

Sporle Neighbourhood Plan

Views Assessment

April 2025



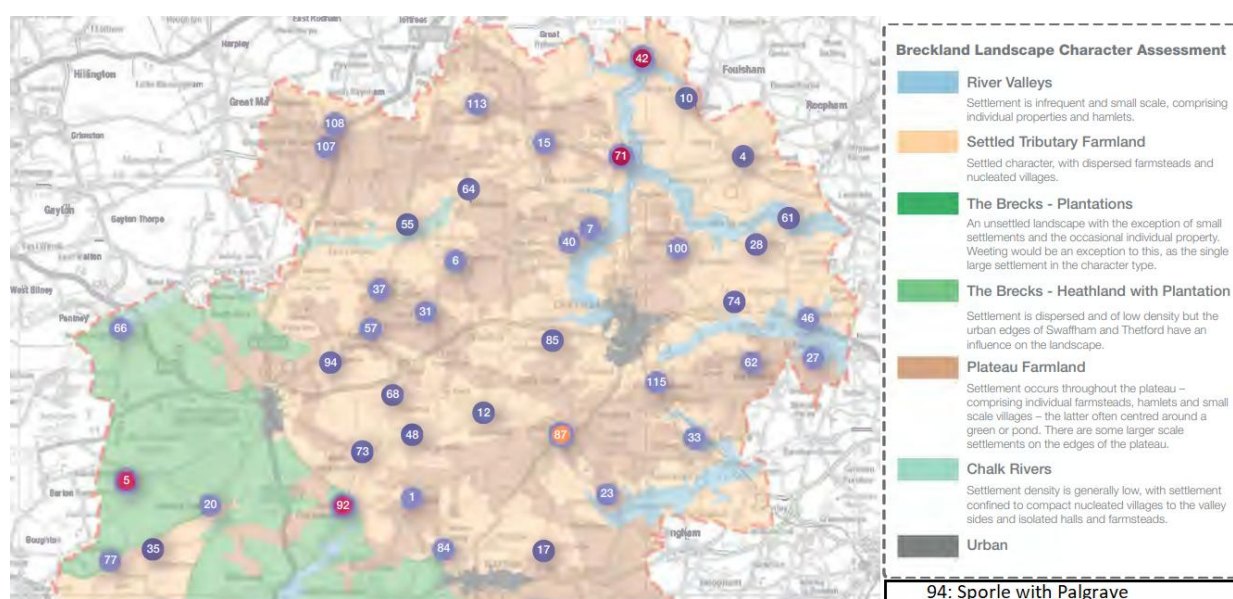
Contents

Background information	3
Sporle Assessment	4
Views assessment	7
View 1: Procession Lane looking towards St Mary's View and Necton Road	7
View 2: Procession Lane E towards village	10
View 3: Looking North along Palgrave Rd from Sporle Rd	13
View 4: Looking northwest along Peddar's Way/Palgrave Rd	16
View 5: Peddar's Way/Palgrave Rd towards Gt Palgrave	18
View 6: View looking west from Southacre Road	21
View 7: 360 Degree Views along Newton Road	23
View 8: Dunham Bridge looking towards Sporle Wood and Newton Road	27
View 9: View looking east towards the Church	30
View 10: View looking west from Priory Close	32
View 11: Sporle Rd/Bunkers Hill	34

Background information

1. Breckland District Council's Landscape and Settlement Character Assessment (2022)¹ identifies that Sporle with Palgrave falls within two distinct landscape character types: plateau farmland² and settled tributary farmland³. It identifies Sporle with Palgrave as having the origin settlement type of 'agricultural village' of the 'continuous rural row' morphological type. These definitions are explored more below along with development implications⁴.

Figure 1: Breckland Character Assessment 2022 - showing Sporle with Palgrave (94) (Source Breckland District Council)



2. Agricultural villages are small settlements which initially originated as a series of dispersed buildings which have since developed into villages. The historic origins may range from farmsteads, grain milling or turnpike settlements on key routes. In the character assessment, Breckland District Council notes that:
 - Within the older historic centre of the village, residential properties are low in height and generally do not exceed three storeys. Churches form features of the villages, often providing the tallest structure.
 - The older historic buildings of agricultural origin are generally located within the village core. The continued use of some farmsteads for agriculture purposes provides an important link to the land uses and practices which continue today.
 - Older buildings within the village are generally characterised by attractive vernacular detailing to the facades, gables and roofs.

¹ Breckland District Council [Landscape and Settlement Character Assessment](#) (2022)

² Settlement comprising individual farmsteads, hamlets and small scale villages – the latter often centred around a green or pond. There are some larger scale settlements on the edges of the plateau.

³ Settled character, with dispersed farmsteads and nucleated villages.

⁴ Breckland District Council [Landscape and Settlement Character Assessment](#) (2022)

- Many villages have now experienced mid-late 20th century and early 21st century development which uses non place-specific architecture and materials, diluting the character and sense of place.
 - The villages typically exhibit a strong relationship with surrounding farmland which contributes to the rural identity of the settlement.
 - Selective views between properties and visual links are afforded across the surrounding agricultural context, with woodland often forming a component of the view. Patterns of mature vegetation typically align the street frontage and frame key views.
 - Where settlements have developed along watercourses, historically significant buildings can be found along the river.
3. Continuous rural row villages have:
- Linear arrangement of farmsteads and dwellings, usually built along a road.
 - A row settlement with no large gaps between buildings.
 - These commonly begin as interrupted rural rows which have since been infilled by development.
4. In the character assessment, Breckland District Council notes that these types of villages:
- Lack a single clustering or central focus, with amenities and facilities distributed along the streetscape.
 - Have regular rows of historic properties which provide a distinctive feature. However, evidence of modern infill development stretching along local roads detracts from the historic linear form of the settlement type.
 - Have a reduced network of local green spaces due to the pattern of infill development, detracting from the wider village setting.
 - Are generally characterised by a limited palette of materials (predominantly Norfolk red brick, clay pantiles, render and timber frames).
 - Have limited scope for public open space because of the continuous nature of the row.
 - Work well because the higher density of housing within the village core can create a greater sense of community, alongside continuous natural surveillance as houses overlook the street.

