement history."*<sup>5</sup>

3.4 The finer grain of landscape assessment below the national/regional scale is at the Local Authority scale, which can be mapped and described and results in the definition of landscape types which have unity of character, due to landform, land cover and distinct patterns of elements.<sup>6</sup> These matters are described and analysed in detail in the Study Methodology described below.

## STUDY METHODOLOGY

4.1 The study has involved a combination of desk research and field assessment, in accordance with current best practice, as advocated by the Countryside Agency and the Landscape Institute.

### Landscaper Character Assessment

4.2 The first stage of this process involved the examination of the published information at the national/regional scale of assessment, focussing on the characteristics of LCA 46, The Fens. The Countryside Agency has defined within The Fens LCA four broad distinctions, described as follows:

- The 'Settled Fens' or 'Townlands' which run in a broad arc inland from the Wash, between King's Lynn and Boston
- The extensive 'Peaty Fens' or 'Black Fens' which were finally comprehensively drained in the 17<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> centuries
- The fens of south east Lincolnshire between the Townlands and the Wolds, the last area to be drained in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century
- The band of Wash Marshes reclaimed from the Wash by construction of sea wall defences begun in the 17<sup>th</sup> Century.<sup>7</sup>

4.3 These distinctions have been acknowledged in this study. The finer grain Local Authority scale of assessment has established the presence of three of the

<sup>4</sup> *Countryside Character, op.cit.*, p.5

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p.15

<sup>6</sup> *Landscape Character Assessment – op.cit.*; pp.10-11.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p.17

above broad distinctions within South Holland District. These are classified as *Landscape Character Types*, as follows:

- The Settled Fens Landscape Character Type
- The Peaty Fens Landscape Character Type
- The Wash Marshes Landscape Character Type

The essential characteristics of these Landscape Character Types are summarised below. This model of field assessment follows that used in the Salisbury Plain Army Training Estate Landscape Character Assessment carried out for Defence Estates by ERM.<sup>8</sup>

#### 4.4 The Settled Fens Landscape Character Type

**Topography:** flat

**Dominant Land Cover and Landscape Elements:**

*Buildings:* farms, masts, poles, pylons, industrial, commercial, settlements, urban

*Heritage/vernacular:* buildings, country houses, field systems, ecclesiastical

*Farming:* hedges, fields, fences, arable, market gardening, orchards

*Woodland and trees:* deciduous, mixed, shelterbelts, hedgerows, orchards, clumps and alien coniferous screens

*Hydrology:* rivers, drainage channels, ditches

*Communication:* roads, railways, airfields, pylons, masts.

**Description:**

Predominantly flat topography, dissected by main roads, rivers, drainage channels and drainage ditches often on raised banks(1-3m). Primarily nucleated settlements with associated mature trees. Church spires and towers often rise above the mature vegetation to provide prominent landmark features. Medium to large fields with intensive market garden crops. Locally strong hedgerow elements. Views are restricted or foreshortened by shelterbelts and woodland or mature hedgerows.

This contributes to a sense of enclosure with a more open feel between settlements. The main visual detractors are the 440kV and 132 kV overhead lines on towers, electricity sub stations and power stations and urban fringe visual clutter (dominated by light industry and glasshouse horticulture).

*Note that within the larger settlements, there are no views of adjacent fenland and this introspective quality reduces the awareness of place within the wider fenland landscape.*

*Key characteristics:* flat landform, nucleated settlements with mature vegetation and church spires; organic lines dominate, e.g. winding roads

*Condition:* average, but ranges from good (farmland) to poor (urban fringe clutter)

**Visual Assessment criteria:**

*Pattern:* strong

*Scale:* medium-large

*Texture:* textured<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p.31

<sup>9</sup> Texture is determined by land cover, e.g. trees, hedges and crop types and their scale or size within the landscape

*Colour:* muted-colourful<sup>10</sup>  
*Complexity:* diverse  
*Remoteness:* active  
*Unity:* fragmented  
*Form:* curved  
*Enclosure:* open-enclosed

***Perception:***

*Security:* comfortable  
*Stimulus:* bland  
*Tranquillity:* vacant  
*Pleasure:* pleasant

***Architecture:***

New-build around traditional (medieval-Victorian) core, with the church as the primary node. Building materials are predominantly brick and a combination of brick and stone. The settlement form is primarily nucleated, interspersed with some linear settlement.

Three representative photographs of the Settled Fens Landscape Character Type are shown below.

