

HUSBANDS BOSWORTH LOCAL LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA

The main features of the area are a canal, canal tunnel, a disused railway line and a substantial part of the old village. The canal and railway run east to west and take advantage of a shallow valley running in the same direction. The land rises toward the eastern end of the valley from 118 metres to 167 metres. This led to the construction of a tunnel when the canal was dug in 1813. The highest points to the north and south of this area are approximately 150 metres. The valley opens out into the beginning of the broad expanse of the Welland Valley to the east.

The Grand Union Canal runs through a deep wooded cutting, westwards to the entrance to a tunnel. The tunnel is 1166 yards in length and was constructed by sinking shafts which were then joined up by tunnelling. The track over the top of the tunnel route (known locally as Boaty Lane) was used by boatmen to take horses from one end of the tunnel to another. Along this route are seven large spoil heaps, the result of the labour of the navvies who dug the tunnel over 200 years ago, are still clearly visible today.

Running parallel with the canal is the track of the now abandoned London & North Western Railway branch from Rugby to Peterborough. The old canal and railway bridges and the canal tunnel portal were made using bricks manufactured at a claypit and brickworks site – now visible as a water-filled pit – adjacent to canal bridge 46, where the Mowsley bridle path crosses the canal.

On either side of the canal and abandoned railway is a mix of pasture and arable land. This part of the area is characterised by a number of small, hedged, fields. The canal and valley is an important local wildlife corridor, providing a route for wintering and migrating birds, including greylag geese, redwings, fieldfares, siskins and redpolls as well as habitat for breeding species including kingfishers, green and great spotted woodpeckers. It is also a haven for bats, moths and butterflies.

There are splendid views of the Welland Valley looking westwards from the top of Boaty Lane and from the public footpath between Dag Lane and the canal bridge. This vista takes in the wooded Laughton hills on the northern side of the valley and Theddingworth with its ancient church steeple on the southern side. Green and fertile fields run along the valley floor for miles into the distance. There are also good views of the village from the top of Boaty Lane.

A mix of residential properties covers much of the southern part of this area. Many of these are listed buildings and heritage assets. These are chiefly in a hillside area (sloping northwards to the canal and valley) bounded on three sides by Honeypot Lane, High Street and Bell Lane. The old village green and two farms are located in this built up area. Properties on and to the north of Hunters Close are mostly modern (20th century) buildings; their residents are among the main beneficiaries of the landscape character area.