

DUNSTON DESIGN GUIDANCE



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1 INTRODUCTION

This guidance has been prepared on behalf of Dunston Parish Council by the Dunston Neighbourhood Panel. It supplements the Dunston Neighbourhood Plan and has been informed by the Dunston Character Appraisal, both of which are available as separate, related documents.



Dunston Neighbourhood Plan

The Neighbourhood Plan will be used by the Local Planning Authority, North Kesteven District Council, when it is considering planning applications relating to developments proposed within Dunston Parish. **Policy 3 of the Neighbourhood Plan** relates to the **Design and Character of Developments** and reads as follows:

“Developments that are consistent with other policies in this Neighbourhood Plan and the Local Plan will be supported provided their design and specification are consistent with the Dunston Design Guidance and complement the established character of the village and parish, as described in the Dunston Village and Parish Character Assessment.

Development within or adjacent to the Conservation Area, must be designed and implemented so as to preserve or enhance its character and appearance.

Design and Access Statements submitted with planning applications should include sufficient information to explain how the guidance and considerations referred to above have been taken in to account in the design of the proposed development”.

This Design Guidance will be taken in to account when relevant applications are being considered against Policy 3 of the Neighbourhood Plan.

The Local Plan

As stated in Policy 3 of the Neighbourhood Plan, due consideration will also be given to the Local Plan's policy on design and amenity. Policy LP25 of the draft Central Lincolnshire Local plan relates to these matters and is reproduced below. This Design Guidance provides locally relevant context for the consideration of proposals against that policy.

Draft Central Lincolnshire Local Plan - Policy LP25: Design & Amenity

All new development, including extensions and alterations to existing buildings must achieve high quality, sustainable design that contributes positively to local character, landscape and townscape, and supports diversity, equality and access for all.

Development proposals will be assessed against the following relevant design and amenity criteria:

Design Principles

All development must respect and enhance the character and local distinctiveness of the area and create a sense of place. As such, proposals will be required to:

- a. Make efficient use of land;*
- b. Maximise pedestrian permeability and avoid barriers to movement through careful consideration of street layouts and access routes;*
- c. Respect the existing topography, landscape character and identity, and relate well to the site and surroundings, particularly in relation to siting, height, scale, massing, form and lot widths;*
- d. Where applicable, not result in the visual or physical coalescence with any neighbouring settlement;*
- e. Where applicable, not result in ribbon development, nor extend existing linear features of the settlement, and instead retain, where appropriate, a tight village nucleus;*
- f. Incorporate and retain as far as possible existing natural and historic features such as hedgerows, trees, ponds, boundary walls, field patterns, buildings or structures;*
- g. Incorporate appropriate landscape treatment to ensure that the development can be satisfactorily assimilated into the surrounding area;*
- h. Provide well designed boundary treatments, and hard and soft landscaping that reflect the function and character of the development and its surroundings;*
- i. Protect any important long local views into, out of or through the site;*
- j. Duly reflect the original architectural style of the local surroundings, or embrace opportunities for innovative design and new technologies which sympathetically complement or contrast with the local architectural style;*
- k. Use appropriate, high quality materials which reinforce local distinctiveness, with consideration given to texture, colour, pattern and durability;*
- l. Ensure places and buildings are accessible to all.*

Amenity Considerations

The amenities which occupiers of neighbouring properties may reasonably expect to enjoy must not be harmed by or as a result of the development. Proposals should demonstrate, where appropriate, how the following matters have been considered, in relation to both the construction and life of the development:

- m. Compatibility with neighbouring land uses;*
- n. Overlooking;*
- o. Overshadowing;*
- p. Loss of light;*
- q. Adverse noise and vibration;*
- r. Adverse impact upon air quality from odour, fumes, smoke, dust and other sources;*
- s. Adequate storage, sorting and collection of household and commercial waste, including provision for increasing recyclable waste;*
- t. Creation of safe environments.*

The Dunston Character Appraisal The Dunston Character Appraisal has provided the foundations for this Design Guidance, the aim of which is to ensure that development proposals – whether in the village or the wider Parish - are designed so as to complement and reinforce Dunston’s distinct and special character.

Prepared alongside the Neighbourhood Plan, the Character Appraisal provides an analytical description of the Parish and village of Dunston, identifying features and characteristics that are valued and contribute significantly to Dunston’s distinctiveness – its sense of place.

