

Ditches and Hedgerows

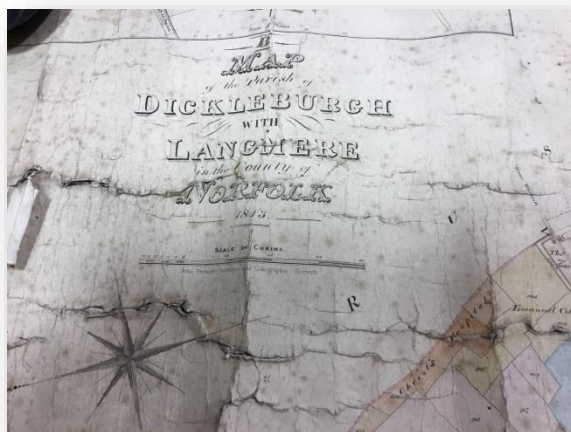
Ditches and Hedgerows add significantly to the biodiversity of an area as well as providing a historic context to the land and the environs, and therefore adding to an understanding of place whilst encouraging emotional and psychological health and well-being. Ditches and Hedgerows also contribute in the effort to capture and lock in carbon from the atmosphere. There are a significant number of heritage ditches and hedgerows that must be protected within the parish. The NP identifies a heritage ditch or hedgerow as being one that has existed prior to 1900. All developers are strongly encouraged to increase the quantity and quality of ditches and hedgerows in the parish. Heritage ditches must be protected from wilful or accidental damage or destruction. Where possible, heritage ditches and hedgerows should be added to. This will protect the plants, insect's mammals, amphibians and birds associated with the hedgerow or ditch and enable greater health of the ditch hedgerow or verge and provide opportunities for the variety of species to increase. Where development is occurring this is particularly important and could potentially e used as part of the mitigation demanded of a development.

Hedgerows are part of the cultural heritage and historical record. In addition they play a significant role in preventing soil loss, reducing pollution, and for their potential to regulate water supply and to reduce flooding.¹

Cultural importance

There is a popular belief that most hedgerows are recent additions to the countryside, having been planted across an open landscape under the Enclosure Acts of the early 19th Century. In fact, at least half our hedges are older than this, and many are hundreds, some even thousands, of years old.² The Parish of Dickleburgh and Rushall have some ancient hedgerows as identified by the Waveney document.

A Heritage ditch or hedgerow is one found on the Parish map of 1843 or older.



Map of the Parish of Dickleburgh with Langmere in the County of Norfolk 1843 courtesy of Norfolk Archive Library

¹ <https://hedgelink.org.uk/hedgerows/importance-of-hedgerows/>

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Heritage Verges

Heritage verges are verges that are identifiable on the 1843 map of the Parish. Heritage verges have served as habitats, safety margins, biodiversity depositaries, the first point of carbon capture from road vehicles and home for some rare plant species. Like ditches and hedgerows, they provide a historic context to the land and the environs, therefore adding to an understanding of place and encouraging emotional and psychological health and wellbeing. Heritage verges are not required to be classified as having a status (such as gold, silver or a Nature reserve, see biodiversity for more information), but there should be an active policy of driving the standard up so that all heritage verges achieve the status of gold or nature reserve. This can be managed through careful, thoughtful cutting policies being part of the mix of measures to increase biodiversity and health of verges so they evoke even more a sense of place and memory.

“One noticeable trend is that, with the move to earlier and earlier cutting in spring, we’re erasing summer from our verges. Only plants that flower early have a chance to set seed before the mowers arrive. As a result, some spring flowers are thriving and spreading, but summer flowering plants – many of which typify our beautiful meadows – are disappearing. This isn’t just bad news for flowers, it is bad news for the bees, beetles, butterflies and birds that rely on plants for food.”³

All developers are strongly encouraged to increase the quantity and quality of verges in the parish, including the establishment of new verges in relation to any development. Developers should be encouraged to aim to improve the health of Heritage Verges as part of a successful application.

A Heritage verge is one found on the Parish map of 1843 or older, see detail below on page 3.

Examples of Heritage Hedges Ditches and Verges

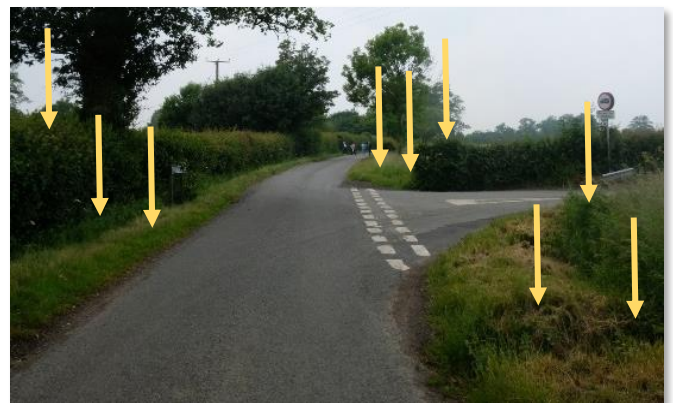
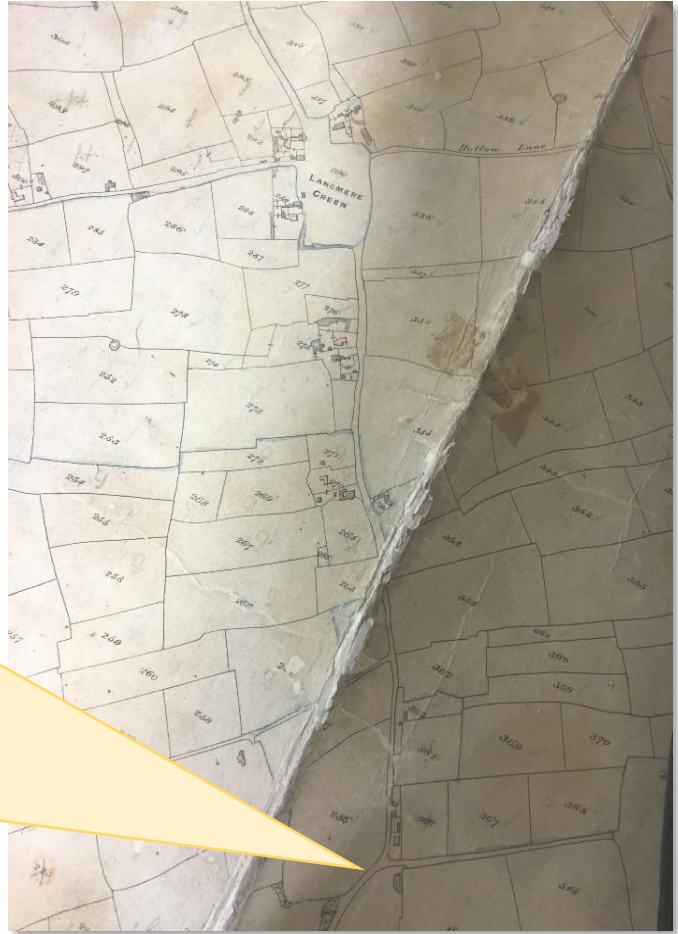


Photo Showing the entrance to Rectory Lane, showing the Heritage hedges, ditches and verges.

³ Plantlife: The Good Verge Guide



Photo of Langmere Road showing heritage ditch, verge and hedges



1843 map of Langmere Road courtesy of Norfolk Archive Library