Sporle Assessment

5. The Sporle Neighbourhood Plan proposes to afford protection to 11 special views. During 2024 the community were asked in an initial survey which views they felt were particularly special within the parish. In this question, 71 people chose to answer and the suggested views are listed below:
- Approaching the village from the north end near the village sign
 - The historic centre of Sporle, especially the Church and village hall
 - Along The Street e.g cottages and views of the meadows to the east
 - Any open space, open agricultural fields or walks around the village e.g, playing field, church graveyard

- Daffodil streams
 - Local pub open sign
 - Newton Road down to Castle Acre
 - The Bunkers Hill-Sporle Road bridge has a canopy view, as does the Procession Lane bridge
 - The Jane Palmer wildflower meadow
 - The unmade part of Palgrave Road (Peddars Way) from South acre Road
 - The windmill
 - Playing field
 - Sporle Woods
 - Views along Peddars Way
 - View from top of Priory Close and in the field above across the valley towards Swaffham and generally westwards
 - Views from Newton road beyond the current edge of housing to the west over farmland
 - Views from the playing field and the flower meadow with surrounding trees.
 - View towards Dunham Bridge and to Newton and Castle acre.
 - Village centre green.
6. A number of views were considered by the steering group and explored. This document provides the evidence to support the views being included within the neighbourhood plan. A set of criteria was used to identify such views:
- a) Accessible from a public space;
 - b) A good reason for its inclusion within the Neighbourhood Plan which may relate to its recreational value, conservation interest, scenic quality, rarity or planning history; and
 - c) Have a specific reason for being important to the community.
7. In the next section is the views assessments and detail given for each of the 11 views identified on **Figure 1**. Whilst the arrows of the views should not be taken as an indicative length it gives the understanding that from each standpoint the view can be seen from either a short or long distance.
8. Several of the views identified in this assessment are open farmland views. These are not rare in the wider Breckland landscape, but they are locally important because they illustrate the close relationship between Sporle, its agricultural setting and the surrounding countryside. They are particularly valued where they are experienced from public routes, including Peddars Way, rural lanes and local walking routes, and where they contribute to the undeveloped approaches, settlement edge, tranquillity or historic setting of the village.

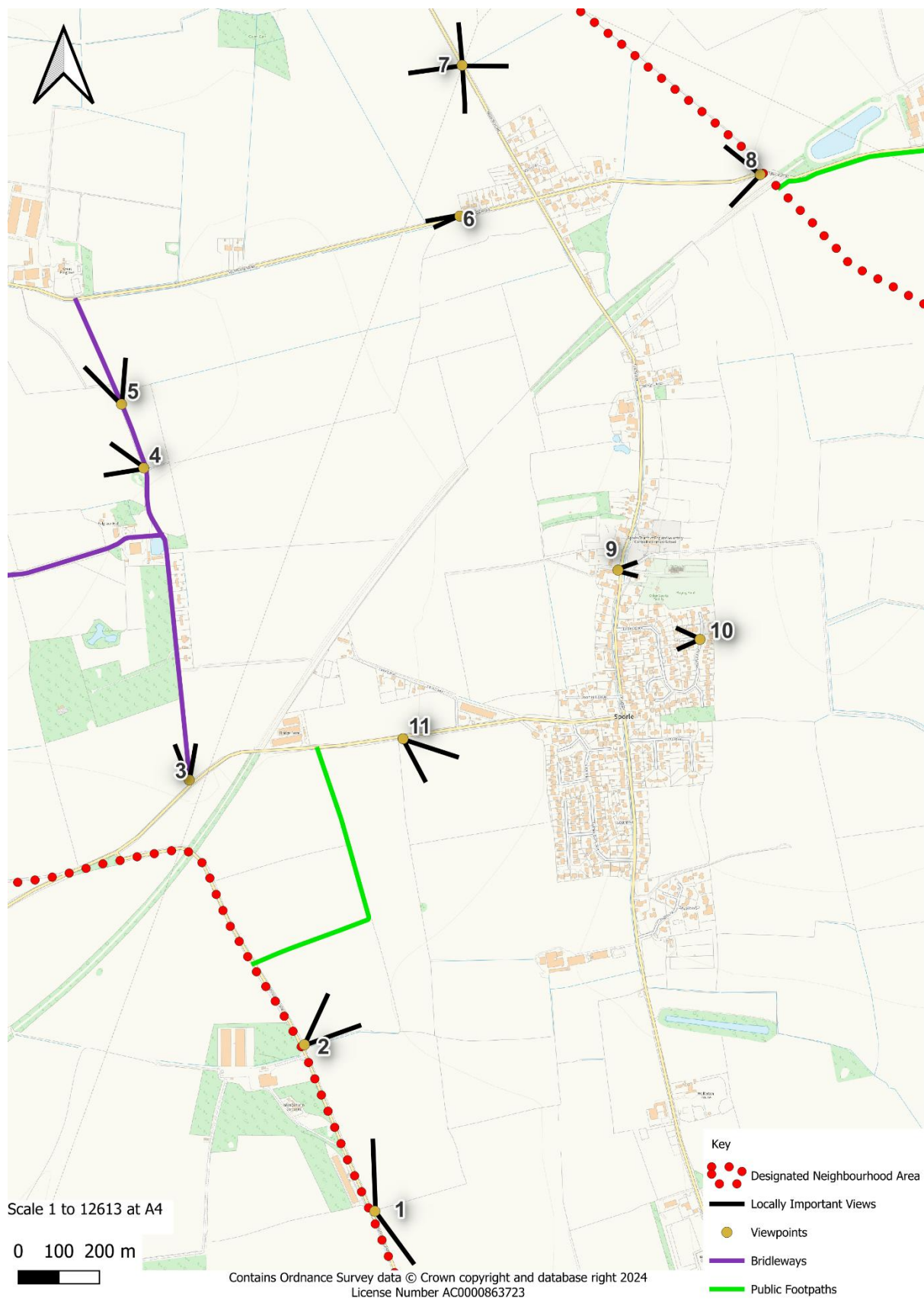
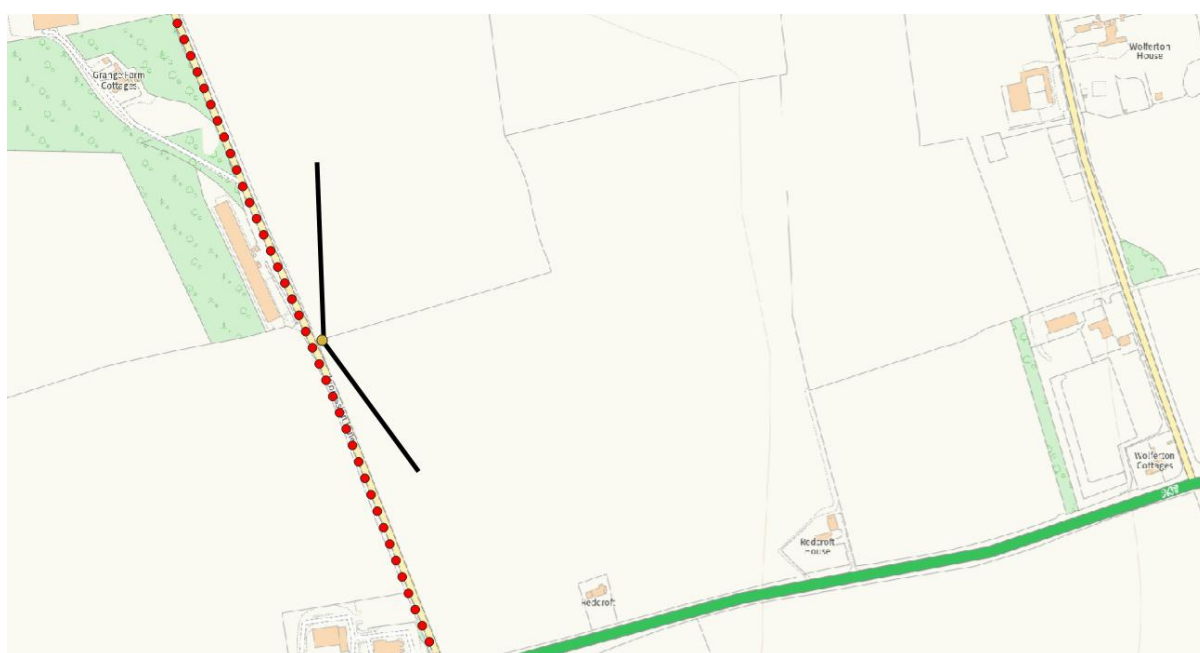


