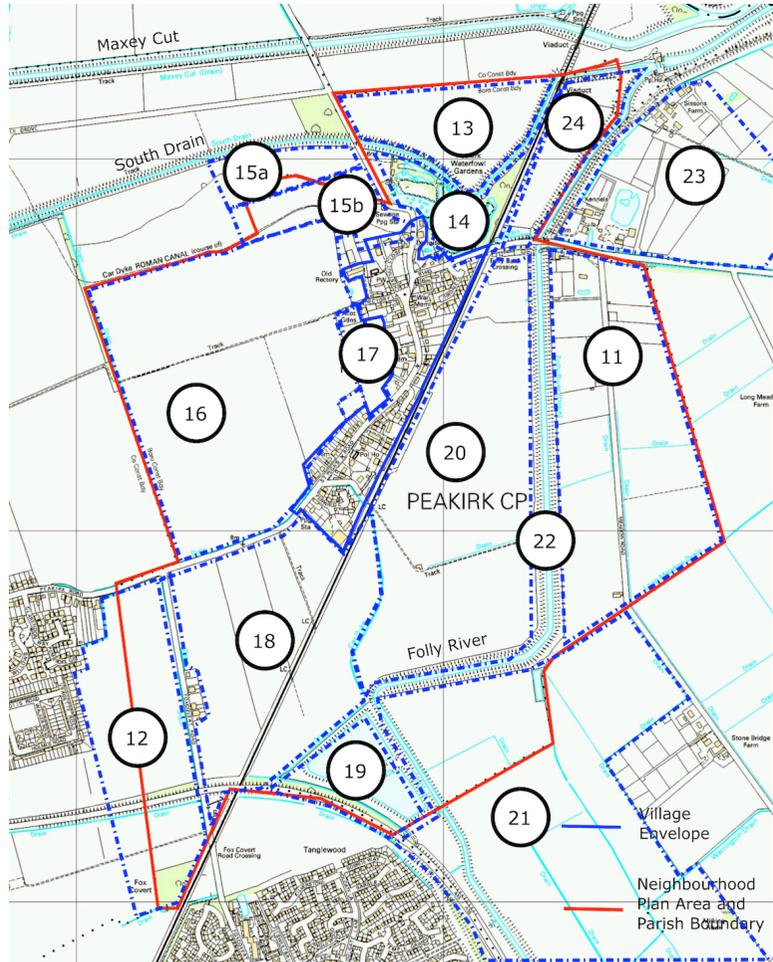


## 14 The Old Wildfowl Trust Site



Information reviewed	Classification	Comments
<b>Historical background:</b>	NCA 75 The Kesteven Uplands.	There is a long history of human occupation from the medieval period. The majority of settlements along the fen edge were in existence, in some form, by the time of the Domesday survey of 1086. Surviving ridge and furrow earthworks suggest that from the medieval period villages were set within a pattern of open arable fields, farmed in strips by the tenants and rotated annually on a three-field system. The arable land was complemented by areas of grazing land at the edge of each parish, used as common land. On the fen edge it is thought that cattle and sheep were grazed on the fens in summer, when the land was

