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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Landscape Partnership was commissioned by Milton Keynes Council in September 2005 to carry out a review of the Local Landscape Designations in the rural areas of the authority. One of the recommendations from this study was that Milton Keynes should complete a detailed assessment for the whole of the rural areas of Milton Keynes. The Landscape Partnership was subsequently instructed in December 2006 to undertake the preparation of a 'local authority scale' landscape character assessment in accordance with the most current version of national guidance. The characterisation work has built on the work of the Local Landscape Designation Study (October 2006) and derived a classification of the landscape types and character areas within the authority for the purposes of:

- Identifying, describing and mapping the different landscape character areas in Milton Keynes rural areas
- Providing guidance on the management of the landscape character areas
- Informing Milton Keynes's Local Development Documents
- Ensuring that decisions about the location of new development take landscape character into account in line with national and regional guidance
- Assessing the landscape in terms of its sensitivity to change

2. CONTEXT

- 2.1 The process of landscape characterisation and assessment has been promoted at a national scale in England by the work of the Natural England (formerly Countryside Agency). In tandem with English Nature, parallel approaches were formulated and tested during 1995-97 to derive, on the one hand, a series of Natural Area profiles for the whole of England and, on the other, Countryside Character profiles. While the Natural Area profiles highlighted the distinctive ecology of rural areas, the Countryside Character profiles analysed landscape character in fairly broad-brush terms via the assessment of physical influences, historic and cultural influences, buildings and settlement, land cover and changes in the landscape.
- 2.2 Through this process 159 Character Areas were formulated and published, as 'The Character of England: landscape, wildlife and natural features' (see Figure 01). The detailed descriptions for the areas are included within eight separate volumes with 'Volume 6: East of England' and 'Volume 7: South East and London' being the relevant volumes for Milton Keynes.



Fig 1

This national character map defines Milton Keynes City Council authority as lying within the three following Character Areas (See Fig 2 and Drawing 01):

- Area 88 Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire Claylands
- Area 90 Bedfordshire Greensand Ridge
- Area 91 Yardley-Whittlewood Ridge

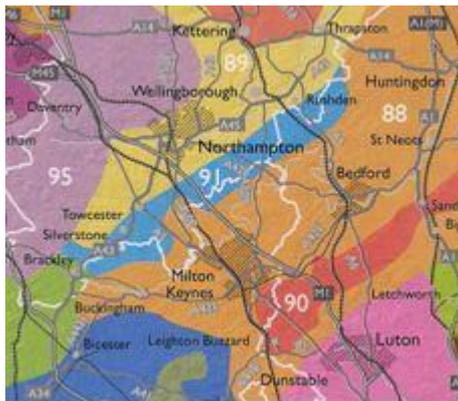


Fig 2

- 2.3 Current guidance on carrying out character work is provided in, 'Landscape Character Assessment – Guidance for England and Scotland' (2002). The approach is also currently enshrined as a major planning tool in, 'PPS7' (2004). PPS 7 also sets out some important overarching principles for raising the quality of life and the environment in rural areas, with the '*continued protection of open countryside for the benefit of all*.' It sets out that sustainable patterns of development should focus development in or next to existing settlements, while also maximising the benefits of the urban fringe landscapes with leisure opportunities for the local population. In particular two of the Key Principles in PPS7 state:
- iv), '*New building in the open countryside away from settlements or outside areas allocated for development in development plans, should be strictly controlled; the Governments overall aim is to protect the countryside for the sake of its intrinsic character and beauty, the diversity of its landscapes, heritage and wildlife, the wealth of its natural resources and so it may be enjoyed by all.*' (our emphasis)
- vi) '*All development in rural areas should be well designed and inclusive, in keeping and scale with its location, and sensitive to the character of the countryside and the local distinctiveness.*' (our emphasis)'
- 2.4 Buckinghamshire County Council produced a countywide 'Landscape Character Assessment – Consultation Draft (see Fig 3) in 1996 which provided an overview of the landscape character areas within the county before Milton Keynes became a unitary authority in 1997.