Figure 2- Important Key Views in Sporle

Views assessment

View 1: Procession Lane looking towards St Mary's View and Necton Road





Criteria	Description
Specific location of the viewpoint	Jiffy.become.coverings (What 3 Words Location)
Description of the view	Looking east towards St Marys View and the Church (northeast) and towards Necton (southeast). The land this view is looking over is arable farmland bordered by hedgerows and trees.

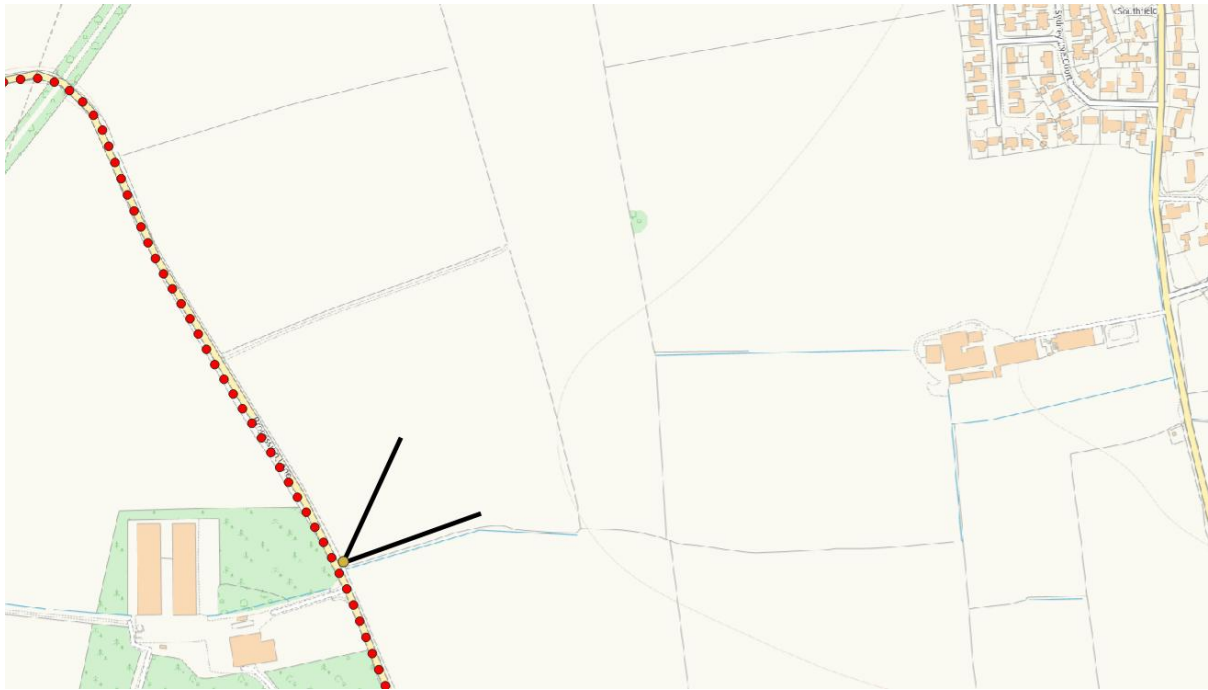
Criteria	Description
Is the view publicly accessible?	The view is publicly accessible and can be seen when one is looking east along Procession Lane.
Value of the view locally (scenic quality, recreational value, historic value, rarity, conservation interest)	The perception of this view is strongly rural. It is of open arable land and features other aspects of the natural environment. The view is widespread and tranquil. The view itself is taken from the Peddars Way National Trail which is a long-distance walking trail following a Roman Road built along the line of an even older trackway. The name, Peddars Way, is said to be derived from the Latin "pedester", which means "on foot"⁵. Peddars Way starts in Suffolk at Knettishall Heath Country Park (or Thetford Station for cyclists) and follows the route of a Roman road for 49 miles (79 Km) to Holme-next-the-Sea on the north Norfolk coast meeting the Norfolk Coast Path at Holme-next-the-Sea⁶. The view does not include any recreational facilities. There are no known natural environment or historic conservation interests within the arable land the view looks over. However, local wildlife will be present. The rural landscape and farmland are part of Sporle's historic identity as a village. The view is not necessarily rare within the character area, but it is special for its contribution to the strong tranquillity and value of this undeveloped landscape. The value of this view lies in its role as part of the rural approach to Sporle. It provides a clear visual connection between the village, surrounding farmland and the wider countryside, helping to reinforce the parish's agricultural character and the sense of separation from larger settlements.
Relevant planning history	There is no relevant planning history within this view. Checked on the Breckland District Council website 18/03/2025.

