

INTRODUCTION

- 3.1 The landscape of the Plan area is a highly valued and important resource. It is part of the identity of the area, it supports wildlife, contributes to the quality of life and because of tourism and the need to attract and retain business it is important to the economy. For these reasons the Council has given a high priority to landscape policies and will seek to protect and enhance the landscape throughout the Plan area. The Council's approach to landscape policy is based on the premise that landscape issues matter across the entire District and that no areas should be devalued or excluded from the landscape policy framework.
- 3.2 There are several clear distinctions in the landscape character of the Plan area. The low lying agricultural landscapes of the Vale of York and Vale of Mowbray together occupy a large area. Generally agricultural practices in these areas have had a considerable impact on landscape quality producing an open and less diverse landscape.
- 3.3 To the east the abrupt and distinctive escarpment of the Cleveland and Hambleton Hills rises steeply to the open plateau of the North York Moors National Park. Of all landscape types the escarpment is most closely associated with the identity of the District. To the south the escarpment gives way to the attractive, rolling and well wooded landscape of the Howardian Hills which is designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.
- 3.4 In the west the Vales border an undulating landscape of hills, ridges and valleys which eventually rises to form the Yorkshire Dales and Pennines. A small part of this area is included in the Nidderdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.
- 3.5 The Plan area contains an abundance of historic parks and gardens which are important in their own right and provide attractive features in the landscape. The wooded character of the many small traditional villages also makes a significant contribution.
- 3.6 To assist the preparation of policies a Landscape Appraisal, as recommended by PPG12, was commissioned. This defined landscape character areas, evaluated landscape quality, grouped landscape character areas into broad strategy zones and advised on the scope and content of policies for the Plan.
- 3.7 Based on the Landscape Appraisal three basic strategies are adopted: where landscape quality is high the emphasis is on protection and conservation; where landscape structure has been weakened by the removal of features the emphasis is on restoration of character and quality; and, where landscape character has been substantially and adversely changed the emphasis is on enhancement through the creation of a new landscape structure compatible with modern agriculture.
- 3.8 The creation of new jobs in the countryside is becoming increasingly important. Landscape and other countryside conservation policies must be balanced with the need to provide for a healthy rural economy which meets the needs of residents of the Plan area. The landscape policies allow for proposals which would secure a stronger and more diverse rural economy provided they would not materially conflict with the need to protect the countryside.

OBJECTIVES

- 3.9 The Landscape Policies of the Plan have the following main objectives:
1. To restrict development outside Development Limits to that which needs to be there.
 2. To promote and maintain an attractive and diverse landscape throughout the entire Plan area.
 3. To protect those areas of highest landscape quality particularly the areas designated as Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Parks and Gardens of Historic or Landscape Interest and Special Landscape Areas.
 4. To improve areas of lower landscape quality.

DEVELOPMENT LIMITS

POLICY L1

DEVELOPMENT LIMITS

Development will generally be restricted to within the Development Limits of settlements as defined on the Inset Maps.

Outside Development Limits, development will be restricted to that required for the purposes of agriculture or forestry or that required to meet the social and economic needs of rural communities. Development appropriate for the enjoyment of the scenic qualities and character of the countryside and other developments appropriate to a rural area may also be acceptable.

JUSTIFICATION

3.10 Development Limits are lines drawn around settlements. In general terms development is acceptable within the Limits. The area outside the Limits, for the purposes of the Plan, is treated as countryside where development will be strictly controlled. Development Limits have the following main objectives:

- To relate development opportunities in settlements to the number of houses required in the Plan period.
- To protect the countryside;
- To prevent the outward spread of development from settlements;
- To ensure that new development is sympathetic in scale and location to the form and character of settlements;
- To prevent the coalescence of neighbouring settlements;
- To provide clear and unambiguous advice as to where development is likely to be permitted.

