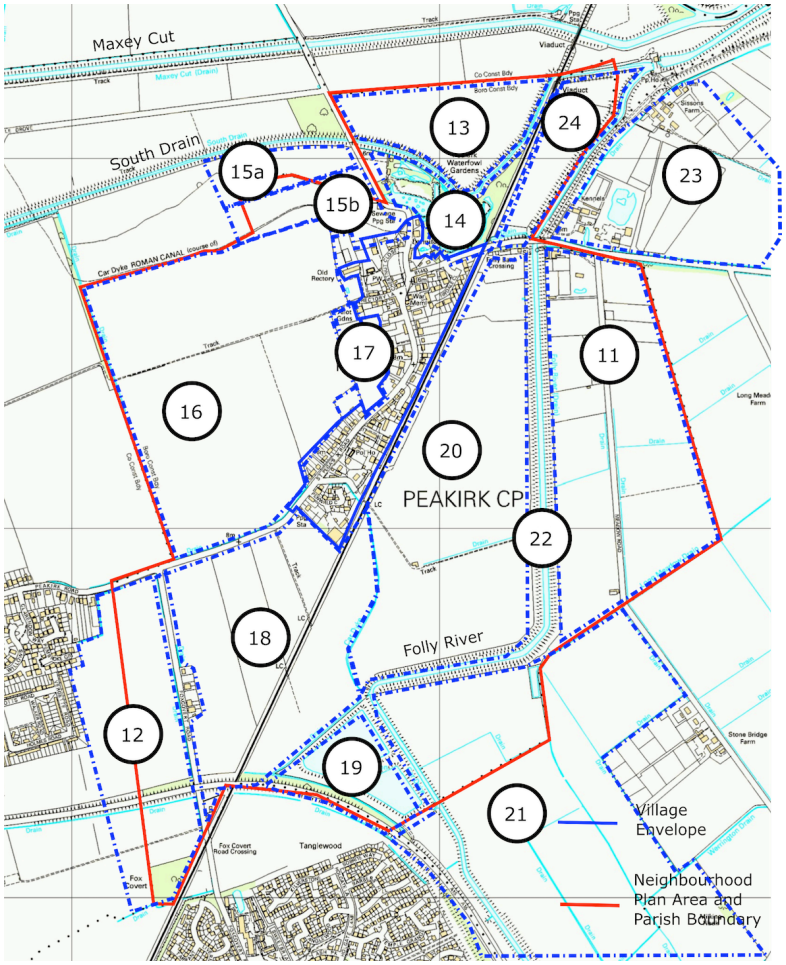
22 The Folly River



Information reviewed	Classification	Comments
Historical background:	NCA 46 The Fens	There is a long history of human occupation here, accounts of which can be found in the Historic Environment Records for Norfolk, Suffolk, Cambridgeshire, Peterborough and Lincolnshire. Scheduled Ancient Monuments of prehistoric to post-medieval date are located across the fens and many undesignated sites and monuments are known, again mainly from the fen edges and islands. Roman settlements occurred mainly on the high, drier islands and above the fen edge, while contemporary transport canals indicate efforts to traverse and control the fens. Car Dyke links the River Witham to the River Cam.
	Landscape Character Assessment	**Landscape Character Area 4 Peterborough Fens Sub Area a. Bedford North Level**

	for Peterborough City Council Final Report May 2007	An extensive area of low-lying reclaimed fen farmland dominated by the geometric pattern of arable fields. The onset of wetland conditions brought by rising sea levels buried vast prehistoric field systems, settlements and burial mound cemeteries at the fen margins. There is a well preserved Iron Age site north east of Peakirk, which elsewhere in the country would be classified as a hill fort. Roman settlement occupied the fen margins, low islands and raised silt ridges of extinct prehistoric water courses. The prevailing wetland character of the area, post medieval times, is reflected by the presence of an important duck decoy nearer Newborough.
	Peterborough Landscape Character Assessment - Urban Fringe Landscape Sensitivity Study April 2007.	**Landscape Descriptive Unit 24** **Land Cover Parcel 29** Apparent historic pattern and/or local heritage protection designations Folly river main feature embanked. Historic interest to north of Peakirk adjacent to Hermitage and Decoy Centre.
	The Potential Urban Expansion to Peterborough – Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity for alternative sites June 2006	**Site 3 Werrington Bridge Road** - 227 hectares, 5,000 possible houses.
	Peakirk Conservation Area Appraisal Report and Management Plan 2010	N/A
	Tracey Partida 2002-2009 Historic Mapping Zone 6	Peakirk is identified as one of the nine townships in the northern Soke of Peterborough, between the watershed of the River Nene in the south and the River Welland in the north, which form Zone 6 of the Historic Environment report by Tracey Partida. A main concern in low lying Peakirk was the maintenance of the drains and watercourses and the Enclosure Awards required the appointment of commissioners 'to ensure that existing drains and associated features such as tunnels, watergates, sluices, banks and bridges were to be scoured, repaired and widened, and where necessary to set out new ones.' This responsibility was to be a communal one and a surveyor was to be appointed 'with or without' salary to oversee this.
	Peakirk Neighbourhood Plan LCA survey 2015	The Folly River was part of a major improvement scheme in the 1970s to link Werrington Brook with the river Welland and provide a drainage outlet into the river Welland for Newborough, Crowland and Eye

Conclusion: This drain is an important part of the drainage system that controls the water levels in this area. It joins with the Car Dyke, The South Drain, the Maxey Cut and the River Welland at the pumping station on Corporation Bank, to the north.