The full Dunston Character Appraisal document is available separately, but key findings have been reproduced in this Design Guidance (including Appendix 1) to inform both the formulation and the consideration of development proposals. It is recommended that the full version of the Dunston Character Appraisal should be referred to whenever more detailed contextual information is required.

Using the Dunston Character Appraisal and the Dunston Design Guidance

Developments outside the built-up area of the village should be designed and sited so that they maintain the landscape character of the area in which they are located – and, where possible, enhance it. The Dunston Character Appraisal will be referred to when proposals are being considered. Appendix 1 of this Design Guidance provides a summary of the Character Appraisal’s description of the landscape characteristics and qualities of the Parish.

Within the village, the siting and design of development proposals should be informed by this Design Guidance (which has itself been derived from the Character Appraisal). The Design Guidance focuses on the village because this is where most of the development that may be carried out over the period of the Neighbourhood Plan is expected to be located.

Setting the Scene

Outline of the Existing Character of Dunston Village

Dunston is a small, relatively compact village, built around an attractive historic core. The village's development has clustered around a handful of key routes - Back Lane, Vicarage Lane, Middle Street and Front Street in the village centre, and along the approach routes of Fen Lane, Chapel Lane and Lincoln Road.

The village strikes a fine balance between the built and natural environments, consisting largely of detached dwellings set amongst generous gardens, many of which are bounded by either stone walls or hedgerows and contain a variety of private planting.

The prevalent building material in the historic core of the village is stone. Further from the village centre, where newer development has come forward, red brick has also become a common material for walls.

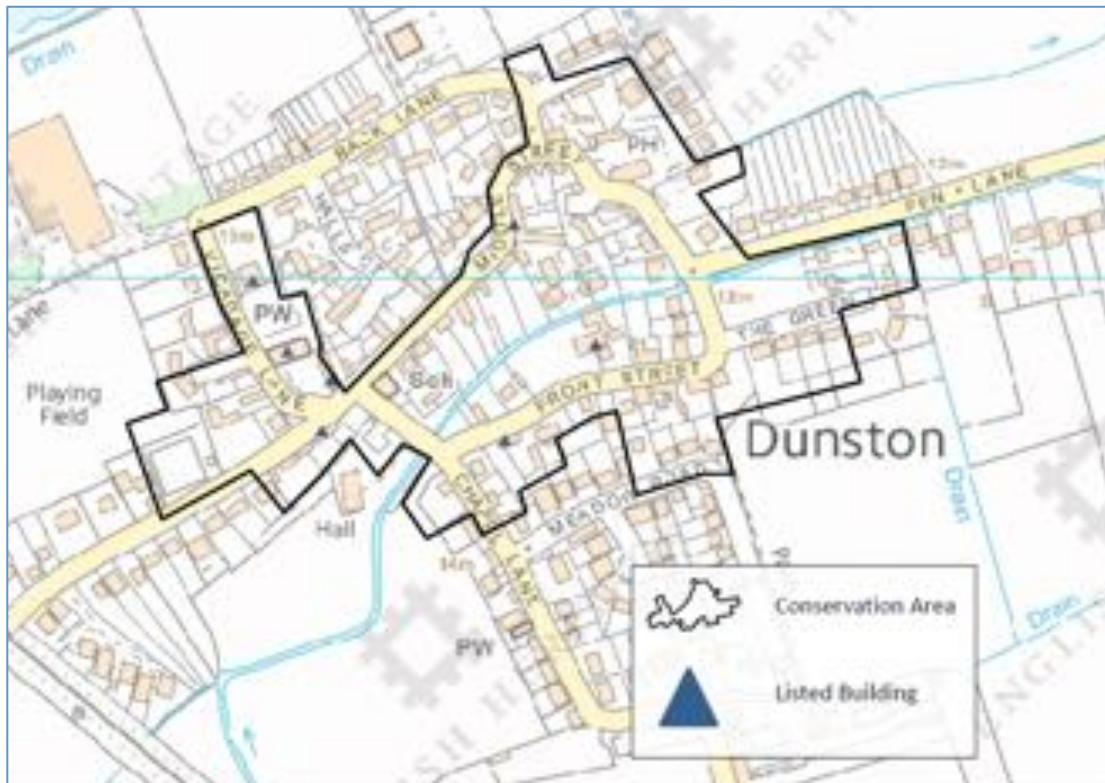
Traditionally the predominant roofing material would have been natural clay pantiles, which have a distinctive appearance that complements the stone facades. This roofing type is still seen throughout much of the village today, though primarily in the village core around Front Street, Middle Street and Vicarage Lane. Though less common than natural clay pantile roofing, a number of properties have slate roofs.