The following matters were taken into account in drawing Development Limits:

- The need to create development opportunities to sustain existing communities and meet the District housing requirement;
- The setting of the settlement as seen from its approach roads and other public places;
- The form and character of the settlement as defined by dwellings, other buildings and their curtilages, the road network and open spaces;
- Sites with planning approval for development;
- Boundaries created by land form, watercourses, trees, hedgerows, roads, walls and buildings;
- The sensitivity of the settlement, particular sites and the surrounding landscape to development;

- The quality of surrounding agricultural land;
 - The range of community services and facilities available within the settlement;
 - Other constraints including sites of archaeological importance and common land.
- 3.11 There are broadly two types of smaller settlement for which Development Limits have not been drawn. The first is very small settlements with a dispersed loose knit form for which no logical boundary could be defined. Development Limits would be inappropriate for these because of pressures that could arise for infilling and other developments. The second type is where there are very few residential buildings and a lack of any sense of identity.
- 3.12 Development Limits will be systematically reviewed from time to time to ensure that the District housing requirement can be met and that there are sufficient development opportunities to sustain existing communities.
- 3.13 Outside Development Limits development will be strictly controlled. PPG7 advises that the guiding principle for development in the countryside is that it should benefit the rural economy and maintain or enhance the environment. It also states that it is Government policy that the countryside should be safeguarded for its own sake.
- 3.14 Generally only those activities which are traditionally located in a countryside setting and need to be there or are necessary to the needs of the rural community will be considered favourably. Falls in farm incomes and reductions in agricultural employment have created a need for a more diverse rural economy. Diversification proposals will be supported provided they do not conflict with the need to protect the countryside.
- 3.15 The Council also recognises that it may be acceptable to locate certain forms of sport, recreation and tourism uses in rural areas. However, only those types of development which draw on the character of the countryside itself, its beauty, culture, history and wildlife will normally be permitted.
- 3.16 Although this Policy sets out the general principles for development inside Development Limits and in the countryside, other policies in the Chapters that follow give detailed guidance on specific types of development.

POLICY L2**GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR DEVELOPMENT OUTSIDE DEVELOPMENT LIMITS**

Development acceptable in principle outside Development Limits under the terms of Policy L1 will be permitted where all of the following criteria are met:

1. It does not have a significant impact on the open character and visual amenity of the countryside and accords with Policies L5 and L8 to L12. Particular attention will be paid to the cumulative effect of sporadic development;
2. It safeguards landscape features worthy of protection;
3. The design of buildings and structures and the materials proposed relate satisfactorily to the setting;
4. Where appropriate, it is accompanied by a landscape scheme which takes into account the immediate impact and distant views of the development;
5. Access roads can accommodate the traffic likely to be generated by the proposal;
6. Services and infrastructure can be provided without causing a serious harmful change to the rural character and appearance of the locality.

JUSTIFICATION

3.17 Much of the District comprises attractive countryside, a quality which is related to the small amount of development and that it is relatively unspoiled by urban influences. Protection of the countryside is an important aim of the Plan and this is to be achieved by carefully controlling new development, permitting it only where needed and ensuring it is appropriate in design and siting.

3.18 This Policy is intended to ensure that any development permitted in the countryside, including agricultural development, is appropriate in siting and design to the character and quality of the surrounding landscape and sympathetic to the appearance and character of traditional buildings in the area.

POLICY L3**DEVELOPMENT AT THE EDGE OF SETTLEMENTS**

Development which will adversely affect the setting of a settlement will not be permitted. Where development is likely to form the long term edge of a settlement, an integral and substantial landscaping scheme incorporating peripheral planting on or close to the site will be required.

On or in association with the sites allocated for development, where indicated on the Inset Maps, the provision of peripheral planting will be required.

