

A47 Blofield to North Burlingham Dualling

Scheme Number: TR010040

Volume 6

6.2 Environmental Statement Appendices

Appendix 7.4 – Landscape Character Areas

APFP Regulation 5(2)(a)

Planning Act 2008

Infrastructure Planning (Applications: Prescribed
Forms and Procedure) Regulations 2009

December 2020

Infrastructure Planning

Planning Act 2008

**The Infrastructure Planning
(Applications: Prescribed Forms and
Procedure) Regulations 2009**

A47 Blofield to North Burlingham
Development Consent Order 202[x]

ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT APPENDICES
Appendix 7.4 Landscape Character Areas

Regulation Number:	Regulation 5(2)(a)
Planning Inspectorate Scheme Reference	TR010040
Application Document Reference	6.2
BIM Document Reference	PCF Stage 3
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Version	Date	Status of Version
Rev 0	December / 2020	Application Issue

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7. Landscape Character Areas

7.1. Assessment Landscape Character Areas

- 7.1.1. The following ‘assessment landscape character areas’ (LCAs) have been identified as an outcome of review of published landscape character studies and site observation. These areas have been defined as the basis for assessing the Proposed Scheme landscape character effects.
- 7.1.2. The following text summarises the baseline context, sensitivity and construction and operation effects of the Proposed Scheme on each LCA.

Landscape Character Area 1: Blofield Settlement



Figure 7-1 : Character Area 1 illustrative view

Source: Site photograph (July 2018)

Baseline Context

- 7.1.3. The LCA associates with the general settlement extents of Blofield, but with particular reference to its periphery, which relates most immediately to the adjacent LCAs and setting of the Proposed Scheme. With this focus in mind, the LCA typically consists of low-density residential development, including an area of notable new build residential properties at ‘Saxon Fields’. The eastern edge of the LCA also includes some larger scale land use represented by the ‘Norwich Camping and Leisure’ outlet and an area of community allotments. Tree cover

alongside roads and within property boundaries contributes to a subtle integration of the buildings in the LCA with the wider landscape setting.

- 7.1.4. The spire of St Andrew and St Peter Church provides a local visual skyline landmark on the southern extents of the character area. The existing A47 skirts along the northern edge of Blofield at the northern extents of the LCA, largely confined within its immediate highway corridor by a shallow cutting and highway boundary vegetation.
- 7.1.5. The LCA associates with a gently graded landform that descends from a height of approximately 25m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD) at its mid extents on a south to south-easterly grade down to approximately 5m AOD associated with a tributary channel of the River Yare. Views are largely contained within the extent of settlement but include glimpses out across agricultural land to the east and south. The visual outlook from the eastern edge of the LCA includes views of the existing A47, which at night includes the visual influence of vehicle headlights. Due to its developed nature and night-time lighting influences there is limited potential for aspects of tranquillity to associate with the LCA.
- 7.1.6. The general condition and quality of the LCA is good in so far as land use is typically clearly defined and maintained. Forces for change are evident in the extents of new build housing that are infilling and extending the settlement boundaries.

Sensitivity Value

- 7.1.7. Whilst the area doesn't associate with any overarching landscape designations, the presence of listed buildings and the perceptible historic and cultural built associations that define Blofield as a distinct settlement afford a medium value to the LCA.

Susceptibility

- 7.1.8. The LCA is bounded along its northern edge by the existing A47 dual carriageway. Whilst the setting of the LCA is susceptible to change in the balance of urban/rural influences, the LCA is already affected by the presence of the existing A47, reducing its susceptibility to highway development. The susceptibility of the LCA is therefore considered to be medium.

Sensitivity

- 7.1.9. The overall sensitivity of the LCA has been assessed as **medium**. This is due to the uniformity in scale and appearance of the LCA which affords it a balanced

relationship with its surroundings but tempered by the existing influence of the A47 which provides a precedent for highway development in this area.

