

Open

Planning Committee

Agenda

6.00 pm
Tuesday, 13th December 2011
The Earl Baldwin Suite
Duke House
Clensmore Street
Kidderminster



Planning Committee

Members of Committee:

| | |
|--|--------------------------------|
| Chairman: Councillor S J Williams | |
| Vice-Chairman: Councillor G C Yarranton | |
| Councillor J Aston | Councillor D R Godwin |
| Councillor I Hardiman | Councillor M J Hart |
| Councillor H J Martin | Councillor C D Nicholls |
| Councillor F M Oborski | Councillor J W Parish |
| Councillor M Price | Councillor M A Salter |

Information for Members of the Public:-

Part I of the Agenda includes items for discussion in public. You have the right to request to inspect copies of Minutes and reports on this Agenda as well as the background documents used in the preparation of these reports.

An update report is circulated at the meeting. Where members of the public have registered to speak on applications, the running order will be changed so that those applications can be considered first on their respective parts of the agenda. The revised order will be included in the update.

Part II of the Agenda (if applicable) deals with items of "Exempt Information" for which it is anticipated that the public may be excluded from the meeting and neither reports nor background papers are open to public inspection.

Delegation - All items are presumed to be matters which the Committee has delegated powers to determine. In those instances where delegation will not or is unlikely to apply an appropriate indication will be given at the meeting.

Public Speaking

Agenda items involving public speaking will have presentations made in the following order (subject to the discretion of the Chairman):

- Introduction of item by officers;
- Councillors' questions to officers to clarify detail;
- Representations by objector;
- Representations by supporter or applicant (or representative);
- Clarification of any points by officers, as necessary, after each speaker;
- Consideration of application by councillors, including questions to officers

All speakers will be called to the designated area by the Chairman and will have a maximum of 3 minutes to address the Committee.

If you have any queries about this Agenda or require any details of background papers, further documents or information you should contact Sue Saunders, Committee/Scrutiny Officer, Civic Centre, Stourport-on-Severn. Telephone: 01562 732733 or email susan.saunders@wyreforestdc.gov.uk

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST - GUIDANCE NOTE

Code of Conduct

Members are reminded that under the Code of Conduct it is the responsibility of individual Members to declare any personal or personal and prejudicial interest in any item on this agenda. A Member who declares a personal interest may take part in the meeting and vote, unless the interest is also prejudicial. If the interest is prejudicial, as defined in the Code, the Member must leave the room. However, Members with a prejudicial interest can still participate if a prescribed exception applies or a dispensation has been granted.

Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992

If any Member is two months or more in arrears with a Council Tax payment, they may not vote on any matter which might affect the calculation of the Council Tax, any limitation of it, its administration or related penalties or enforcement.

NOTES

- Councillors, who are not Members of the Planning Committee, but who wish to attend and to make comments on any application on this list or accompanying Agenda, are required to give notice by informing the Chairman, Director of Legal and Corporate Services or Director of Planning & Regulatory Services before the meeting.
- Councillors who are interested in the detail of any matter to be considered are invited to consult the files with the relevant Officers to avoid unnecessary debate on such detail at the Meeting.
- Members should familiarise themselves with the location of particular sites of interest to minimise the need for Committee Site Visits.
- Please note if Members wish to have further details of any application appearing on the Schedule or would specifically like a fiche or plans to be displayed to aid the debate, could they please inform the Development Control Section not less than 24 hours before the Meeting.
- Members are respectfully reminded that applications deferred for more information should be kept to a minimum and only brought back to the Committee for determination where the matter cannot be resolved by the Director of Planning & Regulatory Services.
- Councillors and members of the public must be aware that in certain circumstances items may be taken out of order and, therefore, no certain advice can be provided about the time at which any item may be considered.
- Any members of the public wishing to make late additional representations should do so in writing or by contacting their Ward Councillor prior to the Meeting.
- For the purposes of the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985, unless otherwise stated against a particular report, "background papers" in accordance with Section 110D will always include the case Officer's written report and any letters or memoranda of representation received (including correspondence from the Highway Authority, Statutory Undertakers and all internal District Council Departments).
- Letters of representation referred to in these reports, together with any other background papers, may be inspected at any time prior to the Meeting, and these papers will be available at the Meeting.
- **Members of the public** should note that any application can be determined in any manner notwithstanding any or no recommendation being made.

Wyre Forest District Council

Planning Committee

Tuesday, 13th December 2011

The Earl Baldwin Suite, Duke House, Clensmore Street, Kidderminster

Part 1

Open to the press and public

| Agenda item | Subject | Page Number |
|--------------------|---|--------------------|
| 1. | Apologies for Absence | |
| 2. | Appointment of Substitute Members To receive the name of any Councillor who is to act as a substitute, notice of which has been given to the Director of Legal & Corporate Services, together with the name of the Councillor for whom he/she is acting. | |
| 3. | Declarations of Interest In accordance with the Code of Conduct, to invite Members to declare the existence and nature of any personal or personal and prejudicial interests in the following agenda items. Members should indicate the action they will be taking when the item is considered. Members are also invited to make any declaration in relation to Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992. (See guidance note on cover.) | |
| 4. | Minutes To confirm as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting held on the 8 th November 2011. | 7 |
| 5. | Applications to be Determined To consider the report of the Development Manager on planning and related applications to be determined. | 13 |
| 6. | Applications Pending Decision To receive a schedule of planning and related applications which are pending. | 57 |

| | | |
|-----|---|----|
| 7. | <p>Planning and Related Appeals</p> <p>To receive a schedule showing the position in relation to those planning and related appeals currently being processed and details of the results of appeals recently received.</p> | 75 |
| 8. | <p>Monthly Progress Report on performance against NI157 targets for determining planning applications</p> <p>To consider a report from the Director of Planning and Regulatory Services that provides Members with a monthly progress report on performance against National Indicators (NI 157, formerly BV109).</p> | 78 |
| 9. | <p>Wyre Forest District Council (Land at Clarence Way, Mortimer Grove, Gloucester Way and March Grove, Bewdley) Tree Preservation Order No. 357</p> <p>To consider a report from the Director of Planning and Regulatory Services that asks the Committee to determine whether the Tree Preservation Order No 357 (2010) relating to trees on Land at Clarence Way, Mortimer Grove, Gloucester Way and March Grove, Bewdley should be confirmed or not with the recommended modifications.</p> | 83 |
| 10. | <p>Worcestershire County Council Landscape Character Assessment Supplementary Guidance</p> <p>To consider a report from the Director of Planning and Regulatory Services which seeks approval for the Worcestershire Landscape Character Appraisal to be endorsed as a material consideration in the Development Management process.</p> <p><i>The appendix to this report has been circulated electronically and a public inspection copy is available on request. (See front cover for details.)</i></p> | 89 |
| 11. | <p>To consider any other business, details of which have been communicated to the Director of Legal and Corporate Services before the commencement of the meeting, which the Chairman by reason of special circumstances considers to be of so urgent a nature that it cannot wait until the next meeting.</p> | - |
| 12. | <p>Exclusion of the Press and Public</p> <p>To consider passing the following resolution:</p> <p>“That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of “exempt information” as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act”.</p> | - |

Part 2

Not open to the Press and Public

| | | |
|------------|--|----|
| 13. | Exempt Minutes To confirm as a correct record the Exempt Minutes of the meeting held on the 8 th November 2011. | 93 |
| 14. | Planning Enforcement Matter To receive a report from the Director of Planning and Regulatory Services regarding a new enforcement case. | 95 |
| 15. | Live Enforcement Cases To receive a report which lists live enforcement cases as at 24 th November 2011. | 98 |
| 16. | To consider any other business, details of which have been communicated to the Director of Legal and Corporate Services before the commencement of the meeting, which the Chairman by reason of special circumstances considers to be of so urgent a nature that it cannot wait until the next meeting. | |

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

PLANNING COMMITTEE

THE EARL BALDWIN SUITE, DUKE HOUSE, CLENSMORE STREET,
KIDDERMINSTER

8TH NOVEMBER 2011 (6.00 PM)

Present:

Councillors: S J Williams (Chairman), G C Yarranton (Vice-Chairman), J Aston, D R Godwin, I Hardiman, M J Hart, M B Kelly, H J Martin, F M Oborski, J W Parish, M Price and M A Salter.

Observers:

Councillors N J Thomas.

PL.63 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor C D Nicholls.

PL.64 Appointment of Substitutes

Councillor M B Kelly was appointed as a substitute for Councillor C D Nicholls.

PL.65 Declaration of Interests

There were no declaration of interests.

PL.66 Minutes

Decision: The minutes of the meeting held on 11th October 2011 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

PL.67 Applications To Be Determined

The Committee considered those applications for determination (now incorporated in Development Control Schedule No. 491 attached).

Decision: The applications now submitted be determined, in accordance with the decisions set out in Development Control Schedule No. 491 attached, subject to incorporation of any further conditions or reasons (or variations) thought to be necessary to give full effect to the Authority's wishes about any particular application.

PL.68 Applications Pending Decision

The Committee received a schedule of planning and related applications that were pending decision.

Decision: The schedule be noted.

PL.69 Planning and Related Appeals

The Committee received details of the position with regard to planning and related appeals, still being processed, together with particulars of appeals that had been determined since the date of the last meeting.

Decision: The details be noted.

PL.70 Monthly Progress Report on performance against NI157 targets for determining planning applications

The Committee considered a report from the Director of Planning and Regulatory Services that provided members with a monthly progress report on performance against National Indicators (NI 157, formerly BV109).

Decision: The details be noted.

PL.71 Section 106 Obligation Monitoring

The Committee considered a report from the Director of Planning and Regulatory Services that gave details of the most current Section 106 Obligations which required monitoring.

PL.72 Exclusion of the Press and Public

Decision: That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of “exempt information” as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act.

PL.73 Planning Enforcement Matters

The Committee considered a report from the Director of Planning and Regulatory Services regarding a number of planning enforcement matters.

PL.74 Live Enforcement Cases

The Committee considered a report which listed live enforcement cases as of the 26th October 2011.

The meeting ended at 6.46 p.m.

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

PLANNING COMMITTEE

8th November 2011 Schedule 491 Development Control

The schedule frequently refers to various standard conditions and notes for permission and standard reasons and refusals. Details of the full wording of these can be obtained from the Director of Planning and Regulatory Services, Duke House, Clensmore Street, Kidderminster. However, a brief description can be seen in brackets alongside each standard condition, note or reason mentioned.

Application Reference: 11/0512/RESE

Site Address: SUTTON ARMS, SUTTON PARK ROAD, KIDDERMINSTER, DY11 6LE

APPROVAL subject to the following conditions:

1. A4 (Reserved Matters only)
2. A11 (Approved plans)
3. Single access – new - footway
4. Vehicle access construction
5. Driveway Gradient
6. Cycle parking (multi unit)
7. Parking for site operatives
8. The exact location of bin storage areas to be submitted and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
9. Provision of electronically operated garage doors to properties fronting Sutton Park Road

Note
Highway

Reason for Approval

The reserved matters have been carefully assessed and they are considered to be acceptable and appropriate to the area in terms of the design, size and position of the proposed houses; the effect on the amenities of adjacent residential property; with respect to landscaping and retaining the trees of value and with regards to car parking, turning areas and highway safety. The application is considered to be acceptable and in accordance with policies H2, TR.9, D.4 of the Adopted Wyre Forest District Local Plan, DS01, CP05, CP07 of the Adopted Wyre Forest Core Strategy, CF.2, QE.3 of the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy, Design Quality SPG and PPS1; PPG3.

Application Reference: 11/0110/FULL

Site Address: LAND OPPOSITE THE GATEHOUSE, NELSON ROAD, SANDY LANE INDUSTRIAL ESTATE, STOURPORT-ON-SEVERN, DY13 9QB

DELEGATED AUTHORITY TO APPROVE subject to the expiry of the press advertisement period and no new issues being raised and to the following conditions:

1. Temporary 2 year permission
2. Strictly in accordance with approved drawings
3. All plots shall be not be occupied other than by gypsies and travellers
4. Submission of flood evacuation plan within two months of the date of the decision
5. The pedestrian evacuation route via the gate sited within plot 2 shall remain clear at all times for access by the occupiers of all the other plots on site
6. Within three months of the date of decision and prior to the commencement of construction of the amenity block whichever is the sooner submission of a site investigation with recommendations for remediation
7. Within two months of the date of the decision details of the disposal of surface water and foul sewage
8. Details of the proposed materials of approved amenity block
9. Within two months of the date of the decision the existing close boarded fencing which is sited at the back of the highway shall be increased in height to approximately 2.3m to match that of the existing palisade fencing and thereafter retained

Reason for Approval

It is considered that on the basis of the following:

- 1) there is an identified need for pitches;
- 2) the site is located adjacent to a tolerated site within the same floodzone;
- 3) there is sufficient early warning of potential flooding from the River Severn to allow occupiers to evacuate the site; and
- 4) there is a lack of alternative sites to outweigh the risk of flooding

There are sufficient reasons cumulatively to approve the development to outweigh compliance with Policy CP02 and part 5 of Policy CP06 of the Adopted Wyre Forest Core Strategy.

| |
|--|
| Application Reference: 11/0195/FULL |
| Site Address: LAND ADJACENT TO NUNNS CORNER, GYPSY SITE G, SANDY LANE INDUSTRIAL ESTATE, STOURPORT-ON-SEVERN |
| <p>APPROVED subject to the following conditions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identification of plans 2. All plots to be occupied by Gypsies and Travellers only 3. Submission of flood evacuation plans within two months of the date of decision 4. Within three months of the date of the decision, details of the disposal of surface water and foul sewage 5. Submission of noise mitigation plans within two months of date of decision; implementation within six months of decision. <p>Note: This permission does not give any permission required for a site licence. Contact Housing Services Manager.</p> <p><u>Reason for Approval</u></p> <p>The extension of the existing tolerated Gypsy Site is considered to be acceptable taking into account the loss of a small amount employment land and its location within Flood Zone 3. There are no highways or other issues in this case. The application is considered to be acceptable and in accordance with policies H.14, NR.11, NR.12, TR.17 of the Adopted Wyre Forest District Local Plan, DS01, DS03, CP02, CP06, CP08, CP11 of the Adopted Wyre Forest Core Strategy, CF2, CF3, CF4, CF5 of the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy, Policies 1, 7, 15, 25, 26 (emerging WFSA&P DPD), PPS1, PPS3, PPS4, PPG24, PPS25, Circular 01/06, Draft National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Draft PPS 'Planning for Traveller Sites'.</p> |

| |
|--|
| Application Reference: 11/0408/FULL |
| Site Address: THOMAS VALE CONSTRUCTION PLC, FIRS INDUSTRIAL ESTATE, KIDDERMINSTER, DY11 7QN |
| <p>APPROVED subject to the following conditions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A6 (Full with no reserved matters) 2. A11 (Approved plans) 3. B6 (External details – approved plan) 4. E2 (Foul and surface water) 5. Details of fencing 6. Contaminated land 7. Submission of details of sustainability measures 8. Disabled parking 9. Cycle spaces 10. Access, turning and parking 11. Travel Plan 12. No External Storage 13. Working Hours for B2 uses 14. No External Working 15. Units to be used for B1, B2 and B8 uses |

Reason for Approval

The proposal will result in a well designed development that will fit well in its surrounding and add to the local economy. Adequate provision has been made for parking taking into account the sustainable location of the site. There will be no adverse impact on the highway network. The application is considered to be acceptable and in accordance with policies NR.2, TR.17 of the Adopted Wyre Forest District Local Plan, DS01, DS02, CP01, CP02, CP03, CP08, CP11 of the Adopted Wyre Forest Core Strategy, D.24, D.25 Worcestershire County Structure Plan, PA1, PA4, PA6, QE1, QE3 of the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy, Policies 25 and 26 (emerging WFS&P DPD) and PPS1, PPS4, PPG13.

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY TO REPORT OF
DEVELOPMENT MANAGER**

Planning Committee

13/12/2011

PART A Reports

| Ref. | Address of Site | Recommendation | Page No. |
|--------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|
| 11/0587/FULL | 27 WOODTHORPE DRIVE BEWDLEY | APPROVAL | 14 |
| 11/0602/FULL | 1 MUSKOKA BEWDLEY | APPROVAL | 19 |

PART B Reports

| Ref. | Address of Site | Recommendation | Page No. |
|--------------|---|-----------------------|-----------------|
| 10/0056/FULL | SAIWEN LOWER HEATH STOURPORT-ON- SEVERN | DELEGATED APPROVAL | 22 |
| 11/0623/FULL | 20 CHICHESTER AVENUE KIDDERMINSTER | APPROVAL | 36 |
| 11/0630/FULL | 17 JAY PARK CRESCENT KIDDERMINSTER | APPROVAL | 38 |
| 11/0637/FULL | PLOT 2 KINGSFORD STORES KINGSFORD LANE WOLVERLEY KIDDERMINSTER | APPROVAL | 40 |
| 11/0640/S106 | CASTLE LOCKS CASTLE ROAD KIDDERMINSTER | DELEGATED APPROVAL | 43 |
| 11/0643/FULL | 1 FOLD COURT THE VILLAGE CHADDESLEY CORBETT KIDDERMINSTER | APPROVAL | 47 |
| 11/0647/S106 | SEVERN ROAD STOURPORT-ON-SEVERN | DELEGATED APPROVAL | 51 |

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

PLANNING COMMITTEE
13TH DECEMBER 2011

PART A

Application Reference: 11/0587/FULL **Date Received:** 27/09/2011
Ord Sheet: 378081 275674 **Expiry Date:** 22/11/2011
Case Officer: Julia McKenzie-Watts **Ward:** Bewdley and Arley

Proposal: Two storey rear extension and first floor extension over existing garage

Site Address: 27 WOODTHORPE DRIVE, BEWDLEY, DY12 2RH

Applicant: Mr and Mrs Cooksey

| | |
|---|---|
| Summary of Policy | D.17 (AWFDLP) CP11 (AWFCS) QE.1, QE.3 (WMRSS) Design Guide SPG PPS1 |
| Reason for Referral to Committee | Third party has registered to speak at Committee |
| Recommendation | APPROVAL |

1.0 Site Location and Description

- 1.1 Number 27 Woodthorpe Drive is a detached property in a residential area of Bewdley, accessed off Dowles Road. The property is in an elevated position with a steep sloping rear garden.
- 1.2 It is proposed to erect a two storey rear extension at the property in order to improve the existing living accommodation in the form of an enlarged garage, enlarged sitting room and new dining room at ground floor level with three enlarged bedrooms at first floor level.

2.0 Planning History

- 2.1 WF1141/79 - Extension : Approved.

3.0 Consultations and Representations

- 3.1 Bewdley Town Council – No objection.

11/0587/FULL

- 3.2 Highway Authority – No objection.
- 3.3 Worcestershire Regulatory Services (Environmental Health) – No objection subject to condition as within 250 metres of Lyttleton Road Landfill Site.
- 3.4 Environment Agency – No comments received.
- 3.5 Neighbour/Site Notice – 1 letter of objection. There are a number of concerns:
- We are concerned about our garden when they do the digging for the foundations as plants will be destroyed (a very old hawthorn).
 - We are concerned about the enclosure this wall will bring to our house and our house foundation.
 - We are not happy about French window to be put on the first floor of this extension as in the future we wouldn't like a balcony overlooking our garden.

4.0 Officer Comments

- 4.1 It is proposed to erect a first floor side extension and ground floor rear extension with first floor above along the entire width of the property (10.6 metres) The rear extension would consist of a width of 7.2 metres projecting 2.2 metres to the rear with the remaining width of 3.4 metres projecting 3 metres to the rear. The extension would be erected on the boundary with number 29 to a height of 7 metres at the highest point.
- 4.2 The rear extension would satisfy the 45 degree rule at ground floor and first floor level when measured from the ground and first floor openings at the attached neighbour's property at 29 Woodthorpe Drive. The Council's guidance leaflet relating to the 45° rule states that the 45° line is drawn at the centre of the original opening, which in this case is a dining area at ground floor area and bedroom above. When taking this into account, there would be no infringement and as a result the proposal would satisfy the 45° rule and no impact on light to the neighbouring windows. There would be no 45° rule issue with respect to the property at No. 25.