JUSTIFICATION

- 3.19 The interface between settlement and countryside is sensitive and requires careful treatment.
- 3.20 Development at the edge of settlements, including new roads, should protect and enhance the setting of settlements in the countryside. The Council is particularly keen to ensure that new buildings on the edges of villages and towns do not result in an abrupt or jarring boundary. Where development is acceptable the Council will require it to include fully integrated landscaping proposals to screen views, to provide shelter and enclosure and assist integration. Existing landscape features of amenity value should be incorporated within such proposals in accord with Policy L14.
- 3.21 The Landscape Appraisal has guided the choice of development sites about the market towns. Sites have been selected in locations where development would not spoil their settings or where the landscaping associated with development could improve the present interface between town and country. Therefore, where indicated on the Inset Maps, the Council will require substantial landscaping on the countryside edge of development sites. This should be on a scale which will provide effective screening and if possible should be planted in advance of development.

POLICY L4

THE EXTENSION OF CURTILAGES ON THE EDGE OF SETTLEMENTS

The extension of a residential or other curtilage will be permitted where it would not have a material adverse impact upon the appearance of the countryside or the setting of a settlement. Where an extension is acceptable appropriate hedge and tree planting will be required and conditions may be imposed removing “permitted development” rights.

JUSTIFICATION

- 3.22 The encroachment of non-agricultural uses into the countryside by the extension of curtilages, especially those associated with residential properties or open storage, can have a major impact. Curtilages should not normally be extended beyond the limits of the settlement as defined by existing buildings, landscape elements or landform.
- 3.23 “Permitted development” rights will be withdrawn where development on an extended curtilage would have a materially adverse impact on the character or appearance of the countryside.

AREAS OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY

POLICY L5

DEVELOPMENT IN OR AFFECTING AONBS

The natural beauty of the Howardian Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the Nidderdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty will be given the greatest possible protection and this will be given priority in the determination of development proposals. Within these areas:

1. Any development which would adversely affect the natural beauty of their landscapes will be strongly resisted;
2. Small scale development required to meet the social and economic needs of rural communities will be permitted so long as such development is consistent with the protection of the natural beauty of the landscape and is compatible with AONB objectives;
3. Small scale tourist and outdoor sport and recreational developments will be permitted which are sensitively related to the distinctive landscape character and heritage of the area;
4. Large scale developments will be strongly resisted unless they are proven to be in the national interest, incapable of being located outside the AONBs and designed to do as little damage to the environment as practicable;
5. Where development is permitted it must be of the highest standard of design reflecting the traditional character of buildings in the area and using traditional local materials or their natural equivalent and be sited so as to integrate satisfactorily with the surrounding landscape.
6. All proposals will be subject to a rigorous examination of their environmental implications. All proposals for large scale developments likely to have a significant effect on the environment within the AONBs should be accompanied by an environmental statement.

Development in areas adjacent to the AONB's which would detract from the natural beauty of their landscape will not be permitted.

JUSTIFICATION

- 3.24 The landscapes of the Howardian Hills and Nidderdale have been formally recognised by the Government as being of national importance by their designation as Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs). The primary objective of designation is the conservation and enhancement of their natural beauty, which includes protecting flora, fauna and geological as well as landscape features.
- 3.25 Within the AONBs small scale developments to meet the social and economic needs of local communities,

where in accord with other policies of the Plan, will normally be acceptable. Where development is permitted the design, external appearance and siting will be subject to special scrutiny to ensure that it fits properly into its surroundings. Development should reflect the traditional character of buildings in the area and the landscape and use local materials. A Landscape Character Assessment has been prepared which identifies and defines distinctive landscape character types in the Howardian Hills AONB.

- 3.26 PPG7 states that it would normally be inconsistent with the aims of designation to permit the siting of major developments. Only proven national interest and lack of alternative sites can justify any exception. All proposals will be subject to rigorous examination of their environmental implications.
- 3.27 Whilst recreation is not an objective of designation it is intended that the demand for recreation should be accommodated as far as is consistent with the conservation of the natural beauty of the landscape and the needs of agriculture, forestry and other uses.
- 3.28 A Joint Advisory Committee (JAC) for the Howardian Hills AONB has been set up to help ensure that planning and management decisions affecting the AONB are consistent. Under the guidance of the JAC a Management Plan has been prepared. This describes the main issues affecting the landscape, sets out policies to guide change to ensure that the landscape continues to be attractive without harming the interests of those who live and work in the area and proposes measures for putting the Plan into action.
- 3.29 Although Policy L5 sets out the main considerations for development in the AONBs other policies in the Chapters which follow give detailed guidance on specific types of development.