⁵ [Peddars Way \(Knettishall Heath to Holme-next-the-Sea\) - Norfolk County Council](#)

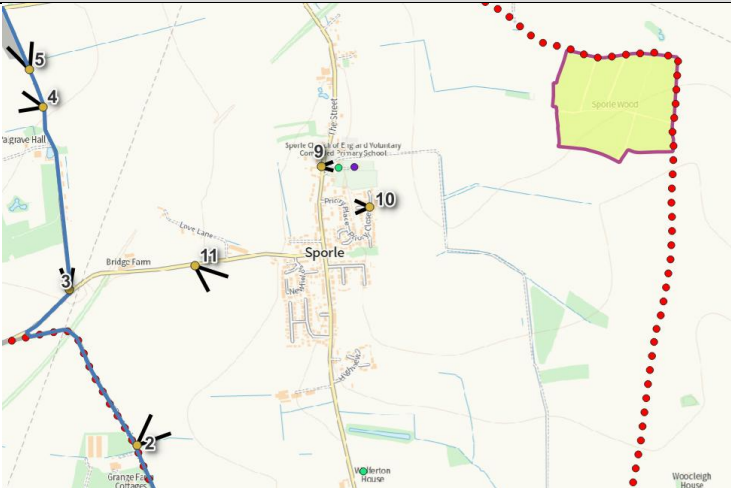
⁶ [Peddars Way and Norfolk Coast Path - National Trails](#)

View 2: Procession Lane E towards village





Criteria	Description
Specific location of the viewpoint	Nuance.deputy.organist
Description of the view	Looking East towards the village. The land this view is looking over is arable farmland bordered by hedgerows and trees.
Is the view publicly accessible?	The view is publicly accessible and can be seen when one is looking east along Procession Lane towards the village.
Value of the view locally (scenic quality, recreational value, historic value, rarity, conservation interest)	The perception of this view is strongly rural. It is of open arable land and features other aspects of the natural environment including Sporle Wood in the background. Sporle Wood holds a number of historic and natural environment designations including being Ancient Woodland, a County Wildlife Site and Priority Habitat Deciduous Woodland. The view is widespread and tranquil.

Criteria	Description
	 The view itself is taken from the Peddars Way National Trail which is a long-distance walking trail following a Roman Road built along the line of an even older trackway. The name, Peddars Way, is said to be derived from the Latin "pedester", which means "on foot"⁷. Peddars Way starts in Suffolk at Knettishall Heath Country Park (or Thetford Station for cyclists) and follows the route of a Roman road for 49 miles (79 Km) to Holme-next-the-Sea on the north Norfolk coast meeting the Norfolk Coast Path at Holme-next-the-Sea⁸. The view does not include any recreational facilities. There are no known natural environment or historic conservation interests within the arable land the view looks over but there are interests within Sporle Wood. It can also be assumed local wildlife will be present within the view. The rural landscape and farmland are part of Sporle's historic identity as a village. The view is not necessarily rare within the character area, but it is special for its contribution to the strong tranquillity and value of this undeveloped landscape. This view is important because it combines the open agricultural setting of Sporle with the wooded backdrop of Sporle Wood. It is experienced by walkers using Peddars Way and helps mark the transition from open countryside towards the village. The view contributes to the distinctive rural setting of Sporle and illustrates the relationship between the settlement, farmland, hedgerows and woodland which is a key part of local landscape character.

⁷ [Peddars Way \(Knettishall Heath to Holme-next-the-Sea\) - Norfolk County Council](#)

⁸ [Peddars Way and Norfolk Coast Path - National Trails](#)

Criteria	Description
Relevant planning history	There is no relevant planning history within this view. Checked on the Breckland District Council website 18/03/2025.