Buildings are generally either two-storey or single-storey in scale, and most have pitched roofs with gable ends. Chimneys are a common feature of many buildings in Dunston, and are typically of red brick.

Vital to the village character are a number of green spaces which provide an attractive setting to those buildings which bound them, views into and out of Dunston and recreation opportunities for the local community. Many of these open spaces are set along the Dunston Beck. The Beck, which flows in an easterly direction, through the village centre and joins the Car Dyke near Nocton Wood, is a key component of many of the village's most picturesque and locally iconic settings. By turning stones on the river bed the presence of freshwater shrimps, mayfly nymphs and other invertebrates can be seen. Trout can be observed at various locations. The presence of trout is an indicator of good water quality in the Beck. The Parish Council is working with the Wild Trout Trust on a habitat improvement scheme for the Beck.

Heritage Assets

Dunston has a rich built fabric, much of which is of recognised heritage value. The village's historic core is a designated Conservation Area, and within this lie seven listed buildings (buildings that have legal protection because they are of Special Architectural or Historic Interest). The Conservation Area boundary and the locations of the listed buildings are shown on the plan on the next page.



All seven buildings are Grade II listed.

The most prominent of the listed buildings is St Peter's Church, dating back to the Norman period. The church's setting includes another three listed buildings; the Church Farmhouse, the Old Vicarage, and 6-7 Lincoln Road.

The remaining three listed buildings are dispersed around the rest of the village core, along Front Street and Middle Street.

Beyond the village, the most notable listed building is Dunston Pillar, reference to which is made in Appendix 1.

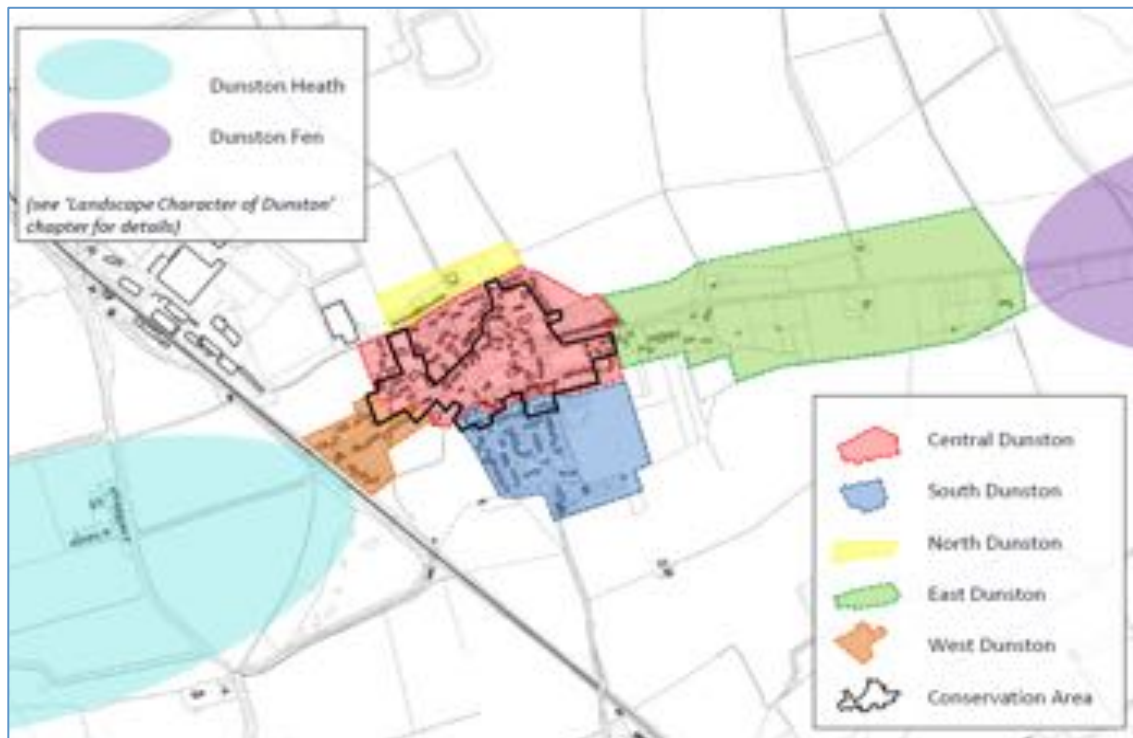
Whilst each of the listed buildings obviously has its own individual heritage value, collectively they also contribute to and enhance the wider village character. Every effort should be made to ensure their preservation.