Aerial view of the Folly River from B1443 south towards Werrington.

Landscape Character	NCA 46 The Fens.	Open fields, bounded by a network of drains and the distinctive hierarchy of rivers (some embanked), have a strong influence on the geometric/rectilinear landscape pattern. The structures create local enclosure and a slightly raised landform, which is mirrored in the road network. The drains and ditches are also an important ecological network important for invertebrates, fish including spined loach, and macrophytes.
	Landscape Character Assessment for Peterborough City Council Final Report May 2007	**Landscape Character Area 4 Peterborough Fens Sub Area a. Bedford North Level** Flat extensive and open landscape with panoramic views and large skies Rectilinear field pattern reflecting the artificial drainage pattern Sparse tree cover generally limited to shelter belts/copses around farmsteads and avenues along drove roads
	Peterborough Landscape Character Assessment - Urban Fringe Landscape Sensitivity Study April 2007.	**Landscape Descriptive Unit 24** **Land Cover Parcel 29** Isolated tree groups to arable land west of drain. Folly river main feature embanked.
	The Potential Urban Expansion to Peterborough – Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity for alternative sites June 2006	**Site 3 Werrington Bridge Road** - 227 hectares, 5,000 possible houses. Generally low lying and flat in topography at or around 3-4M AOD part of the Borough Fen. The levels locally rise to the west along the locally elevated line of the Car Dyke to 6-7M Criss crossed by a network of geometric ditches and drains The site is bounded by the Car Dyke and Folly River (Drain) to the south west and beyond this lies the Paston

		Parkway which is a prominent feature	
	Peakirk Conservation Area Appraisal Report and Management Plan 2010	N/A	
	Peakirk Neighbourhood Plan LCA Survey 2015	Geology	Upper Jurassic clays
		Soils	Soilscape 5 Freely draining lime rich loamy soil Soilscape 20 Loamy and clayey floodplain soil with naturally high groundwater Soilscape 22 Loamy soils with naturally high groundwater
		Landform and Topography	Embanked channel – 6m spot heights.
		Hydrology	Major Drainage Channel.
		Enclosure	Along length south of the B1443 enclosed by hedges and trees of various ages at the field side base of the bank. North of B1443 more open boundary with surrounding land**.** **North** Joins the South Drain at the Sissons pumping station. **South** Joins Car Dyke to flow south adjacent to the Werrington parkway. **East** Southern end more open with smaller hedges and few trees. Middle part mature hedges and some trees. Northern part adjacent to Corporation Bank byway post and wire fence on riverbank with some shrubby planting but mainly open **West** Southern end more open with smaller hedges and few trees. Middle part mature hedges and some mature Willow trees. Northern part adjacent to Folly Bank Crossing Meadows, with some tree planting on river side.
		Biodiversity	Mature hedges with hedgerow trees. Ash, Willow, Elder, Hawthorn. Waterfowl including Swans, Mallards and Coots. Mature Willows along western boundary
		Variety of the Landscape	Uniform along its approx.. 1.3 mile length.
		Tranquility	Occasional noise from the railway and road but otherwise feels isolated. Visual character contained along most of the length. Where no strong boundaries overlook farmland.
		Views	Central area contained views, more open at north and south.

Conclusion. Arable land with typical drainage layout, well maintained. Overall character that of arable fenland fields with planting reducing the scale of the landscape.

Looking north along the Folly Riverbank towards the Thorney Road B1443

Land Use:	NCA 46 The Fens	The Fens are the bread basket of Britain. The drainage of this area from the 17th century onwards presented valuable soils which provide excellent conditions for large-scale cultivation of arable and horticultural crops; holdings of more than 100 ha make up 77 per cent of farmed land. The only consistent relief to the level landform are the notches of the drainage ditches and the raised berms and banks of the artificial drainage channels.
	Landscape Character Assessment for Peterborough City Council Final Report May 2007	**Landscape Character Area 4 Peterborough Fens Sub Area a. Bedford North Level** Predominantly arable farmland Tree cover is sparse and generally only found in the form of shelterbelts around isolated farmsteads, at settlement edges or as avenues along some of the major droves.
	Peterborough Landscape Character Assessment - Urban Fringe Landscape Sensitivity Study April	**Landscape Descriptive Unit 24**