11/0587/FULL

- 4.3 Policy D.17 of the Wyre Forest District Local Plan requires that residential extensions should be in scale and in keeping with the form, materials and detailing of the original building, be subservient to and not overwhelm the original building which should retain its visual dominance, harmonise with the existing landscape or townscape and not create incongruous features and not have a serious adverse effect on the amenity of neighbouring residents or occupiers. The adopted Supplementary Planning Guidance document on Design Quality includes a section on householder extensions and supports the view that extensions should be visually subservient and should ideally be positioned to the rear or side of properties where the effect of the new building is less likely to impact on the street scene. The extensions comply with this in that the first floor side extension shows the required set back of 0.75 metres and the design of the rear extension would ensure that the original property retains its dominance when viewed in the street scene.
- 4.4 The neighbour has raised concern over the impact that the extension would have on their property in terms of a feeling of enclosure; a balcony at first floor level; and the loss of an old Hawthorn hedge currently located on the boundary. Whilst the extension is to be built right on the boundary, there would be no adverse effect on light to the windows of the neighbouring property due to compliance with the 45° rule. It is proposed to erect a Juliette Balcony to the extended bedroom 1; however, this will merely act as a guard to the French window and not provide a platform area on which to stand. As such, it is considered that the balcony would result in minimal impact on the amenity or privacy of the neighbouring property.
- 4.5 It is not proposed to install any windows on the side elevation of the property and a condition added to the approval will ensure that the blank elevation is retained in order to minimise any impact on the neighbouring property.
- 4.6 The design of the extension is acceptable in terms of how it relates to the original property and the surrounding area. It is to be constructed in matching materials and as such, would create an aesthetically pleasing addition to the property.
- 4.7 A condition is to be added to the approval in order to retain and protect the Hawthorn hedge currently located on the boundary and also a note to be added relating to neighbours' rights in order to ensure there are no overhanging gutters.

5.0 Conclusions and Recommendations

- 5.1 I have considered the applicant's rights in consideration of Articles 1 and 8 of the Human Rights Act 1998, both in terms of the applicant and the neighbours. However, it is considered that the proposal would be acceptable development in the locality and no harm would result to the surrounding area.

11/0587/FULL

5.2 Overall, the proposal satisfies the 45 degree rule and the design of the extension complies with the local plan and core strategy policies. It is recommended that the application be **APPROVED** subject to the following conditions:

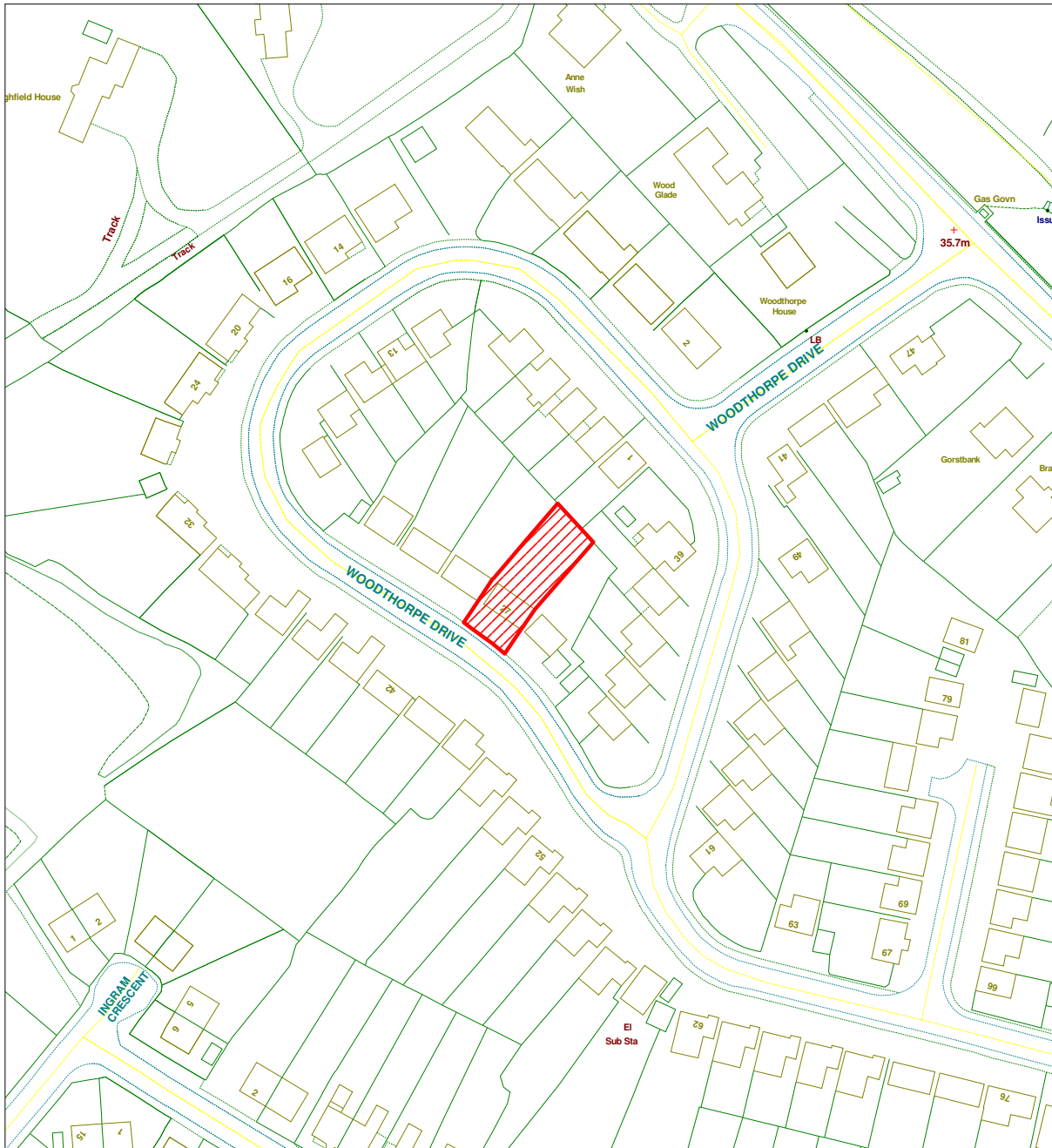
1. A6 (Full with No Reserved Matters)
2. A11 (Approved Plans)
3. B3 (Materials)
4. J7 (Windows in the east elevation facing number 29)
5. Landfill site
6. Retained Hawthorn hedge

Note

SN12 (Neighbours' Rights)

Reason for Approval

The proposed extensions are considered to be of an appropriate scale and design to the main dwelling and will have an acceptable appearance in the street scene. The impact of the extensions upon neighbouring properties has been carefully assessed and it is considered that there will be no undue impact upon their amenity. For these reasons the proposals are considered to be in accordance with the policies listed above.



PLANNING AND REGULATORY SERVICES DIRECTORATE

**27 Woodthorpe Drive
Bewdley
DY12 2RH**



Duke House, Clensmore Street, Kidderminster, Worcs. DY10 2JX. Telephone: 01562 732928. Fax: 01562 732556

| | |
|--|----------------------------------|
| Application Reference: 11/0602/FULL | Date Received: 10/10/2011 |
| Ord Sheet: 377980 275354 | Expiry Date: 05/12/2011 |
| Case Officer: James Houghton | Ward: Bewdley and Arley |

Proposal: Single storey side extension

Site Address: 1 MUSKOKA, BEWDLEY, DY12 2BJ

Applicant: Mr R Farmer

| | |
|---|--|
| Summary of Policy | D.17 (AWFDLP) CP11 (AWFCS) QE.3 (WMRSS) |
| Reason for Referral to Committee | Third party has registered to speak at Committee |
| Recommendation | APPROVAL |

1.0 Site Location and Description

- 1.1 The application property is a detached bungalow with an integral flat roofed garage. The dwelling is set back from the road behind a front drive and gardens.
- 1.2 The application site is set approximately 1.0m above the neighbouring property, No. 3 Muskoka.

2.0 Planning History

- 2.1 11/0475/FULL – Single storey side extension : Refused 26/09/11.

3.0 Consultations and Representations

- 3.1 Bewdley Town Council – No objections and recommend approval.
- 3.2 Highway Authority – No objections.
- 3.3 Worcestershire Regulatory Services (Environmental Health) – No comments received.
- 3.4 Neighbour/Site Notice – One letter of objection has been received from the occupants of a neighbouring property. The objection is, it is claimed, on the basis that the proposed extension would breach the 45° and 25° tilt lines and as such would have a detrimental impact on the levels of light currently enjoyed in the kitchen of the neighbouring property.

11/0602/FULL

4.0 Officer Comments

- 4.1 The applicant seeks approval for the erection of a single storey hip roofed side extension. The extension would provide a dining room and an extended kitchen.
- 4.2 The current application differs from the previously refused application in that the depth of the extension has been reduced by a metre and the roof would be hipped thereby removing the need for a gable facing No. 3 Muskoka and substantially reducing the relative height of the extension.
- 4.3 The proposed side extension would be set back 4.6m from the front elevation of the host property and would be 3.15m wide. A strip of 0.95m wide would be retained between the retaining wall and the extension. The ridge of the extension would be set slightly lower than that of the original building.
- 4.4 The extension would be considered appropriate in terms of both scale and design and would offer no detriment to the appearance of the property, the street scene or the character of the area.
- 4.5 It is noted that the 45° Code and 25° guidelines would be breached when taken from the side facing kitchen window at No. 3 Muskoka. A breach of the 25° tilt of 0.1m at a distance of 4.8m would occur. It should be noted that the kitchen window affected is north facing and that the outlook through this window is currently dominated by a retaining wall (1.2m brick) and a boundary wall (0.8m) topped with a feature concrete block (0.3m). As such it is considered that the extension, which would be set 0.95m behind the boundary wall, would not offer significantly greater detriment to the outlook and daylight enjoyed by the residents of neighbouring properties.

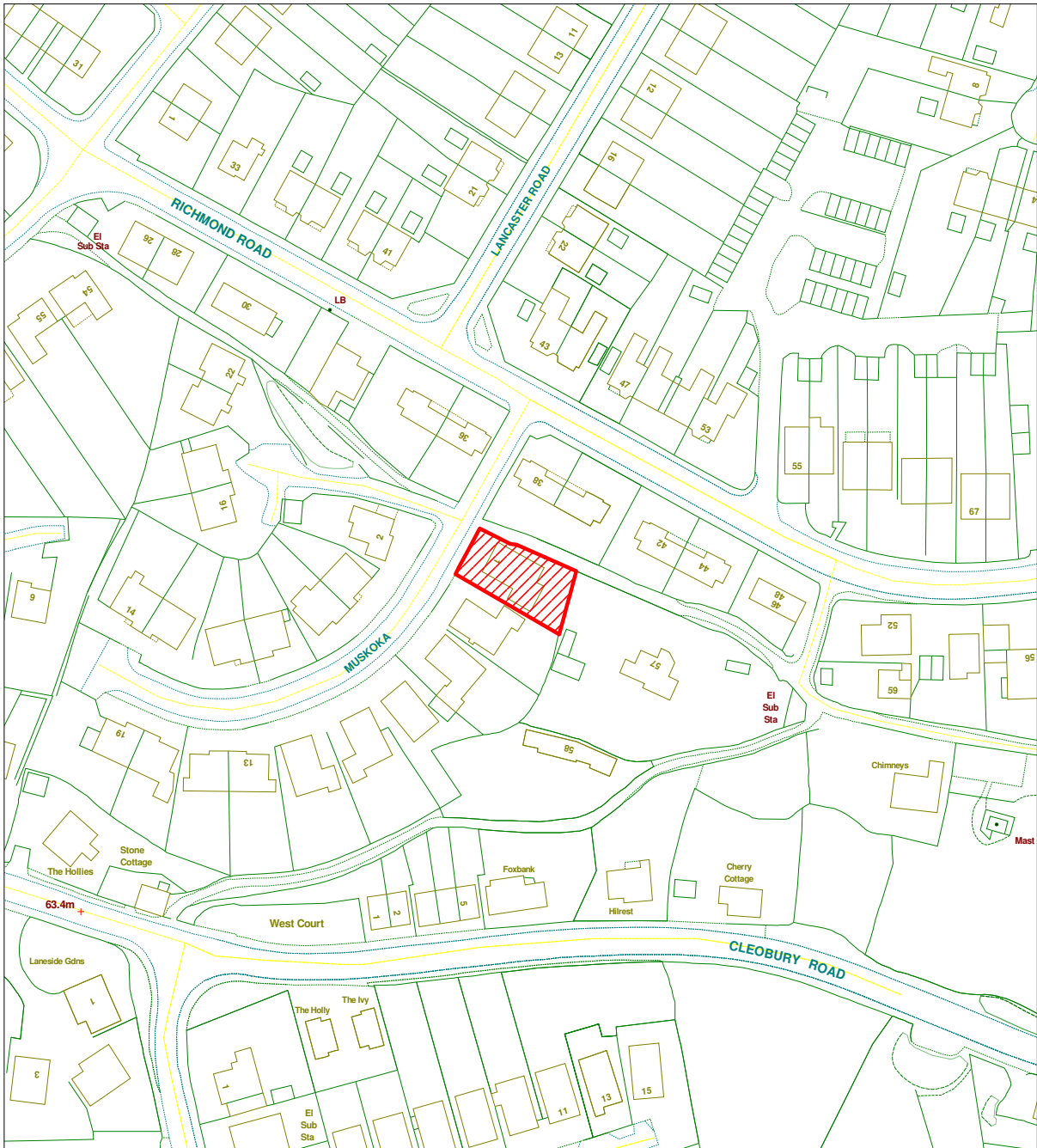
5.0 Conclusions and Recommendations

- 5.1 It is recommended that the application is **APPROVED** subject to the following conditions:

1. A6 (Full with no reserved matters)
2. A11 (Approved plans)
3. B3 (Finishing materials to match)

Reason for Approval

The extension is considered appropriate in terms of both scale and design. The development offers no detriment to the character of the area or the street scene and the impact on the amenity currently enjoyed by the occupants of neighbouring properties is minimal. The extension would accord with the provisions of Policy D.17 of the Adopted Wyre Forest District Local Plan (2004) and Policy CP11 of the Adopted Wyre Forest Core Strategy (2010).



PLANNING AND REGULATORY SERVICES DIRECTORATE

**1 Muskoka
Bewdley
DY12 2BJ**



Duke House, Clensmore Street, Kidderminster, Worcs. DY10 2JX. Telephone: 01562 732928. Fax: 01562 732556

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

PLANNING COMMITTEE
13TH DECEMBER 2011

PART B

| | | | |
|-------------------------------|---------------|-----------------------|------------|
| Application Reference: | 10/0056/FULL | Date Received: | 03/11/2011 |
| Ord Sheet: | 381870 270333 | Expiry Date: | 29/12/2011 |
| Case Officer: | Julia Mellor | Ward: | Mitton |

Proposal: Change of use of land to the rear of Sai Wen for a Gypsy Caravan Site; for the siting of five static caravans, and up to 3 touring caravan pitches, the erection of an amenity block and retention of existing dwelling for residential use

Site Address: SAIWEN, LOWER HEATH, STOURPORT-ON-SEVERN, DY13 9PQ

Applicant: Mrs Betsy Wilson

| | |
|---|---|
| Summary of Policy | H.2, H.9, H.14, D.10, NR.2, NR.11, NR.12 (AWFDLP) DS01, DS03, CP03, CP06, CP08 (AWFCS) CF2, CF3, CF4, CF5 (WMRSS) 1, 7, 14, 15, 25, 26 (Draft Site Allocations and Policies DPD) PPS1, PPS3, PPS4, PPG24, PPS25; Circular 01/06; Draft PPS 'Planning For Traveller Sites' |
| Reason for Referral to Committee | Development Manager considers that application should be considered by Committee |
| Recommendation | DELEGATED APPROVAL |

1.0 Site Location and Description

1.1 The site is located within the Sandy Lane Industrial Estate in Stourport on Severn, and is accessed via a private partly unmade road known as Broach Road.

1.2 The site lies immediately adjacent to the commercial premises known as Conveyor Units which lies to the east. The Hartlebury Common Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) lies beyond the access track to the north. The main part of the application site has a boundary to White Cot a residential property, The Gables, a residential caravan site and Meadow Caravan Park a gypsy and traveller site to the west. Part of the access track lies within the administrative area of Wychavon District Council and a duplicate application has been submitted to this Authority.

10/0056/FULL

- 1.3 The site has a lawful use a scrap yard, alongside the existing residential bungalow known as Sai Wen, however the application site currently accommodates 4 static caravans together with a brick built amenity block. It is proposed to regularise the current site layout to retain the amenity block and authorise a total of five static caravans and up to three touring caravans for use as a gypsy and traveller site.

2.0 Planning History

- 2.1 SU.21/71 – Continuation of prefabricated bungalow granted for a period expiring on 30/4/76.
- 2.2 WF.88/74 - 12 Livery Stables : Refused 04/06/74.
- 2.3 WF.177/91 – External alterations and extension : Approved 21/5/91.
- 2.4 There have also been three appeals against enforcement notices at this site:
- 1) First was an appeal against an enforcement notice served in October 1978 alleging that the owners had breached planning consent Ref. SU.21/71 by virtue that the prefabricated bungalow had not been removed from site following the expiry of the planning consent. The appeal was allowed on 24 May 1982 and permission granted for a 5 year period.
 - 2) Secondly, there was an appeal against an enforcement notice served in October 1978 alleging the unauthorised change of use of the land at the rear of Sai Wen from a use for the purpose of a private garden to a use for the storage of motor vehicles, scrap metal and other materials, the dismantling and / or breaking up of motor vehicles and the storage of motor vehicles. The appeal was allowed and the enforcement notice quashed on 24 May 1982 with the Inspector determining that the use had become established.
 - 3) The third appeal was against an enforcement notice served in May 2003 alleging the unauthorised use of land for the stationing of caravans. A public inquiry was held, the appeal was dismissed and the enforcement notice upheld on 6th November 2003 albeit with a variation to lawfully allow one caravan to remain on the site

3.0 Consultations and Representations

- 3.1 Stourport-on-Severn Town Council (Original Comments) - Recommend refusal on the grounds of over-development, over-crowding and the belief that the present zoning of the application site for industrial purposes should remain undisturbed.

10/0056/FULL

3.2 Highway Authority (Original Comments) – No objections

3.3 Environment Agency (Original Comments)– We have no objections, in principle, to the proposed development but have the following comments to make and recommend that if planning permission is granted a planning condition is imposed.

The site is located within Flood Zone 2 ('medium probability') and part of the vehicular access/egress for the site is located within Flood Zone 3 ('high probability'), based on our 'indicative' Flood Zone Map.

The 1% flood level in this location is 19.82m AOD, as detailed within the Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) and the Flood Assessment Plan (drawing no. 2010-05-01) by Julian Barnett Architects. The FRA has considered a 300mm increase for climate change, which is considered appropriate in this instance. Therefore the 1% plus climate change flood level is 20.12m AOD in this location.

Based on an interpretation of the information submitted (1% plus climate change flood level compared to the topographic survey), it is likely that the majority of the site is located within Flood Zone 1.

PPS25 would class proposed caravans/mobile homes intended for permanent residential use as a 'highly vulnerable' development, which within Flood Zone 2 requires the sequential and exception test to be passed.

PPS25, paragraph 14 states that 'a sequential risk-based approach to determining the suitability of land for development in flood risk areas is central to the policy statement and should be applied at all levels of the planning process.' The aim of the Sequential Test is to steer new development to areas at the lowest probability of flooding (Zone 1). In this instance we would not make any bespoke comments on the Sequential Test. However your LPA need to be satisfied on this aspect. Providing your LPA are satisfied on the Sequential Test we would make the following comments on the FRA.

We are satisfied that the information submitted within the FRA has demonstrated that the development will be safe during a 1% plus climate change flood event.

Finished floor levels for the proposed dwellings should be set at least 600mm above the 1% plus climate change level at 20.72m AOD. The Flood Assessment Plan confirms that finished floor levels will be set to this level as a minimum and typically will be set at 21.12m AOD, which is satisfactory. We would recommend a condition to secure this.

10/0056/FULL

The vehicular access/egress for the site onto Sandy Lane is located partly within the 1% plus climate change flood extent. However the topographic survey levels and text on the Flood Assessment Plan confirms that a safe dry pedestrian access is available during a 1% plus climate change event, via the top of Broach Road and across the track and public footpath over Common ground to Worcester Road. The applicant should ensure that any occupant of the site is aware of this route.

Given the scale of the proposed development we would not comment in detail on the surface water drainage proposals, but would advise the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems. For further surface water management guidance please refer to our West Area Flood Risk Standing Advice.

- 3.4 Severn Trent Water – No objection subject to condition
- 3.5 Planning Policy Manager – Awaiting comments
- 3.6 Worcestershire Regulatory Services (Contaminated Land) – No objections subject to condition
- 3.7 Worcestershire Regulatory Services (Noise) – Awaiting comments
- 3.8 West Mercia Police (Crime Risk Advisor) (Original Comments) – Sandy Lane and the roads off it consist mainly of industrial units; unfortunately the area does suffer from high levels of crime. The figures clearly illustrate that security is a major issue in the area. The location of the proposed development is next to a large factory unit who have been the victims of crime on numerous occasions. All of the crimes have either been thefts or burglaries. A number of the offences have been committed by persons climbing a high corrugated iron fence situated between the factory and the proposed development site. I have visited the premises when mattresses and carpets have been thrown over the top of the barbed wire to enable intruders to climb the fence unharmed. It can be seen that offenders gain access to the fence from the area where this proposed development is to take place.