**The Settled Fens Landscape Character Type**



Gosberton church viewed over open fields

<sup>10</sup> Colour is the dominant colour of the constituent elements, e.g. fields, built form



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Sutton Bridge power station viewed from the A17



Power distribution infrastructure south of Holbeach

## 5 The Peaty Fen Landscape Character Type

**Topography:** flat

**Dominant Land Cover and Landscape Elements:**

**Buildings:** farm, mast, poles, settlements, farmsteads

**Heritage:** vernacular buildings, field systems

**Farming:** fields, fences, arable

**Woodland and trees:** deciduous and alien coniferous screens

**Hydrology:** rivers, drainage channels, drainage ditches

**Communication:** roads, railways, navigable rivers, masts or poles

**Description:**

Flat topography dissected by long straight roads, rivers, drainage channels and drainage ditches, often on raised banks (1-3 metres high). Predominantly linear settlement. Large scale, extensive views, and largely uninterrupted skyline. A sense of openness/exposure. A strong linear pattern, defined by geometric arable fields of cereal and root crops, bounded by drainage channels or drainage ditches (not as intensive of Settled Fen).

**Key characteristics:** flat landform, geometric/linear fields, linear settlement and isolated farmsteads with associated shelterbelts

**Condition:** good

**Visual assessment criteria:**

**Pattern:** strong

**Scale:** large

**Texture:** textured

**Colour:** muted

**Complexity:** simple

**Remoteness:** vacant

**Unity:** interrupted

**Form:** straight

**Enclosure:** open

**Perception:**

**Security:** comfortable

**Stimulus:** bland

**Tranquillity:** vacant

**Pleasure:** pleasant

**Architecture:**

New-build and traditional mixture. Building materials are predominantly brick and a combination of brick and stone

Settlement form: predominantly linear.

Three representative photographs of the Peaty Fens Landscape Character Type are shown below.



## The Peaty Fens Landscape Character Type



Crowland Abbey and Radar Tower viewed across a stretch of Peaty Fen



Deeping St Nicholas viewed over Peaty Fen from Cowbit



Peaty Fen landscape near Sandygate Farm, south west of Sutton St James

## 4.6 The Wash Marshes Landscape Character Type

**Topography:** flat

**Dominant Land Cover and Landscape Elements:**

*Buildings:* isolated farm buildings, timber poles

*Heritage:* field systems, monuments of war

*Farming:* rough grazing marsh

*Woodland trees:* none

*Hydrology:* tidal creeks, drainage channels and drainage ditches, sea banks, water control structures

*Communication:* minor roads and tracks

**Description:**

Flat topography dissected by winding creeks, drainage channels and drainage ditches. Extensive open areas of salt marsh. Expansive views over the sea and inland. Wide uninterrupted horizon.

*Key characteristics:* flat landform, salt marsh, tidal creeks

*Condition:* good

**Visual Assessment criteria:**

*Pattern:* weak

*Scale:* large

*Texture:* textured

*Colour:* muted

*Complexity:* simple

*Remoteness:* remote-wild

*Unity:* unified

*Form:* curved

*Enclosure:* expansive

**Perception:**

*Security:* unsettling

*Stimulus:* challenging

*Tranquillity:* remote

*Pleasure:* pleasant

**Architecture:**

Occasional isolated farm buildings constructed primarily in brick. Concrete pill boxes date from the Second World War.

Three representative photographs of the Wash Marshes Landscape Character Type are shown below.



## The Wash Marshes Landscape Character Type



View north east over the marshes from the sea bank north of Holbeach St Matthew



View of the lighthouses on the Nene Cut south east over the sea bank from near Gedney Drove End



View south east over Crabs' Hole from the sea bank near Gedney Drove End

4.7 *Field Assessment Sheets* for each of these Landscape Character Types are included in Appendix 1 to this report.

4.8 The spatial disposition of these Landscape Character Types is shown on the *Landscape Character and Key Elements Map* included as Appendix 2 to this report.

### **Landscape Capacity and Assessment Criteria**

4.9 Government policy has set a target of generating 10% of the country's electricity requirements from renewable energy sources by 2010. It is apparent from recent government announcements that offshore and onshore wind turbine generation will play a very significant role in achieving these targets.

4.10 The draft revised Regional Planning Guidance (RPG8) published to date has included a policy entitled 'Regional Priorities for Renewable Energy' (Policy 40), Regional Renewable Energy Targets for individual counties, including Lincolnshire, and a plan showing 'Broad Locations for Wind Energy Development' (Appendix 4). The plan identifies all of the Lincolnshire Fens as a 'Highly Suitable Landscape' for wind energy development. There is therefore pressure to accommodate wind turbine generators in the landscape of the South Holland District.