		drier, and then over-wintered either on the higher heath, or in small closes adjacent to the villages. East-west routes also indicate that these settlements developed to serve this movement of livestock.
	Landscape Character Assessment for Peterborough City Council Final Report May 2007	<b>Landscape Character Area 3, The Welland Valley. b Maxey Cut and North Fen</b> Impact of historic pattern - Apparent
	Peterborough Landscape Character Assessment - Urban Fringe Landscape Sensitivity Study April 2007.	N/A
	The Potential Urban Expansion to Peterborough – Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity for alternative sites June 2006	N/A
	Peakirk Conservation Area Appraisal Report and Management Plan 2010	Suggested as a possible extension to the Peakirk Conservation Area in 2010 but considered by English Heritage as not justified as being not of historical or architectural interest.
	Local History	This site was originally a natural spring, planted with osier beds and then used as gravel workings, dug in 1840's for use on the Lincolnshire Loop railway line. 10 islands were constructed in the main pond. Once the gravel had been extracted, the extensive osier beds were used for basket making. This activity had ceased long before the WFT was involved. In 1956 the site was purchased by the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust and work started to transform it into a Wildfowl Gardens. The 14 acre gardens opened to the public in April 1957 by Prince Henry, Duke of Gloucester, as the Trust's second centre, with visitors averaging 30-40,000 per year. 3 more acres were added in 1967. There were 700 water birds, 108 species of which 5 were threatened with extinction. By the mid 70s there were 64,000 paying visitors, 8,000 of which were school children. Visitor numbers fell and in 1989/90 the decision was made by the WFT to sell the site. The Peterborough Agricultural Society leased the site in 1991 for 6 years, but it was uneconomical and closed in December 2001. It was sold into private ownership in 2003
	Peakirk Neighbourhood Plan LCA Survey 2015	Used to be the Waterfowl Gardens. No visible signs of past habitation

**Conclusion:**

The Wildfowl Trust Gardens have been an important part of the setting of the village since the 1840s. It opened in 1957 and closed to public access in 2003. Prior to that it was used as a gravel pit probably for the building of the railway and then osier beds providing local employment.



Aerial view of the main site forming the wooded boundary of the village to the north.

<b>Landscape Character</b>	NCA 75 The Kesteven Uplands.	In the east the lowest elevation is only 3 m above sea level. There are exposed distant views. In this transition zone the landscape has fewer woodlands and more subtle topography The area is characterized by hedgerows with trees, meadows and wide road verges	
	Landscape Character Assessment for Peterborough City Council Final Report May 2007	<b>Landscape Character Area 3, The Welland Valley. b Maxey Cut and North Fen</b> Low lying, moderate quality hedges/hedgerow trees and/or moderate to small woodlands Vegetation generally in linear belts, particularly along rivers, railways and drainage cuts/ditches	
	Peterborough Landscape Character Assessment - Urban Fringe Landscape Sensitivity Study April 2007.	N/A	
	The Potential Urban Expansion to Peterborough – Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity for alternative sites June 2006	N/A	
	Peakirk Conservation Area Appraisal Report and Management Plan 2010	On crossing the Maxey Cut, the sharp bends in the road combined with hedgerows on either side give a sense of expectation, especially when moving from the open landscape between Northborough and Peakirk.	
	Peakirk Neighbourhood Plan Desk Study 2015	Geology	Upper Jurassic clays
		Soils	Soilscape 20 Loamy and clayey floodplain soil with naturally high groundwater Texture- loamy Fertility – moderate
		Landform and Topography	Flat, Contour around 5m Above Ordnance Datum [sea level]. Typical slope of 1:100

		Hydrology	Flood Warning Area. Flood Zone 3. Nitrate Vulnerable Zone. Semi major waterway South Drain at risk from agricultural phosphates. Current ecological quality moderate. Wet woodland served by a natural spring. Approx. one third of the total area water with 10 ponds with numerous islands.
Peakirk Neighbourhood Plan Field Survey 2015		Enclosure	<p>The site is split into many different interconnecting areas within the confines of the main site.</p> <p><b>North</b> Embanked edge of South Drain [2m+] and then fence, ditch and dense hedge. Mature hawthorn, willow, blackthorn and elder. Some ornamental trees such as Fir and Aspen. No access.</p> <p><b>South</b> Post and wire fence with mature hedge and ditch, near double bend on Deeping road. Leylandii, Hawthorn, Beech, Oak, Sycamore, Ash and Copper Beech.</p> <p>Thorney Rd boundary mature hedge as above plus Snowberry. Mature trees include Willow and Ash with chicken wire fence. Ponds just inside the boundary at the bottom of the ditch. 1 potential access.</p> <p><b>East</b> Railway embankment [4m+] above ground level.</p> <p>Ditch and mature hedge as in other areas.</p> <p><b>West</b> Fence and hedge, mature Hawthorn, Blackthorn, Ash, Field Maple, Sycamore and Elder.</p>
		Biodiversity	Mature hedges with hedgerow trees to all four sides. Ash, Willow, Elder, Hawthorn, Fir, Plane. Complete tree cover over the site where no open water except for ex car park, which is kept mown. Many TPOs. Biodiversity unknown but likely to be very high.
		Variety of the Landscape	Complex. There are a variety of different habitats relating to the many areas of water.
		Tranquility	Peaceful with some interruptions. Mid way between tranquil and noisy. Bounded by roads and railway but historically very tranquil inside the site.
		Views	Internal. The area is completely hidden from external view and the outside world would be hidden from the site.