Concentrating on the high number of burglaries in the area, it is my experience that the locking systems on caravan doors are considerably less effective than those on normal house doors therefore the risk to the occupants of the caravans is increased.

Taking into account the high crime levels for the general area and the crime levels for this specific area I am concerned about the safety and security of the occupants of the caravans. This raises the question as to whether this specific location is a suitable place to locate residential caravans.

10/0056/FULL

I note from the supplied drawings that the perimeter is to be protected by 2.8 metre high fencing. If the application is approved I think it essential that a condition of the consent is that access to the site is controlled by substantial gates that can be locked. This would both protect the occupants of the site and the perimeter of the adjacent industrial premises.

Finally I understand that there are access issues to this site. The access road to the proposed development is basically a dirt track running off Sandy Lane. There is a tarmac road that runs parallel to the track for a short distance, this road has a name plate and is called Broach Road. I understand that it is an unadopted road and privately owned.

I further understand that the owner of the tarmac road maintains it at his own expense and it is solely for access to the industrial units he owns. However, vehicles are using this private road and then cutting across onto the dirt track.

The owner of the tarmac road has made complaints to the police about its unauthorised use; I am informed that he may be considering erecting some form of barrier to prevent access from it onto the dirt track.

The dirt track which should be used for access is often blocked by vehicles using the scrap yard which is situated on it.

The only other access to the proposed development is via Power Station Road. This has a height restrictor on it and would be unsuitable for touring caravans.

Before planning permission is granted I do feel that the access issues highlighted above should be clarified and arrangements put in place to ensure unrestricted access.

- 3.9 Strategic Housing Services Manager – Comments regarding the amended layout with respect to site licence requirements are awaited.
- 3.10 Worcestershire County Council Gypsy Liaison Officer – Awaiting comments
- 3.11 Worcestershire County Council Countryside Manager (Original Comments) – As owners and managers of Hartlebury Common, the Council is keen to ensure that any development adjacent to the Common does not pose a threat to the biodiversity of the site, which is designated as a SSSI and Local Nature Reserve, or people's enjoyment of it through access and recreation. The existing and proposed access to this property is a track across the common, for which there is no evidence of a legal right access for vehicles. There has been a history of vehicles and materials associated with this property being stored on the Common without prior permission of the council and we are keen to ensure that such activity does not continue, or indeed increase, as a result of this proposed development.

10/0056/FULL

A recent public inquiry gave permission for livestock fencing to be erected around the site. This new fencing will be positioned on the Common side of the track accessing the proposed development. The site now forms part of a ten year Higher Level Stewardship agreement between Natural England and Worcestershire County Council in order to secure its sustainable management. A bund exists alongside the Common side of the track, in order to protect the Common from illegal activity such as the riding of motorbikes and fly-tipping. This bund has been breached in recent years without permission as a result of the need to manoeuvre large vehicles and mobile homes associated with this proposed development site.

It must be ensured that the current access provision for vehicles to enter and leave the site is adequate to allow the proposed change of use without damaging the property, including the existing bund and proposed fence line. (*Officer comments - a plan showing the position of the bund and fencing has been received and forwarded to the highways authority who have responded by confirming that there is more than adequate road width to turn into the site and move along the road without impacting on the bund*).

- 3.12 Worcestershire County Council (Public Path Orders Officer) (Original Comments) – The application is adjacent to a public right of way (No. 573). The applicant must be aware of their obligations toward the public right of way.
- 3.13 Watercourse Officer - The Environment Agency has advised that it is satisfactory demonstrated by the applicant that the development is likely to be located in flood zone 1 rather than in flood zone 2 as was indicated by the agency's Flood Map. Notwithstanding this, the applicant needs to demonstrate that the development will be safe, the residents can evacuate safely and that the development will not increase flood risk elsewhere.

The development will be safe

I agree with the EA's recommendation to attach a condition to secure that the finished floor levels shall be set no lower than 600mm above the 1% plus climate change level at 20.72m

The residents can evacuate safely

The FRA submitted states that there is dry access/ exit to and from the site during a 1 in 100 year event. The EA states however that vehicular access/egress for the site onto Sandy Lane is located partly within the 1% plus climate change flood extent. A safe dry pedestrian access is apparently available during a 1% plus climate change event, via the top of Broach Road and across the track and public footpath over Common ground to Worcester Road. The applicant should ensure that any occupant of the site is aware of this route.

10/0056/FULL

If possible I would like to attach a condition to ensure that the occupants are made aware of the flood risk and the evacuation routes as part of their occupancy agreement. If such a condition can't be attached then I would recommend that this gets somehow incorporated in the actual site licence.

The development will not increase flood risk elsewhere

The FRA states that the plots will be hard landscaped to provide car parking and amenity. To deal with the runoff a surface water runoff system will need to be installed. The FRA states that surface water drainage will be discharging to soakaways. No actual design is submitted with the application. Instead the building regulations regarding soakaways are partly quoted.

If possible I would like attach a condition to ensure that the Buildings Regulations on sustainable rainwater drainage are followed both to establish the method for surface water disposal and to actually design the surface water system for the site. In the design stage it must be established that the drainage system using soakaways is feasible (ground conditions), can be properly maintained and will not lead to any environmental problems.

- 3.14 Fire Officer - Awaiting comments
- 3.15 Wychavon District Council - Awaiting comments
- 3.16 Worcestershire Wildlife Trust - Awaiting comments
- 3.17 Natural England (Original Comments) - The application site lies adjacent to the Hartlebury Common Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).

Vehicular access to the application site is via common land immediately adjoining the SSSI. In order to manage the SSSI effectively and consistent with the provisions of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (As amended), the SSSI needs to be grazed by suitable livestock. A recent public inquiry established that livestock fencing should be erected around the site to allow grazing of the SSSI. Installing this fencing forms part of the new Higher Level Stewardship agreement for the SSSI recently concluded between Natural England and Worcestershire County Council. In considering the current application the Council should ensure that the current access provision for vehicles to enter and leave the site is adequate to allow the proposed change of use without damaging the integrity of the SSSI.

Based on the information provided, Natural England has no objection to the proposed development subject to the vehicle access issue outlined above being satisfactorily addressed. (*Officer Comments - a plan showing the position of the bund and fencing has been received and forwarded to the highways authority who have responded by confirming that there is more than adequate road width to turn into the site and move along the road without impacting on the bund*).

10/0056/FULL

3.18 Countryside and Conservation Officer – I can see little in the way of biodiversity harm from the application unless the site was to be flood lit. (*Officer Comments – no flood lights form part of the proposal*).

3.19 Neighbour/Site Notice/Press Notice - two objections have been received raising the following concerns:

- I would like to question if this type of development is suitable for the Stourport area.
- The site has previously occupied static caravans for which during this period, our property and others in the area were continuously exposed to petty crime, theft, vandalism and fly tipping which has been a tremendous burden on the operational resources available to our site.
- We are still continuously exposed to anti-social behaviour from the occupiers of this land, including theft and damage to private property. There is an obvious total disregard to law enforcement and lack of respect to others property. Such a lack of discipline from the owners of the site should surely be considered with respect to their future control of the occupants of the caravans.
- We are situated on an industrial estate which is not suitable for domestic occupation and we would be concerned that it would also be an issue for this application.
- In the event that the application should proceed, we would request that the boundary fence between our properties be replaced and substantially upgraded to protect our business and our employees at the cost to the applicants. It is currently not possible for our employees to park in an area created and designated by a previous planning application and has prevented us from further development of our site to the detriment of growth and increased employment to the local community.

4.0 Officer Comments

4.1 The application site is located within the Sandy Lane Industrial Estate which, according to the Adopted Wyre Forest District Local Plan, is allocated for B1, B2 and B8 industrial uses. Whilst there are gypsy and traveller sites within the Sandy Lane Industrial Estate safeguarded by Adopted Local Plan and the emerging Local Development Framework Policy, including sites which front onto Broach Road, this particular site is clearly allocated for employment uses.

4.2 The proposed use for gypsy and traveller accommodation is therefore contrary to Policy CP08 of the Adopted Wyre Forest Core Strategy which seeks to safeguard existing employment areas. The Policy states that development which would result in the loss of employment land will only be acceptable where it can be demonstrated that it meets a list of four criteria which are as follows:

10/0056/FULL

- 1) *the site is identified in an up-to-date employment land review as being suitable to be considered for alternative uses;*
 - 2) *the continued use of the buildings, or their redevelopment for an employment use, is not viable (in physical, operational or commercial terms) and this is supported by robust evidence, such as the marketing for the site and evidence that the site is unviable to be developed for employment use;*
- 4.3 The Council undertook an Employment Land Review in 2007-8 which concluded that Sandy Lane constituted one of the best existing employment areas. No sites were considered for release from industrial uses and Sandy Lane was recommended to be retained for employment uses.
- 4.4 However the planning history of the site is relevant. One of the pitches together with the existing bungalow can lawfully be used for residential purposes. It is considered that these lawful residential uses restrict the amount of land available for alternative employment uses within the application site. Furthermore access via Broach Road and the unmade track leading to the Saiwen significantly restrict the viable industrial use of the site. Given these considerations, it is not considered that the conflict with these parts of Policy CP08 is sufficient to refuse the proposal.
- 3) *the proposed new use would be compatible with neighbouring uses and would not prejudice the amenity, viability or future development of other businesses;*
- 4.5 As stated above, it should be acknowledged that the existing site accommodates two lawful residential units of accommodation and the site has a common boundary to existing residential dwellings and caravans to the west. However it also has a boundary to large industrial premises to the east and the implications of these two uses sitting side by side should be considered. At the time of report preparation comments from Worcestershire Regulatory Services with respect to noise are awaited, however, whilst it is considered that this matter is finely balanced in the absence of an objection from Worcestershire Regulatory Services it is considered that there is not a robust reason for refusal.
- 4) *when considering alternative uses, preference will be given to mixed use development prior to any single use development.*
- 4.6 This final part of the Policy notably does not exclude single use developments.

10/0056/FULL

4.7 Whilst the criteria of Policy CP08 have been considered it is concluded that due to the lawful uses on site and the existing access it would significantly restrict an alternative use and I am not persuaded that there is a robust reason for refusal based on the possible conflict with this policy. Notably with respect to the loss of employment land on the industrial estate it is known that the site has not been in industrial use for a number of years whilst there are several existing vacant premises within the Sandy Lane Industrial Estate and vacant industrial land within the Stourport area on the market.

4.8 As the proposal would provide additional accommodation for gypsies and travellers Policy CP06 of the Adopted Core Strategy is also relevant. Whilst it acknowledges that the Site Allocations and Policies Development Plan Document (DPD) will identify specific sites in the future, it provides criteria for the allocation of these new sites. It is considered relevant to assess the site against these 9 criteria as follows:

1. *For a publicly managed site, it is large enough to accommodate 15-25 pitches;*

As the application site would be privately managed and therefore the above is not relevant

2. *Privately managed sites should be smaller in size and generally be capable of accommodating up to 10 pitches;*

There is no conflict with the above.

3. *If the site is to meet the identified needs of travelling show people, it should be large enough to be suitable for the storage of mobile equipment and accord with Circular 04/07;*

As the proposed development is not for travelling show people this is not applicable.

4. *Local community services and facilities should be within easy access from the site by a variety of modes of transport;*

The site offers a location close to Stourport and is considered to have adequate accessibility to services and facilities. There is a bus service via the Worcester Road, although this only amounts to 2 buses on Tuesdays and Thursdays. There is however a more regular bus service to the Power Station estate.

5. *The site should not fall within areas at higher risk of flooding such as Flood Zones 2 and 3 and its exact location should take account of the strategic flood risk assessment;*

10/0056/FULL

On the Environment Agency's flooding maps and within the Council's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment the site is identified as lying within Flood Zone 2. Flood Zone 2 is described in the national guidance of PPS25 as an area of medium probability of flooding, or land assessed as having between a 1 in 100 and 1 in 1000 annual probability of flooding from the River Severn. However the Environment Agency (EA) acknowledge in their comments that based on the site levels provided within the submitted Flood Risk Assessment it is likely that the majority of the site is located in Flood Zone 1. This is an area of low probability of flooding where all uses of land are considered to be appropriate on flooding grounds.

On the basis that the EA accept that the majority of the site is within Flood Zone 1 it is considered that the impact upon flooding is acceptable and there is no requirement to go through the sequential and exception tests.

6. *Neighbouring uses should be complementary to the amenities of the proposed site;*

As stated previously at the time of report preparation in the absence of an objection from Worcestershire Regulatory Services it is considered that there is not a robust reason for refusal.

7. *The development of the site should not negatively impact on biodiversity or green infrastructure and should be capable of integration with the landscape character of the area;*

It is considered this brownfield hard surfaced site raises no significant concerns.

8. *The site is capable of providing adequate on-site services for water supply, power, drainage, sewage and waste disposal facilities;*

It is understood that the site is connected to the mains sewer and on the basis that caravans have been on the site for a number of years it is considered that access to utilities is adequate.

9. *There is safe and convenient vehicular and pedestrian access and that the site can be easily accessed by towing caravans.*

Concern has been raised with respect to the ability to access the site without contravening the bund aligning the Common. This matter has been discussed with the Highway Authority who has raised no objections.

- 4.9 The application is for a gypsy and traveller site, therefore ODPM Circular 01/2006 Planning for Gypsy and Traveller Caravan Sites is particularly important.

10/0056/FULL

- 4.10 Although the Circular is still in force, the Government announced in 2010 the intention to change planning policy relating to Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople. In April 2011, the Government began this process by publishing a consultation on “Planning for Traveller Sites” which proposes the introduction of a new Planning Policy Statement (PPS) to replace the current Circular.
- 4.11 Despite the anticipated revised guidance, the Government’s objective remains for local planning authorities to identify sites to meet the needs of Gypsies and Travellers. The proposed Planning Policy Statement is identical in many ways to the provisions in the 2006 Circular and it will reinforce this ambition and require Local Planning Authorities to use a robust evidence base to establish need; set pitch and plot targets to address accommodation needs; identify specific sites in their Development Plan that will enable the continuous delivery of sites for at least 15 years from the date of adoption; and identify sufficient specific deliverable sites to meet the need in the first five years of the adoption of the relevant DPD policy.
- 4.12 Policy CF5 of the Regional Spatial Strategy, adopted in 2004 also states that development plans should ensure that adequate provision is made for suitable sites to accommodate gypsies.
- 4.13 The Council has already started to put this into place with the adoption of the Core Strategy DPD in December 2010. As discussed earlier in the report Core Strategy Policy CP06 sets out the criteria for allocating new sites within the District and it also includes a commitment by the Council to ensure that sufficient sites are allocated. The Core Strategy used evidence prepared in the 2008 Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment to ascertain the need for future pitch provision. The findings of this study, which are included in the Core Strategy, were for a total of 30 pitches to be allocated within Wyre Forest District by 2013.
- 4.14 Through Phase 3 of the Regional Spatial Strategy revision process the District Council has supported the provision of 35 pitches by 2017 with a further 15 to be allocated between 2017 and 2022. A total of 7 gypsy pitches were granted permission at Broach Road in 2009 which means that the allocation requirement until 2013 has dropped to 23.
- 4.15 These figures representing the need for additional pitches within the District were presented to the Overview and Scrutiny and Cabinet Members at meetings held on the 19th and 20th September 2011 together with a list of potential sites. The list of sites was informed by a report entitled ‘Assessment of Potential Sites for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople’ undertaken on behalf of the Council by Baker Associates.

10/0056/FULL

- 4.16 Following these meetings the Council went out to public consultation on the seven sites in the table below:

| | Site Location | Potential Number of Pitches |
|---|---|------------------------------------|
| 1 | Stourport Road, Bewdley | 15 |
| 2 | Former Sion Hill School site, Kidderminster | 10 |
| 3 | Lea Castle Hospital site, Cookley | 15 (from 2018) |
| 4 | Land adjacent to Nunn's Corner, Stourport | 4 |
| 5 | Saiwen, Stourport | 3 |
| 6 | The Gables Yard, Stourport | 3 |
| 7 | Farm at St John's Road, Stourport | 15 (from 2023) |

- 4.17 The public consultation period expired on 18 November 2011 and it is anticipated that the responses will be reported to the Overview and Scrutiny and Cabinet Members in the new year. It is anticipated that a final list of sites will be included in the next stage of the Site Allocation and Policies DPD. This next stage, known as the Publication Draft will go out for consultation in 2012.
- 4.18 Notably the application site is one of the seven sites which upon which the public were consulted as a possible gypsy and traveller sites. Since the start of the consultation period permission has been granted for additional pitches within the Sandy Lane Industrial Estate at Nunns Corner (2 pitches) and at the Gatehouse (8 pitches). It is considered that the layout submitted (5 static caravans plus 3 touring caravans) would provide an equivalent to five pitches on the basis that one pitch is based on approximately 1.7 caravans.

5.0 Conclusions and Recommendations

- 5.1 This is a decision which requires all the material considerations to be carefully balanced. It is acknowledged that the application site is located on land that is allocated for industrial uses and there are adjacent industrial premises which raises issues of compatibility between the industrial and residential uses. However there is also an unmet national, regional and local need for additional gypsy and traveller sites within the District; and it is known that the largest sites within the District which are managed by the County Council are full with in excess of 100 families awaiting accommodation and a quarter of those waiting for plots within Wyre Forest.

10/0056/FULL

- 5.2 Furthermore the application site is a brownfield site where the visual implications are not significant and it is sited adjacent to the existing travelling community and close to health and educational facilities. Also it is a site which has been acknowledged through the Local Development Framework process as a potential gypsy and traveller site by the Council.
- 5.3 Therefore after considering all the material considerations and giving due regard to the Equality Act 2010 and the Human Rights Act 1998 it is recommended that **delegated APPROVAL** be granted subject to the expiry of the press notice and no new material planning objections being received and the following conditions:
1. Strictly in accordance with approved drawings
 2. All caravans in accordance with levels shown in the FRA
 3. All plots shall not be occupied other than by gypsies and travellers
 4. Within three months of the date of decision submission of a site investigation with recommendations for remediation
 5. Within three months of the date of the decision details of the disposal of surface water and foul sewage
 6. The amenity block shall not be used for residential a purposes

Note

This permission does not give any permission or consent required to obtain a Caravan Site Licence.

Reason for Approval

Whilst the application site is located on land allocated for industrial uses it is considered that due to the existing lawful uses and existing vacant industrial plots and premises with the Industrial Estate and Stourport on Severn together with the identified need for additional gypsy and traveller pitches within the District there is sufficient reason to over-ride Policy CP08 of the Adopted Wyre Forest Core Strategy. There are no significant flood implications.

- 5.4 Members should note that the applicant would still require planning consent from Wychavon District Council. Over recent months members of the adjoining authority have, under the Local Government Act 1972, resolved to delegate its decision making powers for the part of the application site lying within its administrative area to Wyre Forest District Council. At the time of report preparation, confirmation of this delegated has not been received.

Application Reference: 11/0623/FULL **Date Received:** 24/10/2011
Ord Sheet: 382051 278229 **Expiry Date:** 19/12/2011
Case Officer: Julia Mellor **Ward:** Franche

Proposal: Two storey side extension and single storey rear side extension

Site Address: 20 CHICHESTER AVENUE, KIDDERMINSTER, DY11 5JA

Applicant: Mr & Mrs Clarke

| | |
|---|--|
| Summary of Policy | D.17, TR.17 (AWFDLP) |
| Reason for Referral to Committee | The applicant is a serving Wyre Forest District Council Officer or is an immediate family member of a Wyre Forest District Council Officer |
| Recommendation | APPROVAL |

1.0 Site Location and Description

- 1.1 The application site is located on the Marlpool estate just south of Marlpool Road. The site accommodates a detached three bedroom dwelling.
- 1.2 The proposal seeks consent for a single storey extension to the rear to provide a larger kitchen with a first floor extension above to provide a larger third bedroom and an additional fourth bedroom.

2.0 Planning History

- 2.1 None.

3.0 Consultations and Representations

- 3.1 Highway Authority - No objections.
- 3.2 Neighbour/Site Notice - No comments received.

4.0 Officer Comments

- 4.1 Adopted Local Plan Policy D.17 seeks to ensure that residential extensions are in scale and in keeping with the design of the original property which should retain its visual dominance.