4.11 This study has accepted that there is a need to take a positive view of wind turbine location, in the interests of achieving government policy targets, whilst avoiding developments which would be considered detrimental to landscape quality. The broad scale of national/regional assessment in RPG8 has identified the whole of LCA 46, The Fens, as being 'Highly Suitable'. Accordingly, the identification and plotting at the finer grain Local Authority scale of assessment is the first stage in determining the capacity of the South Holland landscape at the more detailed level to 'absorb' wind turbine developments without detriment to its landscape quality. This field assessment was undertaken at the 1:50000 scale of mapped base information, in accordance with Countryside Agency guidelines.<sup>11</sup>

4.12 Having described systematically the different qualities of the three Landscape Character Types identified as being present within South Holland District, a field assessment of landscape capacity for each 1 kilometre grid square was undertaken.

<sup>11</sup> *Landscape Character Assessment, op.cit.*, p.11

For each grid square, a 5-point score system was used to attribute landscape capacity value, in terms of 'absorbing' wind turbines without detriment to landscape quality. The score system used was as follows:

- o Highly Suitable
- o Suitable
- o Moderately Suitable
- o Unsuitable
- o Highly Unsuitable

4.13 This exercise was undertaken in two separate stages. The first stage of field assessment was carried out by two chartered landscape architects working together, each with extensive and detailed experience of landscape assessment work, both at the *strategic and local* levels. These assessors hold additional qualifications in geology and landscape ecology. The second stage involved a third highly experienced chartered landscape architect, with a prior knowledge of the South Holland landscape and landscape and visual impact assessment work in East Anglia, and took the form of a field calibration and verification exercise. During this, the values ascribed to each grid square at the first stage of assessment were systematically challenged, debated and – if necessary – adjusted as required in order to achieve a well-substantiated consensus view. This important stage of the assessment process proved to be extremely valuable and is entirely in keeping with the Countryside Agency's current best practice guidance.<sup>12</sup> This approach ensures that any subjective interpretation or personal bias is moderated by discussion and the achievement of consensus, thus increasing the level of objectivity in the methodology.

4.14 These landscape capacity values for each grid square were determined in accordance with the following capacity criteria.

4.15 The model for assessing suitability was that of a potential development of 8 wind turbines of 100m height to blade tip. This was derived from the Deeping St Nicholas consent at Appeal and also took into account the current application for a further 6 wind turbines at Red House Farm, Gedney Marsh, by the same developer. Clearly, the Planning Inspector took the view that such a development was acceptable in terms of its landscape and visual impact in the open landscape of

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<sup>12</sup> *Landscape Character Assessment, op.cit.*, paragraphs 5.3 to 5.5, p.30

Deeping Fen. It was therefore considered sensible to expect that further wind turbine developments of a comparable size might receive favourable consideration, allowing for no adverse cumulative impact through inter-visibility between prospective sites. Therefore, this model was judged to be appropriate for determining landscape capacity values throughout the South Holland District.

4.16 The inherent characteristics and condition of the Landscape Character Type (as described above) in which each grid square lies was the *baseline* level for consideration. Added to this was careful consideration of the following key indicators:

- The presence of Conservation Areas, each of which has a church tower or spire at its core which is frequently prominent in unencumbered medium to long distance views from the surrounding Fens landscape. These churches are of historical significance and, prior to the 20<sup>th</sup> century, were the tallest buildings in the Fens landscape, functioning as important location markers and points of visual reference
- The presence of Scheduled Ancient Monuments
- The existence of significant visual receptors of high sensitivity (residential properties) which have views over the surrounding countryside and an absence of low level screening by adjacent vegetation
- The existence of medium sensitivity receptors such as major recreation sites or routes, such as the National Cycle Trail
- The presence and frequency of detracting visual elements in the landscape, especially power stations, high and medium voltage electricity transmission lines and associated infrastructure, communications masts, large scale industrial and commercial buildings (including extensive glasshouses, packing houses and agricultural/horticultural storage and processing facilities), and visual clutter at the urban fringe.

4.17 The value attributed to each grid square is taken as an average of the attributes within the square.

4.18 It should be noted that the presence of Listed Buildings of Architectural or Historical Interest has not been taken into account at this level of assessment. It is suggested that this criterion should be used as a further refinement in the consideration of individual developments as they arise, and that taking into account



the setting of a Listed Building would be a necessary part of the approach to site selection by a prospective wind energy developer.