2.5 In 1999 Landscape Design Associates was commissioned to carry out a study for Milton Keynes Council to inform the review of Milton Keynes Local Plan. This study included an assessment of the Areas of Attractive Landscape (AALs) within the authority and also 'an overview of the landscape character across the whole of the Milton Keynes rural area, to identify broad differences in character and provide the context for the more detailed assessment of the AALs'. The report identified seven Landscape Character Areas, within the whole of Milton Keynes as follows:

- 1 Yardley Ridge
- 2 Ouse Valley
- 3 River Tove Lowlands
- 4 Shenley Lowlands
- 5 Chicheley/Crawley Claylands
- 6 Clayland Fringes
- 7 Brickhills Ridge

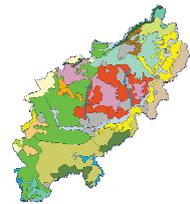
2.6 These seven areas were accepted by Milton Keynes Council and are supported in the adopted Milton Keynes Local Plan (December 2005) as Policy NE4- Conserving Landscape Character. The findings of the Local Landscape Designation Study (October 2006) and the more detailed character assessment included within this report broadly support the seven character areas identified included in the Local Plan. For this reason the numbering and names of the areas have also been largely retained to aid continuity. However as the 1999 study was produced prior to current best practice provided in 'Landscape Character Assessment – Guidance for England and Scotland' (2002) additional levels of assessment and evaluation are required. This process (described below) have resulted in modifications to some of the boundaries and the definition of more detailed sub areas within the character areas to provide a finer scale of detail appropriate to a 'district scale assessment'.

2.7 A number of Local Authorities surrounding Milton Keynes Council have already undertaken Landscape Character Assessments. These include Northamptonshire County Council to the north, Bedfordshire County Council to the east and Buckinghamshire County Council to the west. In addition Aylesbury Vale District Council is currently producing a 'district scale' assessment, which adjoins the western extent of the Milton Keynes authority. The character areas and boundaries proposed in these studies have been reviewed as part of this study in order that where possible there is cross authority consistency.

2.8 Northamptonshire County Council carried out a three-strand process in developing their Environmental Character Map based on separate studies of ecological character, historic environment and current landscape character. The Current Landscape Character Assessment theme (January 2006) identifies three Landscape Character Zones adjacent to the Milton Keynes Council boundary and associated Landscape Character Types, (in brackets) which are:

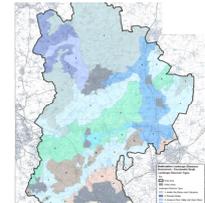
- Salcey Forest and Yardley Chase (Low wooded Clay Ridge)

- Upper Valleys (including River Valley Floodplain and undulating claylands)
- Eastern Fringes (including River Valley Floodplain and undulating claylands)



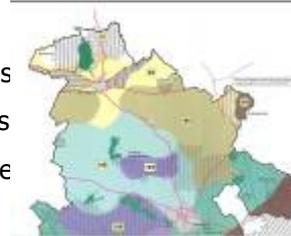
2.9 The Bedfordshire Landscape Character Assessment (November 2003) identifies five Landscape Character Types close or adjacent to the Milton Keynes Council boundary, (see Drawing 02). These are:

- Landscape Character Type 1 - Arable Clay Plateau with Tributaries
- Landscape Character Type 2 - Wooded Wolds
- Landscape Character Type 3 - Limestone River Valley with Open Water
- Landscape Character Type 5 - Settled and Farmed Clay Vales
- Landscape Character Type 6 - Wooded Greensand Ridge



2.10 The Landscape Plan for Buckinghamshire – Part 1 produced by Buckinghamshire County Council has involved sub dividing the national landscape character areas and has defined the following zones adjacent to the Milton Keynes Council boundary:

- Landscape Character Zone 1 - Valley Farmlands
- Landscape Character Zone 2 - Clayland Villages
- Landscape Character Zone 3 - Greensand Ridge



Landscape Overview

Physical Influences

2.11 Milton Keynes Council is primarily located within one main landscape character area as defined at a national scale namely the 'Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire Claylands'. These claylands comprise areas of undulating 'upland plateau' sub divided by the shallow river valleys of the Ouse and Ouzel. To the fringes of the authority there are two contrasting character areas : to the north west lies the the fringes of the Yardley Whittlewood Ridge which is mainly located within Northamptonshire and to the south east is the edge of the Greensand Ridge which extends in a north easterly direction through most of Bedfordshire.