11/0623/FULL

- 4.2 In this case the first floor element is proposed to be set back from the front elevation of the original dwelling by 750 mm to achieve the desired subservience. Furthermore, the scale and design of the proposed extensions are in keeping with the original property.
- 4.3 The siting for the extensions would lie within close proximity to the common boundary with No. 22; however, the proposals comply with the Council's 45° guidance.
- 4.4 The property has two parking spaces to accord with Adopted Local Plan parking standards.

5.0 Conclusions and Recommendations

- 5.1 It is considered that the proposals accord with Adopted Local Plan Policy D.17 which specifically relates to householder extensions and would have a satisfactory appearance in the street scene.
- 5.2 I therefore recommend **APPROVAL** be given subject to the following conditions:
 - 1. A6 (Full with no reserved matters)
 - 2. A11 (Approved plans)
 - 3. B3 (Finishing materials to match)

Reason for Approval

The proposed siting, design and scale of the extensions are in keeping with the original dwelling which would retain its visual dominance. The proposals would have no significant impact upon the amenity currently enjoyed by neighbours and complies with Adopted Local Plan parking standards. The development is therefore considered to accord with the policies listed above.

Agenda Item No. 5

Application Reference: 11/0630/FULL **Date Received:** 25/10/2011
Ord Sheet: 384580 274623 **Expiry Date:** 20/12/2011
Case Officer: Julia McKenzie- **Ward:** Aggborough and
Watts Spennells

Proposal: Kitchen and hall extension at the front of property

Site Address: 17 JAY PARK CRESCENT, KIDDERMINSTER, DY10 4JP

Applicant: MR N DESMOND

| | |
|---|--|
| Summary of Policy | D.17, CP.11 (AWFDLP) QE.1, QE.3 (WMRSS) Design Quality SPG PPS1 |
| Reason for Referral to Committee | The applicant is a Councillor |
| Recommendation | APPROVAL |

1.0 Site Location and Description

- 1.1 Number 17 Jaypark Crescent is a detached property located on the Spennells housing estate in Kidderminster.
- 1.2 It is proposed to extend the front of the property by 2.1 metres in order to enlarge the existing kitchen and create a new porch area.

2.0 Planning History

- 2.1 None.

3.0 Consultations and Representations

- 3.1 Neighbour/Site Notice – No representations received.

4.0 Officer Comments

- 4.1 It is proposed to extend the front of the property by 2.1 metres and 5.3 metres in width in order to enlarge the existing kitchen and create a porch.

11/0630/FULL

- 4.2 There is currently a pitched roof above the garage conversion which extends an additional 2.8 metres to the side, creating a canopy which is supported by a brick pillar above a porch area. The mono pitch roof would continue above the new kitchen extension and form an enclosed porch area with glazed doors to the front to a maximum height of 3.4 metres.
- 4.3 The addition would comply with local plan Policy D.17 in that it would be in scale and character with the original property. The bricks, glazing and tile would match the existing property and as such, would appear as an acceptable addition in the street scene.
- 4.4 There are other properties within the immediate vicinity that have built similar front extensions and therefore the addition of the enlarged lounge and porch would be an acceptable addition to the property when viewed in the street scene.
- 4.5 The 45° rule has been taken into account and no infringement would occur; as such, it is the opinion of the Officer that the proposed extensions would, due to their location and the context of the property, have no impact on the privacy, outlook or daylight enjoyed by the neighbouring property.

5.0 Conclusions and Recommendations

- 5.1 The proposal is acceptable in design and policy terms; would not have any adverse effect when viewed in the street scene and would not have a detrimental impact upon the neighbouring property.
- 5.2 It is recommended that the application is **APPROVED** subject to the following conditions:
1. A6 (Full with no reserved matters)
 2. A11 (Approved plans)
 2. B3 (Finishing materials to match)

Reason for Approval

The proposed kitchen and hall extension is considered appropriate in terms of scale and design. The proposed extension would offer no detriment to the character of the area or the street scene and the impact on the amenity enjoyed by the occupants of neighbouring properties would be minimal. The proposed development would accord with the provisions of Policy D.17 of the Adopted Wyre Forest District Local Plan (2004) and Policy CP11 of the Adopted Wyre Forest Core Strategy (2010).

Application Reference: 11/0637/FULL **Date Received:** 31/10/2011
Ord Sheet: 381821 280796 **Expiry Date:** 26/12/2011
Case Officer: Paul Round **Ward:** Wolverley

Proposal: Erection of detached two bay garage and tractor shed

Site Address: PLOT 2 KINGSFORD STORES, KINGSFORD LANE,
WOLVERLEY, KIDDERMINSTER, DY11 5SA

Applicant: Mr I Jones

| | |
|---|---|
| Summary of Policy | D.17, GB.1, GB.2, GB.6 (AWFDLP) CP11, CP12 (AWFCS) D39 (WCSP) QE6 (WMRSS) PPS1, PPG2 Policy 20 and Policy 25 (emerging SAAP DPD) |
| Reason for Referral to Committee | Development Control manager considers that application should be considered by Committee |
| Recommendation | APPROVAL |

1.0 Site Location and Description

- 1.1 The application site forms part of the former Kingsford Stores located on Kingsford Lane to the north of Wolverley Village and relates to one of the residential dwelling plots granted permission in 2008. The application site lies within the West Midlands Green Belt and is close to the Horse Brook that runs to the west of the site.
- 1.2 The application seeks for the erection of a domestic double garage along with a tractor store for use within the curtilage of the property.

2.0 Planning History

- 2.1 07/819/FULL - Demolition of existing buildings and erect one detached house and one detached bungalow : Approved
- 2.2 09/0278/FULL : Modification of house type and reposition of dwelling approved under planning permission (07/0819/FULL) : Withdrawn
- 2.3 09/0445/FULL - Modification of house type and reposition of dwelling approved under planning permission (07/0819/FULL) : Approved
- 2.4 11/0327/FULL - Detached Garage and Tractor Store : Withdrawn

11/0637/FULL

3.0 Consultations and Representations

3.1 Wolverley and Cookley Parish Council – Views awaited

3.2 Highway Authority – No objection

3.3 Watercourse Officer – I have concerns regarding the proposed location of the garage, which seems to be right at the edge of the level plot, and quite close (about 1 metre or so) to the top of the bank of the brook. My concerns are both for the actual construction period (risk of earth sliding into the watercourse) and the possible impact of the new drainage installed (no details known to me) on the stability of the land bordering the brook.

I think we should make the applicant at least aware that case-law regarding land slips states that the landowner / occupier has the duty to take such steps as are reasonable to prevent or minimize the risks of which he knows or ought to have known. However, I would rather that we actually attach a condition regarding the stability of the land.

Secondly, considering the proximity to the watercourse and the nature of the works I think we should consider attaching a condition regarding taking best practise measures to minimise the risk of increased siltation during the construction period, since silt can have devastating effects for certain water flora and fauna.

And then thirdly, no details have been provided regarding the surface water drainage. Looking at the history of this plot, it should be made certain that the surface water drainage does not pollute the watercourse in any way. Obviously it should also not lead to any instability of the bank.

3.4 Neighbour/Site Notice – No representations received

4.0 Officer Comments

4.1 The original permission in 2008 withdrew permitted development rights to enable the Council to control further developments at this site. It is accepted that detached structures will be required; as such the restrictive condition allows the Local Authority to control their position, size and design. It is worthy of note that a double garage has already been approved on the adjoining plot.

4.2 The garage has been re-located from the previously withdrawn application to be sited towards the north of the site which is set down from the elevated section of Drakelow Lane and behind a bank of trees which will shield the structure from view. This allows the structure to be located in a sensitive way and not be read in the context of the two dwellings so avoiding a build up of linear development in this location.

11/0637/FULL

- 4.3 The detached garage provides for two cars enabling vehicles to be stored securely. The structure also provides a storage area for tractor style grass mower and implements for use in association with the properties garden which is 0.452ha (1.1 acres) and the wildlife meadow which is 0.19ha (0.5 acre) and is within the ownership of the plot. I consider that based on the land holding attached to the dwelling that the need for the garage and store is reasonably required and will consolidate buildings in this location without the need for further structures. On this basis given the above considerations, it is felt that the provision of the garage is appropriate development in the Green Belt.
- 4.4 The design has been modified since submission to reduce the massing and height. The revised plans show a building which is of domestic scale and appropriate in the context of the surrounding area. The materials will match exactly those of the new dwelling.
- 4.5 The location of the garage is adjacent to the bank which leads down to the Horse Brook. Comments have been received from the Watercourse Officer expressing concerns over bank stability, working practices and surface water drainage. As stated in her comments such concerns can be addressed by suitably worded pre-start conditions, which have been agreed to by the Applicant's Agent.
- 4.6 There are no residential properties which will be directly affected by the application and no highway issues have been raised by the Highway Authority.

5.0 Conclusions and Recommendations

- 5.1 The proposed garage is considered to be appropriate in this Green Belt location and has been sited and designed so as to minimise the impact of the structure on the surrounding area and adjacent Horse Brook. The proposal will have no adverse impact on neighbouring properties or the highway network.
- 5.2 I therefore recommend **APPROVAL** subject to the following conditions:
1. A6 (Full with No Reserved Matters)
 2. A11 (Approved Plans)
 3. Materials to match new dwelling
 4. Stability survey to be submitted prior to work commencing
 5. Method statement of working practices during construction
 6. details of surface water drainage
 7. Use of building as applied for.

Reason for Approval

The proposed garage is considered to be appropriate in this Green Belt location and has been sited and designed so as to minimise the impact of the structure on the surrounding area and adjacent Horse Brook. The proposal will have no adverse impact on neighbouring properties or the highway network.

| | |
|--|----------------------------------|
| Application Reference: 11/0640/S106 | Date Received: 31/10/2011 |
| Ord Sheet: 383027 276220 | Expiry Date: 26/12/2011 |
| Case Officer: Paul Round | Ward: Greenhill |

Proposal: Variation of Section 106 Agreement to allow reduced Public Open Space contributions

Site Address: CASTLE LOCKS, CASTLE ROAD, KIDDERMINSTER, DY11 6TH

Applicant: GREAT TITCHFIELD DEVELOPMENTS LTD

| | |
|---|---|
| Summary of Policy | LR.1 (AWFDLP) CP07 (AWFCS) Planning Obligations SPD Emerging Kidderminster Central Area Action Plan PPG17 |
| Reason for Referral to Committee | Application involving proposed Section 106 obligation |
| Recommendation | DELEGATED APPROVAL |

1.0 Site Location and Description

- 1.1 The site forms the former Zanzibar Nightclub, which received planning permission for 46 residential units in 2007. The site is virtually complete, with units now being occupied.
- 1.2 The site is located off Castle Road and lies adjacent the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal Conservation Area.
- 1.3 The application seeks to vary the amount of contributions towards Public Open Space.

2.0 Planning History

- 2.1 WF.37/89 – Sheltered Housing (39 Flats) : Refused.
- 2.2 WF.726/91 – 25 dwellings : Approved.
- 2.3 WF.623/92 – Residential flat scheme 34 units : Approved.
- 2.4 WF.48/94 – Warehouse : Refused.
- 2.5 WF.434/94 – Certificate of Lawful Use (Dancehall) : Approved.

11/0640/S106

- 2.6 05/1208/FULL – Residential development for 38 flats : Withdrawn.
- 2.7 06/0300/FULL - Residential development for 38 flats : Approved.
- 2.8 06/1242/FULL – Residential development for 42 flats : Approved.
- 2.9 09/0340/S106 – Variation of S.106 to allow contribution in lieu of on-site affordable housing : Approved.

3.0 Consultations and Representations

- 3.1 Parks and Green Spaces Manager – Views awaited.
- 3.2 Economic Development & Regeneration - North Worcestershire – Views awaited.

4.0 Officer Comments

- 4.1 The current owners have brought the property from the receivers following the collapse of Bentley Homes. Whilst they have been able to complete the works they are experiencing difficulty in sales of the properties, which have been reduced in price, and as such viability of the scheme is suffering. This application therefore deals with a request to consider a reduction in Public Open Space contributions.
- 4.2 Section 106A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) gives developers the ability in which to amend or modify a Section 106 agreement. Under the terms of this section such an application can only be considered after a five year period, with any adverse decision being made able to an appeal under Section 106B.
- 4.3 As this application has been submitted within 5 years, the Local Planning Authority has the ability to consider whether a deed of variation can be approved, without any reprisals under S.106B in respect of appeals.
- 4.4 The public open space contributions were agreed prior to the adoption of Planning Obligations SPD in February 2007, which set out a framework for dealing with contributions arising from development.

11/0640/S106

- 4.5 Within the report to committee the Public Open Space was justified in the following way;

Due to the restrictive nature of the site it is not possible to be able to provide the amount of amenity space that is normally associated with this number of residential units. Although there is ample opportunity to provide a quality landscaping scheme and seating out areas, this is not itself sufficient to outweigh the lack of amenity space on site. The developers appreciate this position and have agreed to pay a financial contribution of £85,000 that will go towards the works to the Park Lane Urban Open Space or other Public Open Space maintained by the Council.

- 4.6 Whilst there is a distinct need for contributions to enable appropriate open space provision, the figure of £85,000 was arrived via negotiation rather than via specific calculation of the adopted formulae. Based on the current requirement of for public open space contributions of £450 per child bed space, it is not considered that the current S.106 contribution level which equates to £2,237 per child bed space can be justified to be retained. There is a need however to seek greater contributions than set out in the Planning Obligations SPD as set out in the original reasoning for the contribution in respect of the deficiency of amenity space for the development. The £30,000 now offered allows for an increase over and above the SPD levels given the deficiency of amenity space whilst giving a 65% reduction of the original contributions helping the developer with the viability of the scheme.
- 4.7 The original contributions were to be used towards the creation of a public open space in Park Lane, close to the site. This is still an aim of the Council which is set out in the emerging Kidderminster Central Area Action Plan, naming it 'the Green on the Hill'. Contributions are sought from developments within the locality to help bring this aspiration about. The reduced monies can be utilised towards providing an open space in Park Lane as originally intended, which has been given additional weight with the publication of the Kidderminster Central Area Action Plan. The original agreement set a 10 year period for the District Council to utilise these monies, which allows sufficient time for a realisation of the scheme, however should this not be possible provision is made with the original agreement to utilise the money in any space maintainable by the District Council within the Kidderminster area. This part of the obligation will not change.
- 4.8 The trigger point for the contributions was the occupation of the first dwelling. This took place on 30th June 2011. In the event of late payments the original agreement required interest payments of 2% above base lending rate of the Co-operative Bank Plc, this will not change. As such late payment interest which is currently at 8%pa will be payable.

11/0640/S106

5.0 Conclusions and Recommendations

- 5.1 It is considered that the reduction in the contributions to £30,000 is justifiable and can be supported in line with current adopted policies.
- 5.2 I therefore recommend **delegated authority** be given to the Director of Legal and Corporate Services in consultation with the Director of Planning and Regulatory Services **to vary the Section 106 agreement.**

| | | | |
|-------------------------------|---------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|
| Application Reference: | 11/0643/FULL | Date Received: | 01/11/2011 |
| Ord Sheet: | 389304 273536 | Expiry Date: | 27/12/2011 |
| Case Officer: | Stuart Allum | Ward: | Blakedown and Chaddesley |

Proposal: Installation of solar panels

Site Address: 1 FOLD COURT, THE VILLAGE, CHADDESLEY CORBETT, KIDDERMINSTER, DY10 4SA

Applicant: Mr A Page

| | |
|---|---|
| Summary of Policy | D.17, CA.1 (AWFDLP) |
| Reason for Referral to Committee | Statutory or non-statutory Consultee has objected and the application is recommended for approval |
| Recommendation | APPROVAL |

1.0 Site Location and Description

- 1.1 No. 1 Fold Court is part of a barn conversion complex, located to the east of 'The Village' and accessed via Fold Lane, the entrance to which lies opposite St. Cassian's Church. This is also within the Chaddesley Corbett Conservation Area.
- 1.2 Fold Court was first converted from agricultural to dwelling use following approval in 1990. There are 11 dwellings in total, including the original farmhouse. Most of these properties are ranged around a central courtyard, with windows facing into this communal space.
- 1.3 The proposal on this occasion relates to an inward facing roof slope, ie. facing the courtyard and opposite or adjacent to units 2 to 10 inclusive.
- 1.4 The proposed solar panels would be arranged to cover the majority of the area on the south-east facing roof slope of the garage block, the roof ridge of which is set at a lower level than that of the main two-storey dwelling.
- 1.5 Planning permission is required for this installation only because 'permitted development' rights were removed on the original 1990 planning consent.

2.0 Planning History

- 2.1 WF/597/90 – Conversion of barns and outbuildings to Residential Use : Approved 9/10/90.
- 2.2 WF/512/96 – Erection of en-suite and wardrobe extension at first floor level : Refused 24/9/96.

11/0643/FULL

3.0 Consultations and Representations

- 3.1 Chaddesley Corbett Parish Council – Object to the proposal and recommend Refusal, as the property is a barn conversion in a Conservation Area and solar panels would not be in keeping with the area.
- 3.2 Conservation Officer – The 1884 Ordnance Survey map clearly shows Fold Farm and its group of barns, now known as Fold Court. These buildings can thus be considered as Heritage Assets, notwithstanding the lack of any formal designation.

Potential Impact on the Conservation Area

Fold Court sits within the Chaddesley Corbett Conservation Area, designated in 1969. The Conservation Area Character Appraisal of September 2005 describes the barns originally associated with Fold Farm as being:

“divided up into both a mix of smaller units incorporated into two buildings, and several larger dwellings in others, resulting in a more intense residential development”.

This intense residential development around the original farmyard creates an almost totally enclosed space onto which the solar panels will face. Thus the impact on the wider Conservation Area and views to and from it will be negligible.

I do have concerns regarding the impact of the panels locally, particularly on the roofscape of the group. Had the barns been locally listed, I am convinced that the proposal could be shown to be contrary to Policies LB.1 and LB.3. Similarly, had this proposal formed part of a new conversion, I think it would be contrary to Policy RB.1 – (works should have no significant detrimental effect on the fabric, character or setting of the building).

In this particular case, however, my remit is to consider the impact on the Conservation Area, and this I feel will be negligible for the reasons stated above. I therefore have no objections to the proposal.

- 3.3 Neighbour/Site Notice – One letter of objection received:

- “It will destroy my visual amenity.
- It would set a precedent in the Chaddesley Corbett Conservation Area.
- When Fold Court was first granted permission one side of the development had a corrugated tin roof. As this was in the Conservation Area it was decided that the tin roof would be incongruous and a slate or tile roof was required. If this development is allowed it will look out of place.
- I think this development will decrease the value of my property.

11/0643/FULL

4.0 Officer Comments

- 4.1 The recent emphasis on domestic energy micro-generation, latterly stimulated by a period of Central Government financial incentives, has led to a steady stream of enquiries from householders across the District regarding the planning implications of such installations.
- 4.2 In many of these cases, solar panels on the roof slopes of buildings will be capable of installation without the benefit of planning permission, being a 'permitted development' under Part 40 Class A of the General Permitted Development Order.
- 4.3 In common with many other barn conversions, however, this site does not benefit from 'permitted development' rights and this explains the need for the planning application.
- 4.4 The adoption of the Wyre Forest Core Strategy document in December 2010 has refined the Council's approach to sustainable energy issues and the associated issues of climate change and CO₂ emissions. Policy CP01 sets out the general objectives of energy efficiency coupled with an increasing proportion of energy sourced from renewables.
- 4.5 This policy does not specifically refer to the retrospective fitting of solar panels on domestic properties. However, the general thrust of the policy is clear and runs in parallel with the advice in the supplement to Planning Policy Statement No. 1 'Planning and Climate Change' from 2007, as well as advice in PPS22 'Renewable energy'.
- 4.6 The increased development of renewable energy resources to facilitate the Government's commitments to both climate change and renewable energy are, therefore, important material considerations in the determination of this planning application.
- 4.7 These must, however, be balanced against the circumstances of the site and its spatial relationship with the locality within the Conservation Area and the adjacent properties.
- 4.8 The views of the Conservation Officer are reported above. These are clear in relation to both the wider Conservation Area and the more localised setting, and do not offer any compelling argument to justify a refusal recommendation.

11/0643/FULL

- 4.9 Solar panels are, by definition, utilitarian in appearance and not ‘attractive’ in appearance to everyone. This observation is supported by the nature of the local objection received. There is no doubt that the visual appearance of the host roof will alter and as such the outlook from properties facing will be affected in terms of roof face. However, the existing ridge height would not be exceeded and the roof plane would essentially remain the same. These factors, added to the solar panels usefulness in contributing to renewable energy generation is considered to outweigh concerns relating to visual amenity on this occasion.
- 4.10 Regarding issues of amenity and privacy, the rights enjoyed by the neighbouring properties under the provisions of Article 1 of Protocol 1 and Article 8 of the Human Rights Act 1998 have been balanced against the scope and scale of the proposal in that context. No potential breach has been identified, which is also the case in relation to the appropriate planning policy.
- 4.11 Finally, it should be noted that perceived devaluation of property values in association with proposed development is not a material planning consideration.