In addition, there are numerous other historic buildings, which though they have not achieved statutory listing, still make a significant contribution to the character of Dunston and collectively give Dunston its unique charm and personality.

Character Areas Overview

Whilst the village as a whole has a strong overarching character, a number of sub-areas, each with their own distinct qualities and character can be identified. In this

respect, Dunston can be broadly divided into five distinct “townscape” areas of different character, the location and extents of which are shown the plan below.



The defining characteristics and qualities of these character areas are outlined in the next section (Detailed Design Guidance) and described in detail in the Dunston Character Appraisal.

Detailed Design Guidance

Introduction

The design guidance that follows should be taken into account when designing new buildings and extensions and alterations to existing buildings throughout the village. When applying the guidance to particular proposals, the characteristics of the particular Character Area in which the site is located should also be taken in to account. The key characteristics and features of each Character Area are outlined on pages 13 to 21.

When seeking planning permissions and approvals, applicants will be expected to explain how the design of the proposal has responded to this guidance. Normally, this should be set out in a Design and Access Statement.

Core Design Principles

New buildings in Dunston should be designed to respect the village's established character. This does not necessarily mean that new buildings have to be designed to look like old ones, but it does mean that they have to fit in, without detracting from the area's character and appearance – and, wherever possible, any changes should make a positive contribution that further strengthens the village's character and appearance.

Although there are variations in building forms, there are strong unifying themes. Defining characteristics include:

- buildings mostly of “domestic” scale and form;
- pitched roofs, mostly (though not exclusively) with simple gables;
- walls (buildings and boundaries) mostly of local stone and red brick;
- roofs mainly of clay pantiles or slates;
- vertically emphasized window and door proportions.

New buildings should normally be consistent with those themes, unless there is a justifiable design case for departing from them whilst still preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the village.

Extensions and alterations to existing buildings should normally be visually compatible with the main building(s) unless, again, this will detract from the character or appearance of the area.

Generally, this all means that new buildings and alterations or additions to existing ones should sit harmoniously in the streetscape and with their surroundings. They do not have to “copy” their older neighbours, but they should respect them.

The character of the village should be acknowledged and either reflected or interpreted in the scale and form of new buildings, extensions or alterations. This should include:

- their location and their siting within their plot;
- their form and “massing”;
- their proportions (including the proportions of individual elements like windows and doors);
- the materials used for wall, roofs, doors, windows etc.;
- the walls, hedges and fences that are used to define boundaries;
- the treatment of spaces around the buildings (gardens, paths, driveways etc.); and, the planting and retention of trees.

Those are important design considerations wherever new buildings, extensions and alterations are being carried out.

Where a less obviously compatible design solution is proposed for a new building, extension or alteration, and planning application is required, the justification should be set out in the “Design and Access Statement”, for consideration by the local planning authority.

In addition to the requirement to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the village, there are further requirements relating to the protection of listed buildings and their settings. Development that could affect the setting of any of Dunston’s listed buildings will require very careful planning and design: it is recommended that professional advice – and that of the Local Planning Authority’s conservation experts – should be sought at the earliest stage.

Materials Palette and other Distinctive Characteristics

In Dunston, the materials used for the walls and roofs of buildings – and boundary walls and other features – are mostly within a particular “palette” of stone and brick, clay tiles and slate. Generally, the materials used for the external walls and roofs of new buildings and structures should be selected from that same palette, which is illustrated by the photographs that follow.