4.19 The *Landscape Capacity Values Map* is included as Appendix 3 to this report.

## CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Reference to the *Landscape Capacity Values Map* at Appendix 3 to this report shows that, assessing the landscape at the Local Authority scale using the methodology described above, much of the South Holland District's landscape is classified as either unsuitable or highly unsuitable for locating wind energy developments, based upon the model of 8 turbines at 100 metres high to blade tip. These areas have been thus classified on the basis of their inherent landscape characteristics, the presence of key sensitivity indicators such as conservation areas and the need to conserve open views of prominent churches, and the setting of Scheduled Ancient Monuments.

5.2 However, there are some tracts of land within the Settled Fens Landscape Character Type which have been classified as moderately suitable for such developments, typically those affected adversely by the landscape and visual impact of high voltage electricity transmission lines and associated infrastructure, urban fringe clutter and large scale industrial and commercial developments. This has occurred to such an extent that the integrity of the landscape has been compromised and there is consequently a reduced sensitivity to change.

5.3 In addition, and of note, are two clusters of grid squares which have been classified as suitable. One of these – on the former Wingland Aerodrome site south east of Sutton Bridge – has a square classified as highly suitable. This is as a consequence of the dominating visual effects of the Sutton Bridge power station and the plethora of high voltage lines in the vicinity, linking to the major installation south of Walpole Marsh. This site has very few residential receptors nearby. Those present benefit from a high degree of adjacent screening by vegetation – a factor cited as important by the Inspector in his decision to uphold the Deeping St Nicholas Wind Turbines Appeal.<sup>13</sup> This is reinforced by dense belts of recent planting associated with the programme for the development of the Wingland Industrial Estate

<sup>13</sup> Appeal Decision APP/A2525/A/02/1099738; paragraph 22, p.5

by South Holland District Council. Extensive earth banks with mature vegetation along the River Nene and the northern side of the A17 provide considerable visual containment.

5.4 The smaller cluster lying to the west of the A16 to the north of Spalding has a very low incidence of residential receptors, some of which benefit from low-level screening by vegetation, and the developments to the northern, western and southern edges are predominantly industrial, commercial or form commercial horticulture production units. To the east, the raised banks of the River Welland provide visual containment.

5.5 The cluster of four grid squares in the Peaty Fen Landscape Character Type covering the Deeping St Nicholas Wind Turbines site and its immediate environs has been classified as being moderately suitable. This is based upon the reasoning that the development of the 8 wind turbines at this location has already adversely affected the open landscape and reduced its quality, thus increasing its capacity for further turbine development of up to 8 turbines of the same configuration without detrimental loss to the remaining local landscape quality.

5.6 It can be inferred that those areas classified as being highly unsuitable are the most sensitive to detrimental loss of landscape quality as a consequence of wind turbine developments, on the basis of the model used in this study. It is recommended that this factor be reflected in emerging Local Plan policies in that it should become the accepted measure of '*acknowledged importance in the local environment*' referred to in Policy E17 of the current South Holland District Local Plan.<sup>14</sup> It is also recommended that these areas should not be considered as suitable for any scale of wind turbine development other than for very carefully sited *individual* turbines in exceptional circumstances. Any such scheme would also need to be rigorously assessed entirely on the basis of its individual attributes.

5.7 In certain circumstances, those areas classified as being unsuitable on the model used for this study could be open to consideration as being moderately suitable, provided that no detrimental effects on landscape quality could be properly demonstrated, in the event of the following factors being taken into account:

- o less than 8 100-metre high turbines being proposed in any one development

<sup>14</sup> *South Holland District Local Plan* (Adopted October 1998); p.50

- o up to 8 smaller turbines being proposed
- o individual wind turbines associated strictly with local use, i.e. not exporting to the electricity grid as their prime purpose.

This would be a matter for each proposal being judged on its individual attributes, within the wider context of these recommendations.

### **Implications for the Development of Supplementary Planning Guidance for Wind Energy by South Holland District Council**

6.1 It is recommended that this study be used to underpin the drafting of Supplementary Planning Guidance for the development of wind energy projects within South Holland District.

6.2 It is important that the SPG remains flexible and open to periodic review, in the light of future developments of any kind within the District which might affect the landscape capacity value attributed to any grid square. It is therefore recommended that the SPG be subject to regular programmed review, based upon a periodic re-assessment of landscape capacity along the lines of this study. This is felt to be a practical and pragmatic means of reviewing and changing the approach to the consideration of the landscape and visual impact of wind energy development proposals. This review process should be drawn up in such a way as to fit in with the statutory Local Plan review process, once the Local Plan has been adopted.