View 3: Looking North along Palgrave Rd from Sporle Rd



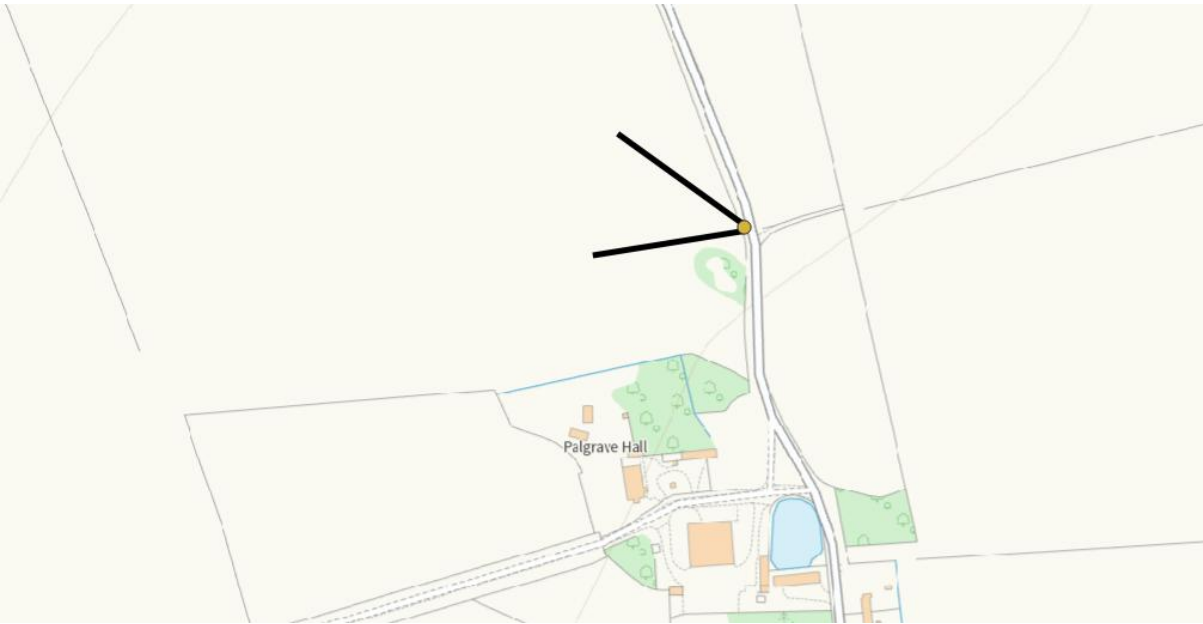


Criteria	Description
Specific location of the viewpoint	Liquids.vast.bibs
Description of the view	Looking North along Palgrave Rd from Sporle Rd
Is the view publicly accessible?	The view is publicly accessible for people on foot/cycle or car and follows the route of the Peddars Way National Trail which is a long-distance walking trail following a Roman Road built along the line of an even older trackway. The name, Peddars Way, is said to be derived from the Latin "pedester", which means "on foot"⁹. The view can be accessed off Bunkers Hill/Sporle Road. This is a well-used footpath by the community.
Value of the view locally (scenic quality, recreational)	The perception of this view is strongly rural. It includes a linear rural road surrounded by features of the natural environment.

⁹ [Peddars Way \(Knettishall Heath to Holme-next-the-Sea\) - Norfolk County Council](#)

Criteria	Description
value, historic value, rarity, conservation interest)	The view is tranquil along a quiet lane and feels enclosed by nature and wooded environment. The view is not necessarily rare within the character area, but it is special for its historic contribution and connection to past ancestors within this undeveloped landscape particularly those who once built and used this Roman Road. The view does not include any recreational facilities. There are no known natural environment or historic conservation interests within the view. The local value of this view is not based on a wide panorama, but on the experience of moving through an enclosed rural lane along the historic Peddars Way route. The hedgerows, trees and quiet character of the lane create a strong sense of rural enclosure and continuity with the historic route. This view is therefore important for its recreational and historic associations as well as for its contribution to the parish's rural character.
Relevant planning history	There is no relevant planning history within this view. Checked on the Breckland District Council website 18/03/2025.

View 4: Looking northwest along Peddar’s Way/Palgrave Rd



Criteria	Description
Specific location of the viewpoint	Flock.surnames.paused
Description of the view	Looking Northwest along Peddars Way/Palgrave Rd

Criteria	Description
Is the view publicly accessible?	The view is publicly accessible for people on foot/cycle or car and follows the route of the Peddars Way National Trail which is a long-distance walking trail following a Roman Road built along the line of an even older trackway. The name, Peddars Way, is said to be derived from the Latin "pedester", which means "on foot"¹⁰. The view can be accessed off Bunkers Hill/Sporle Road to the south and Southacre Road to the north. This is a well-used footpath by the community.
Value of the view locally (scenic quality, recreational value, historic value, rarity, conservation interest)	The perception of this view is strongly rural. It is of open arable land and features other aspects of the natural environment. The view is widespread and tranquil. The view is in close proximity to the grass field that contains remains of the deserted medieval village of Palgrave which is a scheduled monument. There are no known natural environment or historic conservation interests within the arable land the view looks over. However, local wildlife will be present. The view is not rare, it is of a typical farmed landscape within Norfolk and forms part of Sporle's historic identity as a rural village. This view is locally important because it forms part of the experience of travelling along Peddars Way through an undeveloped rural landscape. The view contributes to the setting of the historic route and allows walkers, cyclists and horse riders to experience the open agricultural character of the parish. Its value lies in the combination of recreational access, historic route alignment and the sense of remoteness and tranquillity created by the surrounding farmland and hedgerows
Relevant planning history	There is no relevant planning history within this view.