2.12 The river valleys within the Council's administrative area have a big influence on the geology, soils and topography of the area. Within the vicinity of the Ouse and the Ouzel, soils are more alluvial and subject to seasonal waterlogging, whereas in the remainder of the area the soils are either calcareous, as a result of the underlying limestone geology, or clayey as a result of glacial boulder clay deposits. The topography and landform in the vicinity of these rivers, and their tributaries, is also noticeably different to

that within the rest of the authority. The landform falls towards the flatter valley bottoms, particularly from Yardley Ridge in the north and the Greensand Ridge in the south.

Historic and Cultural Influences

- 2.13 The historic landscape and environment in and around Milton Keynes is diverse and valuable. There are some nationally important areas, which include prehistoric settlement and religious sites. A number of these sites are Scheduled Monuments including numerous moated sites to the east of Milton Keynes city, a Motte and Bailey castle/deserted village at Wolverton, Lavendon Castle and Abbey, Magiovinium Roman town and fort south of the city and a Roman site at Olney. Tyrringham, Gayhurst and Chicheley Hall are also Registered Parks and Gardens.
- 2.14 Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes Historic Landscape Characterisation provides an overview of the changes in landcover and field pattern that have taken place around Milton Keynes. Although there are many areas that are dominated by modern 'prairie fields', older field patterns can also be found, most of which are 'Pre 18th Century Irregular Enclosure' or more regular 'Parliamentary Enclosure'. The following are the main historic landscape types found around Milton Keynes:
- Assarted Enclosures
 - Enclosed Furlongs and Strips
 - Pre 18th Century Irregular Enclosure
 - Parliamentary Enclosure (Original Allotments)
 - 19th Century Enclosure
 - 20th Century Prairie Fields
 - Pre 18th Century Regular Enclosure
 - 20th Century Enclosure
 - Meadows
 - Parks and Gardens
 - Flooded Restored Mineral Extraction

Buildings and settlement

- 2.15 The natural geology has influenced the range of building materials found within the areas. Along the Ouse Valley corridor the warm coloured limestone, mainly derived from local quarries make an important contribution to the local vernacular architecture and sense of place. However the local stone is not very hard and some of the finer and prominent houses e.g. Tyrringham and churches e.g. Gayhurst and Olney have been constructed from imported stone. Local building materials on the central and upland plateau areas east of the Ouse Valley comprise more local red brick and some timber frame. Many of the older houses including Chicheley Hall were built from locally manufactured bricks from locally dug clay. Roofing materials mainly comprise slate and tile however in a number of the villages e.g. Stoke

Goldington thatch is still significant. To the south east on the Brickhills there are a few buildings using the distinctive local greensand e.g. Bow Brickhill church.

- 2.16 The urban areas of the Borough fall outside the scope of this study however they forms a key part of the landscape context having grown substantially since its designation as a new town in 1967 when the population of the city was just 40,000. By 2003 the population of the urban areas had grown to 180,000 and the Borough, including the Rural Areas, had grown from 60,000 to 215,000. In a relatively short space of time Milton Keynes has grown into a regionally important city. The clear framework of grid roads have together with the linear park system created a strong landscape framework which is maturing in step with the residential and employment. A number of the urban areas are clearly visible from the surrounding rural areas. These include industrial and commercial areas to the urban fringes e.g. at Kingston and Wolverton and landmark buildings in the city centre e.g. the Xscape Snowdome and Milton Keynes Theatre which being located on an area of elevated clay plateau are visible through out much of the authority and beyond.
- 2.17 Furthermore the authority is located within The Milton Keynes South Midlands Growth Area and future projections to 2011 are that the population will grow to 247,000 and then to 350,000 by 2031, i.e. nearly a doubling of the existing population. The established Strategy is that the growth should largely be located adjacent to the east and west of the City, with further increase in densities in the City Centre. However this process of continued change is likely to have an impact on the character of the adjacent rural areas particularly in the context of the increased urban densities required by PPG 3.