Construction effects

- 7.1.10. During construction there would be a loss of existing semi-mature A47 highway boundary vegetation on the northern edge of the LCA, which would affect the setting of a small number of residential properties and the immediate highway corridor in the vicinity of the A47/Yarmouth Road junction. Construction work would also locally affect the relative experience of tranquillity. The extensive influence of operations focussed on construction of the Blofield overbridge in adjacent LCA 2 would have an indirect associative effect on LCA 1. During construction the Proposed Scheme would result in a **minor adverse magnitude** of change and a **slight adverse significance** of effect on LCA 1.

Operation effects

- 7.1.11. At year 1 of operation there would be limited direct effects on the LCA but more perceptible indirect effects arising from inter-visibility between the eastern edge of the LCA and the realigned extents of Hemblington Road leading up to Blofield overbridge. At year 1 of operation the Proposed Scheme would result in a **minor adverse magnitude** of change and a **slight adverse significance** of effect on LCA 1.
- 7.1.12. By year 15 of operation the establishment of Proposed Scheme highway boundary planting on the immediate northern residential edge of the LCA and more extensively along the length of the highway corridor would contribute to integration of the Proposed Scheme into its setting. By year 15 of operation the Proposed Scheme would result in a **negligible adverse magnitude** of change and a **neutral significance** of effect on LCA 1.

Landscape Character Area 2: Blofield / Lingwood Valley



Figure 7-2 : Character Area 2 illustrative view

Source: Site photograph (July 2018)

Baseline Context

- 7.1.13. The LCA associates with a broad, 'valley' landscape where the topography has a subtle influence on the character of the area. The landform associates with a tributary drainage network, which drains southwards into the River Yare and which creates a shared valley landscape association between the eastern settlement edge of Blofield and western settlement edge of Lingwood.
- 7.1.14. At its northern extents the LCA is influenced by the settlement extents of Blofield and by the existing A47 but is more notably rural at its southern extents. The existing A47 passes through the area at a slight elevation, sharing a largely open, unbounded association with the surrounding landscape.
- 7.1.15. The more elevated extents of the LCA experience open and in some cases expansive visual relationships with setting, whilst the lower levels are more intimate and contained. Levels range between a high point of 25m AOD and low point of 0m AOD.
- 7.1.16. Land use typically consists of large-scale arable fields delineated by fragmented hedgerow boundaries with hedgerow trees. In some areas tree cover is sparse, resulting in a distinctly open landscape, whilst in others a single tree line can

notably divide the landscape. One such example is a line of shelterbelt poplars along Hemblington Road on the north-eastern edge of Blofield which contributes localised screening of the A47 and presents a notable landscape feature in its own right.

- 7.1.17. The church spires of St Andrew and St Peter church on the southern edge of Blofield and St Michael and All Angels church on the northern outskirts of Brundall contribute notable local visual landmarks. The concentration of settlement in Blofield and the visual and noise influence of the A47 erode day and night-time tranquillity at the northern extents of the LCA, whilst the southern extents, with its sparse settlement and minor road network, exhibit potential for a greater sense of tranquillity. Access across the LCA is largely limited to the road network with only a limited number of Public Rights of Way (PRoW) on the immediate settlement edges of Blofield and Lingwood.
- 7.1.18. The general condition and quality of the LCA is fair in so far as the majority of land use is actively managed for agriculture but shows evidence of fragmentation in its structure where hedgerow field boundaries are gappy or missing. Forces for change relate to the potential for a gradual decline in tree cover as existing trees reach maturity and die-off, where current hedgerow management doesn't actively include the reinstatement of gaps or establishment of successional trees.

Sensitivity Value

- 7.1.19. The area does not associate with any landscape designations but does present a distinct and cohesive agricultural landscape with established cultural associations. The value of the LCA has therefore been assessed as medium.

Susceptibility

- 7.1.20. The LCA is crossed at its mid-extents by the existing A47. Whilst the overall setting of the LCA is susceptible to change by virtue of its defining rural character, the LCA is locally affected by the presence of the A47, reducing its susceptibility to highway development within the existing extent of highway influence. The susceptibility of the LCA is considered to be medium.