## **APPENDICES**

### **APPENDIX 1**

**Field Assessment Sheets**

### **APPENDIX 2**

**Landscape Character and Key Elements Map**

### **APPENDIX 3**

**Landscape Capacity Values Map**

**SOUTH HOLLAND LANDSCAPE  
CAPACITY STUDY**

Field Survey  
Sheet No. 1

Date  
02-07-03

**Landscape Character  
Type: SETTLED FENS**

Topography flat rolling undulating broad valley narrow valley

**Dominant Land Cover and Landscape Elements:**

Buildings	Heritage	Farming	Woodland/trees	Hydrology	Communication
<u>farms</u>	<u>buildings</u>	<u>hedges</u>	<u>deciduous</u>	<u>rivers</u>	<u>roads</u>
<u>masts</u>	<u>country house</u>	<u>fields</u>	<u>mixed</u>	<u>tidal creeks</u>	<u>railways</u>
<u>poles</u>	<u>field systems</u>	<u>fences</u>	<u>shelter belts</u>	<u>drainage channels</u>	<u>navigable rivers</u>
<u>pylons</u>	<u>ecclesiastical</u>	<u>arable</u>	<u>hedgerows</u>	<u>drainage ditches</u>	<u>airfields</u>
<u>industrial</u>	<u>war monuments</u>	<u>market gardens</u>	<u>orchards</u>	<u>sea banks</u>	<u>pylons</u>
<u>commercial</u>		<u>orchards</u>	<u>clumps</u>	<u>water control structures</u>	<u>masts</u>
<u>settlements</u>		<u>marsh</u>	<u>coniferous screens</u>		

**Brief Description:**

Predominantly flat topography, dissected by main roads, rivers, drainage channels and drainage ditches often on raised banks(1-3m). Primarily nucleated settlements with associated mature trees. Church spires and towers often rise above the mature vegetation to provide prominent landmark features. Medium to large fields with intensive market garden crops. Locally strong hedgerow elements. Views are restricted or foreshortened by shelterbelts and woodland or mature hedgerows.

This contributes to a sense of enclosure with a more open feel between settlements. The main visual detractors are the 440kV and 132 kV overhead lines on towers, electricity sub stations and power stations and urban fringe visual clutter (dominated by light industry and glasshouse horticulture).

*Note that within the larger settlements, there are no views of adjacent fenland and this introspective quality reduces the awareness of place within the wider fenland landscape.*

**Key Characteristics:**

Flat landform, nucleated settlements with mature vegetation and church spires; organic lines dominate, e.g. winding roads.

**Architecture:**

New-build around traditional (medieval-Victorian) core, with the church as the primary node. Building materials are predominantly brick and a combination of brick and stone. The settlement form is primarily nucleated, interspersed with some linear settlement.

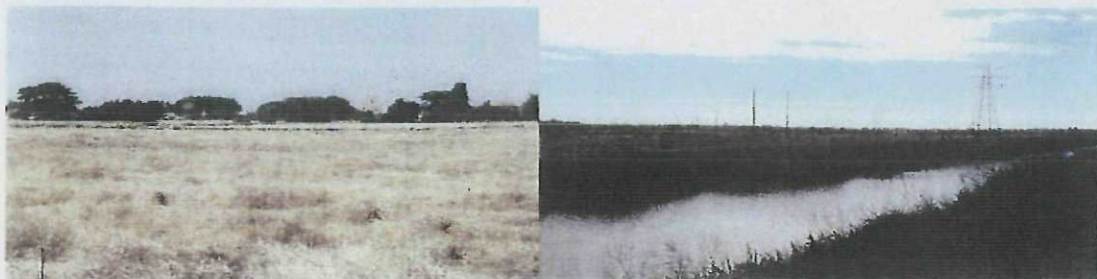
**Condition:**

Average, but ranges from good (farmland) to poor (urban fringe).

**Visual Assessment criteria**

Pattern	dominant	<u>strong</u>	<u>broken</u>	<u>weak</u>
Scale	intimate	<u>small</u>	<u>medium</u>	<u>large</u>
Texture	smooth	<u>textured</u>	<u>rough</u>	<u>very rough</u>
Colour	monochrome	<u>muted</u>	<u>colourful</u>	<u>garish</u>
Complexity	uniform	<u>simple</u>	<u>diverse</u>	<u>complex</u>
Remoteness	wild	<u>remote</u>	<u>vacant</u>	<u>active</u>
Unity:	unified	<u>interrupted</u>	<u>fragmented</u>	<u>chaotic</u>
Form:	straight	<u>angular</u>	<u>curved</u>	<u>sinuous</u>
Enclosure	expansive	<u>open</u>	<u>enclosed</u>	<u>constrained</u>
<b>Perception</b>				
Security	intimate	<u>comfortable</u>	<u>safe</u>	<u>unsettling</u>
Stimulus	monotonous	<u>bland</u>	<u>interesting</u>	<u>challenging</u>
Tranquillity	remote	<u>vacant</u>	<u>peaceful</u>	<u>busy</u>
Pleasure	unpleasant	<u>pleasant</u>	<u>attractive</u>	<u>beautiful</u>