The ways in which stone and bricks are assembled in the construction of walls (for example, the type of brick bond and the coursing of stonework) should also be considered carefully and local traditions should be reflected in new buildings unless there are good reasons for departing from them. This is particularly important within the Conservation Area. Contrasting and contemporary materials may be acceptable if they make a positive contribution and harmonise within the overall character of the area.

Roofs



Red clay pantiles and grey/blue slates are prevalent and make a significant contribution to the village's distinctive character. Using these or similar roofing materials for the roofs of new buildings and extensions will help to maintain that distinctiveness and provide continuity between old and new. Within the Conservation Area, natural materials (clay tiles and slates) will normally be appropriate. In other parts of the village alternative materials may be acceptable, but colour, size and profile should still be given careful consideration. The forms / shapes of roofs are also important, so attention should be paid to matters such as angles of pitch, forms of gables, shapes and proportions of dormers.

Boundary treatments



The ways in which boundaries and enclosed – especially boundaries with streets, lanes and paths – contribute greatly to the village’s character. It is important that traditional walls and hedges are kept (and maintained) and that a similar approach is taken with new development and replacements. Stone walls are prevalent in the village core, often with tiles cappings. Brick walls and hedges have also been used – and these are often to be found in the more recently developed parts of the village too. Wooden gates are traditional, but wooden fences next to streets, lanes, paths and open spaces rarely create a pleasing appearance.

Windows and doors



In older buildings, it will normally be best to adhere to the original proportions, styles and materials used for windows and doors. Where contemporary additions or replacements are to be made, it is important that they sit comfortably with the architectural characteristics of the buildings.

In new buildings, modern materials and styles may be appropriate, but traditional proportions and methods should still be respected.

Character Area 1: Central Dunston

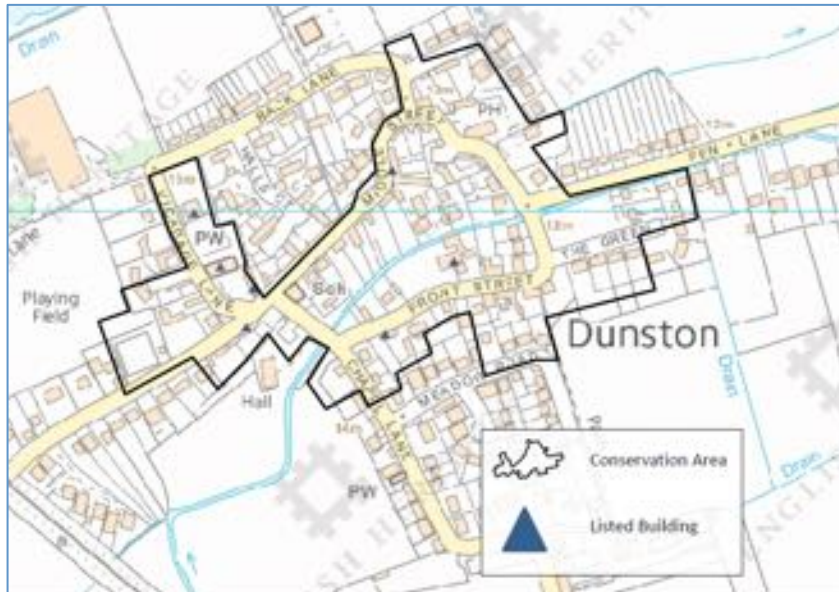


Character Synopsis

- Dunston's historic core.
- Largely residential, but also contains a number of Dunston's key community facilities and landmark buildings, including St Peter's Church and The Red Lion.
- Majority of buildings have stone walls (though some are red brick) and clay pantile roofs.
- There are significant green spaces and an abundance of greenery in the form of mature and semi-mature trees as well as hedgerows and planted gardens.

Conservation Area

Much of the village centre has been designated as a Conservation Area. New buildings in this part of the village should be designed to respect its established character. Within the Conservation Area there are particular historic and architectural reference points that need to be understood and respected.



Strengths

- Well-defined streets and spaces.
- High consistency of architectural forms and buildings materials.
- Numerous well-maintained, authentic vernacular buildings, including seven listed buildings.
- Attractive natural features - green open spaces, Dunston Beck and numerous trees.
- Quality and distinct streetscape features, including traditional signage and attractive stone / brick boundary treatments.

Weaknesses

- A small number of properties pay little regard to the traditional building form and materials, and slightly dilute the character of this area.