POLICY L6

ROAD IMPROVEMENTS IN THE AONBS

New roads within or adjacent to the Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty will be strongly opposed and proposals to improve existing roads will be carefully examined to ensure that they are necessary and minimise damage to the environment, such proposals may require an environmental statement. As far as possible the irregular pattern and character of the minor road network in the AONBs should be retained.

JUSTIFICATION

- 3.30 New roads within the AONBs could be damaging to the landscape character and to nature conservation. In addition improved road access could result in an increase in visitor numbers detracting from the peacefulness essential to the AONBs character. The Government’s policy is to keep new roads away from protected areas such as AONBs.
- 3.31 Improvements to existing roads can be similarly damaging. Minor road networks have historic origins and are integral to landscape character. When improvements are necessary, works must be in sympathy with the landscape or settlement and the existing character of the road should be retained.

POLICY L7**LANDSCAPE FEATURES AND FORESTRY IN OR AFFECTING AONBS**

A high priority will be given to the conservation of all landscape features which characterise the Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, with particular emphasis being given to maintaining and enhancing their wooded character. The planting of broadleaved trees and the progressive diversification of existing coniferous plantations to mixed conifer/broadleaved woodlands particularly along woodland edges, stream and river margins and roads and footpaths will be encouraged.

Within or adjacent to AONBs forestry proposals will be strongly resisted which would:

1. Detract from the landscape quality and character which designation is intended to conserve;
2. Adversely affect nature conservation or archaeological interests. All areas of ancient semi-natural woodland should be conserved;
3. Restrict existing public access.

JUSTIFICATION

- 3.32 The scenic quality of the Howardian Hills is derived from a combination of its undulating landscape and the pattern of extensive woodlands and farmland. Most woodland occurs either on high ground, on steep slopes or on other areas which are less suited to cultivation. The protection of the landscape of the Howardian Hills will depend very much on maintaining its existing wooded character. Within or adjacent to the AONB forestry proposals which diversify and enhance the landscape will be supported.
- 3.33 The greater economic returns from softwoods over hardwoods tend to favour the planting of conifers and already there are large stands of pine and spruce. In many cases these have integrated well into the landscape and make a positive contribution to the character of the area. Forestry can also contribute to the employment and prosperity in rural areas.
- 3.34 There is, however, scope for improvement through better design and increased use of native broadleaved species. The Council will seek to safeguard the remaining areas of ancient semi-natural woodland and promote a higher proportion of native broadleaved trees in new planting.
- 3.35 In Forestry Authority consultations the Council will aim to maintain the high density of tree and woodland cover. It will also seek to ensure that felling and replanting proposals are undertaken in a manner sympathetic to the landscape and wildlife.

LANDSCAPE POLICY AREAS

POLICY L8

PARKS AND GARDENS

The character and features of Parks and Gardens of Historic or Landscape Interest, as shown on the Proposals Map and Inset Maps, will be preserved and enhanced, particularly those included in the National Register. Within Parks and Gardens of Historic or landscape Interest:

1. Development which would adversely affect their special historic character and appearance will not be permitted;
2. The conservation of their landscape and architectural elements will be encouraged;
3. The maintenance, restoration and construction of traditional estate walling and fencing will be encouraged;
4. The restoration of their layout will be encouraged where this is appropriate and based on thoroughly researched historical investigations;
5. Development which would detract from their settings will not be permitted.

JUSTIFICATION

3.36 There are about 50 Parks and Gardens of Historic or Landscape Interest in the Plan area. These make a positive contribution to the landscape particularly in areas lacking tree and woodland cover such as the Vale of Mowbray and the Vale of York and are an important part of the District’s heritage. It is important that they are given protection from development which would adversely affect their visual qualities and historic value.

