

# Comparative assessment of Stapleford and Great Shelford Neighbourhood Plan views

## Purpose of this document

In his clarification note of March 2025, the examiner wrote:

**“It would be helpful if the parish councils expanded on the way in which it assessed the identified views beyond the information set out on paragraph 8.17 of the Plan.**

**Several representation comments about the general nature of the views identified. Again, it would be helpful if the parish councils expanded on the way in which they selected the views.”**

To address this, here we set out seven criteria relating to landscape and visual value against which each of the 29 views in the Stapleford and Great Shelford Neighbourhood Plan (S&GS NP) are assessed. This comparative analysis highlights 10 views which are less significant in landscape and visual terms than others and hence which we propose to remove from the S&GS NP.

## Views assessment criteria

Views have been scored against each of the following, with all 29 views then ranked according to their total score:

Criteria for assessing landscape value:

- a. there is a clearly defined feature within the view cone (e.g. a particular hill, other important landscape feature or settlement)
- b. the view gives clear context to the wider setting of the Plan area
- c. permanent loss of the view would represent a fundamental change to the landscape
- d. rarity of the view type within Stapleford and Great Shelford.

Criteria for defining visual value:

- e. appreciation of the view is the principal activity of being at the viewpoint (rather than, say, the view being incidental/unimportant to the experience, or being experienced only transiently while passing through the landscape)
- f. the positive contribution the view makes towards creating or enhancing a sense of place (equally, loss of the view would reduce or remove a sense of place)
- g. the view is part of an Important Countryside Frontage.

One further criterion has been applied: where the majority of a view's features lie outside the Plan area, this is sufficient reason to remove the view entirely from the NP.

The assessment reflects information in Map 7 (p90) and Appendix 7 (p165-175) of the submission version of the S&GS NP, and notes residents' opinions expressed in the Mid-Term Community Consultation (2023) (see Appendices 6 and 7 to the Consultation Statement).

## Comparative views assessment

1. Presented in the order in which they appear in Appendix 7 of the S&GS NP:

View ID	Score against each assessment criterion (no/low = 1; medium = 2; high = 3)							Total score (max. 21)
	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	
A	1	1	3	1	1	1	1	9
B	3	2	3	3	2	3	1	17
C	3	3	3	3	1	3	1	17
D	3	2	2	2	1	2	1	13
E	<i>Removed – most of view's features lie outside Plan area</i>							
F	1	1	3	1	1	1	1	9
G	1	1	3	1	1	1	1	9
H	2	1	2	1	1	2	3	12
I	1	1	3	1	1	2	3	12
J	3	2	3	2	1	2	1	14
K	3	2	3	2	1	2	1	14
L	1	2	3	1	1	2	1	11
M	3	2	3	2	2	2	1	15
N	2	2	3	2	1	2	1	13
O	3	3	3	3	3	3	1	19
P	3	2	3	2	1	2	1	14
Q	3	1	2	2	1	1	1	11
R	3	2	3	2	1	2	1	14
S	1	1	3	1	1	1	2	11
T	3	2	3	2	1	2	1	14
U	3	2	3	2	1	2	3	16
V	3	2	3	2	1	2	3	16
W	2	2	3	2	1	2	1	13
X	2	2	3	2	1	1	1	12
Y	3	2	3	2	2	2	1	15
Z	3	3	3	3	2	3	1	18
Aa	3	3	3	3	3	3	1	19
Bb	3	2	3	2	1	2	1	14
Cc	3	1	3	3	3	3	1	17