Design Examples



Lincoln Road is host to a row of fine vernacular properties



Modern dwellings replicating traditional building forms



Common building forms and features, but differing materials and construction eras

Character Area 2: South Dunston

Character Synopsis



- Largely residential, with the Methodist Chapel (built in 1870 of red brick) being the one exception.
- A mixed layout and plot arrangement.
- West side of Chapel Lane: mixture of older cottages with slate roofs and render and modern detached brick houses with concrete tiles; properties are single plot

depth, with open fields to the rear; some properties close to the road and others set back. There is an imposing gault brick detached house, separated from the village hall by the beck side.

- East side: pair of older stone cottages along with modern bungalows and detached houses; plots are generally larger and set back from the road.
- Meadow Road and Spring Court: a modern development of spacious dwellings generally set back from the road.
- Boundary treatment generally a mixture of hedges and fences of good quality.
- Street surfacing generally tarmac; the extension to Meadow Lane Road is block paving and the private road is gravel.
- Drives generally gravel or block paving.
- The playing field is the key open space in this area.

Strengths

- Important views from the character area generate a feeling of spaciousness and tranquillity that pervade the village and help frame its character.
- Mature trees are an important feature.
- The Methodist Chapel is a key landmark building.

Weaknesses

- The group of signs at the junction of Chapel Lane and Front Street is of poor quality.
- The telephone / electricity poles detract from the streetscape.

Design Examples



The Methodist Chapel is one of the most distinct buildings in this part



The leafy residential cul-de-sac of Spring Court

Character Area 3: North Dunston



Character Synopsis

- Comprising the North Side of Back Lane, this is the smallest of the Character Areas.
- Connecting Middle Street and Vicarage Lane it is a narrow poorly maintained road with a single pavement.
- The area is flat with a gentle west to east down slope.
- A bridleway divides the area between residential and education use.
- Dunston St Peter's Church of England Primary School is a typical single-storey 1970's school building, extended in recent years, with small surfaced and grassed play grounds.
- West of the bridleway is a line of residential properties, mostly from the post WWII period; divided between semi-detached bungalows and 4-unit terrace blocks typical of their time; all set back from the road behind a mixture of wooden fencing and hedges;
- Semi-mature trees and shrubs give the area its tranquil feel.
- More modern infill houses have been blended sympathetically within the area.

Strengths

- Residential properties set back from pavement with off road parking, trees, shrubs and hedging.

Weaknesses

- Narrow road that has not been well maintained.
- Poor vehicular access at the beginning and end of the school day.
- Also used by large agricultural vehicles routing to and from farm land east and south of the village.

Design Examples

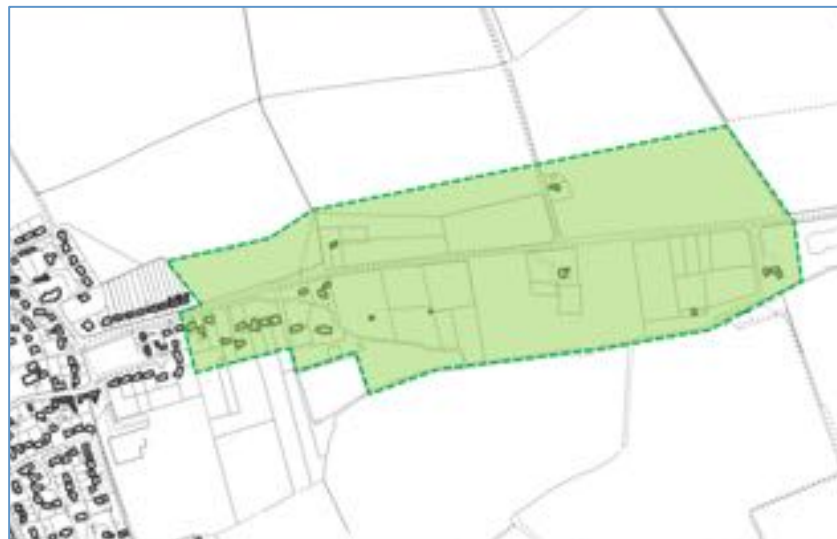


Terrace Homes



Back Lane Bungalows

Character Area 4: Dunston East



Character Synopsis

- A lightly developed area on the eastern edge of the village, giving way to open countryside.
- The area is flat but descends slightly eastwards.