3.37 The best are identified by English Heritage as being of national importance and are listed in the Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in England. These are:

- Beningbrough Park
- Newburgh Priory
- Thorpe Perrow

English Heritage is reviewing the Register for North Yorkshire and others may be added.

3.38 The other parks and gardens although not designated in this way are nevertheless important and their character and appearance will also be safeguarded.

POLICY L9**SPECIAL LANDSCAPE AREAS**

Special attention will be given to the protection and conservation of the scenic quality and distinctive local character of the landscape in the areas designated as Special Landscape Areas on the Proposals Map and Inset Maps and this will be given greater weight than other planning considerations. Within Special Landscape Areas:

1. Development which would materially detract from the special scenic quality of the landscape will be strongly resisted;
2. Small scale development required to meet the social and economic needs of rural communities and small scale tourist and outdoor sport and recreational development will be permitted provided such development is sensitively related to the distinctive local character of the landscape.
3. Large scale development will only be permitted if there would be substantial proven social and economic benefits to the rural community and it would not have a significant adverse effect on the special scenic quality of the landscape.
4. A high standard of design and siting in new development will be required reflecting the traditional character of buildings in the area, and the landscape, and using materials sympathetic to the locality;
5. The conservation and maintenance of features important to the local landscape such as trees, hedges, copses, woodlands and ponds will be encouraged.

JUSTIFICATION

3.39 Parts of the District, such as the Howardian Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and certain parks and gardens, have been designated as nationally important. The Plan area also contains other areas of high quality landscape which, whilst not justifying a national designation are of special local importance and merit protection. The greater part of these have been identified in general terms by the County Council as Special Landscape Areas in the North Yorkshire Conservation Strategy. PPG12 acknowledges the role of locally devised landscape designations in protecting the countryside.

3.40 The Plan, using the Landscape Appraisal, defines the detailed boundaries and extent of the Special Landscape Areas. Within

these areas the Council will encourage the conservation and management of all features which are responsible for giving the landscape its special character. The Council will also give these areas special protection from development which would harm their distinctive character and scenic quality. However, the level of protection given to these areas is less than that given to nationally designated areas.

3.41 Small scale development required for the purposes of agricultural or forestry or small scale development which will benefit the rural economy and is compatible with the area's scenic quality and character such as low key farm diversification, small scale tourist facilities or attractions or informal recreation will be permitted.

POLICY L10

LANDSCAPE RESTORATION AREAS

Within the areas defined as Landscape Restoration Areas on the Proposals Map and Inset Maps features important to the local landscape will be protected and, as far as possible, the restoration of the landscape to its former character and quality by the creation of new landscape features will be encouraged. Development permitted under other policies will be encouraged, or where necessary required, to make a positive contribution to landscape restoration through appropriate landscape works.

JUSTIFICATION

- 3.42 Within Landscape Restoration Areas a good number of traditional features have survived and landscape character is still reasonably strong. The Council will, therefore, seek to conserve these features.
- 3.43 However, the overall landscape structure has been weakened by the removal of features and many of the individual features themselves are in decline. The Council will, therefore, seek to restore these areas to their former character by promoting the re-creation of distinctive features that have been lost such as trees, hedges, copses, woodlands and ponds.
- 3.44 Woodland planting can make a significant contribution to the restoration of landscape character and quality. The scale, location and character of new woodlands should reflect the distinctive character of the local landscape. The Council is particularly keen to encourage the planting and retention of broadleaved woodland in view of its high ecological and landscape value.
- 3.45 The Council will support measures such as tree planting by grant aid. Other initiatives such as Countryside Stewardship and the Farm Woodland Premium Scheme operated by the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food and the Forestry Authority’s Woodland Grant Scheme may also be useful in landscape restoration.
- 3.46 Creating new landscape features will provide habitat opportunities for wildlife and may provide opportunities for recreation. Woodlands in particular are capable of meeting multiple objectives and this should be considered in all new schemes.