¹⁰ [Peddars Way \(Knettishall Heath to Holme-next-the-Sea\) - Norfolk County Council](#)

View 5: Peddar's Way/Palgrave Rd towards Gt Palgrave



Criteria	Description
Specific location of the viewpoint	Fruits.broad.graced
Description of the view	Looking North towards Great Palgrave
Is the view publicly accessible?	The view is publicly accessible for people on foot/cycle or car and follows the route of the Peddars Way National Trail which is a long-distance walking trail following a Roman Road built along the line of an even older trackway. The name, Peddars Way, is said to be derived from the Latin "pedester", which means "on foot"¹¹. This is a well-used footpath by the community.
Value of the view locally (scenic quality, recreational value, historic value, rarity, conservation interest)	The perception of this view is of a strongly rural setting with an ancient history. It includes a linear rural road surrounded by features of the natural environment. The view is tranquil and feels enclosed by nature. The fields on the west side of the Peddars Way trail adjacent to Southacre Road within this view are designated as a scheduled monument and is a historic site of a deserted medieval village (ie Great Palgrave). There were earthworks and moats approximately at this location. Both the lost villages of Great and Little Palgrave are mentioned in the Domesday Book.  The view is special for its historic contribution and connection to past ancestors within this undeveloped landscape particularly those who once built and used this Roman Road and were inhabitants of the deserted medieval site.

¹¹ [Peddars Way \(Knettishall Heath to Holme-next-the-Sea\) - Norfolk County Council](#)

Criteria	Description
	The view does not include any recreational facilities. There are no known natural environment interests within the view.
Relevant planning history	There is no relevant planning history within this view. Checked on the Breckland District Council website 18/03/2025.

View 6: View looking west from Southacre Road



Criteria	Description
Specific location of the viewpoint	Pins.mimes.envoy

Criteria	Description
Description of the view	Looking west from Southacre Road
Is the view publicly accessible?	The view is publicly accessible for people on foot/cycle or car.
Value of the view locally (scenic quality, recreational value, historic value, rarity, conservation interest)	The perception of this view is of a rural setting. It includes a linear rural road surrounded by features of the natural environment. The view is tranquil and feels enclosed by nature. This road is used by many villagers to walk along which joins up with the Peddar's Way National Trail. In fact, it creates a circular walk from the middle of the village. (Up the Street, along Southacre Road, down the Peddars Way and back along Sporle Road) The view does not include any recreational facilities. There are no known natural environment or historic conservation interests within the view. This view has particular local value because it forms part of a well-used informal walking route from the village into the surrounding countryside. It helps connect the built-up part of Sporle with Peddars Way and provides residents with an accessible rural walking experience close to home. The enclosed lane, hedgerows and trees contribute to the tranquillity of the route and help retain the rural character of this part of the parish.
Relevant planning history	There is no relevant planning history within this view. Checked on the Breckland District Council website 18/03/2025.