5.0 Conclusions and Recommendations

- 5.1 The issues and material considerations of this case are finely balanced. On reflection, it is considered that the energy generation and associated climate change benefits outweigh the more local concerns centred on local character and safeguarding the visual amenity of neighbouring properties.
- 5.2 Accordingly, and in consideration of Article 1 of Protocol 1 and Article 8 of the Human Rights Act 1998, it is recommended that the application be **APPROVED** subject to the following conditions.
1. A6 (Full with no reserved matters)
 2. A11 (Approved plans)

Reason for Approval

The proposed solar panels are considered to be an appropriate addition to the dwelling as converted, and are considered to preserve the character and appearance of the wider Chaddesley Corbett Conservation Area. The impact of the panels upon neighbouring properties has been carefully assessed and it is considered that no undue or serious loss of amenity would occur as a result of the development. Accordingly, the proposal is considered to be in compliance with the policies listed above.

Application Reference: 11/0647/S106 **Date Received:** 02/11/2011
Ord Sheet: 381376 271228 **Expiry Date:** 28/12/2011
Case Officer: Julia Mellor **Ward:** Mitton

Proposal: Variation of Section 106 agreement to enable a change to the timescale relating to the approval and implementation of Public Art

Site Address: SEVERN ROAD, STOURPORT-ON-SEVERN,

Applicant: Tesco Stores Ltd

| | |
|---|---|
| Summary of Policy | D.10, D.11, D.12, CA.1, LB.1, LB.5, STC.2 (AWFDLP) CP07, CP11, CP12, CP15 (AWFCS) CTC.20 (WCSP) Character Appraisal for Conservation Areas Nos. 1 and 2 and Gilgal (all 2001) Design Quality SPG (2004) Public Realm Design Guide for Stourport on Severn (2006) Supplementary Planning Document on Planning Obligations (2007) PPS1, PPS5 |
| Reason for Referral to Committee | Application involving proposed Section 106 obligation |
| Recommendation | DELEGATED APPROVAL |

1.0 Site Location and Description

1.1 The application site forms the northern part of the former Carpets of Worth site on Severn Road in Stourport on Severn. The site is located between Severn Road and the western bank of the River Stour, which forms the western and eastern boundaries respectively. Stour Lane forms the northern boundary of the site. The southern part of the Carpets of Worth site lies in an area where outline permission has been granted for up to 159 dwellings together with 3,300 sq. metres of commercial floorspace (references 08/0768/OUTL and 09/0588/OUTL).

1.2 The total area of the application site amounts to 4.52 hectares, however this total includes parts of the existing highway network, the new road bridge over the River Stour which will connect Severn Road with Discovery Road on the east side of the river and the new pedestrian bridge which will link to Pinta Drive, again on the east side of the river.

11/0647/S106

1.3 The current application follows approval for a Tesco retail store. Outline planning consent was granted in May 2008 (reference 07/1105/EIA), and reserved matters approval was granted in January 2011 (reference 10/0706/RESE). Therefore, in summary, approval has been granted for:

- an A1 use class retail store providing up to 4,209 sq. metres (45,309 sq. ft.) of gross floorspace, of which 2,919 sq. metres can be used as the net retail sales area;
- an adjoining car park with 310 parking spaces;
- a petrol filling station;
- a new access to the site via a new public highway running from a junction with Severn Road positioned opposite nos. 12 and 14;
- the provision of a new public highway link road/ bridge over the River Stour connecting to the existing highway at Discovery Road;
- the provision of a pedestrian footpath and bridge over the River Stour linking the site to Pinta Drive;
- the provision of improvements to Lichfield Street;
- the provision of a signalised junction at Mitton Street/Severn Road junction;
- the provision of pedestrian crossing facilities at the Mitton Street/Vale Road/Lion Hill junction and
- the provision of improvements on Mitton Street

1.4 The outline application was granted consent subject to a Section 106 Agreement for contributions towards and legal obligations to ensure (in summary)

- a) that the car park is used only by customers for a maximum of 2 hours and 40 minutes and to enforce a charge for parking over this maximum time period;
- b) that the store does not open until the existing Tesco store at Lombard Street, Stourport on Severn has been permanently closed;
- c) agreement of public art prior to the commencement of development and implementation of the artwork prior to the first opening of the store;
- d) the written approval of a trolley management plan;
- e) payment of £20,000 to the District Council for signposting to improve the connectivity between the store and the town centre;
- f) that a post office is not operated within the store without the written consent of the Local Planning Authority;
- g) the implementation of a previously agreed Green Travel Plan prior to the first opening of the store;

11/0647/S106

- h) that the agreed Green Travel Plan is reviewed at regular intervals of no greater than one year and that reasonable modifications are implemented;
- i) an agreed construction programme identifying compounds for the storage of equipment and material, the movement of traffic and parking for site operatives;
- j) an agreed lorry routing agreement which will require heavy vehicles to approach via the link bridge and not along Mitton Street;
- k) payment of the County Council's costs in respect of those incurred in the promotion of Traffic Regulation Orders and the installation of crossings for pedestrians (to exclude the cost of constructing pedestrian crossings, signalised junctions and other measures);
- l) payment to the County Council of £95,000 as a bus service capital contribution – (to include all or any of the following measures) – kerbing, bus shelters, timetable information, highway surface improvements, the marketing of bus services and the provision of equipment to provide bus priority routes;
- m) payment to the County Council of £200,000 as a contribution to subsidise the bus service start up measures (to include all or any of the following) – the amendment of existing or award of new bus service contracts and the enhancement of vehicle quality and the enhancement of bus services; by the provision of a new or amended bus service linking Areley Kings, the site and the town centre and enhancing service nos. 914, 915 and 11
- n) payment to the County Council of £30,000 for improvements to the highway to enable improved access by pedestrians from the store along Lodge Road to the town centre;
- o) payment to the County Council of £20,000 for the installation of signage and street furniture to promote the use of sustainable forms of access/travel by pedestrians and cyclists from the site to and within the town centre;
- p) payment to the County Council of £50,000 towards junction improvement measures along the route of bus services and/or junctions otherwise affected by traffic impact from the development which may include York Street/Bridge Street/New Street;
- q) that the development is not commenced until a detailed design of the link road has been agreed by the District Council and County Council with evidence submitted of land ownership and agreement to dedicate the relevant parts of the land to the County Council for adoption;

11/0647/S106

- r) that the development is not commenced until a detailed design of the pedestrian bridge and footpath has been agreed by the District Council with evidence submitted of land ownership and agreement to dedicate the relevant parts of the land to the District Council if required; and
- s) that the link road and pedestrian bridge and footpath are constructed prior to the opening of the store.

1.5 The current proposal is made to seek a formal Deed of Variation to the signed Section 106 Agreement regarding part c), with respect to the timescale relating to the approval and implementation of public art.

2.0 Planning History

2.1 Outline application for redevelopment of part of site to provide a Class A1 supermarket, petrol filling station, new road and bridge, other highway works, landscaping and other associated works - Not registered (June 2005).

2.2 Outline application for redevelopment of part of site to provide a Class A1 supermarket, customer car park, petrol filling station, new road bridge, new footbridge, other highway works, landscaping and other works - Not registered (December 2006); Non-determination appeal withdrawn May 2008.

2.3 Outline application 07/1105/EIA : Redevelopment of part of site to provide a Class A1 supermarket, customer car park, petrol filling station, new road bridge, new footbridge, other highway works, landscaping and other works. Submitted October 2007 - Approved 19th May 2008.

A High Court challenge was dismissed March 2009. A subsequent Court of Appeal challenge was dismissed 29th July 2010 and permission was refused to appeal to the Supreme Court on 18th November 2010.

2.4 Outline Application 08/1053/EIA : Construction of a new Class A1 supermarket with associated means of access, customer car park, petrol filling station, new road & bridge, footbridge, landscaping, highways & other works – Approved 22nd October 2009.

Permission was given to pursue a judicial review of the outline consent; this challenge has however been withdrawn.

2.5 Reserved Matters Application 10/0299/RESE : Construction of a new Class A1 supermarket with associated means of access, customer car park, petrol filling station, new road and bridge, footbridge, landscaping, highways and other works (Reserved Matters following Outline Approval 08/1053/EIA - Appearance, Layout, Scale and Landscaping to be considered) - Approved 9th November 2010.

11/0647/S106

- 2.6 Reserved Matters Application 10/0590/RESE : Construction of a new Class A1 Supermarket with associated means of access, customer car park, petrol filling station, new road and bridge, footbridge, landscaping, highways and other works (Reserved Matters following Outline Approval 08/1053/EIA - landscaping to be considered) - Approved 9th November 2010.
- 2.7 Reserved Matters Application 10/706/RESE : Construction of a new Class A1 supermarket with associated means of access, customer car park, petrol filling station, new road and bridge, footbridge, landscaping, highways and other works (Reserved Matters following Outline Approval 07/1105/EIA - Layout, Scale, Appearance and Landscaping to be considered) - Approved 19th January 2011

3.0 Consultations and Representations

- 3.1 Stourport-on-Severn Town Council – Awaiting comments.
- 3.2 Community and Partnership Services – Awaiting comments.
- 3.3 Economic Development & Regeneration - North Worcestershire – Awaiting comments.
- 3.4 Legal and Corporate Services – Awaiting comments.

4.0 Officer Comments

- 4.1 Section 106A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) gives developers the ability to amend or modify a Section 106 Agreement. Under the terms of this section such an application can only be considered after a 5 year period, with any adverse decision being made open to an appeal under Section 106B. As this application has been submitted within 5 years, the Local Planning Authority has the ability to consider whether a Deed of Variation should be approved, without any reprisals under Section 106B in respect of appeals. Clause 10.1.4.1 of the Section 106 Agreement states the following:

“Prior to the commencement of development to obtain written approval of the District Council to a suitable piece or pieces of public art to be constructed on the land”

- 4.2 The Agreement thereafter goes on to state:

“Prior to the retail store first opening for trade to construct the public art approved by the District Council pursuant to Clause 10.1.4.1”

11/0647/S106

- 4.3 The current Deed of Variation seeks the Council's agreement to amend the Section 106 obligation to allow additional time to agree on the siting and design of a piece or pieces of public art. Discussions have been ongoing with the applicant and the County Council and officers are keen to encourage a piece of art which is both unique and relevant to the location of the site. However, all parties are also mindful to ensure that there is agreement regarding the artworks ongoing maintenance. A possible lighting scheme, fencing design and bespoke gates have all been the subject of discussions, however all parties are yet to come to a mutual agreement on the type and location of the artwork.
- 4.4 According to the existing Section 106 obligation such an agreement should have taken place prior to the commencement of development, this has clearly not happened as the site has been cleared and highway works along Severn Road and to provide the vehicular bridge to link the application site to Discovery Road have commenced.

5.0 Conclusions and Recommendations

- 5.1 The applicant proposes that the existing clauses are replaced by the following:

"Prior to the occupation of the development to obtain the written approval of the District Council to a suitable piece or pieces of public art to be constructed on the land and to construct the same as approved"

- 5.2 It is considered that the proposed Deed of Variation as set out above is reasonable as it would allow further time to agree an appropriate piece or pieces of public art. However, the proposed amendment would still give a definitive end date by which time the agreed artwork needs to have been implemented. The proposed variation would ensure that agreement is reached and the public art constructed prior to the first opening of the store which is anticipated in mid June 2012.
- 5.3 It is considered that the proposed variation will still comply with the policy guidance of Adopted Wyre Forest Core Strategy Policy CP07 and the Supplementary Planning Document on Planning Obligations adopted by the Council in February 2007.
- 5.4 It is therefore recommended that **delegated authority** be given to the Director of Legal and Corporate Services in consultation with the Director of Planning and Regulatory Services to **vary the Section 106 Agreement**.

Wyre Forest District Council

Planning Committee Meeting 13 December 2011

List of Pending Applications

NB This list includes all applications upon which no decision has been issued, including applications proposed to be determined at this Committee

| WF No. | Valid Date | Target Date | Address of Site | Description of Proposal | Applicant | Case Officer |
|--------------|------------|-------------|---|--|-----------------------------------|--------------------|
| WF/0469/05 | 29/04/2005 | 24/06/2005 | 1 OX BOW WAY KIDDERMINSTER DY102LB | Full : Change of use of 3m strip of land, enclosure with timber fence - Variation to Conditions 11 and 12 of WF.222/94; Variation to Section 106 Agreement, 3 metre strip of land to rear of | The Owners of, | Paul Round |
| 08/0034/LIST | 17/01/2008 | 13/03/2008 | 20, 21 & 22 HORSEFAIR KIDDERMINSTER DY102EN | Demolition of 20, 21 & 22 Horsefair | Wyre Forest Community Housing Ltd | Paul Wrigglesworth |
| 08/0035/FULL | 17/01/2008 | 13/03/2008 | 20,21,22 & 23 HORSEFAIR KIDDERMINSTER DY102EN | Demolition of existing buildings and erection of 5 No affordable dwellings | Wyre Forest Community Housing Ltd | Paul Wrigglesworth |

| WF No. | Valid Date | Target Date | Address of Site | Description of Proposal | Applicant | Case Officer |
|--------------|------------|-------------|---|--|---------------------------|--------------------|
| 08/0445/S106 | 01/05/2008 | 26/06/2008 | FORMER STOURVALE WORKS DEVELOPMENT OFF OXBOW WAY KIDDERMINSTER DY102LB | Variation of S106 Agreement to allow alternative access arrangements to Puxton Marsh and non-provision of on site play area. | Cofton Ltd | Paul Round |
| 08/0495/FULL | 19/05/2008 | 18/08/2008 | THE OLD POST OFFICE SITE BLACKWELL STREET KIDDERMINSTER DY102DY | Retention/Refurbishment of Old Post Office frontage building, demolition to rear and construction of 54 apartments with undercroft parking. | Regal Executive Homes | Paul Wrigglesworth |
| 08/0500/FULL | 22/05/2008 | 21/08/2008 | LAND AT CORNER OF THE TERRACE/TENBURY ROAD CLOWS TOP KIDDERMINSTER DY14 9HG | Erection of 12 dwellings with associated parking & access | Marcity Developments Ltd | Paul Round |
| 08/1044/FULL | 12/11/2008 | 11/02/2009 | FORMER VICTORIA SPORTS FIELD SPENNELLS VALLEY ROAD KIDDERMINSTER | Erection of a hotel (C1); public house/restaurant (A4); indoor and outdoor bowling facility (D2), access, car parking, landscaping and associated works (Resubmission of 07/1165/FULL) | Victoria Carpets Ltd | Julia Mellor |
| 09/0156/S106 | 03/03/2009 | 28/04/2009 | TARN 1-16 SEVERN ROAD STOURPORT-ON-SEVERN | Variation of S.106 agreement attached to WF1208/04 to change tenure of affordable housing units | West Mercia Housing Group | Paul Round |
| 09/0181/FULL | 13/03/2009 | 08/05/2009 | LOWER HOUSE BARN ARELEY LANE STOURPORT-ON-SEVERN DY130TA | Retrospective application for the retention of the use of land for inclusion within the residential curtilage including retention of the shed and decking | Mr B Young | Stuart Allum |
| 09/0223/FULL | 30/03/2009 | 25/05/2009 | 39 LOAD STREET BEWDLEY DY122AS | Change of use from shop (A1) to tattoo studio (Sui Generis) | Etch Body Art | Stuart Allum |

| WF No. | Valid Date | Target Date | Address of Site | Description of Proposal | Applicant | Case Officer |
|---------------|------------|-------------|---|---|-----------------------------------|--------------------|
| 09/0575/CERTE | 12/08/2009 | 07/10/2009 | 30 MALHAM ROAD STOURPORT-ON-SEVERN DY138NR | Storage of motorcycles in own garage for use as motorcycle training establishment | Mr T Meola | Paul Round |
| 09/0598/CERTE | 21/08/2009 | 16/10/2009 | STABLE COTTAGE FOXMEAD CALLOW HILL ROCK KIDDERMINSTER DY149XW | Use of existing former stable block building as a dwelling. | Mr & Mrs M Kent | Julia Mellor |
| 10/0121/CERTE | 10/03/2010 | 05/05/2010 | THE ORCHARD WORCESTER ROAD HARVINGTON KIDDERMINSTER DY104LY | Use part of site for the storage and sale of motor vehicles | MR N PERRINS | Paul Round |
| 10/0181/CERTE | 30/03/2010 | 25/05/2010 | DOVEYS COTTAGE ROCK KIDDERMINSTER DY149DR | Use of land as residential curtilage associated with Doveys Cottage for a period in excess of ten years. | Mr Keith Billingsley | Paul Round |
| 10/0472/CERTP | 17/08/2010 | 12/10/2010 | HORSELEY COTTAGE HOBRO WOLVERLEY KIDDERMINSTER DY115TA | Conversion of existing garage to form ancillary accommodation. Proposed garden store | Mr C Fortnam | Paul Round |
| 10/0550/FULL | 20/09/2010 | 20/12/2010 | LAND ADJACENT TO SEBRIGHT ROAD KIDDERMINSTER DY115UE | The construction of ten affordable dwellings | Wyre Forest Community Housing | Paul Round |
| 10/0598/FULL | 07/10/2010 | 02/12/2010 | LAND ADJACENT TO 35 LONG ACRE KIDDERMINSTER DY102HA | Renewal of Planning Permission 07/0823 to erect a 3 No. bedroom dwelling | Mr S Milward | Paul Wrigglesworth |
| 11/0146/FULL | 10/03/2011 | 05/05/2011 | 50 STOURPORT ROAD BEWDLEY DY121BL | Part change of use of domestic property to day nursery for up to 16 children | Mrs K Hopkins | James Houghton |
| 11/0163/FULL | 16/03/2011 | 11/05/2011 | CHURCHFIELDS BUSINESS PARK CLENSMORE STREET KIDDERMINSTER DY102JY | Construction of 223 dwellings and associated roadworks and landscaping (following demolition of existing buildings) | Bellway Homes (West Midlands) Ltd | Julia Mellor |

| WF No. | Valid Date | Target Date | Address of Site | Description of Proposal | Applicant | Case Officer |
|--------------|------------|-------------|---|---|---|--------------------|
| 11/0172/LIST | 22/03/2011 | 17/05/2011 | HARVINGTON HALL HARVINGTON HALL LANE HARVINGTON KIDDERMINSTER DY104LR | Installation of a lightweight glass and steel draught lobby | HARVINGTON HALL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE | James Houghton |
| 11/0252/FULL | 26/04/2011 | 26/07/2011 | HOPLEYS CAMPING AND CARAVAN SITE DODDINGTREE CLEOBURY ROAD BEWDLEY DY122QL | Change of use of land for the provision of tent pitches and retention of 4 tepees, associated stoned access ways, minor adjustment of levels and landscaping | Mr J Hopley | James Houghton |
| 11/0297/LIST | 19/05/2011 | 14/07/2011 | KNIGHT HOUSE WOLVERLEY VILLAGE WOLVERLEY KIDDERMINSTER DY115XD | Front stone canopy porch, re-roofing main roof, conversion of existing garage to sitting room. Re-skinning existing rear and side single storey extensions, new balcony guard rail, new windows to rear elevation | Mr G Hawkins | James Houghton |
| 11/0309/FULL | 25/05/2011 | 24/08/2011 | 1 FREDERICK ROAD HOO FARM INDUSTRIAL ESTATE WORCESTER ROAD KIDDERMINSTER DY117RA | Change of use from wholesale cash and carry and storage and distribution use (Class B8) to bulky goods retail (Class A1), creation of egress onto Edwin Avenue and associated works | Arrowcroft (JB) Limited | Paul Wrigglesworth |
| 11/0310/FULL | 25/05/2011 | 24/08/2011 | UNIT 1 FREDERICK ROAD AND LAND TO THE WEST HOO FARM INDUSTRIAL ESTATE WORCESTER ROAD KIDDERMINSTER DY117RA | Change of use from wholesale cash and carry (Class B8) to bulky goods retail (Class A1) and associated works | Arrowcroft (JB) Limited | Paul Wrigglesworth |
| 11/0308/FULL | 31/05/2011 | 26/07/2011 | KNIGHT HOUSE WOLVERLEY VILLAGE WOLVERLEY KIDDERMINSTER DY115XD | Double detached garage with guest room above. Timber garden room and garden pond | Mr G Hawkins | James Houghton |