POLICY L11**LANDSCAPE ENHANCEMENT AREAS**

Special emphasis will be placed on the creation of new landscapes and the general visual improvement of the landscape in the areas shown as Landscape Enhancement Areas on the Proposals Map and Inset Maps. Within these areas landscape creation, improvement and enhancement will be secured and promoted by:

1. Encouraging, and where appropriate requiring, new development permitted by other policies to incorporate major on and off site landscaping. When considering larger scale developments their potential to enhance the visual quality of the landscape will be taken into account;
2. Encouraging the conservation and maintenance of features important to the local landscape such as trees, hedges, copses, woodlands and ponds;
3. Encouraging the removal of eyesores and redundant structures;
4. Encouraging the planting of trees, copses and woodlands in both small and large blocks; and
5. Encouraging landscape works to reduce the impact of existing intrusive development.

JUSTIFICATION

- 3.47 The Landscape Appraisal revealed large parts of the Plan area where landscape character has been substantially and adversely changed through, for example, the intensification of agriculture and inappropriate development. Often in such areas there is little or no landscape structure worth restoring and positive action is needed to create a new landscape structure.
- 3.48 The Council has defined these areas as Landscape Enhancement Areas where the aim will be to develop and enhance landscape character and quality by promoting the creation of distinctive new landscapes appropriate to the locality which reflect the local ecology and the pattern of modern agriculture. The Council will also seek to reduce the impact of existing intrusive development.
- 3.49 Guidance on landscape character can be found in the Council's Landscape Appraisal. This describes the characteristic landscape types in the District and their distribution and identifies the elements or features which make the most important contribution to their character.
- 3.50 New development may present opportunities to enhance landscape character. Consequently, when this is appropriate, the Council will expect substantial landscape proposals as an integral part of new developments with the emphasis on woodlands, tree belts, copses and hedge planting. The Council may be prepared to look more favourably on developments of a larger scale than would be the case elsewhere when these would enhance landscape character, but only for the categories of development described in Policy L1. Examples of development which could create opportunities for enhancement are carefully designed and implemented restoration schemes following mineral extraction and recreation developments such as carefully sited and designed golf courses (Policy SR6).

- 3.51 Woodland planting can make a significant contribution to landscape enhancement. Woodlands will need to be in large blocks to make an impact but they should not coalesce into a continuous screen, blocking views through the landscape.
- 3.52 Whilst the Council is keen to encourage the planting and retention of broadleaved woodland, in the Landscape Enhancement Areas mixed broadleaved and coniferous woodlands will be supported.
- 3.53 The Council will support measures such as tree planting by grant aid. Other initiatives
- such as Countryside Stewardship and the Farm Woodland Premium Scheme operated by the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food and the Forestry Authority's Woodland Grant Scheme may also be useful in landscape enhancement.
- 3.54 Creating new landscape features will provide habitat opportunities for wildlife and may provide opportunities for recreation. Woodlands in particular are capable of meeting multiple objectives and this should be considered in all new schemes.

POLICY L12

RIVER AND STREAM CORRIDORS

Developments likely to have a material adverse impact on the natural features of river and stream corridors throughout the Plan area, including those that flow through settlements, will not be permitted. The environmental and amenity value of river and stream corridors will be conserved and enhanced by:

1. Protecting existing natural features, marginal vegetation and wildlife habitats and encouraging their reinstatement when lost;
2. Resisting, unless essential, proposals to divert, culvert, straighten or otherwise modify river and stream channels;
3. Resisting development that would directly or indirectly have an adverse impact on their character, amenity and landscape;
4. Requiring that the design of structures and engineering works is appropriate in form and scale to their setting;
5. Promoting the maintenance, enhancement and, where appropriate, the restoration of the wooded character of river and stream courses.

Development proposals in river and stream corridors should also accord with Policy NC7 on Wildlife Corridors, Policy SR8 on Footpaths and Bridleways and Policy SR12 on River-based Recreation.

