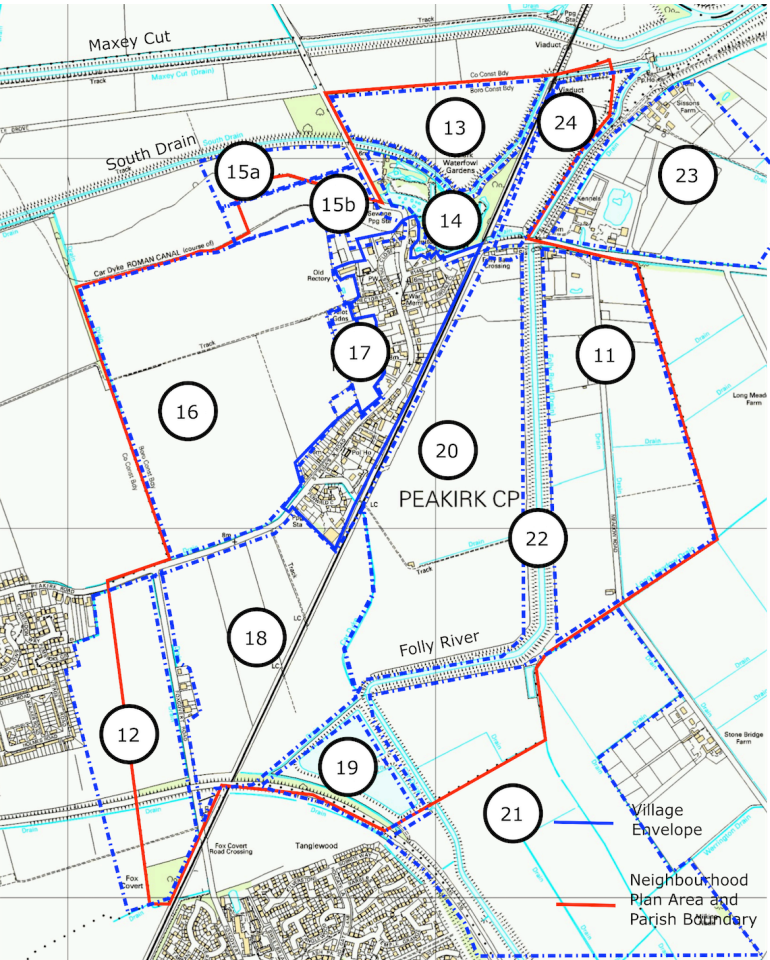


20 Between the Railway and the Folly River



Information reviewed	Classification	Comments
Historical background:	NCA 46 The Fens	<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>

	Landscape Character Assessment for Peterborough City Council Final Report May 2007	<p><b>Landscape Character Area 4 Peterborough Fens Sub Area a. Bedford North Level</b></p> <p>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.</p> <p>The prevailing wetland character of the area, post medieval times, is reflected by the presence of an important duck decoy nearer Newborough.</p>
	Peterborough Landscape Character Assessment - Urban Fringe Landscape Sensitivity Study April 2007.	<p><b>Landscape Descriptive Unit 24</b></p> <p><b>Land Cover Parcel 29</b></p> <p>Historic interest to north of Peakirk adjacent to Hermitage and Decoy Centre</p>
	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	N/A
	Tracey Partida 2002-2009 Historic Mapping Zone 6	<p>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 written by Tracey Partida.</p> <p>In medieval times owners and tenants from each township farmed the large, arable open fields in common, each one being divided into 'furlongs'. Peakirk also probably had areas of pasture, wood and meadow, possibly on the floodplain of the River Welland and also contained a small block of fen, identified as North Fen.</p> <p>Parliamentary Enclosure of Peakirk took eleven years to complete. The enclosure Act of 1809 prompted the end of the open field system and led to enclosure of common land at Peakirk Long Meadow and Moor. The landscape changed as paths or baulks between open fields were re-routed and the open landscape was replaced by hedges and hedgerow trees surrounding small fields.</p> <p>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.</p>
	Peakirk Neighbourhood Plan LCA Survey 2015	<p>Large arable field and two smaller grass fields, marking the fen edge where Landscape Character Area 4 The Peterborough Fens, meets Landscape Character Area 3 The Kesteven Uplands.</p> <p>Car Dyke Roman canal forms southern boundary following the 5m contour that marked the fen edge.</p>

**Conclusion:** This area follows the 5m contour and Car Dyke, which mark where National Character Area 75 The Kesteven Uplands, meets National Character Area 46 The Fens, confirming the position of Peakirk as a Fen Edge village. The area is one large arable field and two small grass paddocks contained by the embankments of the railway on the west, the Folly River on the east and the Car Dyke on the south. The northern embankment carries the B1443 Thorney Road.