| WF No. | Valid Date | Target Date | Address of Site | Description of Proposal | Applicant | Case Officer |
|----------------|------------|-------------|---|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 11/0359/FULL | 13/06/2011 | 08/08/2011 | 90 ST. JOHNS AVENUE KIDDERMINSTER DY116AZ | Rear first floor extension | Ms JULIE HOPKINS | Stuart Allum |
| 11/0395/CERTE | 04/07/2011 | 29/08/2011 | CHURCH FARM BUNGALOW CHURCHILL KIDDERMINSTER DY103LY | Certificate for occupation of dwelling unfettered by agricultural worker occupancy condition | T F Bache Trust | Paul Wrigglesworth |
| 11/0420/FULL/O | 15/07/2011 | 14/10/2011 | LAND AT CHURCHFIELDS KIDDERMINSTER | HYBRID APPLICATION: AREA A - FULL DETAILS: PROPOSED FOODSTORE (USE CLASS A1) AND PETROL FILLING STATION; ASSOCIATED PLANT, MEANS OF ENCLOSURE, RECYCLING, PARKING AND HIGHWAY WORKS INCLUDING NEW LINK ROAD BETWEEN THE RINGWAY AND CHURCHFIELDS; DEMOLITION OF EXISTING BUILDINGS, WITH EXCEPTION OF THE 1902 BUILDING (PART DEMOLITION PART RETENTION AND CHANGE OF USE TO CAFE, CUSTOMER AND COLLEAGUE FACILITIES). AREA B - OUTLINE: PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT OF UP TO 26 UNITS WITH ASSOCIATED ACCESS AND PARKING; DEMOLITION OF EXISTING BUILDINGS. (LAYOUT AND ACCESS TO BE DETERMINED). | Asda Stores Ltd | Julia Mellor |
| 11/0435/FULL | 18/07/2011 | 12/09/2011 | 23 & 29 YORK STREET 1 & 1A BRIDGE STREET STOURPORT-ON- SEVERN DY139EH | Internal and external works to create 4 No. 1 bed flats | SUNCREST HOLDINGS LTD | Julia McKenzie- Watts |
| 11/0436/LIST | 18/07/2011 | 12/09/2011 | 23 & 29 YORK STREET 1 & 1A BRIDGE STREET STOURPORT-ON- SEVERN DY139EH | Internal and external works to create 4 No. 1bed flats | SUNCREST HOLDINGS LTD | Julia McKenzie- Watts |

| WF No. | Valid Date | Target Date | Address of Site | Description of Proposal | Applicant | Case Officer |
|--------------|------------|-------------|---|--|-------------------------|--------------------|
| 11/0439/FULL | 21/07/2011 | 15/09/2011 | HERONS PARK NURSING HOME HERONSWOOD ROAD KIDDERMINSTER DY104EX | Provision of additional bedroom converted from existing accommodation in association with approved scheme for 24 bedroom extension (09/0731) | ROYAL BAY CARE HOMES | Paul Wrigglesworth |
| 11/0449/FULL | 21/07/2011 | 15/09/2011 | 2 QUEENS ROAD STOURPORT- ON-SEVERN DY130BH | Variation of condition 3 of Planning Permission 10/0745/FULL to allow alternative extraction scheme to be installed | Mr S Gogna | Stuart Allum |
| 11/0450/FULL | 25/07/2011 | 19/09/2011 | THE FINGERPOST CLEOBURY ROAD ROCK KIDDERMINSTER DY149TA | 2 Storey side extension | MR C WOODHOUSE | Stuart Allum |
| 11/0448/OUTL | 26/07/2011 | 20/09/2011 | LAND ADJACENT TO 42 BRIAR HILL CHADDESLEY CORBETT KIDDERMINSTER DY104SH | Erection of a single storey dwelling | Mr A Gregory | Stuart Allum |
| 11/0458/FULL | 27/07/2011 | 21/09/2011 | THE SALON BROUGHTON COTTAGE THE VILLAGE CHADDESLEY CORBETT KIDDERMINSTER DY104SA | Single storey extension to rear with internal modifications to create separate living accommodation; replacement of rear flat roof with pitched truss gable roof; single storey extension to side to provide entrance to flats | MISS V PAVLOVIC | Stuart Allum |
| 11/0460/LIST | 27/07/2011 | 21/09/2011 | THE SALON BROUGHTON COTTAGE THE VILLAGE CHADDESLEY CORBETT KIDDERMINSTER DY104SA | Single storey extension to rear with internal modifications to create separate living accommodation; replacement of rear flat roof with pitched truss gable roof; single storey extension to side to provide entrance to flats | MISS V PAVLOVIC | Stuart Allum |
| 11/0464/LIST | 29/07/2011 | 23/09/2011 | 236 WESTBOURNE STREET BEWDLEY DY121BS | Installation of satellite dish on chimney | Mrs J B Roberts | James Houghton |

| WF No. | Valid Date | Target Date | Address of Site | Description of Proposal | Applicant | Case Officer |
|--------------|------------|-------------|--|--|-------------------------------|----------------------|
| 11/0469/FULL | 01/08/2011 | 26/09/2011 | RICHMOND ROAD BEWDLEY | Erection of 5 No. affordable dwellings | Wyre Forest Community Housing | James Houghton |
| 11/0471/FULL | 01/08/2011 | 26/09/2011 | CLENT AVENUE BIRCHEN COPPICE KIDDERMINSTER | 7 No. Affordable Dwellings (5 no. 2 bed and 2 no. 3 bed - alternative scheme to planning approval 08/0311/FULL) | Wyre Forest Community Housing | Julia McKenzie-Watts |
| 11/0511/FULL | 15/08/2011 | 14/11/2011 | MANOR INN 76 MINSTER ROAD STOURPORT-ON-SEVERN DY138AP | Construction of a 70 bed Care Home (Use Class 2) with associated parking (after demolition of existing building) | STOURPORT ON SEVERN CARE LTD | Julia Mellor |
| 11/0534/RESE | 23/08/2011 | 22/11/2011 | FORMER CARPETS OF WORTH SEVERN ROAD STOURPORT-ON- SEVERN DY139EX | Redevelopment of the site to provide a mix of uses including Residential, Class A Retail Uses, Class B Employment, Class C Hotel and Class D Assembly and Leisure (Reserved Matters following Outline Approval 09/0588/OUTL - Access, Appearance Landscaping, Layout and Scale to be considered) | STOURPORT CORPORATION NV | John Baggott |
| 11/0545/FULL | 26/08/2011 | 21/10/2011 | TOP ACRE OFF CURSLEY LANE SHENSTONE KIDDERMINSTER DY104DX | Application under S.73 to vary conditions 1 and 2 of Planning Permission 06/1062/FULL to remove all reference to the limited time period of 5 years for the stationing of caravans for residential purposes, the laying of hardstanding and erection of a close boarded and gravel board fence | MRS S J SMITH | John Baggott |

| WF No. | Valid Date | Target Date | Address of Site | Description of Proposal | Applicant | Case Officer |
|---------------|------------|-------------|--|---|------------------|----------------------|
| 11/0533/CAC | 30/08/2011 | 25/10/2011 | CLENSMORE STREET KIDDERMINSTER DY102JY | Reduction of front wall of existing Cornmill building and associated wall to canal (to facilitate redevelopment of the site for residential purposes under planning application reference 11/0163/FULL) | Bellway Homes | Julia Mellor |
| 11/0543/CERTE | 31/08/2011 | 26/10/2011 | SMITHS TURNING 5A WHITEHILL ROAD KIDDERMINSTER DY116JH | The use of an area of land as garden land | MR J CADDICK | Paul Wrigglesworth |
| 11/0548/FULL | 06/09/2011 | 01/11/2011 | 18 LANSDOWN GREEN KIDDERMINSTER DY116PX | Proposed front extension to form porch, extended lounge with canopy roof over and flat roof extension to front of garage | Mr A Stokes | Julia McKenzie-Watts |
| 11/0551/FULL | 08/09/2011 | 03/11/2011 | UNIT 16 WILDEN INDUSTRIAL ESTATE STOURPORT-ON-SEVERN DY139JY | Repairs to reinstate damage to edge of yard | Mr K Lee | Stuart Allum |
| 11/0588/FULL | 28/09/2011 | 23/11/2011 | 45 COMBERTON PARK ROAD KIDDERMINSTER DY103DY | Two-storey side extension, single storey rear extension and bay window to front | Mr R J Dean | Stuart Allum |
| 11/0591/FULL | 03/10/2011 | 28/11/2011 | THE GRAND TURK 207 SUTTON ROAD KIDDERMINSTER DY116QJ | Conversion of existing public house to form 6 No. one bedroom flats and associated amenity areas and car parking | Symfonia Ltd | Julia McKenzie-Watts |
| 11/0592/FULL | 05/10/2011 | 30/11/2011 | 106 MARLPOOL LANE KIDDERMINSTER DY115HR | Installation of side facing window (facing 105 Marlpool Lane) | MR R M JONES | Julia McKenzie-Watts |
| 11/0594/FULL | 05/10/2011 | 30/11/2011 | VICARAGE FARM FOLD LANE CHADDESLEY CORBETT KIDDERMINSTER DY104SA | Proposed Alterations To Include Rooflights, Conversion Of Roof Space to Form En-Suite, Window Alterations, Internal Reconfiguration. | Mr & Mrs A Davis | Paul Wrigglesworth |

| WF No. | Valid Date | Target Date | Address of Site | Description of Proposal | Applicant | Case Officer |
|--------------|------------|-------------|--|---|-------------------|----------------------|
| 11/0596/FULL | 05/10/2011 | 30/11/2011 | LAND OFF RIBBESFORD ROAD BEWDLEY | Change of use of land to commercial stud farm and erection of stabling | Mr & Mrs P Parker | James Houghton |
| 11/0593/FULL | 06/10/2011 | 01/12/2011 | 2B NORTHWOOD LANE BEWDLEY DY121AH | Single storey side extension | MR C POUNEY | James Houghton |
| 11/0598/TREE | 10/10/2011 | 05/12/2011 | 6 THE CROFT KIDDERMINSTER DY116LX | Reduce and trim a Turkey Oak in rear garden | Mr G Mezzone | Alvan Kingston |
| 11/0599/FULL | 10/10/2011 | 05/12/2011 | 2 CONNAUGHT AVENUE KIDDERMINSTER DY116LS | Erection of two storey side extension and extension to garage in garage court | Mr P Baynton | Paul Wrigglesworth |
| 11/0601/FULL | 10/10/2011 | 09/01/2012 | MORGAN CERAMICS BEWDLEY ROAD STOURPORT-ON-SEVERN DY138QR | Removal of Condition 10 of 10/0321/OUTL to remove requirement for a continuous block of single aspect houses along the south west boundary | Redrow Homes | Paul Round |
| 11/0602/FULL | 10/10/2011 | 05/12/2011 | 1 MUSKOKA BEWDLEY DY122BJ | Single storey side extension | Mr R Farmer | James Houghton |
| 11/0600/FULL | 11/10/2011 | 06/12/2011 | 30 NEVILLE AVENUE KIDDERMINSTER DY117AL | Ground floor and first floor rear and side extension | Mr Mark Sivelle | Paul Wrigglesworth |
| 11/0603/LIST | 11/10/2011 | 06/12/2011 | 16 SEVERN SIDE SOUTH BEWDLEY DY122DX | Alteration of window to kitchen to form french doors, replacement of other windows on rear elevation. Other alterations to internal layout. | Mr & Mrs P Hayden | Stuart Allum |
| 11/0604/FULL | 12/10/2011 | 07/12/2011 | 11 KENILWORTH DRIVE KIDDERMINSTER DY101YD | Replacement and resiting of boundary fence, so that it aligns with adjacent property, No. 15 Kenilworth Drive | MR A PERRY-KEENE | Julia McKenzie-Watts |

| WF No. | Valid Date | Target Date | Address of Site | Description of Proposal | Applicant | Case Officer |
|---------------|------------|-------------|---|--|------------------------------|----------------------|
| 11/0605/FULL | 12/10/2011 | 07/12/2011 | SLINGFIELD MILL WEAVERS WHARF KIDDERMINSTER DY101AA | Erection of 4 no CCTV cameras to the exterior of Slingfield Mill | Premier Inn Hotels Ltd | Paul Wrigglesworth |
| 11/0606/LIST | 12/10/2011 | 07/12/2011 | SLINGFIELD MILL WEAVERS WHARF KIDDERMINSTER DY101AA | Installation of CCTV cameras and external signage for new Premier Inn Hotel and plaster boarding of walls to third floor guest lobby | Premier Inn Hotels Ltd | Paul Wrigglesworth |
| 11/0610/FULL | 12/10/2011 | 07/12/2011 | 22 LINDEN AVENUE KIDDERMINSTER DY103AB | Single storey front extension | Mr M Kragulj | Stuart Allum |
| 11/0611/CERTP | 14/10/2011 | 09/12/2011 | 12 NEW WOOD LANE BLAKEDOWN KIDDERMINSTER DY103LD | Certificate of Lawful Development: Proposed Development - Single storey rear extension | Mr N Poole | Paul Wrigglesworth |
| 11/0608/TREE | 17/10/2011 | 12/12/2011 | 37 ROUND HILL WHARF KIDDERMINSTER DY116US | Removal of a group of minor oak limbs growing over the rear garden | MR BRYAN TAYLOR - JUST TREES | Alvan Kingston |
| 11/0609/TREE | 17/10/2011 | 12/12/2011 | ELFIN GLEN GORST HILL ROCK KIDDERMINSTER DY149YH | Removal of an oak tree | MR P ROGERS | Alvan Kingston |
| 11/0613/FULL | 17/10/2011 | 12/12/2011 | 54 HIGHFIELD ROAD KIDDERMINSTER DY102TJ | Extension - rear conservatory and WC | Mr D Clarke | Stuart Allum |
| 11/0612/FULL | 18/10/2011 | 13/12/2011 | 31 FARFIELD KIDDERMINSTER DY101UQ | Erection of a two storey rear extension (resubmission of 11/0402/FULL) | Ms K R O'Kell | Stuart Allum |
| 11/0614/LIST | 18/10/2011 | 13/12/2011 | THURSTON COURT SEVERN SIDE SOUTH BEWDLEY DY122DX | Internal and external repairs to building | Residents of Thurston Court | James Houghton |
| 11/0615/FULL | 18/10/2011 | 13/12/2011 | BENTLEY GROVE CURSLEY LANE MUSTOW GREEN KIDDERMINSTER DY104LF | Change of use to Residential Care Home - Use Class C2 | MADE ARCHITECTURE | Julia McKenzie-Watts |

| WF No. | Valid Date | Target Date | Address of Site | Description of Proposal | Applicant | Case Officer |
|--------------|------------|-------------|---|--|--------------------------------|----------------|
| 11/0616/FULL | 20/10/2011 | 15/12/2011 | ALPHA ADHESIVES & SEALANTS LTD LLEWELLYN CLOSE SANDY LANE INDUSTRIAL ESTATE STOURPORT-ON-SEVERN DY139RH | Extension to existing general industrial building for the continued purpose of manufacturing, storage and shipment | ALPHA ADHESIVES & SEALANTS LTD | James Houghton |
| 11/0619/FULL | 20/10/2011 | 15/12/2011 | WITLEY JONES FURNITURE LTD BEECH HOUSE SANDY LANE TITTON STOURPORT-ON-SEVERN DY139QA | Proposed extension to Furniture Manufacturing Unit and installation of P.V. panels | WITLEY JONES FURNITURE LTD | James Houghton |
| 11/0620/FULL | 20/10/2011 | 15/12/2011 | BROOM MEADOW COTTAGES BROOME STOURBRIDGE DY9 0EZ | Refurbishment of existing property, demolition of existing single storey side extension, erection of new two storey side extension with new vehicular access and detached garage | Mr D Pheysey | Stuart Allum |
| 11/0617/TREE | 24/10/2011 | 19/12/2011 | 510 CHESTER ROAD SOUTH KIDDERMINSTER DY101XD | Crown raise oak tree | Mrs E Meredith | Alvan Kingston |
| 11/0618/TREE | 24/10/2011 | 19/12/2011 | 107 HABBERLEY ROAD KIDDERMINSTER DY115PW | Crown raise two cedar trees to 5m | Mr M Knott | Alvan Kingston |
| 11/0621/TREE | 24/10/2011 | 19/12/2011 | 15 TRINITY FIELDS KIDDERMINSTER DY102DF | Fell two Scotts Pine and crown one Scotts Pine | Mr J Suesse | Alvan Kingston |
| 11/0622/FULL | 24/10/2011 | 19/12/2011 | 19 THE RIDGEWAY STOURPORT-ON-SEVERN DY138XT | Single storey garage and utility extension to side and rear | Mr & Mrs Pullen | Julia Mellor |
| 11/0623/FULL | 24/10/2011 | 19/12/2011 | 20 CHICHESTER AVENUE KIDDERMINSTER DY115JA | Two storey side extension and single storey rear side extension | Mr & Mrs Clarke | Julia Mellor |
| 11/0628/FULL | 24/10/2011 | 19/12/2011 | WILD ACRES 10 NEW WOOD LANE BLAKEDOWN KIDDERMINSTER DY103LD | Construction of linked drawing room building and alterations of existing stable block and conversion to swimming pool hall | Mr E Butterfield | James Houghton |

| WF No. | Valid Date | Target Date | Address of Site | Description of Proposal | Applicant | Case Officer |
|--------------|------------|-------------|--|---|-------------------------|----------------------|
| 11/0629/FULL | 24/10/2011 | 19/12/2011 | FAIRHOLM RIVER SIDE NORTH BEWDLEY DY121AB | Rear extension to form bedroom and bathroom | Mr & Mrs D Corbett | Paul Round |
| 11/0630/FULL | 25/10/2011 | 20/12/2011 | 17 JAY PARK CRESCENT KIDDERMINSTER DY104JP | Kitchen and hall extension at the front of property | MR N DESMOND | Julia McKenzie-Watts |
| 11/0631/FULL | 26/10/2011 | 21/12/2011 | 11 LYTTLETON ROAD BEWDLEY DY122BU | Single storey side extension | Miss S Miles | James Houghton |
| 11/0632/FULL | 27/10/2011 | 22/12/2011 | GREENACRES WORCESTER ROAD CLENT STOURBRIDGE DY9 0EP | Extensions and alterations to detached dwelling | Mrs R J Coton | James Houghton |
| 11/0633/FULL | 27/10/2011 | 22/12/2011 | 12 LYNDHOLM ROAD KIDDERMINSTER DY101TJ | Rear Conservatory | Mr & Mrs Carey | Stuart Allum |
| 11/0634/FULL | 28/10/2011 | 23/12/2011 | LAND OFF GREY GREEN LANE BEWDLEY | Conversion of redundant agricultural building to form new dwelling and associated work | Central Building Design | Paul Round |
| 11/0635/LIST | 28/10/2011 | 23/12/2011 | STRAWBERRY FIELDS BARN CLEOBURY ROAD BEWDLEY DY122QJ | Installation of wood burning stove and associated external flue | MR J LEACH | James Houghton |
| 11/0636/FULL | 31/10/2011 | 26/12/2011 | HODGE HILL FARM BARN BIRMINGHAM ROAD KIDDERMINSTER DY103NS | Change of use of existing outbuilding to form 5No. Residential dwellings with associated garaging and parking (Renewal of Planning Permission 08/0659/FULL) | MOOR PARK TRUST | Paul Wrigglesworth |
| 11/0637/FULL | 31/10/2011 | 26/12/2011 | PLOT 2 KINGSFORD STORES KINGSFORD LANE WOLVERLEY KIDDERMINSTER DY115SA | Erection of detached two bay garage and tractor shed | Mr I Jones | Paul Round |
| 11/0639/FULL | 31/10/2011 | 26/12/2011 | 27 ENDEAVOUR PLACE STOURPORT-ON-SEVERN DY139RL | First floor side extension over existing garage | Mr M Ballard | James Houghton |