**Photographic Record:**





**SOUTH HOLLAND LANDSCAPE  
CAPACITY STUDY**

Field Survey  
Sheet No. 2

Date  
02-07-03

**Landscape Character  
Type: PEATY FENS**

Topography flat rolling undulating broad valley narrow valley

**Dominant Land Cover and Landscape Elements:**

Buildings	Heritage	Farming	Woodland/trees	Hydrology	Communication
<u>farms</u>	<u>buildings</u>	hedges	<u>deciduous</u>	<u>rivers</u>	<u>roads</u>
<u>masts</u>	country house	<u>fields</u>	mixed	tidal creeks	<u>railways</u>
<u>poles</u>	<u>field systems</u>	<u>fences</u>	shelter belts	<u>drainage channels</u>	<u>navigable rivers</u>
pylons	ecclesiastical	<u>arable</u>	hedgerows	<u>drainage ditches</u>	airfields
industrial	war monuments	market gardens	orchards	sea banks	pylons
commercial		orchards	clumps	water control structures	<u>masts</u>
<u>settlements</u>		marsh	<u>coniferous screens</u>		

**Brief Description:**

Flat topography dissected by long straight roads, rivers, drainage channels and drainage ditches, often on raised banks (1-3 metres high). Predominantly linear settlement. Large scale, extensive views, and largely uninterrupted skyline. A sense of openness/exposure. A strong linear pattern, defined by geometric arable fields of cereal and root crops, bounded by drainage channels or drainage ditches (not as intensive c.f. Settled Fen).

**Key Characteristics:**

Flat landform, geometric/linear fields, linear settlement and isolated farmsteads with associated shelterbelts

**Architecture:**

New-build and traditional mixture. Building materials are predominantly brick and a combination of brick and stone  
Settlement form: predominantly linear.

**Condition:**

Good

**Visual Assessment criteria**

Pattern	dominant	<u>strong</u>	broken	weak
Scale	intimate	<u>small</u>	medium	<u>large</u>
Texture	smooth	<u>textured</u>	rough	very rough
Colour	monochrome	<u>muted</u>	colourful	garish
Complexity	uniform	<u>simple</u>	diverse	complex
Remoteness	wild	remote	<u>vacant</u>	active
Unity:	unified	<u>interrupted</u>	fragmented	chaotic
Form:	<u>straight</u>	angular	curved	sinuous
Enclosure	expansive	<u>open</u>	enclosed	constrained
<b>Perception</b>				
Security	intimate	<u>comfortable</u>	safe	unsettling
Stimulus	monotonous	<u>bland</u>	interesting	challenging
Tranquillity	remote	<u>vacant</u>	peaceful	busy
Pleasure	unpleasant	<u>pleasant</u>	attractive	beautiful

**Photographic Record:**





**SOUTH HOLLAND LANDSCAPE  
CAPACITY STUDY**

Field Survey Sheet No. 3 Date 02-07-03

**Landscape Character  
Type: WASH MARSHES**

Topography Flat rolling undulating broad valley narrow valley

**Dominant Land Cover and Landscape Elements:**

Buildings	Heritage	Farming	Woodland/trees	Hydrology	Communication
<u>farms</u> <u>masts</u> <u>poles</u>	buildings country house <u>field systems</u>	hedges fields fences	deciduous mixed shelter belts	rivers <u>tidal creeks</u> <u>drainage channels</u> <u>drainage ditches</u>	<u>roads</u> railways navigable rivers
pylons	ecclesiastical	arable	hedgerows	<u>sea banks</u>	airfields
industrial	<u>war monuments</u>	market gardens	orchards	<u>water control structures</u>	pylons
commercial		orchards	clumps		masts
settlements		<u>marsh</u>	coniferous screens		

**Brief Description:**

Flat topography dissected by winding creeks, drainage channels and drainage ditches. Extensive open areas of salt marsh. Expansive views over the sea and inland. Wide uninterrupted horizon.

**Key Characteristics:**

Flat landform, salt marsh, tidal creeks.

**Architecture:**

Occasional isolated farm buildings constructed primarily in brick. Concrete pill boxes date from the Second World War.

**Condition:**

Good.