Aerial view, looking north from the track midway across the area towards the Thorney Road B1443

<b>Landscape Character</b>	NCA 46 The Fens.	The area is notable for its large-scale, flat, open landscape with extensive vistas to level horizons. This gives the impression of huge skies, which convey a strong sense of place, tranquility and inspiration.
	Landscape Character Assessment for Peterborough City Council Final Report May 2007	<b>Landscape Character Area 4 Peterborough Fens Sub Area a. Bedford North Level</b> Flat extensive and open landscape with panoramic views and large skies Rectilinear field pattern reflecting the artificial drainage pattern Predominantly arable farmland 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.	<b>Landscape Descriptive Unit 24</b> <b>Land Cover Parcel 29</b> Open arable fields to centre and south. Some smaller units including grazing to north and east. 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	N/A	
	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	Flat, altitude ranging from minus 1 to 3m AOD. Embankments approx. 5m AOD
		Hydrology	Drainage ditches at boundaries. Car Dyke at western boundary and drainage ditch along track running across area. Overflow pumping station half way down eastern boundary
		Enclosure	Strong boundaries to north, west and east. Car Dyke a more open boundary to the south. <b>North</b> B1443 to Thorney, with semi mature native hedge enclosing paddock from the road. 2nd field lower hedge with trees. Drainage ditch at roadside. <b>South</b> Car Dyke Roman canal with mature Willow trees along part of the route <b>East</b> Embanked Folly River with mature native hedge and mature willows at field side of the bank. <b>West</b> Railway and village edge screened by mature trees.
		Biodiversity	Mature hedges with hedgerow trees. Ash, Willow, Elder, Hawthorn. Evidence of badgers and foxes locally. Mature Willows along Car Dyke and Folly River. Oak and Field Maple along track.

		Variety of the Landscape	Simple. Three adjacent fields.
		Tranquility	Varied. Western and northern boundaries noisy. Quieter in other areas.
		Views	Open views across most of the area with screening of Peakirk edge and some parts of railway.

### Conclusion.

This area is three fields separating the railway line at the edge of the village from the Folly River.



Looking north from half way down the field track towards B1443 Thorney Road

<b>Land Use:</b>	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. As cultivation techniques have become more intensive, however, the soil resource is increasingly diminished through desiccation and erosion. Clays and silts laid down by marine incursions dominate the area abutting the Wash and extend inland along the rivers, forming the fertile horticultural soils of the silt fens.	
	Landscape Character Assessment for Peterborough City Council Final Report May 2007	<b>Landscape Character Area 4 Peterborough Fens Sub Area a. Bedford North Level</b> 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 2007.	<b>Landscape Descriptive Unit 24</b> <b>Land Cover Parcel 29</b> Open arable fields to centre and south. Some smaller units including grazing to north and east. Isolated tree groups to arable land west of drain. Folly river main feature embanked. More intimate and enclosed to north of village, including pasture and taller mature hedges, willow and mature poplars.	
	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	N/A	
	Peakirk Neighbourhood Plan LCA Survey 2015	Agricultural Land Classification-	Grade 3 Good to Moderate
		Public Rights of Way	Along B1443, although informal use of farm tracks for generations.
		Infrastructure	Thorney Road B1443 forms northern boundary. Embanked railway track Spalding to Peterborough forms eastern boundary.
		Current use	Large arable field with 2 smaller paddocks to north.
		Drainage	Drainage ditches at boundaries. Car Dyke.
		Buildings and Visual features	Electric cables visible crossing site.  Small stone barn/store on track through arable field.