| WF No. | Valid Date | Target Date | Address of Site | Description of Proposal | Applicant | Case Officer |
|--------------|------------|-------------|---|---|-----------------------------------|----------------|
| 11/0640/S106 | 31/10/2011 | 26/12/2011 | CASTLE LOCKS CASTLE ROAD KIDDERMINSTER DY116TH | Variation of Section 106 Agreement to allow reduced Public Open Space contributions | GREAT TITCHFIELD DEVELOPMENTS LTD | Paul Round |
| 11/0641/FULL | 31/10/2011 | 26/12/2011 | ROUSBINE CARAVAN PARK CALLOW HILL ROCK KIDDERMINSTER DY149DD | Retention of two holiday caravans | MR & MRS LUNNON | Paul Round |
| 11/0648/FULL | 31/10/2011 | 26/12/2011 | 38 SHRUBBERY STREET KIDDERMINSTER DY102QY | Proposed bay window | Mr E Dirita | Stuart Allum |
| 11/0638/TREE | 01/11/2011 | 27/12/2011 | 21 BELVEDERE CLOSE KIDDERMINSTER DY103AT | Fell a scots pine | MR R BERRY | Alvan Kingston |
| 11/0643/FULL | 01/11/2011 | 27/12/2011 | 1 FOLD COURT THE VILLAGE CHADDESLEY CORBETT KIDDERMINSTER DY104SA | Installation of solar panels | Mr A Page | Stuart Allum |
| 11/0272/FULL | 02/11/2011 | 28/12/2011 | CAUNSALL BRIDGE CAUNSALL ROAD CAUNSALL KIDDERMINSTER DY103RT | Installation of CCTV Camera mounted on 6m steel pole, powered by solar panel | BRITISH WATERWAYS | Paul Round |
| 11/0646/FULL | 02/11/2011 | 28/12/2011 | STONE HOUSE STONE KIDDERMINSTER DY104BG | Extension to form swimming pool, extension over snooker room to form housekeeping accommodation, erection of garage building, reduction of rear levels, alterations to fenestration and internal layout (Renewal of Planning Permission 08/1058/FULL) | Mr J Broadhurst | Stuart Allum |
| 11/0647/S106 | 02/11/2011 | 28/12/2011 | SEVERN ROAD STOURPORT-ON- SEVERN | Variation of Section 106 agreement to enable a change to the timescale relating to the approval and implementation of Public Art | Tesco Stores Ltd | Julia Mellor |

| WF No. | Valid Date | Target Date | Address of Site | Description of Proposal | Applicant | Case Officer |
|--------------|------------|-------------|---|---|-------------------------------------|----------------------|
| 11/0683/LIST | 02/11/2011 | 28/12/2011 | STONE HOUSE STONE KIDDERMINSTER DY104BG | Extension to form swimming pool, extension over snooker room to form housekeeping accommodation, erection of garage building, reduction of rear levels, alterations to fenestration and internal layout (Renewal of Listed Building Consent 08/1059/LIST) | Mr J Broadhurst | Stuart Allum |
| 10/0056/FULL | 03/11/2011 | 29/12/2011 | SAIWEN LOWER HEATH STOURPORT-ON-SEVERN DY139PQ | Change of use of land to the rear of Sai Wen for a Gypsy Caravan Site; for the siting of five static caravans, and up to 3 touring caravan pitches, the erection of an amenity block and retention of existing dwelling for residential use | Mrs Betsy Wilson | Julia Mellor |
| 11/0644/FULL | 03/11/2011 | 29/12/2011 | LAND ADJACENT TO THE GREEN CHADDESLEY CORBETT KIDDERMINSTER DY104SL | Demolition of existing redundant garages and construction of four affordable houses | Wyre Forest Community Housing | Paul Wrigglesworth |
| 11/0645/FULL | 03/11/2011 | 29/12/2011 | 60 HIGHFIELD ROAD KIDDERMINSTER DY102TJ | Proposed extension to provide "granny flat" | Mrs L Cubbin | Julia McKenzie-Watts |
| 11/0649/FULL | 03/11/2011 | 29/12/2011 | 6 MARLOWE CLOSE KIDDERMINSTER DY103QT | Proposed Front and rear side extensions and conversion of garage to accommodation. | Mr M Egginton | Julia McKenzie-Watts |
| 11/0650/FULL | 07/11/2011 | 02/01/2012 | 13 SEVERN SIDE SOUTH BEWDLEY DY122DX | Single-storey rear extension to form garden room, internal alterations to form ground floor toilet, new porthole window to passageway | Mr S Kocher | Stuart Allum |

| WF No. | Valid Date | Target Date | Address of Site | Description of Proposal | Applicant | Case Officer |
|--------------|------------|-------------|--|---|--------------------------|----------------------|
| 11/0651/LIST | 07/11/2011 | 02/01/2012 | 13 SEVERN SIDE SOUTH BEWDLEY DY122DX | Single-storey rear extension to form garden room, internal alterations to form ground floor toilet, new porthole window to passageway | Mr S Kocher | Stuart Allum |
| 11/0652/ADVE | 08/11/2011 | 03/01/2012 | RAMADA HOTEL & RESORT HABBERLEY ROAD BEWDLEY DY121LA | 2 No. internally illuminated totem signs, 1 No. non-illuminated directional sign and 1 No. internally illuminated fascia sign | Mercure Hotel | Paul Round |
| 11/0653/FULL | 09/11/2011 | 04/01/2012 | 18 WYRE HILL BEWDLEY DY122UE | New ground and first floor windows in side elevations and dropped kerb | Mr J Rushgrove | Julia McKenzie-Watts |
| 11/0654/ADVE | 09/11/2011 | 04/01/2012 | WEST MIDLAND SAFARI PARK SPRING GROVE BEWDLEY DY121LF | Re-theme existing entrance signs | Mr D Chorley | Paul Round |
| 11/0655/TREE | 09/11/2011 | 04/01/2012 | 1-6 ANTON CLOSE BEWDLEY DY121HX | Fell a Common Lime, behind No.10 Campion Way | Mrs H Lad | Alvan Kingston |
| 11/0656/TREE | 09/11/2011 | 04/01/2012 | 10 CAMPION WAY BEWDLEY DY121HW | Reduce stem and remove branches of Common Lime | Mrs H Lad | Alvan Kingston |
| 11/0658/FULL | 09/11/2011 | 04/01/2012 | 17 LABURNUM GROVE KIDDERMINSTER DY115PY | Two storey side extension | Mr & Mrs Jones | Julia McKenzie-Watts |
| 11/0659/FULL | 10/11/2011 | 05/01/2012 | FERNHALLS FARM GREENWAY ROCK KIDDERMINSTER DY149SH | Conversion of retained barns/workshop with modifications to form three dwellings. Demolition of three steel framed buildings and clearance of part demolished buildings | All Weather Developments | Paul Round |
| 11/0660/FULL | 10/11/2011 | 05/01/2012 | VICARAGE FARM THE VILLAGE CHADDESLEY CORBETT KIDDERMINSTER DY104SA | Stable block and change of use of land for the keeping of horses | Mr & Mrs A Davis | Paul Wrigglesworth |

| WF No. | Valid Date | Target Date | Address of Site | Description of Proposal | Applicant | Case Officer |
|--------------|------------|-------------|---|--|------------------------|----------------------|
| 11/0661/FULL | 10/11/2011 | 05/01/2012 | SION BARN HILLPOOL KIDDERMINSTER DY104PF | Proposed car port (with pitched and photovoltaic tiles) and log store | Mr A Watson | Julia McKenzie-Watts |
| 11/0662/FULL | 10/11/2011 | 05/01/2012 | HODGE HILL NURSERIES BIRMINGHAM ROAD KIDDERMINSTER DY103NR | Change of use from retail sales of restricted category goods to retail sales of bird and pet foods | MR P NEEDHAM | Paul Wrigglesworth |
| 11/0663/FULL | 14/11/2011 | 09/01/2012 | FISHERS CASTLE SANDY LANE HARVINGTON KIDDERMINSTER DY104NF | Proposed alterations to existing loft conversion over garage including insertion of dormer windows | MR J PATTERSON | Stuart Allum |
| 11/0664/FULL | 14/11/2011 | 09/01/2012 | NEW HOUSE FARM BELBROUGHTON ROAD BLAKEDOWN KIDDERMINSTER DY103JH | Variation of Condition 5 of Planning Permission WF/0193/01 (Restricting floodlighting) to now read "Floodlighting of the manege hereby approved shall be limited to three lights, fitted with cowls or hoods, fixed at height of 4.3m to the south elevation of the adjacent stable building (identified as Stable 1 on plan 3149/200) and shall not be operated during night-time hours 21:00 to 06:30" (Retrospective) | Mr J Raggett | James Houghton |
| 11/0665/FULL | 15/11/2011 | 10/01/2012 | OAKFIELD FARM CAKEBOLE CHADDESLEY CORBETT KIDDERMINSTER DY104RQ | Proposed kitchen, utility and bedroom extension with en-suite | Mr N Meredith | Stuart Allum |
| 11/0666/FULL | 15/11/2011 | 14/02/2012 | WHARTON PARK GOLF CLUB LONGBANK BEWDLEY DY122QW | Erection of building for Golf Driving Range and Associated Works | WHARTON PARK GOLF CLUB | Paul Round |
| 11/0667/FULL | 15/11/2011 | 10/01/2012 | RHONELEA MUSTOW GREEN KIDDERMINSTER DY104LD | Proposed two storey extensions and front single storey extension with lean to and canopy to front of dwelling. Resubmission of withdrawn application ref: 11/0574/FULL. | Mr A Davis | Julia McKenzie-Watts |

| WF No. | Valid Date | Target Date | Address of Site | Description of Proposal | Applicant | Case Officer |
|--------------|------------|-------------|---|--|-------------------------------|----------------------|
| 11/0668/FULL | 15/11/2011 | 10/01/2012 | CHADDESLEY GARAGE CHADDESLEY CORBETT KIDDERMINSTER DY104QN | Install 16 solar pv panels onto the south facing roof of this property to generate electricity | HINGLEY & CALLOW OILS LTD T/A | Stuart Allum |
| 11/0673/FULL | 15/11/2011 | 10/01/2012 | CALLOW GAS UNIT 6 RUSHOCK TRADING ESTATE RUSHOCK DROITWICH WR9 0NR | Install 16 solar pv panels onto the south west facing roof | CALLOW GAS | Paul Wrigglesworth |
| 11/0674/FULL | 16/11/2011 | 11/01/2012 | 5 WILLOWFIELD DRIVE KIDDERMINSTER DY115DN | Two single storey side extension | Mr & Mrs Morgan | James Houghton |
| 11/0670/FULL | 17/11/2011 | 12/01/2012 | 39 BARNETTS LANE KIDDERMINSTER DY103HH | Demolition of existing dwelling and the construction of four new dwellings, garages and access drive | Collective Ltd | Paul Wrigglesworth |
| 11/0672/FULL | 17/11/2011 | 12/01/2012 | D M S CHROMIUM PLATING LTD FIRS INDUSTRIAL ESTATE KIDDERMINSTER DY117QN | Erection of single storey extension to rear of existing works to form additional storage - overcladding part of existing front elevation and office to enhance appearances | D M S CHROMIUM PLATING LTD | Julia McKenzie-Watts |
| 11/0677/FULL | 17/11/2011 | 12/01/2012 | FROG HALL COTTAGE HEIGHTINGTON BEWDLEY DY122XR | Proposed Two Storey Side Extension and Rear Decking. Diversion Of Existing Footpath. | Mr B Norgrove | James Houghton |
| 11/0671/TREE | 18/11/2011 | 13/01/2012 | HIGHBANK CLEOBURY ROAD BEWDLEY DY122PG | Crown Ash Tree by 25 % | Mrs a McKie | Alvan Kingston |
| 11/0675/FULL | 18/11/2011 | 13/01/2012 | 10 ADAM STREET AND REAR OF 6 ADAM STREET KIDDERMINSTER DY116PS | Erection of 5 No. flats and car parking to the rear of No. 5 (Demolition of builder yard buildings) | MESSRS CONNOLLY & JONES | Paul Wrigglesworth |

| WF No. | Valid Date | Target Date | Address of Site | Description of Proposal | Applicant | Case Officer |
|--------------|------------|-------------|--|--|--------------------------------------|----------------------|
| 11/0676/FULL | 18/11/2011 | 13/01/2012 | 6 ADAM STREET KIDDERMINSTER DY116PS | Demolition of bungalow and erection of three terraced houses with garage and parking to the rear of number 5 | Mr P T Jones & Sons | Paul Wrigglesworth |
| 11/0678/FULL | 18/11/2011 | 13/01/2012 | LOWER BARNS COTTAGE HOLLIES LANE FRANCHE KIDDERMINSTER DY115RN | Two storey rear extension and single storey side extension | Mrs P Patterson | Julia McKenzie-Watts |
| 11/0679/FULL | 18/11/2011 | 13/01/2012 | 4 BROCKTON PLACE STOURPORT-ON-SEVERN DY130LE | Retention Of 2No Bungalows and Garages non compliant with previously approved scheme under 07/0375/FULL | Mr A Evans | Paul Round |
| 11/0680/FULL | 21/11/2011 | 16/01/2012 | KING CHARLES HIGH SCHOOL HILL GROVE HOUSE COMBERTON ROAD KIDDERMINSTER DY101XA | New Floodlights and Security boundary fencing to exterior Astro turf pitch | KING CHARLES HIGH SCHOOL | James Houghton |
| 11/0682/FULL | 21/11/2011 | 16/01/2012 | 2 ASPEN WALK STOURPORT-ON- SEVERN DY138TZ | Relocation of side boundary fence | Mr J Minor | James Houghton |
| 11/0684/LIST | 21/11/2011 | 16/01/2012 | VICTORIA BRIDGE ARLEY BEWDLEY | Replacement of existing timber inspection platform with new GRP platform | Severn Valley Railway (Holdings) Plc | John Baggott |
| 11/0681/FULL | 22/11/2011 | 21/02/2012 | 37 & 38 OLDNALL ROAD KIDDERMINSTER DY103HN | Demolition of existing properties and erection of care home under use class C2 and associated works | Castle oak Developments Ltd | Paul Wrigglesworth |

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

Planning Committee

13 December 2011

PLANNING AND ENFORCEMENT APPEALS

| Appeal and Application Number | Planning Inspectorate Reference | Appellant | Site (Proposal) | Form of Appeal and Start Date | Written Reps. or Statement Required By | Proof of Evidence required by | Public Inquiry, Hearing or Site Visit date | Decision |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------|--|-------------------------------|--|-------------------------------|--|----------|
| WFA1392 11/0486/ENF | APP/R1845/C/11 /2158124 | Mrs I Harding | 12 STOKESAY CLOSE KIDDERMINSTER DY101YB Unauthorised erection of boundary wall (Enforcement Case No 10/0048/ENF) | WR 10/08/2011 | 21/09/2011 | | | |
| WFA1393 11/0489/ENF | APP/R1845/C/11 /2158189 | Mr G Attwood | LAND AT THE ROBIN HOOD PH DRAYTON ROAD DRAYTON Unauthorised erection of a building (Enforcement Case 10/0173/ENF) | WR 11/08/2011 | 22/09/2011 | | 21/11/2011 | |

| Appeal and Application Number | Planning Inspectorate Reference | Appellant | Site (Proposal) | Form of Appeal and Start Date | Written Reps. or Statement Required By | Proof of Evidence required by | Public Inquiry, Hearing or Site Visit date | Decision |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------|---|-------------------------------|--|-------------------------------|--|----------|
| WFA1395 10/0635/FULL | APP/R1845/A/11 /2158862 | Willmar Hire | FIVE ACRES HEIGHTINGTON ROAD BLISS GATE KIDDERMINSTER Replacement storage and agricultural machinery workshop building | HE 01/11/2011 | 13/12/2011 | 27/12/2011 | 24/01/2012 Loom Room, | |
| WFA1396 11/0383/FULL | APP/R1845/A/11 /2159374 | Mr M Daneshfar | DRIVING TEST CENTRE 21 CASTLE ROAD KIDDERMINSTER Internal alterations and conversion to form 3no 3 bedroom apartments | WR 31/08/2011 | 12/10/2011 | | | |
| WFA1397 11/0193/LIST | APP/R1845/E/11 /2155253 | Ms Emily Field | 5 RICKETTS PLACE STOURPORT ROAD BEWDLEY DY121DW To add velux window to rear roof | WR 20/09/2011 | 01/11/2011 | | | |

| Appeal and Application Number | Planning Inspectorate Reference | Appellant | Site (Proposal) | Form of Appeal and Start Date | Written Reps. or Statement Required By | Proof of Evidence required by | Public Inquiry, Hearing or Site Visit date | Decision |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------|---|-------------------------------|--|-------------------------------|--|----------|
| WFA1398 11/0498/FULL | APP/R1845/A/11 /2163375 | Mr T Smith | THE HOLLIES TRIMPLEY LANE SHATTERFORD BEWDLEY DY121RL Change of use of land to site one static caravan for one gypsy family | HE 07/11/2011 | 19/12/2011 | | | |
| WFA1399 11/0428/FULL | APP/R1845/D/11 /2163281 | Mr D Warren | 8 BRIAR HILL CHADDESLEY CORBETT KIDDERMINSTER Two storey side extension | WR 10/11/2011 | | | | |
| WFA1400 11/0443/LIST | APP/R1845/E/11 /2164038 | Mr M Jackson | 1, 2 & 3 HIGH STREET BEWDLEY DY122DH Retrospective application for retention and alteration of external render | WR 18/11/2011 | 30/12/2011 | | | |

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

PLANNING COMMITTEE
13TH DECEMBER 2011

Monthly progress report on performance against NI 157 targets for determining planning applications

| OPEN | |
|-------------------------|---|
| DIRECTOR: | Director of Planning and Regulatory Services |
| CONTACT OFFICER: | John Baggott – Extension 2515 John.Baggott@wyreforestdc.gov.uk |
| APPENDICES: | None |

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide Members with a monthly progress report on performance against national indicators (NI 157, formerly BV 109).

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 **That the report be noted.**

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 At Full Council in May 2006, it was agreed as part of the Recovery Plan that a report on the performance against best value performance indicators (BVPI 109, now NI 157) be reported to the Planning (Development Control) Committee on a monthly basis.

- 3.2 The national targets for determining planning applications are as follows:

| | | |
|-------------------------------|---|----------------------|
| NI 157 a (Major applications) | - | 60% within 13 weeks. |
| NI 157 b (Minor applications) | - | 65% within 8 weeks. |
| NI 157 c (other applications) | - | 80% within 8 weeks. |

- 3.3 In addition to these national targets there are Local targets set out within the Business Plan for 2011/12. These are as follows:

| | | |
|--------------------|---|----------------------|
| Major applications | - | 65% within 13 weeks. |
| Minor applications | - | 75% within 8 weeks. |
| Other applications | - | 85% within 8 weeks. |

4. PERFORMANCE

Major applications

- 4.1 The following table shows the quarterly performance figures for major applications for the period from 1st January 2010 to 30th September 2011. It also shows the performance at the time of compiling the report within the 3rd Quarter of 2011/12 although the relevant period does not end until 31st December 2011 and as such these figures may be subject to further change.
- 4.2 As previously advised, due to the continued low number of new major applications that have been received over recent months, performance in this area has been affected due to the number of older and more complex major applications which have reached final determination and which have already gone beyond 13 weeks. Whilst every effort has been made to manage these applications effectively, performance in this category is becoming increasingly difficult and performance during both the 1st and 2nd Quarters of 2011/12 has regrettably fallen below the National target. Performance is likely to continue to be affected in the current and future quarters.

| Quarter | No. determined | No. determined within 13 weeks | % determined within 13 weeks |
|---|----------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1 January – 31 March 2010 | 5 | 3 | 60.00% |
| 1 April – 30 June 2010 | 9 | 6 | 66.67% |
| 1 July – 30 September 2010 | 3 | 2 | 66.67% |
| 1 October – 31 December 2010 | 13 | 9 | 69.23% |
| 1 January – 31 March 2011 | 6 | 4 | 66.67% |
| 1 April – 30 June 2011 | 5 | 2 | 40.00% |
| 1 July – 30 September 2011 | 6 | 3 | 50.00% |
| 1 October – 31 December 2011 (figures taken 21 November 2011) | 8 | 4 | 50.00% |

Minor applications

- 4.3 The following table shows the quarterly performance figures for minor applications for the period from 1st January 2010 to 30th September 2011. It also shows the performance at the time of compiling the report within the 3rd Quarter of 2011/12 although the relevant period does not end until 31st December 2011 and, as such, these figures may be subject to further change. Performance within this category has consistently met the national targets. However, with the continued relatively low numbers of new minor applications having been received, added to older more complex applications reaching final determination, performance in this category is now proving to be a real challenge. In attempting to manage performance during the 1st Quarter of 2011/12, a number of “out of time” applications were retained and not determined until the start of the 2nd Quarter. However the overall number of new minor applications received, and determined, during the 2nd Quarter was ultimately insufficient to compensate for the “out of time” applications resulting in performance regrettably falling below the national target.

| Quarter | No. determined | No. determined within 8 weeks | % determined within 8 weeks |
|---|----------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1 January – 31 March 2010 | 33 | 24 | 72.73% |
| 1 April – 30 June 2010 | 29 | 23 | 79.31% |
| 1 July – 30 September 2010 | 36 | 27 | 75.00% |
| 1 October – 31 December 2010 | 36 | 27 | 75.00% |
| 1 January – 31 March 2011 | 26 | 19 | 73.08% |
| 1 April – 30 June 2011 | 39 | 26 | 66.67% |
| 1 July – 30 September 2011 | 27 | 16 | 59.26% |
| 1 October – 31 December 2011 (figures taken 21 November 2011) | 25 | 11 | 44.00% |

Other applications

- 4.4 The following table shows the quarterly performance figures for other applications for the period from 1st January 2010 to 30th September 2011. It also shows the performance at the time of compiling the report within the 3rd Quarter of 2011/12 although the relevant period does not end until 31st December 2011 and, as such, these figures may be subject to further change.