JUSTIFICATION

- 3.55 River corridors can make a significant contribution to landscape quality. The enclosed valleys of the River Leven west of Stokesley, the Cod Beck west of Landmoth Ridge and the Woundales Beck, north east of Borrowby with their steeply wooded banks rank amongst the most attractive landscapes in the Plan area. Elsewhere the corridors of the many rivers and streams
- and the major lowland rivers provide vegetation which adds colour, texture, contrast and elevation, within what can be generally flat monotonous landscapes of intensively cultivated farmland.
- 3.56 The rivers and becks which flow through Bedale, Great Ayton, Northallerton, Stokesley and Thirsk contribute to their

character and appearance, generally providing attractive spaces and enhancing the setting of buildings. They also provide important opportunities for recreation. To varying degrees all would benefit from environmental enhancement and improvements in public access.

- 3.57 The Council will ensure that the environmental, amenity and recreational value of river and stream corridors are not directly or indirectly impaired by new development. It is recognised that there may be a need to upgrade sewage treatment works or construct new facilities to meet discharge regulations. Such works would have a beneficial effect on water quality (see Policy UT4).
- 3.58 Where developments are permitted in river corridors they should complement and enhance the river environment.

Engineering works, such as levees, can be insensitive or visually intrusive and detract from landscape character. Careful consideration at the planning and design stage can minimise this and sometimes obtain positive landscape benefits.

- 3.59 The Council will generally support initiatives and proposals which result in the conservation or enhancement of natural elements of the river environment or result in landscape improvements. The wooded character of many river valleys enhances landscape variety and promotes opportunities for wildlife. This feature should be retained and extended.

LOCAL LANDSCAPE FEATURES

POLICY L13

TREE PRESERVATION ORDERS

Tree Preservation Orders will be made on individual trees, groups of trees or woodlands which are important in the local landscape or street scene for their amenity and scenic value. When determining applications to fell or to carry out other works to trees subject to Tree Preservation Orders, the health and stability of the trees, their likely future life span and the continuing contribution of the trees to public amenity will be taken into account and an arboriculturist's report will normally be required.

JUSTIFICATION

- 3.60 Trees enhance the quality of the countryside and urban areas by adding beauty and colour. The Council will, in the interests of amenity, protect prominent or valuable woodlands, individual trees and groups of trees by making Tree Preservation Orders.
- 3.61 The landscape or street scene interest of the trees or woodland, the species and condition of the trees and their nature conservation and historic interest are all factors which will be taken into consideration in making a Tree Preservation Order.
- 3.62 Tree Preservation Orders on woodlands are likely to be very rare and only contemplated as a last resort.
- 3.63 In the event of the loss of trees subject to a Tree Preservation Order the Council will normally require replacement trees to be planted of an appropriate size and species.

Advice on trees is provided in a Supplementary Planning Guidance Note entitled 'Trees' produced by the Council.

POLICY L14

THE LANDSCAPING OF NEW DEVELOPMENTS

Where appropriate the retention and maintenance of existing landscape features will be required in new developments and these should be incorporated as an integral part of the design. Proposals for development which would result in the loss of or damage to landscape features of amenity value will not be permitted. The provision of a new landscape framework which improves the environment, where appropriate incorporating existing landscape features, will be encouraged and, where necessary, will be a requirement of new development.

JUSTIFICATION

- 3.64 The Council has a duty to ensure that when planning permission is granted there is appropriate provision for the preservation and planting of trees. PPG1 recognises that landscape design in new developments is very important and should be subject to specific consideration.
- 3.65 The submission of comprehensive and fully integrated landscape schemes, where appropriate, including maintenance and management details, will generally be a requirement of new development proposals and the Council will require their early implementation.
- 3.66 Where trees and hedges form existing features of development sites the Council will require planning applications to be

accompanied by landscape surveys to enable an assessment of the impact of development on such features. Trees and hedges of high amenity value should be retained and planning permission may be refused where such features would be lost. Where trees and hedges are to be retained proper protection during site clearance and all construction stages will be required.

Advice on trees is provided in a Supplementary Planning Guidance Note entitled 'Trees' produced by the Council.

CHAPTER 3 THE LANDSCAPE