	2007.	**Land Cover Parcel 29** Folly river main feature embanked.	
	The Potential Urban Expansion to Peterborough – Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity for alternative sites June 2006	**Site 3 Werrington Bridge Road** - 227 hectares, 5,000 possible houses. The site is bounded by the Car Dyke and Folly River (Drain) to the south west and beyond this lies the Paston Parkway which is a prominent feature. The site is crossed and bounded by a few linear minor roads, which locally have some good hedges, which provide enclosure.	
	Peakirk Conservation Area Appraisal Report and Management Plan 2010	N/A	
	Peakirk Neighbourhood Plan LCA Survey 2015	Agricultural Land Classification-	Major Environment Agency/Internal Drainage Board Drain
		Public Rights of Way	None, although well established informal use.
		Infrastructure	B1443 crosses river near level crossing. Informal footpath along banks.
		Current use	Major drain with grazing for cows on banks.
		Drainage	Links to Car Dyke and Werrington Lakes in south west corner, links to South Drain, Maxey Cut and River Welland to the north.
		Buildings and Visual features	Pumping station at Sissons farm. Village edge can be seen from western bank. Road bridge carrying B1443

Conclusion: Major Drain important to the drainage of the whole area, currently leased for grazing. Some informal access over a long period of time.

Cattle grazing the Folly Riverbank south of the Thorney Rd B1443

Constraints:	NCA 46 The Fens and Peterborough Flood Risk Management Strategy	The Welland flows through Peterborough from its source in Hothorpe Hills, Northamptonshire to its mouth in the Wash. The River Welland itself forms the northern boundary of Peterborough but its catchment extends further south and includes the villages of Barnack, Ufford, Etton, Marholm, Glinton and Peakirk as well the northern part of Peterborough's urban area. The rivers making up the Peterborough Brooks form notable tributaries to the Welland.
	Landscape Character Assessment for Peterborough City Council Final Report May 2007	**Landscape Character Area 4 Peterborough Fens Sub Area a. Bedford North Level** Although the area is exposed and, is widely visible from its surroundings, this does not weaken the character and may be considered to even strengthen it further. The sense of distance from major development generally leads to a tranquil character The general lack of semi natural vegetation and the character of many of the drainage ditches means that the landscape generally has a relatively poor biodiversity value. Progressive drainage has gradually reduced the biodiversity value over the centuries

	Peterborough Landscape Character Assessment - Urban Fringe Landscape Sensitivity Study April 2007.	**Landscape Descriptive Unit 24** **Land Cover Parcel 29** Folly river main feature embanked.
	The Potential Urban Expansion to Peterborough – Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity for alternative sites June 2006	**Site 3 Werrington Bridge Road** - 227 hectares, 5,000 possible houses. Location where development will be isolated from and not form any relationship with the existing urban fabric Location where development would adversely affect the setting of an existing village. Moderate scope to provide mitigation in the medium term broadly in keeping with existing landscape pattern. The site is relatively close to the village of Peakirk and the scale of development would be likely to have an adverse impact on the setting of the village. The site is bounded by the Car Dyke and Folly River (Drain) to the south west and beyond this lies the Paston Parkway which is a prominent feature.
	Peakirk Conservation Area Appraisal Report and Management Plan 2010	N/A
	Peakirk Neighbourhood Plan LCA Survey 2015	An important feature in the fenland landscape both functionally and aesthetically. Any further development would spoil this character completely.

Conclusion. This drain is an important part of the drainage system that controls the water table in this area. It joins with the Car Dyke, The South Drain, the Maxey Cut and the River Welland at the pumping station on Corporation Bank, to the north.

It is embanked to a height of 6m above AOD to protect the surrounding agricultural land and Peakirk village in the event of a flood.

Looking west along the north bank the Folly River where it turns north

Opportunities:	NCA 46 The Fens and Peterborough Flood Risk Management Strategy	A large number of the schemes put forward in the action plan relate to river corridor improvements, which would benefit the water environment as well as the surrounding landscapes.
	Landscape Character Assessment for Peterborough City Council Final Report May 2007	**Landscape Character Area 4 Peterborough Fens Sub Area a. Bedford North Level** The fens have a very limited network of rights of way due to their relatively recent draining, with transport in the past often having been by boat.
	Peterborough Landscape Character Assessment - Urban Fringe Landscape Sensitivity Study April	**Landscape Descriptive Unit 24** **Land Cover Parcel 29**

	2007.	Moderate scope to provide mitigation in the medium term broadly in keeping with existing landscape pattern Scattered habitat survival with poor linkages between habitats.
	The Potential Urban Expansion to Peterborough – Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity for alternative sites June 2006	Site 3 Werrington Bridge Road - 227 hectares, 5,000 possible houses. Moderate scope to provide mitigation in the medium term broadly in keeping with existing landscape pattern. There are no rights of way which run though the site, but a section of the Green Wheel follows the minor roads to the eastern boundary. There are other minor roads that pass through the site currently provide recreational opportunities.
	Peakirk Conservation Area Appraisal Report and Management Plan 2010	N/A
	Peakirk Neighbourhood Plan LCA Survey 2015	There could be some opportunity for footpaths and a cycleway, as it is a popular local dog walking route. There is scope for the creation of a new Green Infrastructure corridor linking Werrington Brook to the Welland River via the Folly River – The Folly River Corridor. The northern and western parts of this area could be important in its success.

Conclusion. This area should remain as an important drain. Any proposed development should not weaken the intrinsic landscape setting of Peakirk but there is an opportunity that could add biodiversity and public access value via a new Green Infrastructure Corridor.