

## AREAS OF SIGNIFICANT VISUAL PROMINENCE

A characteristic of Ropley parish is that it is divided up into east / west parcels by five roads. The distance between these roads is widest at the east end of the parish but they converge and meet close to the western boundary. Ropley village settlement is situated just east of this meeting of roads and at a point where they are interconnected by local routes. The many roads that pass through Ropley Civil Parish have attracted many settlement groups.

The landscape of Ropley is attractive and is highly valued by local residents. It was formerly an Area of Special Landscape Quality (Local Plan 1st review 1996). There are panoramic views over extensive pasture and arable fields dotted with woods and farmsteads. These views can be appreciated from a network of 45 footpaths, making it attractive walking country. With ridges forming hills to all the borders of the Parish, there is a tree-lined horizon in every quadrant. The Parish is bordered on three sides by the South Downs National Park.

Very little of the Ropley settlement pattern is visible from any of the elevated viewpoints around the parish as these are largely hidden in the ancient stream beds. This makes it essential that any new development does not have a detrimental impact on the visual landscape and landscape character e.g. obstructing important views, being visually intrusive when viewed from key viewpoints. A comprehensive survey of the Parish has identified areas of significant visual prominence and locations from which there are key vistas. An Area of Significant Visual Prominence (AVSP) is an area in which development would be visible from a number of important viewpoints and would have a negative visual impact on the landscape. A Key Vista (KV) is a view from a single point where the view is key to the landscape character and any development within the vista would obstruct or would have a detrimental impact on the view.

The following details the location and nature of the ASVPs and the KVs and their key attributes;

ASVPs

**Viewpoint 1 – Ridge adjacent to a barn near “Daylesford”, Eastern end of FP26, 175m West of Stapley Lane (OS Grid Ref SU 64693 29764)**

This viewpoint situated on the edge of the escarpment to the south of Ropley parish with extensive views to the ridgeline north of the Mid Hants Railway Line, on the northern boundary of the parish. This view emphasises the nature of the ridges and the lack of visibility of the settlement within the parish.

**Viewpoint 2 – Track near Merryfield Grove, 290m East of Stapley Lane (OS Grid Ref SU 65271 30299)**

Also situated on the ridgeline inside the South Downs National Park with a similar panoramic aspect over the parish to the North and West, with extensive areas of arable land in evidence.

**Viewpoint 3 – Field Adjacent “Belair” off Soames Lane, 50m North of “Belair” (OS Grid Ref SU65721 30967)**

Situated on one of the spurs extending into the parish from the escarpment on the Southern border of the parish. Views extend as far as Teggs Down in Winchester to the West and once more to the ridgeline at Bowers Grove Wood north of the A31.

***Viewpoint 4 – Track Adjacent to Gullet Wood, 370m NW of the railway bridge on Gravel Lane (OS Grid Ref SU64972 34509)***

This is a significant viewpoint from the north of the parish looking across the entire area to the south and west. Little of the Ropley settlements are visible and underlines the areas to be protected from inappropriate developments that would damage the visual character of the parish. To the south is the South Downs National Park with its Dark Skies Policy; during the hours of darkness there is little evidence of any intrusive lighting in the panorama.

***Viewpoint 5 – “Harry Potter” bridge on Mid Hants Railway at Ropley Station, adjacent to the boiler workshops (OS Ref SU 62995 32450)***

Views to the escarpment in the south-east across the village centre and to the parish boundary to the south. From this viewpoint woodland is the most evident feature, with virtually none of the parish settlements in view.

***Viewpoint 6 – Teggs Down Road, 500m East of the Junction with Old Park Road (OS Grid Ref SU 62578 31177)***

A panoramic view facing north-east and east right across the parish. The Watercress Line railway buildings are visible in the centre of the view, otherwise little evidence of any other structures, despite facing directly towards the village centre. A mixture of arable land and woodland are the main features with one of the ridgelines crossing from north-west to south-east.

***Viewpoint 7 - Crates Copse, Approx. 200m from Andrews Lane (OS Grid Ref SU 65570 32080)***

Views to the west and north to the Watercress Railway buildings at Ropley Station, a mixture of woodland and open arable fields with virtually no built environment in evidence.

***Viewpoint 8 - Field Above Ropley Soke, at the high point of FP14 (OS Grid Ref SU 65437 33690)***

This viewpoint demonstrates the large tracts of arable land and the prominent Bower's Grove Wood along the northern boundary of the parish, stretching from Gravel Lane in the east to Ropley Station in the west. Even the A31 is invisible in the valley concealing The Shant and the settlement of North Street.

***Viewpoint 9 – Field Opposite Norther end of Dunsell's Lane, At the high point of FP 10 above the Telephone Exchange (OS Grid Ref SU 64432 32671)***

This view from Footpath 10 demonstrates that even this close to the village centre, very little evidence of the settlement is visible. The northern ridgeline is dominated by Bower's Grove Wood and only the structures around Ropley station can be seen in the middle distance.

***Viewpoint 10 – Stile on Charlwood Lane, FP 31 (OS Grid Ref SU 67522 31575)***

Situated at the eastern end of a large area of arable land between Lyeway Lane and the Petersfield Road in Monkwood. A single dwelling and a few agricultural buildings are all that can be seen in the panorama. Views for almost 2 kilometres include only arable land.

**Viewpoint 11 – *Lyeway Lane, 560m East of the junction with Lyeway Road (OS Grid Ref SU 66723 31876)***

Once again arable land is the dominant feature in this view to the north-east, with a few farm buildings. Any development, other than those permitted in the countryside for agricultural purposes would represent an unacceptable intrusion into this rural landscape.

The map which follows shows the viewpoints and the areas shown in blue are the area of landscape that can be seen from these viewpoints.