Sensitivity

- 7.1.21. The overall sensitivity of the LCA has been assessed as **medium**. This is due to the uniformity in scale and appearance of the LCA which affords it a coherent sense of place but tempered by the existing influence of the A47 which provides a precedent for highway development within part of its area.

Construction effects

7.1.22. During construction a notable length of existing poplar and evergreen trees would be removed in the vicinity of the Yarmouth Road junction with the A47 resulting in a more open landscape aspect. More generally, the disruption caused by construction earthworks would lead to a fragmentation of the unifying order of field boundaries in combination with various disharmonious influences including a site compound and construction machinery. Construction work would also locally affect the relative experience of tranquillity. The inward focus of the valley would accentuate the influence of construction within the relative containment of its setting. During construction the Proposed Scheme would result in a **moderate adverse magnitude** of change and a **moderate adverse significance** of effect on LCA 2.

Operation effects

7.1.23. At year 1 of operation the Proposed Scheme highway infrastructure including main dual carriageway, side roads and an elevated overbridge landform and bridge structure would have a noticeable influence on the setting of the LCA. At year 1 of operation the Proposed Scheme would result in a **moderate adverse magnitude** of change and a **moderate adverse significance** of effect on LCA 2.

7.1.24. By year 15 of operation the establishment of Proposed Scheme highway boundary planting around Blofield overbridge and along the length of the highway corridor would contribute to integration of the Proposed Scheme into its setting. The extent of vegetation would itself bring about change to the existing landscape character, which is otherwise more typically open. By year 15 of operation the Proposed Scheme would result in a **minor adverse magnitude** of change and a **slight adverse significance** of effect on LCA 2.

Landscape Character Area 3: Blofield / Lingwood Plateau



Figure 7-3 : Character Area 3 illustrative view

Source: Site photograph (July 2018)

Baseline Context

- 7.1.25. The LCA associates with an extensive ‘plateau’ landscape where the limited topographic variation has a notable influence on the character of the area. The landform associates with a level of around 25m AOD, with a variance of typically no more than 2 or 3m across the extent of the LCA. Consequently, individual features can exert a notable influence over a localised area, or where visibility is open, such features can become focal points across a wide area.
- 7.1.26. Typical ‘features’ in this context include individual farmsteads, where buildings have an accentuated presence within a broader setting of agricultural fields. Highway lighting columns associated with the A47 junction with the B1140 are another example of a localised feature whose relative prominence is accentuated in the open landscape.
- 7.1.27. Land use typically consists of medium to large scale arable fields delineated by fragmented hedgerow boundaries with hedgerow trees. In some areas tree cover is sparse, affording a distinctly open landscape, whilst in others a single tree line can notably divide the landscape.

- 7.1.28. The spire of St Peters church on the northern outskirts of Lingwood contributes a localised landmark feature whilst the edge of the village of Lingwood exerts a notable settlement influence over the southern extents of the LCA.
- 7.1.29. The existing A47 passes through the LCA at two points. At the LCA's western extents the route of the A47 is broadly level with its surroundings and partially delineated along either side by mature trees. At the LCA's eastern extents the A47 is bounded along its northern edge by a hedgerow and trees and a largely open, unbounded relationship with the landscape to the south. The eastern extents of the LCA also associate with an area of existing highway lighting which exert both a day and night-time influence on a localised extent of the LCA.
- 7.1.30. The concentration of settlement in Lingwood and the visual and noise influence of the A47 erode day and night-time tranquillity at the western, eastern and southern extents of the LCA, however the mid extents with its sparse settlement and minor road network exhibit potential for a greater sense of tranquillity. Access across the LCA is largely limited to the road network with only one PRow linking Lingwood with North Burlingham across the mid extents of the LCA.
- 7.1.31. The general condition and quality of the LCA is fair in so far as the majority of land use is actively managed for agriculture but shows evidence of fragmentation in its structure where hedgerow field boundaries are gappy or missing. Forces for change relate to the potential for a gradual decline in tree cover as existing trees reach maturity and die-off, where current hedgerow management doesn't actively include the reinstatement of gaps or establishment of successional trees.