View 7: 360 Degree Views along Newton Road

Looking North



Looking West

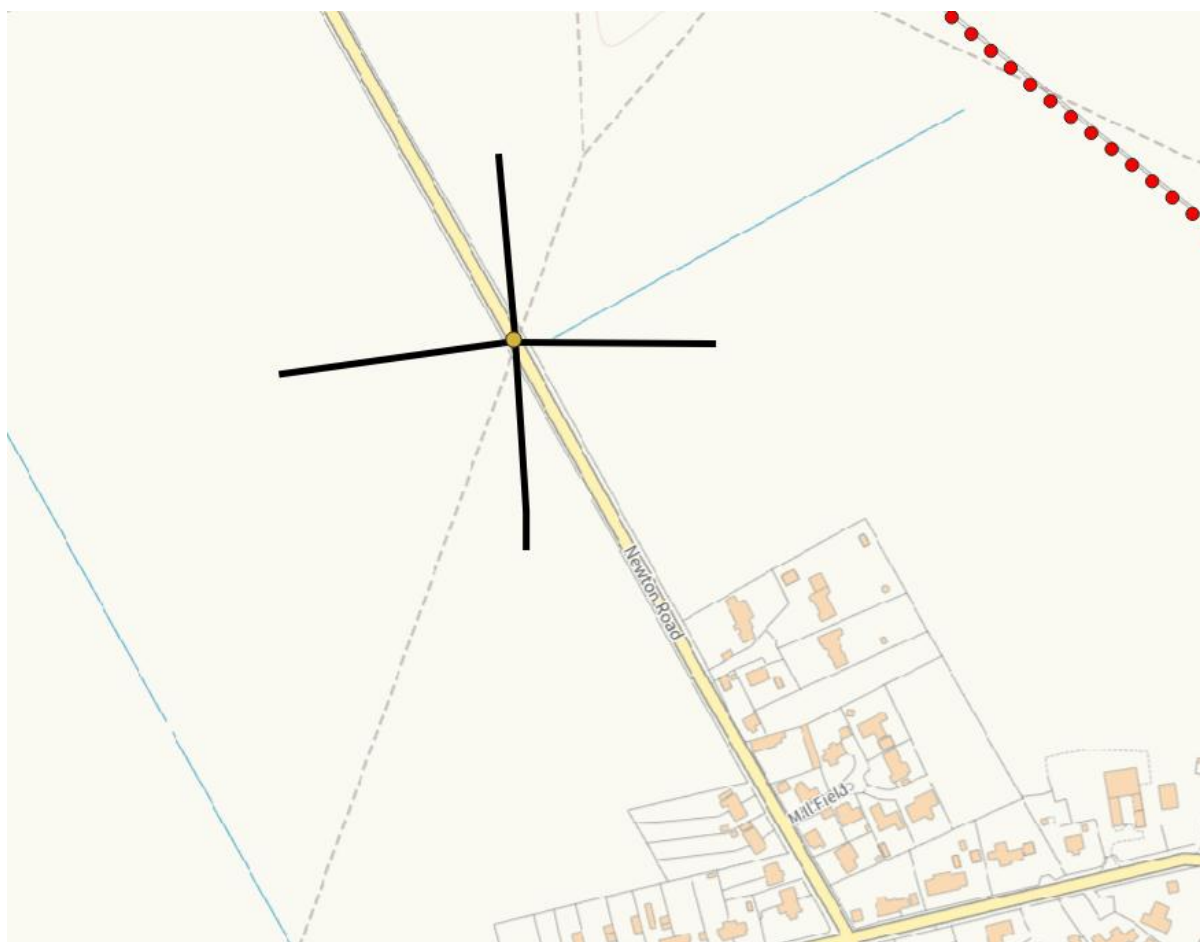


Looking South



Looking Southeast



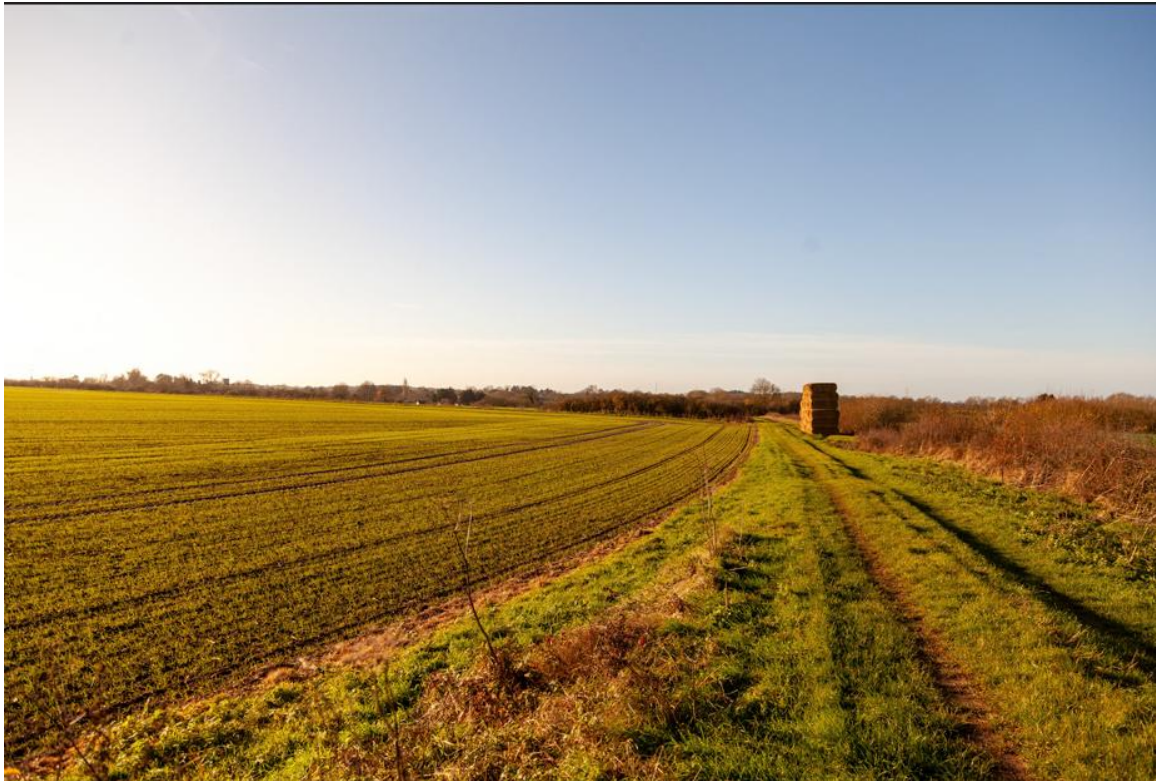


Criteria	Description
Specific location of the viewpoint	Uttering.groups.reply
Description of the view	360-degree views along Newton Road
Is the view publicly accessible?	The view is publicly accessible for people on foot/cycle or car.
Value of the view locally (scenic quality, recreational value, historic value, rarity, conservation interest)	The perception of this view is of a rural setting. It includes a linear rural road surrounded by features of the natural environment and also widespread extensive views of arable land and the surrounding countryside. This view is of the main route out of the village going north. The road is used often by walkers. The view does not include any recreational facilities. There are no known natural environment or historic conservation interests within the view.

Criteria	Description
	The value of this view lies in its position on the northern edge of the village, where the built-up area gives way to open countryside. The 360-degree nature of the view allows an appreciation of Sporle's rural setting, including the relationship between the village, surrounding arable fields, hedgerows and wider landscape. It is locally important because it is experienced from a well-used walking route and helps define the transition between the settlement and the countryside beyond.
Relevant planning history	There is no relevant planning history within this view. Checked on the Breckland District Council website 18/03/2025.