**Visual Assessment criteria**

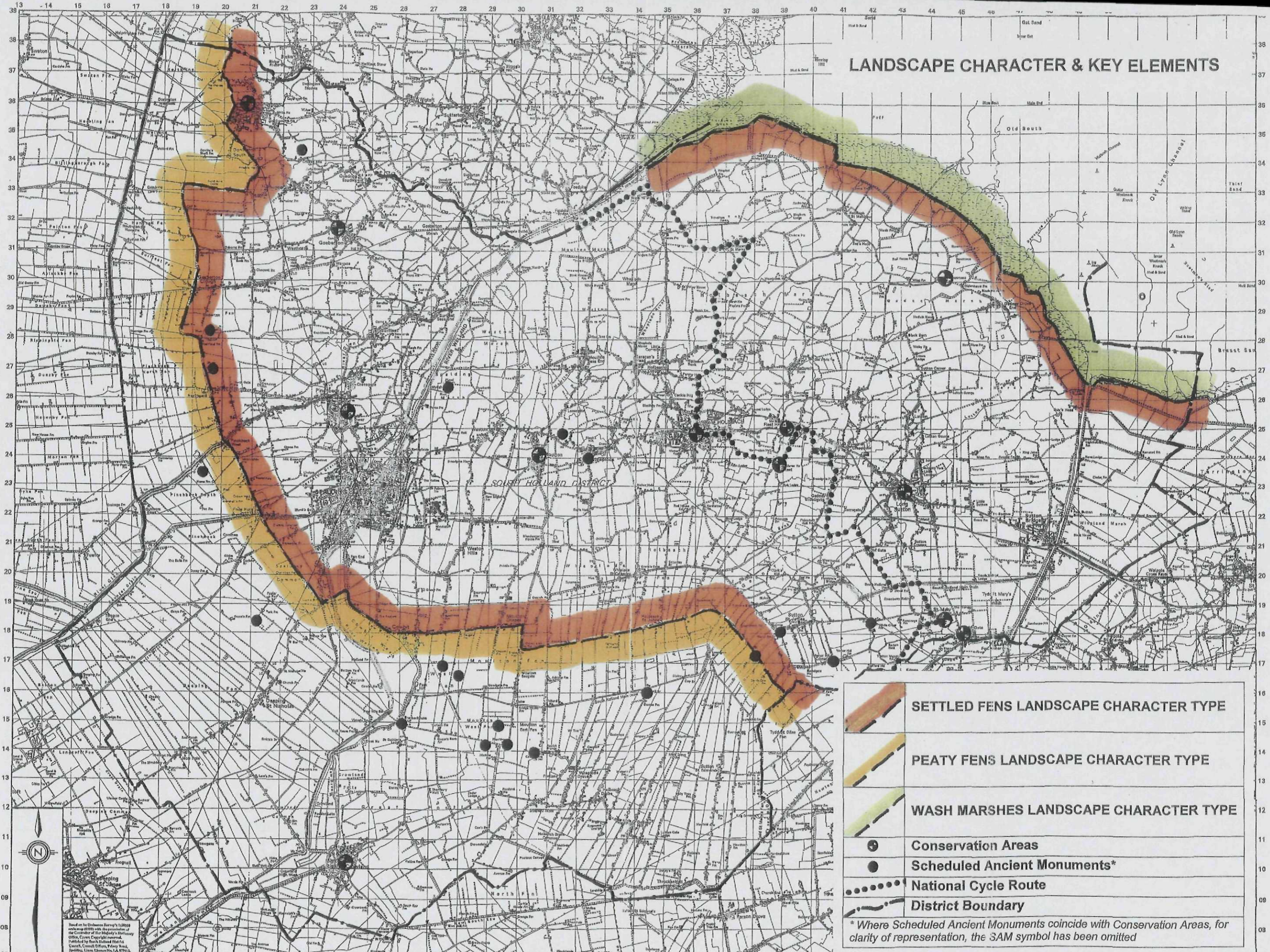
Pattern	dominant	strong	broken	<u>weak</u>
Scale	intimate	small	medium	<u>large</u>
Texture	smooth	<u>textured</u>	rough	very rough
Colour	monochrome	<u>muted</u>	colourful	garish
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Form:	<u>straight</u>	angular	<u>curved</u>	sinuous
Enclosure	<u>expansive</u>	open	enclosed	constrained
<b>Perception</b>				
Security	intimate	comfortable	safe	<u>unsettling</u>
Stimulus	monotonous	bland	interesting	<u>challenging</u>
Tranquillity	<u>remote</u>	vacant	peaceful	busy
Pleasure	unpleasant	<u>pleasant</u>	attractive	beautiful