Sensitivity Value

- 7.1.32. The area does not associate with any landscape designations but does present a distinct and cohesive agricultural landscape with established cultural associations. The value of the LCA has therefore been assessed as medium.

Susceptibility

- 7.1.33. The LCA is crossed at its western and eastern extents by the existing A47. The overall setting of the LCA is susceptible to change by virtue of its defining rural character and the potential for individual features to exert a prominent influence on their setting. The LCA is however locally affected by the presence of the A47, reducing its susceptibility to highway development within the existing extent of highway influence. The susceptibility of the LCA is considered to be medium.

Sensitivity

7.1.34. The overall sensitivity of the LCA has been assessed as **medium**. This is due to the uniformity in scale and appearance of the LCA which affords it a balanced relationship between its constituent parts but tempered by the existing influence of the A47 which provides a precedent for highway development within part of its area.

Construction effects

7.1.35. During construction there would be some loss of individual trees and hedgerows within the footprint of the Proposed Scheme road alignment and within the extents of Proposed Scheme footway / cycleway along the existing A47. The LCA would be directly affected by the disruption brought about by construction earthworks and construction activity but also influenced by the indirect effects arising from inter-visibility with adjacent LCA 5 and associated construction of the B1140 overbridge. Construction work and the presence of a site compound would also locally affect the relative experience of tranquillity. During construction the Proposed Scheme would result in a **moderate adverse magnitude** of change and a **moderate adverse significance** of effect on LCA 3.

Operation effects

7.1.36. At year 1 of operation the combined influence of the existing A47 and Proposed Scheme road alignment and the movement of vehicles along both routes would result in an apparent highway influence on part of the LCA. The LCA would also be subject to the indirect influence of the elevated B1140 overbridge in adjacent LCA 5. At year 1 of operation the Proposed Scheme would result in a **moderate adverse magnitude** of change and a **moderate adverse significance** of effect on LCA 3.

7.1.37. By year 15 of operation the establishment of Proposed Scheme highway boundary planting along the highway corridor would contribute to integration of the Proposed Scheme into its setting. Planting around the B1140 overbridge would limit the indirect influence of the Proposed Scheme from adjacent LCA 5. By year 15 of operation the Proposed Scheme would result in a **minor adverse magnitude** of change and a **slight adverse significance** of effect on LCA 3.

Landscape Character Area 4: Burlingham Plantation

Figure 7-4 : Character Area 4 illustrative view



Figure 7-5 : Character Area 4 illustrative view

Source: Site photograph (July 2018)

Baseline Context

- 7.1.38. The LCA associates with an underlying 'plateau' topographic influence at its southern extents, bordering into subtle 'valley' landform influences at its northern extents. The landform height varies between 25m AOD at the southern extents of the LCA dropping down to localised valley areas of 15m AOD at the northern extents of the LCA.
- 7.1.39. The LCA's inherent character is defined by the extent of woodland copse and plantation tree cover. The origins of tree cover associate with the historic estate planting of Burlingham House which includes the settlement setting of North Burlingham and the coincident extents of agricultural fields.
- 7.1.40. As a result of the 'enclosure' created by trees, the LCA includes areas bounded by dense blocks of trees and other areas partially delineated or punctuated by lines, groups or single trees. Views across the area are consequently heavily influenced by vegetation, with views and vistas limited or filtered by the extent of tree cover.