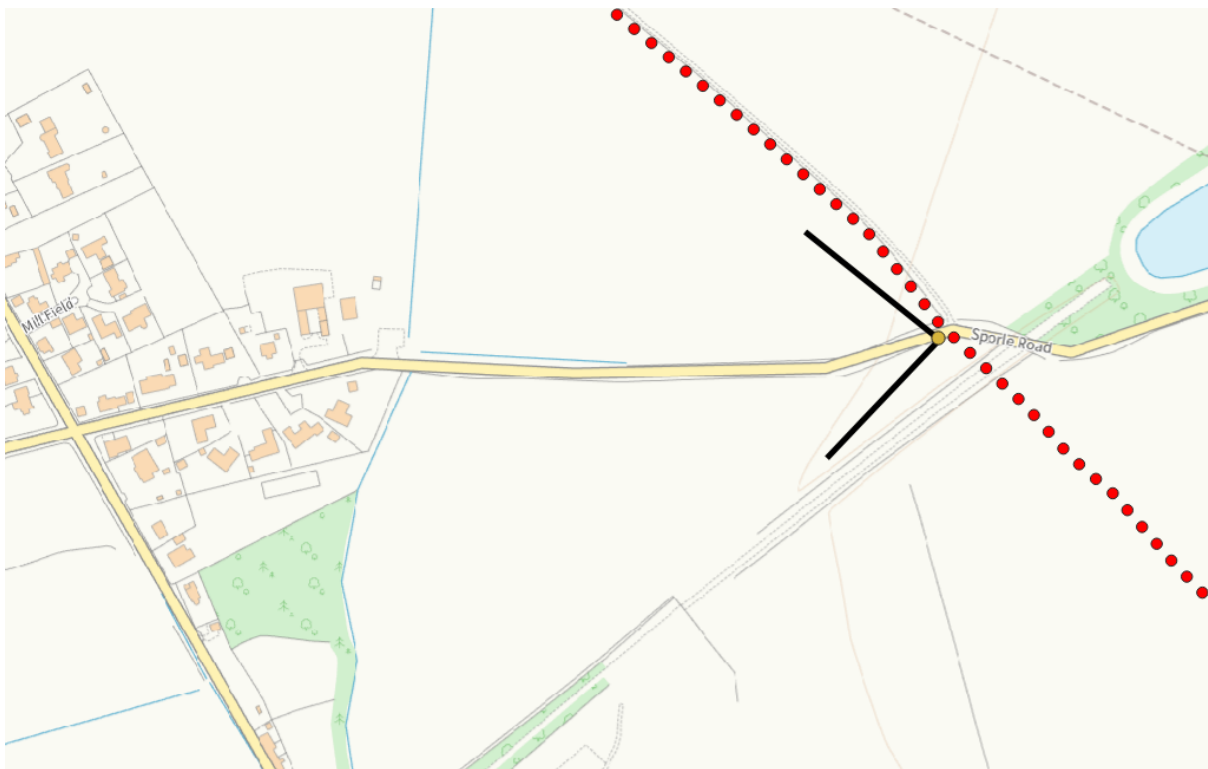
View 8: Dunham Bridge looking towards Sporle Wood and Newton Road

Towards Sporle Wood



Towards Newton Road





Criteria	Description
Specific location of the viewpoint	Vocally.assurance.radically

Criteria	Description
Description of the view	Views looking northwest to west from the bridge which is at a higher elevation than the village.
Is the view publicly accessible?	This view is publicly accessible by foot.
Value of the view locally (scenic quality, recreational value, historic value, rarity, conservation interest)	The perception of this view is strongly rural. It is of open arable land and features other aspects of the natural environment. The view is widespread and tranquil. The view does not include any recreational facilities. There are no known natural environment or historic conservation interests within the arable land the view looks over. However, local wildlife will be present. The rural landscape and farmland are part of Sporle's historic identity as a village. This view is locally important because the higher position at Dunham Bridge allows wider appreciation of the surrounding countryside and the setting of Sporle within the landscape. The view across open farmland towards Sporle Wood and Newton Road reinforces the parish's rural identity and the visual connection between the village, farmland and woodland. It is valuable as a quiet pedestrian viewpoint and as part of the wider rural approach to the village.
Relevant planning history	There is no relevant planning history within this view. Checked on the Breckland District Council website 18/03/2025.

View 9: View looking east towards the Church



Criteria	Description
Specific location of the viewpoint	Resolves.alone.lawns
Description of the view	Looking east towards the Church of St Mary, Village Hall and other features within the historic core of the village.
Is the view publicly accessible?	The view is publicly accessible for people on foot/cycle or car
Value of the view locally (scenic quality, recreational value, historic value, rarity, conservation interest)	There are historic conservation interests within this view. The view looks towards the Church of St Mary an important and cherished Grade I Listed Building within the village. Within the churchyard is the Grade II Listed Sporle War Memorial. This view represents part of the historic built-up area within Sporle.  The view does not include any known natural environment interests. It does include green spaces used for informal recreation and socialising.
Relevant planning history	There is no relevant planning history within this view. Checked on the Breckland District Council website 18/03/2025.

View 10: View looking west from Priory Close



Criteria	Description
Specific location of the viewpoint	Crafts.audible.enhanced

Criteria	Description
Description of the view	Looking west from Priory Close towards residential dwellings and the countryside beyond
Is the view publicly accessible?	The view is publicly accessible for people on foot/cycle or car
Value of the view locally (scenic quality, recreational value, historic value, rarity, conservation interest)	The perception of the view is of a rural low-density village scene with one storey residential dwellings present surrounded by countryside in the background. The view looks across part of the village and the valley it sits within. The community enjoy the view. The view does not include any recreational facilities. There are no known natural environment or historic conservation interests within the view. This view is important because it shows how parts of the village are visually connected to the countryside beyond. Although the foreground includes residential development, the low-density form, single-storey dwellings and open land beyond create a softer village edge and a clear relationship with the rural landscape. The view helps illustrate the settlement's position within a shallow valley and contributes to local appreciation of the village's rural setting.
Relevant planning history	There is no relevant planning history within this view. Checked on the Breckland District Council website 18/03/2025.

View 11: Sporle Rd/Bunkers Hill



Criteria	Description
Specific location of the viewpoint	Slip.stretcher.processor

Criteria	Description
Description of the view	Looking Southeast from Sporle Rd towards Necton
Is the view publicly accessible?	The view is publicly accessible for people on foot/cycle or car
Value of the view locally (scenic quality, recreational value, historic value, rarity, conservation interest)	The perception of this view is strongly rural. It is of open arable land and features other aspects of the natural environment which is a typical rural landscape in this part of Norfolk. The view is widespread and tranquil. Sporle Road is used by walkers from the village who enjoy this view. There are no known natural environment or historic conservation interests within the arable land the view looks over. However, local wildlife will be present. The rural landscape and farmland are part of Sporle's historic identity as a village. The local value of this view lies in its contribution to the rural approach to and from Sporle. The open arable land, hedgerows and wide sky are characteristic of the parish and provide a clear sense of leaving the built-up settlement and entering open countryside. Although the view is not rare in the wider landscape character area, it is locally important because it helps maintain the undeveloped rural setting of the village and the visual connection between Sporle and its surrounding farmland.
Relevant planning history	There is no relevant planning history within this view. Checked on the Breckland District Council website 18/03/2025.