- A mixture of layouts and housing plot arrangements.
- The main feature here is Dunston Beck, an important feature that continues from the Central Character Area along the lane for a short distance before diverging south.
- Expanse of arable land with some woodland exhibiting a mixture of flora and wildlife.
- Housing at the western end of the area is of mixed age, styles and building materials; mostly large houses in generous grounds with mature garden trees and shrubs.
- Main features being Nocton Wood, Dunston Beck and at the Fen the Car Dyke.

Strengths

- A sense of space, with green open areas for leisure.
- Easy access to unspoilt countryside.
- Access to bridleways, walks, wildlife, the Witham for fishing, kayaking etc.

Weaknesses

- The wide Fen Lane leading to the narrow badly maintained single unnamed road to the Witham.

Design Example



Fen Lane looking west into Village.

Character Area 5: Dunston West



Character Synopsis

- This is largely a green and visually attractive residential area with a mix of housing types.
- A few non-residential uses include a vehicle servicing garage and a children's day nursery.
- The western village boundary is marked by the railway embankment and the railway bridge that spans Lincoln Road, the principle traffic route between the village and the B1188 - the main route to neighbouring villages and Lincoln City.
- From its lowest point at the bridge, Lincoln Road rises gently to the
- highest point in the village at St Peter's Church.

Strengths

- Sympathetic development gives an impression of openness and character.

Weaknesses

- Principle route into the village leads to heavy traffic at peak times.

- Some noise from trains particularly at night

Design Examples



**Cottages and the Old School at
Eastern end of Lincoln road**



Western Entrance to Village

Appendix 1

Landscape Character within Dunston Parish – an outline

The Parish of Dunston consists of a narrow, linear expanse of rural Lincolnshire, which stretches from the A15, in the west, to the banks of the River Witham, in the east.

At the centre of the Parish is Dunston village, which accommodates most of the Parish's built development and, therefore, the majority of the local population. The village is flanked on either side by stretches of open countryside; to the east is Dunston Fen, and to the west is Dunston Heath.

Dunston Fen

Dunston Fen runs east-north-east from the village, between Dunston Water Dyke and Nocton Delph. This character area is bisected by Fen Lane which runs eastward for 5 miles, skirting Nocton Woods, to the White Horse Inn on the river Witham at its eastern boundary.

Once past the ridges of higher ground at Nocton Wood, to the north, and Metheringham Barff, to the south, the landscape of the character area is classic fen land, sloping gently from the village down to the river. It is an area of wide-open arable farmland with scattered buildings.

Non-agricultural activities are few in number; a light engineering workshop operates from Prior Lane and further east, at a disused farm, one of the largest arboriculture companies in the East Midlands area operates a wood chipping/processing plant. Several small isolated farm complexes, cottages and converted farms buildings are found at intervals along the eastern stretch of Fen Lane. Other features include Dunston Beck, which, a short distance after Prior Lane, swings northwards to cross Fen Lane and, after skirting Nocton Wood, enters Dunston Backside Drain. Other minor dykes and ditches drain the area, eventually into the River Witham.

Along the Dunston Bank of the River Witham, a bridleway runs to Kirkstead Bridge at Woodhall Spa. On the Southrey side the following can be accessed:

- Water Railway - part of the long distance National Cycle Route Number 1;
- the Viking Way - this section is part of the 147 mile long distance walk;
- the abbeys of the Witham, including Tupholme, Bardney and Barlings.

Southrey Woods cover 22 acres and are part of Bardney Limewoods, within the Lincolnshire Limewoods, an area steeped in history, with numerous archaeological sites, rich in wildlife, ancient woodlands and quiet countryside.

There are impressive views of Lincoln Cathedral to the north-west, the Lincolnshire Wolds to the north-east and a far-scape of emptiness towards Tattershall Castle in the southeast.

Dunston Heath

Dunston Heath runs east/west between the A15 and B1188 roads and between Metheringham Heath, to the south, and Nocton Heath, to the north. The Heath's topography is undulating, with a gentle eastward rise towards the Lincolnshire Limestone Edge. A small beck rises from a spring and flows eastward through Dunston village to the River Witham on the eastern boundary of the Parish.