- 7.1.41. The influence of landmark features is limited to discrete views such as those of St Andrew church in North Burlingham and Burlingham House. The influence of settlement at North Burlingham is relatively localised by the enclosure created by tree cover, with the exception of an area of commercial development at the eastern edge of North Burlingham, which is visible from the A47.
- 7.1.42. The A47 itself passes through the southern extents of the LCA, broadly level with its surroundings and extensively delineated along its northern side by mature trees and hedgerow and partially delineated along its southern side by mature trees.
- 7.1.43. Land use is typically defined by small to medium scale arable fields, which also includes a number of horse paddocks close to North Burlingham. The LCA includes a notable number of PRow complemented by a network of 'Burlingham Woodland Walk' footways and bridleways which together create an extensive area of accessible land.
- 7.1.44. The association of settlement at North Burlingham, Burlingham Green and Burlingham House, combined with a regular occurrence of farmsteads and the visual and noise influence of the A47 reduce the potential for day and night-time tranquillity. The containment afforded by vegetation does however offer some balance to the extent of built influence on the overall experience of tranquillity.
- 7.1.45. The general condition and quality of the LCA is good in terms of the intactness of the woodland plantation structure, albeit with evidence of fragmentation in some of the hedgerow field boundaries where hedges are gappy or missing. Forces for change relate to the potential for a gradual decline in tree cover as existing trees reach maturity and die-off, where current woodland or hedgerow management doesn't actively include the establishment of successional trees.

Sensitivity Value

- 7.1.46. The area does not associate with any landscape designations but does present a distinct and cohesive agricultural landscape with established historic estate parkland and cultural associations. The value of the LCA has therefore been assessed as medium.

Susceptibility

- 7.1.47. The LCA is crossed in its southern extents by the existing A47. The overall setting of the LCA is susceptible to change by virtue of its structured estate parkland character. The LCA is however locally affected by the presence of the A47, reducing its susceptibility to highway development within the existing extent of highway influence. The susceptibility of the LCA is considered to be medium.

Sensitivity

7.1.48. The overall sensitivity of the LCA has been assessed as **medium**. This is due to the structured scale and appearance of the LCA which affords it a balanced relationship between its constituent parts but tempered by the existing influence of the A47 which provides a precedent for highway development within part of its area.

Construction effects

7.1.49. During construction there would be some loss of individual trees and hedgerows and some localised loss of plantation woodland within the footprint of the Proposed Scheme. The LCA would be directly affected by the disruption brought about by construction earthworks and construction activity. Construction work and the presence of site compounds would also locally affect the relative experience of tranquillity. During construction the Proposed Scheme would result in a **moderate adverse magnitude** of change and a **moderate adverse significance** of effect on LCA 4.

Operation effects

7.1.50. At year 1 of operation the combined influence of the existing A47 and Proposed Scheme road alignment and the movement of vehicles on both routes would result in an apparent highway influence on part of the LCA. A bund to limit headlight glare located along the northern edge of the Proposed Scheme would contribute to localised visual screening but itself would be at odds with the even grade of surrounding landform. This effect would however be localised by the visual containment afforded by the woodland plantation structure. At year 1 of operation the Proposed Scheme would result in a **minor adverse magnitude** of change and a **slight adverse significance** of effect on LCA 4.

7.1.51. By year 15 of operation the establishment of Proposed Scheme highway boundary planting along and adjacent to the highway corridor would contribute to integration of the Proposed Scheme into its setting. By year 15 of operation the Proposed Scheme would result in a **negligible adverse magnitude** of change and a **neutral significance** of effect on LCA 4.

Landscape Character Area 5: Freethorpe Plateau



Figure 7-6 : Character Area 5 illustrative view

Source: Site photograph (July 2018)

Baseline Context

- 7.1.52. The LCA shares some common characteristics with those of LCA 3 'Blofield / Lingwood Plateau' but exhibits sufficient difference to merit reference as a separate LCA for the purposes of assessment. The key differences between the two are in respect of scale and openness, whereby LCA 5 is larger in scale and more open in character than LCA 3. The characteristics of LCA 5 are summarised below.
- 7.1.53. The LCA associates with an extensive 'plateau' landscape where the limited topographic variation has a notable influence on the character of the area. The landform initially falls away at a shallow grade from west to east before dropping more apparently at its eastern limits. The extent of LCA most directly associated with the Proposed Scheme coincides with a level range of between 25m and 20m AOD, though ultimately dropping to around 10m AOD at the LCA's eastern limits.
- 7.1.54. As a result of the broad, shallow grade, individual features can exert a notable influence over a localised area, or where visibility is open, such features can become focal points across a wide area. Typical 'features' in this context include individual buildings such as 'The Coach House' at the junction of the A47 and B1140 and Burlingham Lodge Farm. Highway lighting columns associated with

the A47 junction with the B1140 are another example of a localised feature whose relative prominence is accentuated in the open landscape. The edge of the village of Lingwood exerts a notable settlement influence over the southern extents of the LCA.

