

10. G: FRINGE FARMLAND

LOCATION

- 10.1. Fringe Farmland is located in one area, found to the west of Norwich, occupying a broad linear strip adjacent to the Norwich Southern Bypass. The boundary of this area is distinguished by the woodlands at the periphery of the Tud valley to the north of the area and the rural river valley of the Yare Rural River Valley to the south. It is defined as a distinctive landscape as a result of its relatively developed character and eroded farmland context.

KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- **Gentle ridge of land** marking the dividing line between two valley landscapes and creating an impression of exposure along the ridgeline;
- **History of mineral extraction**, particularly sand and gravel workings, resulting in scarred and reclaimed areas.
- **Use of the area for urban fringe uses** including a park and ride scheme (under construction), retail warehouses, a golf course and the Royal Norfolk Showground.
- **Significant level of settlement** including the Norwich suburb of New Costessey and the smaller linear settlement of Easton.
- **Rural farmland origins and context** including both arable and pastoral farmland and retaining a peaceful rural quality.
- **Absence of large wooded areas.**
- **Norwich Southern Bypass** is a major feature of the area.

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

- 10.2. This landscape is underlain by sand and gravel drift deposits. Topographically it occurs on a gentle ridge of land occupying the area between the valleys of the River Yare and the River Tud at an elevation of above 30m AOD and up to 50m AOD. As a consequence of the topography and the relatively low-level of woodland the landscape feels quite exposed. There are views from here into adjacent valley landscapes of the Tud and the valley of the rural Yare with its flooded gravel workings.
- 10.3. Originally this area would have shared many of the characteristics of the tributary and/or plateau farmland landscape character types. However, recent construction and land use activities have had a significant effect upon the rural character. Sand and gravel extraction activities have scarred the landscape and, unlike the Valley Urban

Fringe, these have not revegetated as an attractive wetland feature. Redevelopment of these areas has resulted in development of a large linear block of out-of-town shops along the Norwich Southern Bypass in the form of retail warehouses and supermarkets. These large buildings are highly visible and dominant within the landscape, effectively creating an extension to the City and a new 'gateway' to Norwich. Other large-scale more urban developments in this area include the Royal Norfolk Showground with its associated boundary fencing, the new park-and-ride development, and a small golf course located at Glen Lodge Farm.

- 10.4. There is also a significant amount of residential land within this area along with associated uses such as schools. The main settled areas are New Costessey, which has merged with Norwich, and the small linear settlement of Easton with its distinctive water tower that acts as a local landmark. These settlements have a strong post-war quality and urban character. Infrastructure developments are a dominant feature of the landscape. In particular the Norwich Southern Bypass which introduces a corridor of noise and movement and makes the area an important gateway into Norwich. This is in contrast to the other roads of the area, which retain a strong rural character. Pylons also affect the character of the area, crossing the landscape at intervals.
- 10.5. Elsewhere, towards the Yare/Tiffey Rural River Valley the landscape retains a strong rural character including both arable and pastoral farmland and a number of dispersed farmhouses. There are no Scheduled Ancient Monuments or historic parklands within the landscape and the area is also notable for the absence of distinctive built elements or historical features such as round-towered or isolated churches.

LANDSCAPE ASSETS

✓✓✓ very characteristic/important ✓✓ characteristic/important ✓ noticeably present/important

- Asset not present or present but by virtue of extent or quality does not contribute significantly to landscape character

| ASSET/LEVEL OF IMPORTANCE | | NOTES |
|---|---|-------|
| | | |
| NATIONAL/INTERNATIONAL: | | |
| Nationally important ecological assemblages | - | |
| Presence of Scheduled Ancient Monuments | - | |
| Presence of round-towered churches | - | |
| Presence of isolated churches | - | |
| DISTRICT/COUNTY: | | |

| | | |
|--|-----|---|
| Strong regional vernacular character | ✓ | Some rural dwellings but overpowered by out-of-town shopping etc. |
| Important Views that provide sense of place | ✓ | Gateway quality |
| Presence of historic parkland particularly EH listed. | - | |
| Wooded appearance | ✓ | |
| Distinctive valley landform | - | |
| Waterways visible within the landscape | - | |
| Watermills present | - | |
| Windmills present | - | |
| Moats present. | - | |
| LOCAL: | | |
| Pastoral Farmland with visible grazing animals. | ✓ | |
| Willow pollard and/or poplar-lined watercourses | - | |
| Drainage ditches | - | |
| Wide grass verges alongside roads | - | |
| Good hedgerow network | - | |
| Mature hedgerow trees | - | |
| Presence of river crossings | - | |
| Sunken Lanes | - | |
| Water bodies | ✓ | |
| Distinctive plateau landscape | ✓ | |
| Area of or including significant strategic breaks between settled areas | ✓✓✓ | Important strategic gaps between New Costessey and Easton. |

See summary table for greater explanation of Landscape Assets

CHARACTER AREAS

10.6. There is only one character area of this landscape type:

Norwich Policy Area (See Volume 2 for more details)

- Easton Fringe Farmland (G1).

Figure G: Landscape Type G - Fringe Farmland



- Large superstores and 'brownfield' land are a feature of the Fringe Farmland.



- Other edge-of-town development such as the Royal Norfolk Showground occupy this landscape type.



- The golf course does not integrate well into the farmed landscape.



- In contrast to the more developed areas some parts of the landscape retain farmland and settlement with a strong rural quality.