### Conclusion.

This is a small, enclosed wooded area separate from the edge of the village that it has been left to return to its natural character since being used as a Wildfowl Park 1957-2003. Much of the area is water and the rest covered by mature trees. It is adjacent to the existing village envelope along its southern boundary. It is in the High Flood Risk area identified by the Environment Agency. 107 of the trees on site are covered by Tree Protection Orders.



Looking south across the main pond in the Wildfowl Trust site 2008.

<b>Land Use:</b>	NCA 75 The Kesteven Uplands.	On the fen edge it is thought that cattle and sheep were grazed on the fens in summer, when the land was drier, and then over-wintered either on the higher heath, or in small closes adjacent to the villages. East-west routes also indicate that these settlements developed to serve this movement of livestock.
	Landscape Character Assessment for Peterborough City Council Final Report May 2007	<b>Landscape Character Area 3, The Welland Valley. b Maxey Cut and North Fen</b> The mixed farmland of calcareous loamy soils combines arable use with pasture; hedgerows, meadows and wide road verges.
	Peterborough Landscape Character Assessment - Urban Fringe Landscape Sensitivity Study April 2007.	N/A
	The Potential Urban Expansion to Peterborough – Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity for alternative sites June 2006	N/A
	Peakirk Conservation Area Appraisal Report and Management Plan 2010	The site of the gardens was a spring, planted with osier beds and subsequently used for gravel extraction.
	Peakirk Neighbourhood Plan LCA	Agricultural Land Classification- N/A

	Survey 2015	Public Rights of Way	No access to any part of the site including area previously used as a car park.
		Infrastructure	Minor rural road to western boundary, unclassified but busy and southern boundary [B1443], Spalding to Peterborough railway line at eastern boundary, recently up graded to take more freight traffic.
		Current use	Wet woodland served by a natural spring. Approx. half of the area water with possibly 10 ponds with numerous islands. Used to be the Waterfowl Gardens.
		Drainage	The South Drain is an important Environment Agency waterway used for controlling the local water table and is regularly maintained. Classified as a Flood Risk area 3a. by the Environment Agency.
		Buildings and Visual features	2 or 3 derelict 1970's style buildings from previous use adjacent to ex car park. Phone cables visible crossing site.

**Conclusion.** This is a small, enclosed wooded area, about 10 acres, separate from the edge of the village and it has been left to return to its natural character since being used as a Wildfowl Park 1957-2003. Much of the area is water and the rest covered by mature trees. It is adjacent to the existing village envelope along its southern boundary but would be unsuitable for any development involving building. It is in the High Flood Risk area identified by the Environment Agency. 107 of the trees on site are covered by Tree Protection Orders.