- 7.1.55. Land use typically consists of large-scale arable fields delineated by fragmented hedgerow boundaries with hedgerow trees. In some areas tree cover is sparse, affording a distinctly open landscape, whilst in others a single tree line can notably divide the landscape.
- 7.1.56. The existing A47 coincides with the western extents of the LCA. The route of the A47 is broadly level with its surroundings and typically shares an open, unbounded relationship with the landscape on either side. The exception occurs where a hedgerow delineates the northern highway boundary with the existing A47 eastbound lay-by. The western extents of the LCA also associate with an area of existing highway lighting which exert both a day and night-time influence.
- 7.1.57. The concentration of settlement in Lingwood and the visual and noise influence of the A47, and to a lesser extent the B1140 and occasional passing trains on the Norwich to Great Yarmouth railway line, erode day and night-time tranquillity across the LCA. Parts of the more sparsely settled northern and southern extents of the LCA have potential to experience a greater sense of tranquillity. Access across the LCA is largely limited to the road network but does include two PRow complemented by the routes of the 'Burlingham Woodland Walks' in the northern extents of the LCA.
- 7.1.58. The general condition and quality of the LCA is fair in so far as the majority of land use is actively managed for agriculture but shows evidence of fragmentation in its structure where hedgerow field boundaries are gappy or missing. Forces for change relate to the potential for a gradual decline in tree cover as existing trees reach maturity and die-off, where current hedgerow management doesn't actively include the reinstatement of gaps or establishment of successional trees.

Sensitivity Value

- 7.1.59. The area does not associate with any landscape designations but does present a distinct and cohesive agricultural landscape with established cultural associations. The value of the LCA has therefore been assessed as medium.

Susceptibility

- 7.1.60. The existing A47 coincides with the western extents of the LCA. The overall setting of the LCA is susceptible to change by virtue of its defining rural character and the potential for individual features to exert a prominent influence on their

setting. The LCA is however locally affected by the presence of the A47, reducing its susceptibility to highway development within the existing extent of highway influence. The susceptibility of the LCA is considered to be medium.

Sensitivity

7.1.61. The overall sensitivity of the LCA has been assessed as **medium**. This is due to the uniformity in scale and appearance of the LCA which affords it a balanced relationship between its constituent parts but tempered by the existing influence of the A47 which provides a precedent for highway development within part of its area.

Construction effects

7.1.62. During construction there would be some loss of individual trees and hedgerows. More generally, the disruption caused by construction earthworks would introduce various disharmonious influences including a site compound and construction machinery. Elevated operations associated with construction of the B1140 overbridge would accentuate the extent of construction influence. Construction work would also locally affect the relative experience of tranquillity. During construction the Proposed Scheme would result in a **moderate adverse magnitude** of change and a **moderate adverse significance** of effect on LCA 5.

Operation effects

7.1.63. At year 1 of operation the Proposed Scheme highway infrastructure including main dual carriageway, side roads, lighting and an elevated overbridge landform and bridge structure would have a noticeable influence on the setting of the LCA. At year 1 of operation the Proposed Scheme would result in a **moderate adverse magnitude** of change and a **moderate adverse significance** of effect on LCA 5.

7.1.64. By year 15 of operation the establishment of Proposed Scheme highway boundary planting around the B1140 overbridge and along the length of the highway corridor would contribute to integration of the Proposed Scheme into its setting. The extent of vegetation would itself bring about change to the existing landscape character, which is otherwise more typically open. By year 15 of operation the Proposed Scheme would result in a **minor adverse magnitude** of change and a **slight adverse significance** of effect on LCA 5.