**Conclusion.** This is valuable farmland cultivated as one field with LCA18 by a local farmer. It is prone to flooding in the north and access is only really possible from Thorney Road. It adjoins the railway track, which forms the boundary of realistic development in the village to the east. The southern boundary is the line of the Car Dyke, which also acts as the boundary of the National Character Area 4 The Fens. The Folly River embankment provides the eastern boundary.



Looking north west from the Folly River bank towards the eastern edge of the village

<p><b>Constraints:</b></p>	<p>NCA 46 The Fens and River Welland Catchment Flood Management Plan Dec 2009. [EA]</p>	<p>Modern built development is eroding the architectural and historic character of some Fenland villages. Development on settlement margins can be particularly damaging, creating visual intrusion and resulting in the loss of surrounding landscape features and increasing the risk of coalescence. The proliferation of smaller, unplanned residential development along arterial roads is also changing the landscape, reducing the sense of remoteness and enclosing views.</p> <p>Currently the main sources of flood risk for people, property, infrastructure and the land are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>river flooding from the River Welland and its tributaries, particularly in the northern</li> </ul>
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		part of Peterborough, and towns of Market Harborough and Stamford;
	Landscape Character Assessment for Peterborough City Council Final Report May 2007	<b>Landscape Character Area 4 Peterborough Fens Sub Area a. Bedford North Level</b> Ensure careful consideration is given to development on the fringes of settlements to minimize visual intrusion Ensure built development is generally enclosed by existing and/or strengthened vegetation Where development is otherwise considered acceptable ensure that the forms and materials create elegant structures within the open landscape Prevent development that could detract from local landmarks
	Peterborough Landscape Character Assessment - Urban Fringe Landscape Sensitivity Study April 2007.	<b>Landscape Descriptive Unit 24</b> <b>Land Cover Parcel 29</b> Development will be isolated from and not form any relationship with the existing urban fabric, development would adversely affect the setting of an existing village.
	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	N/A
	Peakirk Neighbourhood Plan LCA Survey 2015	The area would be difficult to access unless from the Thorney Road and would be unsuitable for extension of Peakirk village as it is separated by the recently upgraded railway line. This area is low lying valuable agricultural land between the railway and the Folly River. It is prone to flooding in the north and access is only really possible from Thorney Road. It adjoins the railway track, which forms the boundary of realistic development in the village to the east. It would be unsuitable for any development except casual recreational use. There is an existing track, used by the farmer, but its use is limited by the danger of crossing the railway line by means of an unmanned crossing into the village.

**Conclusion.** This is valuable farmland mainly cultivated as one field with LCA18 by a local farmer. The two smaller paddocks to the north provide valuable grass and tree cover. This area should remain in its current use. It is unlikely to be suitable for any other use than as present.



Looking south west from where the base of the Folly river meets the track towards Car Dyke

<b>Opportunities:</b>	NCA 46 The Fens	Manage the agricultural landscape and soils which allow the Fens to be a major provider of food and horticultural produce, while seeking to enhance opportunities for biodiversity. Conserve, manage and enhance the Fens landscape and increase educational opportunities to access its geodiversity, archaeology and cultural heritage to enhance enjoyment and understanding for those who live and work in and visit the Fens.
	Landscape Character Assessment for Peterborough City Council Final Report May 2007	<b>Landscape Character Area 4 Peterborough Fens Sub Area a. Bedford North Level</b> 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. Some of the minor roads form part of the Green Wheel cycle network. The use of traditional building materials should be encouraged Encourage the improvement of village and farmstead edges through the use of appropriate shelterbelt planting
	Peterborough Landscape Character Assessment - Urban Fringe Landscape Sensitivity Study April 2007.	<b>Landscape Descriptive Unit 24</b> <b>Land Cover Parcel 29</b> Scattered habitat survival with good linkages between habitats and/or local habitat protection designations

	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	N/A
	Peakirk Neighbourhood Plan LCA Survey 2015	Overall character that of arable fenland field with some infrastructure development around the edges. Important to keep feeling of openness between settlements. There is an existing track, used by the farmer, but its use is limited by the danger of crossing the railway line by means of an unmanned crossing into the village. This track links the village to the Folly River bank and is used by walkers locally.

**Conclusion.** This area should remain in its current use. It is unlikely to be suitable for any other use at present, although the northern boundary tree belt and the existing footpath through the field offer some ideas for improving public access.