Transport

- 2.18 The Roman Watling Street runs from east to west through the southern part of the authority. This historic road later became an important coaching route and the settlements of Stony Stratford, Great Brickhill include a number of fine buildings relating to the period. The original road alignment now largely runs through the urban area along the current V4 grid road, while the modern A5 follows a more modern alignment and provides a dual carriageway through the authority. The M1 provides the main motorway route to through and Milton Keynes runs centrally within the authority broadly parallel to the A5. Its alignment marks the eastern extent of the urban areas of the new town. To the north it represents a major impact on the otherwise quiet rural area. A number of other A roads lead into Milton Keynes including the A508 and A509 from the north, the A422 which runs north of the city from Bedford to Buckingham and the A421 which also runs south of the city between Bedford and Buckingham. Within the city the grid road system includes a number of dual carriageways which are an important feature of the urban landscape. In contrast in the rural areas road patterns include a number of minor roads and lanes. The main west coast railway line runs through the authority passing from the south west northwards crossing first the Ouse valley on a major viaduct and then through the Tove Valley by

substantial cuttings. The secondary Bletchley to Bedford railway runs to the south of the area. The Grand Union Canal winds through the authority mainly through the urban area, however to the south it follows the Ouzel Valley Linear Park and to the north crossing the River Ouse on an iron viaduct before traversing the western slopes of the Tove Valley.

Land cover

- 2.19 The land cover and land use within the rural areas is predominantly in arable cultivation. On the valley slopes and undulating claylands there is generally limited woodland cover and the structure of hedges and hedgerow trees is weak still bearing the affects of the Dutch Elm Disease from the 1970's when the predominant hedgerow tree was virtually annihilated from the local landscape. There are local areas where grazing mainly with sheep e.g. along parts of the Tove and Ouse Valley is also locally significant. The poorer soils on the Yardley Ridge to the north and Greensand Ridge to the south support a much higher proportion of woodland which present significant prominent wooded skylines when viewed from within much of the authority. The valley floor of the Ouse comprise a number of important flood meadows which still support traditional grazing however in many areas the ground is cultivated up to the river. In addition the Ouse Valley includes a number of restored and active mineral extraction sites many of which have been restored for wildlife and recreational uses..

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 The methodology used is based on the national guidance found in 'Landscape Character Assessment – Guidance for England and Scotland' (2002) and the other associated Topic Papers. The precise approach was also determined to meet the requirements of Milton Keynes Borough Council in the development of their Local Development Documents.

Briefing

3.2 Following the award of the contract, an initial briefing meeting was held with officers of Milton Keynes City Council and the consultant’s project team to refine the project brief and programme.

Project Administration

3.3 The project was monitored throughout the contract period by officers from Planning and Transport within Milton Keynes Borough Council. Monitoring included the use of the following:

- progress meetings
- liaison by phone
- work programme
- correspondence - by letter, fax and e-mail

Spatial Framework

3.4 The fundamental building blocks used in this landscape character assessment is the Landscape Description Unit (LDU). LDUs are distinct and relatively homogenous units of land, each defined by a series of definitive attributes, so called because they define the extent of each spatial unit. The units can operate at a number of spatial scales or 'Levels,' dependent on the purpose of the study and are summarised below in Fig 4.