**Photographic Record:**





# LANDSCAPE CHARACTER & KEY ELEMENTS

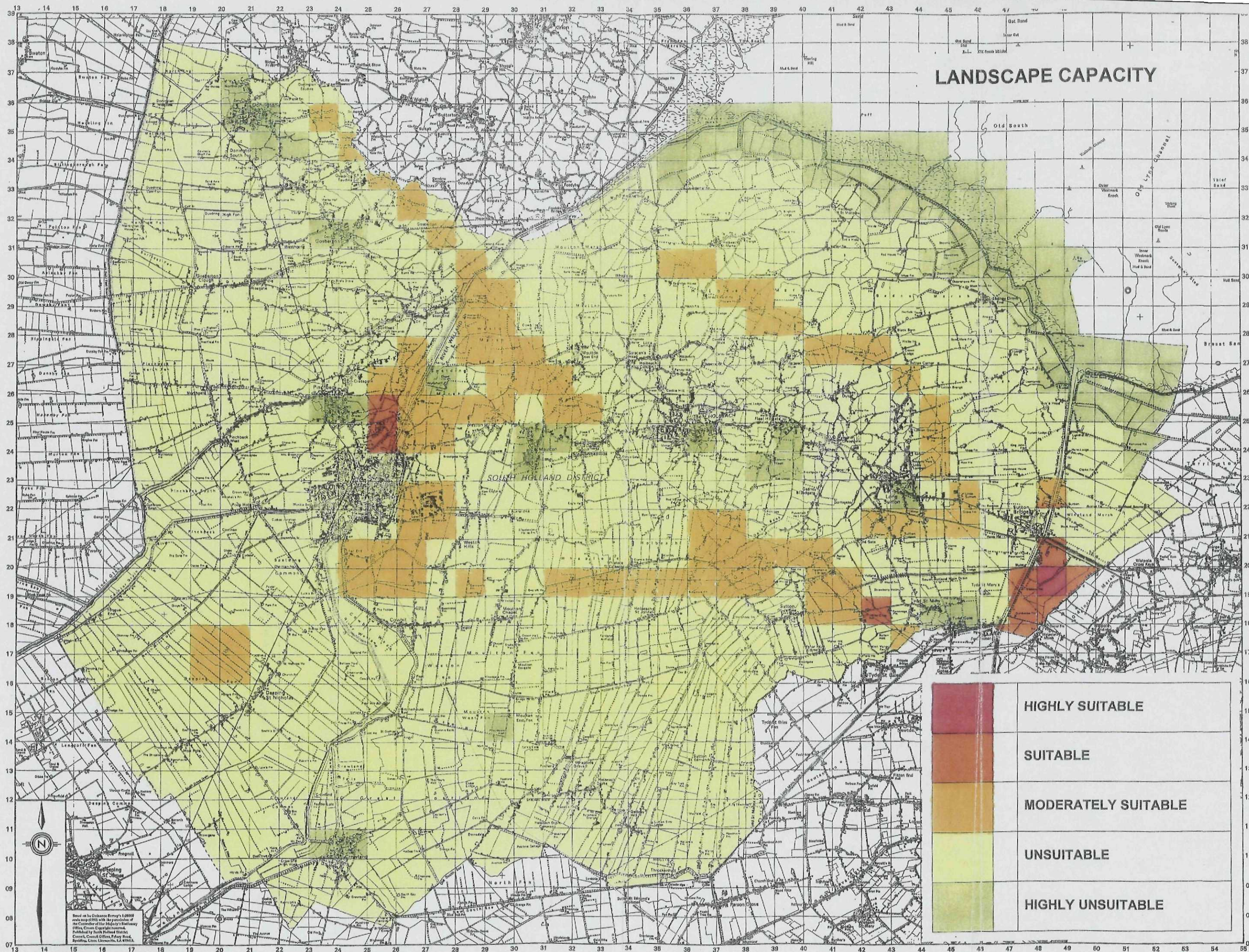



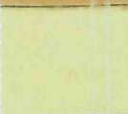
	<b>SETTLED FENS LANDSCAPE CHARACTER TYPE</b>
	<b>PEATY FENS LANDSCAPE CHARACTER TYPE</b>
	<b>WASH MARSHES LANDSCAPE CHARACTER TYPE</b>
	<b>Conservation Areas</b>
	<b>Scheduled Ancient Monuments*</b>
	<b>National Cycle Route</b>
	<b>District Boundary</b>

\* Where Scheduled Ancient Monuments coincide with Conservation Areas, for clarity of representation, the SAM symbol has been omitted



# LANDSCAPE CAPACITY



	HIGHLY SUITABLE
	SUITABLE
	MODERATELY SUITABLE
	UNSUITABLE
	HIGHLY UNSUITABLE

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