The café area in the 1990s

<b>Constraints:</b>	NCA 75 The Kesteven Uplands and River Welland Catchment Flood Management Plan Dec 2009. [EA]	The South Lincolnshire Limestone Aquifer is located under this part of the NCA. It is regionally important and large demands are placed upon it with 80 per cent of the abstraction for public water supply as well as agricultural and industrial needs. Currently the main sources of flood risk for people, property, infrastructure and the land are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>river flooding from the River Welland and its tributaries, particularly in the northern part of Peterborough, and towns of Market Harborough and Stamford;</li> </ul>
	Landscape Character Assessment for Peterborough City Council Final Report May 2007	<b>Landscape Character Area 3, The Welland Valley. b Maxey Cut and North Fen</b> Potential future mineral extraction to be carefully evaluated against historic value of landscape. If future extraction is, on balance, acceptable, restoration measures to provide additional accessible green space and wet woodland .
	Peterborough Landscape Character Assessment - Urban Fringe Landscape Sensitivity Study April 2007.	N/A
	The Potential Urban Expansion to Peterborough – Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity for alternative sites June 2006	N/A
	Peakirk Conservation Area Appraisal Report and Management Plan 2010	It is outside the current village envelope.
	Peakirk Neighbourhood Plan LCA Survey 2015	This area is adjacent to the existing village envelope along its southern boundary but would be unsuitable for any development involving building. It is in the High Flood Risk area identified by the Environment Agency. Any development could have a detrimental effect on the drainage of neighbouring houses, which are also about 3-5m AOD. 107 of the trees on site are covered by Tree Protection Orders. There is a strong presumption against any form of development or change of land use which is likely to damage or prejudice the long term existence of trees covered by a Tree Preservation Order. There are six restrictive covenants in the Land Registration Document inserted by the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust, specifically prohibiting a change of use within the period of 80 years from the date of sale and confirming that residential use was not appropriate. This was confirmed by the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust as still being their intention.12/10/2015. Any access onto the Thorney Road would add to the increasingly difficult traffic problems caused by ‘rat runners’ from the Deepings and Bourne, made worse by the extended time the rail crossing barriers are down since the line has been upgraded.

**Conclusion.** This area should remain as a haven for wildlife in this intensively farmed area. Any development on this site is constrained by the fact its surface is largely water and in the Environment Agency Flood Zone 3, which shows a High Risk of flooding from rivers and sea. It is outside the current village envelope. The land is currently unsafe for public access and would need extensive work prior to any further public use.



Looking east from the Deeping Road over the disused car park towards the derelict office buildings.

<b>Opportunities:</b>	NCA 75 The Kesteven Uplands.	Manage and expand broadleaf woodlands where possible, conserving the predominant tree species that include ash and oak and considering successional tree planting to conserve the tree canopy in existing woodland. Manage existing wet woodland, and extend and buffer where possible.
	Landscape Character Assessment for Peterborough City Council Final Report May 2007	<b>Landscape Character Area 3, The Welland Valley. b Maxey Cut and North Fen</b> Promote improvements in and around villages to the perimeter and wider setting to improve visual quality and to maintain separation from adjacent settlements and northern edge of Peterborough.
	Peterborough Landscape Character Assessment - Urban Fringe Landscape Sensitivity Study April 2007.	<b>Landscape Descriptive Unit 24 Land Cover Parcel 29</b> Peakirk Wildfowl Trust Centre [semi-derelict] potential site to re-furbish as 'Decoy Centre' – links to Drainage, Wildfowl and Maxey Cut.
	The Potential Urban Expansion to Peterborough – Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity for alternative sites June 2006	N/A
	Peakirk Conservation Area Appraisal Report and Management Plan 2010	To enhance wildlife value by planting native forest type trees where possible.
	Peakirk Neighbourhood Plan LCA Survey 2015	Some extra protection could be given to mature trees and hedges. Possible scope for improving limited public recreational access with appropriate screening,

		as suggested by the covenants. The Neighbourhood Plan Peakirk 2030 supports the identification of Green Infrastructure Corridors in line with the PCC Green Strategy 2006, which identifies this site as a potential Green Hub within the network. The Biodiversity and Green Infrastructure Strategy supports the Maxey Cut Climate Change Resilience Project. This site offers opportunities to be an important part of the Folly River Corridor Green Infrastructure.
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**Conclusion.** The Peakirk Neighbourhood Plan encourages the inclusion of this area in the PCC Biodiversity and Green Infrastructure Strategy which supports the Maxey Cut Climate Change Resilience Project. There are opportunities within the restrictive covenants to use the land for educational and/or training and outdoor leisure and recreational use together with associated offices, storage, parking, retail and catering facilities associated with such use. Further protection such as designation as a County Wildlife Site may be appropriate.