The area is predominantly arable agricultural land with some wooded areas. At the B1188 there is a small development of mixed housing. Whilst at the western boundary of the Parish, a farm and some buildings, including the Dunston Pillar, lie adjacent to the A15 Lincoln-Sleaford road. The Pillar – a listed building - is the major landmark in this character area. Historic buildings on this site, but no longer visible, were a leper hospital and a Methodist chapel. A small industrial complex straddles the B1188 north of the Heath Road, comprising a quarry on the west side and light manufacturing on the east.

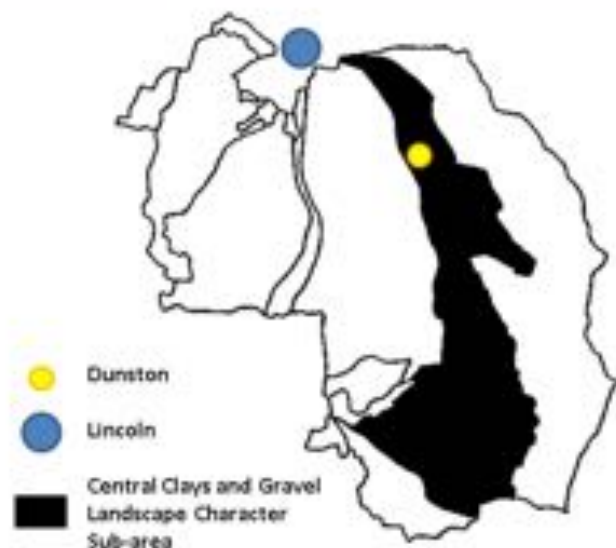
Dunston Heath area is bisected from north to south by Bloxholm Lane and east to west by Dunston Heath Lane. The latter's surfacing is degraded by heavy use. There are a number of fragmented Bridleways and Public footpaths in the area.

There is a small detached community to the east of the area comprising buildings of a mixture of ages, types and construction materials, in a small cluster off the B1188 at the junction with Lincoln Road leading into the village proper.

Mature trees are an important feature of the Character area - predominantly of mixed native variety in small woods and copses, and singly or in small groups at intervals along Dunston Heath Lane. Both Bloxholm and Dunston lanes are bounded by wide grass verges with substantial hedging of mixed native species. Dunston Beck is a clear, spring-fed stream rising to the west of the village on Dunston Heath. The Beck's source lies to south of the Heath Lane between Bloxholm Lane and the B1188.

The wider context

The North Kesteven Landscape Character Assessment (2007) provides a detailed assessment of the landscape character, distinctiveness and qualities of North Kesteven. It classifies and describes the different landscapes present in the district.



Dunston is identified as lying within the extensive Central Clays and Gravel Landscape Character sub-area, which runs the entire length of the District, as illustrated in the map on page 23.

The assessment provides the following overview of the key characteristics of the Central Clays and Gravel Landscape Character sub-area:

- *The narrowest part is in the north, widening southwards beyond Sleaford to meet the Upland Plateau Fringe. The western edge is defined by the Limestone Heath and Slea Valley, whilst the Fens lie to the east along its full extent.*
- *A gently undulating lowland, edged by areas of woodland in the north.*
- *Fields are generally smaller and more varied in shape than on the adjacent limestone plateau with some grazing land as well as arable.*
- *Surface water drains into small streams running from west to east and drainage ditches run by the sides of the fields.*
- *Well kept hedgerows along roadsides and sometimes between fields.*
- *Dark brown coloured soil.*
- *Small copses of broadleaved woodland throughout the sub-area and larger areas of woodland on the eastern edge.*
- *Three distinctive lines of settlements – the limestone villages following the spring lines coming off the limestone plateau; the line of villages on the clay strip; and the villages edging the fens to the south.*
- *Road network orientated with the main roads running from north to south (Lincoln to Sleaford) with smaller roads running west to east.*
- *Pressures for change in the sub-area relate to inappropriate development on the edge of villages and the loss of hedgerows and tree cover.*
- *Opportunities for landscape enhancement mainly rest with increased hedgerow and tree planting and maintaining the character of the villages.*

Of the three distinctive lines of settlements referred to above, Dunston is one of the 'limestone villages following the spring lines coming off the limestone plateau'. Potterhanworth, Nocton, Digby and Scopwick are also in this group.