2. Presented in order of relative value, from highest to lowest:

View ID	Score against each assessment criterion (no/low = 1; medium = 2; high = 3)							Total score (max. 21)
	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	
Aa	3	3	3	3	3	3	1	19
O	3	3	3	3	3	3	1	19
Z	3	3	3	3	2	3	1	18
B	3	2	3	3	2	3	1	17
C	3	3	3	3	1	3	1	17
Cc	3	1	3	3	3	3	1	17
U	3	2	3	2	1	2	3	16
V	3	2	3	2	1	2	3	16
M	3	2	3	2	2	2	1	15
Y	3	2	3	2	2	2	1	15
J	3	2	3	2	1	2	1	14
K	3	2	3	2	1	2	1	14
P	3	2	3	2	1	2	1	14
R	3	2	3	2	1	2	1	14
T	3	2	3	2	1	2	1	14
Bb	3	2	3	2	1	2	1	14
D	3	2	2	2	1	2	1	13
N	2	2	3	2	1	2	1	13
W	2	2	3	2	1	2	1	13
H	2	1	2	1	1	2	3	12
I	1	1	3	1	1	2	3	12
X	2	2	3	2	1	1	1	12
L	1	2	3	1	1	2	1	11
Q	3	1	2	2	1	1	1	11
S	1	1	3	1	1	2	2	11
A	1	1	3	1	1	1	1	9
F	1	1	3	1	1	1	1	9
G	1	1	3	1	1	1	1	9
E	Removed – most of view's features lie outside Plan area							

Key:

Highly important views: 15-21

Important views: 13-14

Lower priority views: <13

## Findings

Reflecting the scores in the table above, views have been allocated to one of four categories. A full description of each view can be found in Appendix 7 of the S&GS NP; for the sake of brevity, they are described here only with reference to their vantage points.

**CATEGORY 1:** there are **10 highly important** views:

Aa (19) – Little Trees Hill, high point of Magog Down

O (19) – high point of new countryside park between Hinton Way and Haverhill Rd

Z (18) – near black barn on farm track beyond Stapleford Granary

B (17) – Jenny's Path, just north of the railway bridge

C (17) – Church St/Bridge St junction at Gt/Lt Shelford boundary

Cc (17) – Ely viewpoint at Wandlebury<sup>1</sup>

U (16) – gap between 41 Gog Magog Way and homes at Chalk Hill

V (16) – Haverhill Rd, just outside Stapleford village boundary

M (15) – northern-most extension of Clay Pit off Granhams Rd

Y (15) – beginning of farm track behind Stapleford Granary

CATEGORY 2: there are **9 important** views:

J (14) – boundary of Gt Shelford Village Charity community garden and allotments

K (14) – DNA Path next to blue bridge over railway

P (14) – high point on Granhams Rd

R (14) – bottom of private road to Fox Hill on Hinton Way

T (14) – Stapleford cemetery

Bb (14) – junction of Haverhill Rd and A1307

D (13) – entrance to Rec at Gt Shelford

N (13) – high point on Granhams Rd at entrance to Nine Wells House

W (13) – views over R Granta meadows (including Clerk's Piece) from London Rd

CATEGORY 3: there are **9 lower priority** views:

H (12) – just south of railway bridge on Cambridge Rd looking over De Freville Farm

I (12) – Trinity House farm land, Cambridge Rd

X (12) – entrance to car park behind Stapleford Granary

L (11) – near 'Hillrise', roughly the mid-point along Granhams Rd

Q (11) – Cherry Hinton Rd, nr junction with Wort's Causeway

S (11) – gap between 27 and 31 Mingle Lane

A (9) – Jenny's Path, at field boundary approaching M11 underpass

F (9) – allotments at Stonehill Rd

G (9) – W boundary of Gt Shelford PC cemetery

CATEGORY 4: **one view has been removed** on the basis that most of its features lie outside of the Plan area:

E – NW corner of Shelford Rugby Club

## Recommendations

The landscape and visual value of views in Categories 1 and 2 mean that they are 'highly important' or 'important' to the Plan area and should be retained in Policy S&GS 13.

We propose to remove 10 views of lower landscape and visual value from Policy S&GS 13. These are listed in Categories 3 and 4 above.

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<sup>1</sup> Although a notable feature of this view lies outside the Plan area (Ely Cathedral), we maintain that this view is highly important to Policy S&GS 13. The foreground of the view falls within the Plan area and overlooks the Gog Magog Hills; protection of the foreground is critical to preserving the 27km-distant view to Ely Cathedral; the viewpoint is a destination in and of itself; it is accessible via a PROW; Wandlebury is a highly significant heritage asset within the Plan area and a County Wildlife Site.