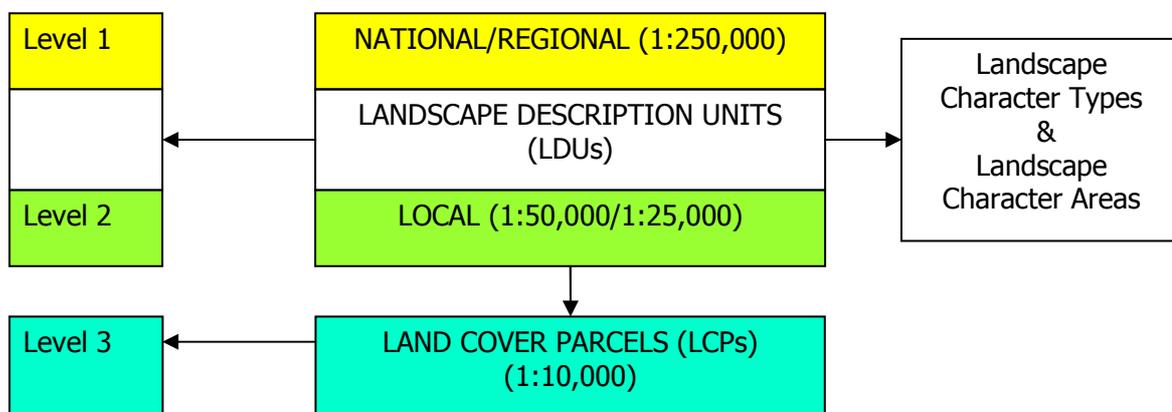


Fig 4 Spatial Framework for landscape character assessment

Desk Based Stage

- 3.5 The desk study work was sub-contracted to The Living Landscapes Project. This process involved the development of Level 2 LDUs for the rural areas within the whole authority. This scale was considered appropriate for the purpose of the study. The work was undertaken in late 2005 as part of the Local Landscape Designations Study (2006).

Level 2 Landscape Description Units

- 3.6 Four attributes are used to define LDUs at Level 2 as follows,
- **Physiography**
 - **Ground type** - which together with physiography encapsulate the underlying natural dimension of the landscape
 - **Landcover** - reflecting surface vegetation; and
 - **Cultural pattern** - which describes the structural component of the cultural landscape

The attributes for each LDU from the above groups are listed in Appendix F.

- 3.10 The natural dimension of the landscape (physiography and ground type) is mapped first, not only because it provides a context for analysing the historical evolution of the landscape, but also because the baseline attributes of relief, geology and soils have 'real' boundaries which can be readily defined. In practice this entails firstly defining the more immediately distinct areas, where the pattern of topography relates clearly to changes in geology and soil.
- 3.11 Cultural attributes do not usually have such clearly defined boundaries, but because of the constraints that have historically been imposed on land utilisation by slope, soil fertility and drainage it is often possible to map cultural patterns at the landscape scale using the emerging LDU framework.
- 3.12 It is an iterative process requiring comparison of all the data to help define the less immediately visible distinctions in the landscape. For example, a break in slope which coincides with a change in soil type and tree cover to the plateau above will be easily identifiable as a sharp boundary, where a few steps takes you into a clearly different landscape, whereas the transition between a dispersed and a nucleated settlement pattern in a rolling landscape may be much wider or more blurred and is likely to require examination of Historic Landscape Characterization (HLC) and other information to help map a line of best fit.
- 3.13 Definitive attributes are derived through a process of overlay mapping, which is described in more detail below. This process was traditionally achieved by physically overlaying a number of acetate sheets one

on top of the other. However for this study GIS has been used which not only overcomes the problems associated with enlarging/ reducing source maps at different scales, but it also allows far greater scope in the actual analysis of the data. The digital datasets used to help define LDUs vary with availability from the client but typically include: geology, 10m contours, soils, farm census data, settlements, woodland, ancient woodland, HLC, OS 1:50k, and the National Typology. Other datasets may be referred to where available. Each aspect of the analysis, and the attributes defined is outlined below.

Physiographic analysis

3.14 Physiography is an expression of the shape and structure of the land surface as influenced both by the nature of the underlying geology and the effect of subsequent geomorphological processes. Two definitive attributes are used at Level 2, one defining the geological structure (and relative relief) of the unit and the other to describe the form (and relative relief) of the land surface. This is derived from interpretation of the relationship between geological and contour data. Physiographic boundaries should ideally follow clear 'breaks in slope' that are related to geological boundaries. Where there is no obvious break in slope (e.g. the transition between the dip slope of an escarpment and an adjoining vale) a 'best fit' line (i.e. a line that has been adjusted to match the surface landform) should be defined that reflects the geological boundary. The physiographic character of the LDUs within the Milton Keynes authority is denoted as one of the following categories:

- **Glacial lowlands** - areas of intermediate relief, generally below 90 metres (300 feet), with a pronounced rolling, in places undulating topography - associated with drift laid down by ice sheets.
- **Periglacial plateau** - uniformly elevated tracts of gently rolling relief, usually bounded on one or more sides by steeper slopes which drop to lower land - often dissected by narrow, steep sided valleys at a greater level of detail.
- **River valleys** - flat, low-lying land formed by the recent deposition of waterbourne drift in larger river valleys, but also including other low-lying areas formed from lacustrine (lake) drift.
- **Soft rock lowlands** - areas of intermediate relief, generally below 90 metres (300 feet), with an apparent rolling, in places undulating topography.
- **Soft rock plateau** - uniformly elevated tracts of gently rolling relief, usually bounded on one or more sides by steeper ground which drops to lower land - often dissected by narrow, steep sided valleys at a greater level of detail.
- **Soft rock vales & valleys** - low-lying land, generally below 90 metres (300 feet) - associated with clay vales and broad valley bottoms.
- **Scarp slopes & ridges** - distinct, often steep sided tracts of elevated/undulating relief, generally well defined by clear breaks in slope - may be in the form of discrete hills/ridges, valley sides, or as rising ground (eg. scarp slopes) on the edge of higher land.

Ground type analysis

3.15 Ground type is an expression of the soil forming environment and its influence in determining the surface pattern of vegetation and land use. Two definitive attributes are used at Level 2, one describing the nature of the underlying bedrock/drift, the other to reflect variations in the process of soil formation related to drainage and soil fertility. This is derived from interpretation of geological (rock type), soils and land use data. The ground type character of the LDUs within the Milton Keynes authority is denoted as one of the following categories:

- **Wet meadowland** - slowly permeable mineral soils developed on alluvial drift and supporting wetland, or relic wetland (lines of willow, reeds in ditches) vegetation. Seasonal or perennial waterlogging is the main constraint to agricultural production.
- **Dry meadowland** - free-draining mineral soils developed on alluvial drift. Seasonal waterlogging may be a constraint to agricultural production but in most places groundwater is controlled by ditches and pumps.
- **Wet claylands** - slowly permeable soils, typically developed on soft clays and glacial tills. Seasonal waterlogging is the main constraint to agricultural production and in central and western areas this ground type is mainly under permanent grassland.
- **Claylands** - slowly permeable soils, typically developed on soft clays and glacial tills. Although at risk in wetter areas to seasonal waterlogging, this ground type is utilised extensively for cereal growing in Eastern England.
- **Impoverished Sandy Brown soils** - light, free-draining sandy and coarse loamy soils developed on soft sandstones and sandy drift with nutrient poor patches.
- **Sandy Brown soils** - light, free-draining sandy and coarse loamy soils developed on soft sandstones and sandy drift. In places can include localised patches of wetland (denoted by Bw), or nutrient poor/podzolic (denoted by Bd) soils.
- **Shallow Calcareous Brown soils** - free draining base rich loamy soils developed on soft limestone and chalky drift at elevations below about 180m (600ft) – with patches of stony soils and /or rock outcrops.

Landcover analysis

3.16 Landcover is an expression of the type of vegetation (natural and man made) covering the land surface. Two definitive attributes are used at Level 2, one describing the predominant land use/type of farming, the other reflecting the contribution that trees and woodlands make to the character of the landscape. The broad pattern of primary land use and associated tree cover at the farm type level as related to the inherent physical (slope, drainage, fertility) and economic constraints within a particular area. The ground type of the LDUs within Milton Keynes is denoted as one of the following categories:

- **Ancient wooded farmlands**- landscapes characterised by extensive areas of broadleaved woodlands, mainly of ancient origin (as defined on the ancient woodland inventory), which pre-date the surrounding enclosure pattern. This pattern typically displays clear signs of piecemeal woodland

clearance, including irregular woodland outlines and frequent woodland place names ending in terms such as 'ley' and 'hurst'.

- **Ancient farmlands** - arable landscapes characterised by individual blocks, or clusters of ancient woods which are often significantly larger than the surrounding enclosure pattern.
- **Wooded disturbed land** - tracts of disturbed land where naturally regenerated woodland/secondary tree cover have been allowed to develop.
- **Settled farmlands** - arable landscapes characterised by individual blocks, or clusters of ancient woods which are often significantly larger than the surrounding enclosure pattern.
- **Settled farmlands with tree groups/coverts** - arable landscape characterized by thinly scattered and/or small groups of trees associated with farmsteads, watercourses and other linear features.

Cultural pattern analysis

3.17 Cultural pattern is an expression of the structural component of the cultural landscape as reflected in the historic pattern of enclosure and rural settlement. Two definitive attributes are derived, one describing the broad pattern of village formation and settlement dispersion, the other reflecting the structure (size/tenure) of agricultural holdings. The cultural pattern of the LDUs within the Milton Keynes is denoted as one of the following categories:

- **Clustered with estate farms** - settled rural landscapes characterized by multiple settlement clusters and large (>65 ha) estate farms (defined as those areas where >50% of the land is managed by tenant farmers).
- **Clustered with small farms** - settled rural landscapes characterised by clusters of wayside dwellings and small (<65 ha) estate farms (defined as those areas where >50% of the land is managed by tenant farmers).
- **Dispersed with large estates** - estate landscape characterized by loose clusters of dwellings and large (>65 ha) estate farms (defined as those areas where >50% of the land is managed by tenant farmers).
- **Meadow and marsh** - largely unsettled agricultural landscapes often characterized by a surveyor enclosed pattern of large rectilinear fields on river floodplains and coastal grazing marsh.
- **Meadowland** - largely unsettled agricultural landscapes associated with medium sized often tenanted farms on river floodplains.
- **Villages and estate farms** - rural landscapes characterised by discrete, usually large villages and large (>65 ha) estate farms (defined as those areas where >50% of the land is managed by tenant farmers).
- **Villages and large farms** - rural landscapes characterized by discrete, usually large villages and medium sized (<95 ha), often tenanted farms.

Definitive and descriptive information

- 3.18 The definition of discrete LDUs provides units, which are the building blocks of the landscape. The four definitive attributes (physiography, ground type, land cover and cultural pattern) tell us much about each LDU, but not the complete picture. Descriptive information, such as the visual and perceptual aspects of landscape, must also be collected and this coverage of LDUs provides the meaningful and structured spatial framework for gathering this descriptive information about the landscape. Descriptive attributes include both character-based information (e.g. species associations, building styles, etc.), as well as qualitative information relating to the significance of particular attributes, their condition and their vulnerability to change.
- 3.19 The process of LDU mapping and subsequent characterisation with other descriptive data also enables broad patterns to be distinguished, which in turn makes it possible to begin to understand the relationship between the many factors that contribute to landscape character. The iterative nature of this process greatly assists in the understanding of how a particular landscape has developed and is the key to assessing the character of that landscape.
- 3.20 Once the inherent character of the land has been described through the desk based study it is then much easier to understand and describe the more aesthetic aspects of the landscape, such as scale, form and enclosure. Although these are the qualities which are often the most apparent to viewers on the ground, the fact that they are almost invariably controlled by either relief, or the surface pattern of vegetation and land use, explains why the LDUs defined by the process of overlay mapping can be used as a basis for defining Landscape Character Types and/or Character Areas. Similarly, it is much easier to evaluate the condition of a particular landscape, or its sensitivity to accept change, where this is underpinned by a working knowledge of how that landscape has evolved.

Detailed Study – Field Survey

- 3.21 The field survey provides the opportunity to undertake a number of key tasks, including:
- incorporating the visual/aesthetic/perceptual dimension
 - recording the condition of the landscape, including both the ecological and cultural aspects
 - verifying LDUs and identifying any refinements to LDU and Character Areas boundaries
 - assessing any particular qualities, and/or problems in areas of particular pressure or sensitivity
 - note and distinctive features, local; materials , plant species etc.
- 3.22 The survey form was developed and designed to ensure that a structured, consistent recording of information was possible. Character and condition information is collected in distinct sections, in a mixture of guided responses as well in sections of free text to provide greater descriptive colour. An evaluation matrix was completed to inform the most appropriate landscape strategy and guidelines for each are and sub area. The form used is found in Appendix B.