- 4.5 Performance in this category has consistently met, or been close to meeting, the national targets, but in managing performance during the 1st Quarter of 2011/12 an unusually high number of older applications came to final determination at the end of the Quarter. These had to be suitably managed, with the result being a significant proportion of these applications were determined at the start of the 2nd Quarter of 2011/12, which has had a direct impact upon the performance figures for the 2nd Quarter, with performance regrettably falling short of the national target.

| Quarter | No. determined | No. determined within 8 weeks | % determined within 8 weeks |
|---|----------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1 January – 31 March 2010 | 84 | 72 | 85.71% |
| 1 April – 30 June 2010 | 124 | 111 | 89.52% |
| 1 July – 30 September 2010 | 119 | 94 | 78.99% |
| 1 October – 31 December 2010 | 109 | 91 | 83.49% |
| 1 January – 31 March 2011 | 97 | 84 | 86.60% |
| 1 April – 30 June 2011 | 109 | 88 | 80.73% |
| 1 July – 30 September 2011 | 112 | 79 | 70.54% |
| 1 October – 31 December 2011 (figures taken 21 November 2011) | 65 | 47 | 72.31% |

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no financial implications.

6. LEGAL AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no legal or policy implications.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 7.1 There are risk management issues if performance continues to fail to meet the national targets.

8. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 8.1 This report relates to the analysis of performance levels against national and local indicators. There are no equality impact issues to be addressed.

9. CONCLUSION

- 9.1 Members are advised of continued concerns in respect of the performance against major applications targets, due to the relatively low number of new major applications being received which would offset the older, more complex, major applications which are nearing determination. Similarly, performance against minor applications continues to suffer, and every effort is being made, insofar as is possible, to manage new applications within all categories effectively to ensure that performance in this area shows an improvement during future quarters. Performance in the others category also suffered during the 2nd Quarter, for the reasons referred to in paragraph 4.5, and it is of huge disappointment to report a failure to meet the national target in this category in particular. Procedures have been put into place in an attempt to see an immediate improvement during the 3rd Quarter of 2011/12.
- 9.2 Members are advised that the number of planning case officers was reduced by 1 FTE, with effect from 1st January 2011. The impact of this lost post is now being felt within Development Control which in turn is having an adverse impact upon performance in all categories of applications. Added to which, the numbers of chargeable pre-application enquiries and applications which are not recorded under the NI 157 (e.g. discharge of conditions and non-material amendments) has shown a marked increase in recent months, which in turn has had an knock-on effect overall performance against NI157.
- 9.3 The Council has no control over the number and timing of applications being submitted for determination, but undoubtedly the economic climate has had an impact upon the number of new applications, in all categories, which have been received over recent months.

10. CONSULTEES

- 10.1 None.

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- Report on Recovery Plan (Full Council) – May 2006.
- Monthly progress reports – Planning (DC) Committee (June 2006 – May 2009).
- DCLG: Planning Performance Statistics – Planning (DC) Committee (August 2006 – May 2009).
- Monthly progress reports – Planning Committee (June 2009 – November 2011).
- DCLG : Planning Performance Statistics – Planning Committee (August 2009 – May 2011).

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

PLANNING COMMITTEE

13th DECEMBER 2011

Wyre Forest District Council
 (Land at Clarence Way, Mortimer Grove, Gloucester Way and
 March Grove, Bewdley)
 Tree Preservation Order No. 357

| OPEN | |
|-------------------------|--|
| DIRECTOR: | Director of Planning and Regulatory Services |
| CONTACT OFFICER: | Alvan Kingston – Ext. 2548 Alvan.Kingston@wyreforestdc.gov.uk |
| APPENDICES: | Appendix 1 - Location Map |

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To determine whether the Tree Preservation Order No 357 (2010) relating to trees on Land at Clarence Way, Mortimer Grove, Gloucester Way and March Grove, Bewdley should be confirmed or not with the recommended modifications.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 That the following trees within the Tree Preservation Order (TPO) be confirmed without modifications:

TPO to include

- T1 Coast Redwood (*Sequoia sempervirens*)
- T2 Cedar (*Cedrus*)
- T3 Sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*)
- T4 Coast Redwood (*Sequoia sempervirens*)
- T6 Sweet Chestnut (*Castanea sativa*)
- T7 Lime (*Tilia*)
- T9 Sweet Chestnut (*Castanea sativa*)
- T11 Common Beech (*Fagus sylvatica*)

as these trees contribute to the amenity of the locality and are considered worthy of protection.

- 2.2 That the following modifications are made due to the incorrect identification or plotting during the making of the Preservation Order:

- T8 False Acacia (*Robinia pseudoacacia*) was plotted within the garden of 4 Gloucester Way and is in fact in the garden of No. 2 Gloucester Way.
- T10 Hornbeam (*Carpinus betulus*) was wrongly identified as a Common Beech (*Fagus sylvatica*).
- T12 Purple Beech (*Fagus sylvatica* ‘Dawyck Purple’) was wrongly identified as a Common Beech (*Fagus sylvatica*).

- **G1. 7 Common Limes (*Tilia europaea*) & 2 Sycamores (*Acer pseudoplatanus*) be altered to include only 1 Common lime (*Tilia x europaea*) and 2 Sycamores (*Acer pseudoplatanus*) and to change the address as the group is situation on 3 March Grove. Four of the limes are given individual classifications of T13, T14, T15, & T16.**
- **G2. 16 Yew (*Taxus*) incorrect numbers of trees within this group. There are in fact 18 Common Yews and 1 Field Maple within this group.**

These trees should also be included within the Order as they also contribute to the amenity of the locality and are considered worthy of protection.

2.3 That the following trees be removed from the Order as they are poorer quality trees that are restricting the growth of better specimens:

- **Two Common lime (*Tilia x europaea*) that were designated within G1.**
- **T5 Birch (*Betula*).**

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 During 2008 and 2009 the Council carried out a re-surveying of all Area Tree Preservation Orders that were made pre 1975. This was carried out for a number of reasons, but was mainly due to instructions sent from Central Government that require all local authorities to keep their TPOs up-to-date and in good order.

3.2 The original TPO at this site was made in 1966, before the current residential estate was constructed.

4. OFFICER COMMENTS

4.1 As a result of development of the site many trees find themselves in small to moderate sized gardens, where the relationship between them and the new dwellings is not ideal.

4.2 However the trees have been present for many years and the owners of the properties bought their houses fully aware that they had trees within their gardens. The TPO review has been carried out with the needs of the occupiers of the dwelling, the expectations of local people and the interest of the trees in mind. This has resulted in the inclusion of 38 mature trees within the site that are in a good condition, and have high amenity value for the local landscape.

4.3 Objections to the TPO have been received from the following:

- 4 Local residents.

4.4 The nature of the objections are summarised below:

1. I would only accept a preservation order on these trees for "cutting down of the trees", with maintenance, that is topping pruning or pollarding being left to the owners to decide on and subject to any such work being carried out by bona-fide tree surgeons/specialists that are registered with an appropriate Trade organisation.

Agenda Item No. 9

2. These Lime trees can grow to over 30 metres and some varieties as high as 45 metres and being situated within 10 metres of the properties will represent a health and safety risk to residents, friends and the wider general public who may be visiting the properties. They currently stand almost 30 metres high and even though visibly they appear in good condition this would not preclude wind damage and the upper boughs and branches now being so big there is a high likelihood of damage to the property and/or injury to residents and anyone else close by. This is especially so as winds are primarily westerly and this would be likely to cause anything falling to do so in the direction of the properties with potential severe damage. One assumes health & safety considerations should take precedence over both Conservation and amenity. It is noted that in recent years two Lime trees further up have suffered storm damage and as a result had to be removed.
3. In respect of my own property I recently noted that there was a growing unevenness in my patio paving slabs and some were cracking and on removing an area where this was most prominent I found tree roots growing right up to and touching the property. These roots were up to nearly 3 inches in diameter and in the absence of any other trees are clearly from the Lime trees. There is a danger these could affect the property and/or underground drainage pipes etc.
4. The height of the trees is now in danger of being a nuisance to other neighbours by reducing light, cutting down hours of sunlight available and with the amount of debris falling from the trees reduces the amenity they are entitled to from their gardens. The debris also means that gutters fill up quickly and get blocked up causing overflows and have to be cleared out many more times than a normal householder would expect.
5. It is ironic to note that nearly all other Lime trees in Kidderminster (and most other places), mostly the responsibility of the Council have in fact already been pollarded, except where they are in Parks or open areas. Presumably for similar reasons as above i.e. Health and Safety and possibly also because it is the most cost effective way for them to maintain the trees. If they topped the trees this would have to be done more often and increase the cost. Nevertheless in this state they are still an amenity to the Public.
6. The accuracy of the following trees on the schedule are incorrect - the Acacia - T8 - is in the garden of No. 4, I only has 2 beech trees (not 3 as detailed) and I also have a horse chestnut and another acacia.
7. I only have 2 yew trees in my garden and also there is a sycamore tree (not included in the TPO) which is "dead and dying".
8. I confirm that I do not have a tree in my garden (map ref G2).

4.5 In response to the objections, the following observations are made:

- 1) Unfortunately the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 does not give the option of allowing works to take place to trees that are covered by a Tree Preservation Order (TPO), without the need for a formal planning application. Therefore if the tree is deemed worthy of protection any work, whether felling or minor pruning, will need official approval by the Local Planning Authority.

- 2) The maximum height of a Common lime (*Tilia x europaea*) is 40 metres. The trees are currently around 30 metres tall and they do look rather imposing considering the size of the garden they are growing in and the proximity they are to the house. However, they are showing no signs of significant defects and any works required for real health and safety issues would be approved.
- 3) No tree is 100% safe, however with an average of only 6 people dying a year due to fallen trees the odds of 1:10,000,000 should alleviate fears that trees are dangerous due to their size or proximity to dwellings. If all trees close to properties were reduced or felled in the UK, the urban landscape would be a poorer place.
- 4) The trees that were designated as G1 (now known as G1, T13, T14, T15 and T16) are an important feature within the landscape and act to demarcate an urban residential estate with open countryside. The fact that they are subjected to strong westerly winds should not have an overall effect on their safety and stability as they have grown with these conditions and will have adapted well to them.
- 5) Although the objector has submitted a picture showing a root growing close to his house, as the District has very few areas of shrinkable clay soils, the possibility of subsidence is rather slim. In addition no proof of damage to drains or the property has been submitted. If it was proven that the trees are causing damage to the objector's property, an application for works would be considered on its merits.
- 6) Leaves and the loss of light are issues that cannot be solved easily, without the complete removal of the trees. Minor crown lifting works will improve light levels to properties, but anyone who buys a property with protected trees within the garden will have to carry out additional maintenance to the outside of their property, removing leaves, twigs and other debris. I therefore do not feel this is a good enough reason for the omission of trees from a TPO.
- 7) Objections 1 to 5 have been taken into account and although most of the trees that made up G1 in the original order are recommend for inclusion in the final Order, the omission of two poorer quality trees should allow more light into the gardens and dwellings and give them more usable space in their gardens. I do not feel the omission of these two trees will have a detrimental effect on the amenity of the area as the crowns of the remaining trees will quickly fill gaps left by their removal.
- 8) Unfortunately T8 was plotted in the wrong garden and T10 and T12 were identified incorrectly. These have been rectified in the modified Order.
- 9) G2 covers 8 properties and includes a total of 19 trees. The objector in objection No. 7 was confused by the number of trees in the group as they only had 2 Yew trees and Sycamore. As the Sycamore is dead the objector is free to have this tree removed and it is not included within the new Order. The 2 Yew trees are part of the 19 other trees that make up G2.

- 10) The owner of 7 Mortimer Grove objected to the Order asserting that they have no trees in their garden. Although the location of G2 on the plan did suggest that some of the trees located along the entire width of the garden of this property, there is one tree close to the boundary with 6 Mortimer Grove that should be included within the TPO. This tree is a Field Maple, which was not included in the original Order, but was planted as a replacement, following the removal of a protected tree in application 08/1026/TREE.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no financial implications arising directly as a result of this report.

6. LEGAL AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no legal and policy implications arising directly as a result of this report.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 7.1 There are no risk management issues arising from this report.

8. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 8.1 There are no issues arising from the equality impact assessment.

9. CONCLUSION

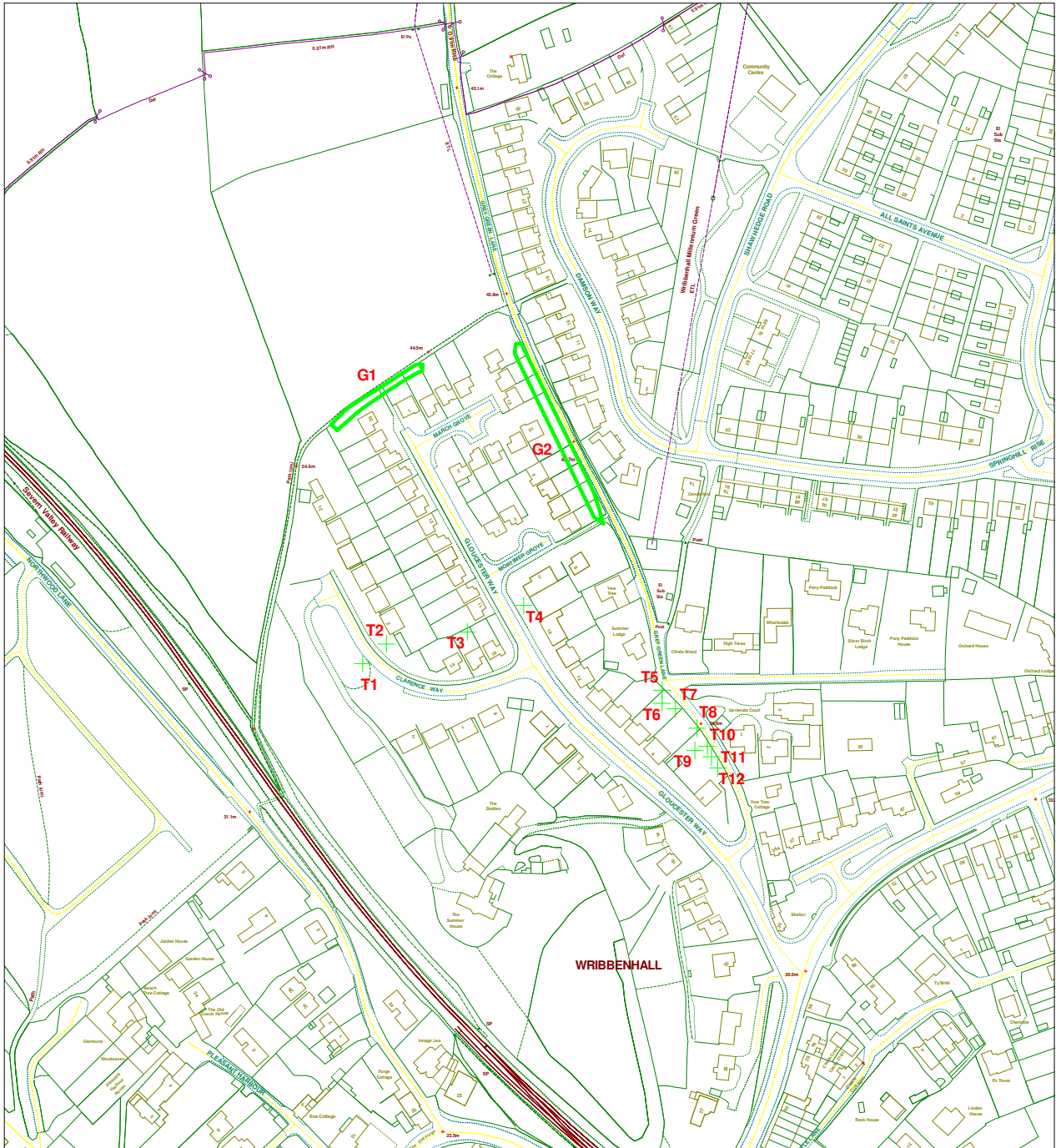
- 9.1 Officers consider that the objections and representations have been fully considered and that the Tree Preservation Order should be confirmed without modification.

10. CONSULTEES

- 10.1 None.

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 11.1 Tree Preservation Order No. 357.



Wyre Forest District Council

PLANNING AND REGULATORY SERVICES DIRECTORATE

**Land at Clarence Way, Mortimer Grove,
Gloucester Way and March Grove
Bewdley**



Duke House, Clensmore Street, Kidderminster, Worcs. DY10 2JX. Telephone: 01562 732928. Fax: 01562 732556

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

PLANNING COMMITTEE
13TH DECEMBER 2011

Worcestershire County Council
Landscape Character Assessment Supplementary Guidance

| OPEN | |
|-------------------------|--|
| DIRECTOR: | Director of Planning and Regulatory Services |
| CONTACT OFFICER: | Maria Dunn - Extension 2551 Maria.Dunn@wyreforestdc.gov.uk |
| APPENDICES: | Appendix 1 - Landscape Character Assessment Supplementary Guidance <i>The appendix to this report has been circulated electronically and a public inspection copy is available on request. (See front cover for details.)</i> |

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To seek approval for the Worcestershire Landscape Character Appraisal to be endorsed as a material consideration in the Development Management process.

2. RECOMENDATION

- 2.1 The Committee is asked to resolve to endorse the Worcestershire Landscape Character Assessment Supplementary Guidance to be used as Supplementary Guidance for Wyre Forest District.**

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 A Supplementary Guidance document has been produced by Worcestershire County Council to aid interpretation and application of the Worcestershire Landscape Character Assessment (LCA).
- 3.2 The Landscape Character Assessment Supplementary Guidance (LCA SG) is a non-statutory document that will provide guidance on the application of landscape character principles to development. The LCA SG will ultimately be used to help guide and determine relevant planning applications in the county. Whilst it will not constitute a formal part of the Development Plan, it is intended that the final document will carry weight as a 'material consideration' and so can form part of the reasoning for planning decisions.

- 3.3 The Landscape Character Assessment Supplementary Guidance (LCA SG) is necessary to provide a single, consistent and unifying guidance document on the application of landscape character planning for the whole county. It is intended that this document will reinforce the LCA's role as a robust and defensible evidence base. The LCA SG provides targeted guidance to support decision-making for county and district planning officers, planning applicants, land managers and communities.
- 3.4 Supplementary guidance differs from 'Supplementary Planning Documents', which are usually produced by individual district councils as part of their Local Development Frameworks; this document has been prepared by Worcestershire County Council on behalf of the county council and each the six Worcestershire districts, and each City, Borough and District Council in Worcestershire.
- 3.5 The process of landscape character assessment identifies and describes the 22 areas of differing inherent character within the landscape. Worcestershire's Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) places the features of the landscape in context, providing not just a description of the different landscapes within the county, but an understanding as to why those differences are there and what they represent.
- 3.6 The Worcestershire Landscape Character Assessment was originally carried out between January 1997 and January 1999, resulting in a first draft LCA Supplementary Planning Guidance published in May 1999. Since then the LCA data has been refined, updated and made available on the County Council's web site. The original draft is now out of date and will be replaced by this SG.
- 3.7 This latest version of the SG was developed from a draft produced in 2010-2011. As part of the process, a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) was prepared to assess the sustainability impacts of the guidance. An initial SA Scoping Report went out for consultation with key partners in 2010. The SA Report, produced in 2011, considered the draft SG to be largely positive in sustainability terms, with the only 'major' impact identified being a positive impact on 'Landscape'. All other identified impacts were minor, with many that could be either positive or negative.

4. COMMENTS ON THE CONSULTATION

- 4.1 The draft version of the Supplementary Guidance and the accompanying SA report were subject to a public consultation from Monday 13th June 2011 to Friday 22nd July 2011. A total of 35 responses were received. Assuming the 'unsure' responses to be 'neutral', most respondents felt that:

- they would find the SG a useful tool;
- they will be confident of implementing the SG during the normal remit of their work; the structure of the document was user friendly;
- the SG will influence future approaches to using the County LCA;
- the SG has addressed all relevant planning issues;
- the SG correctly identifies all relevant policy drivers/legislation;
- the chapter summaries are useful; and
- the stages in the Future Built Development section are clearly set out and readily understandable.

4.2 Respondents also stated that they would welcome formatting changes to ensure that key points within the document stood out, and there were 9 recommendations for additional monitoring indicators. Responses to the consultation were put into a response summary and the draft SG was amended as necessary in light of comments received. The final guidance includes these amendments, as well as the recommendations made by the SA Report.

4.3 The LCA SG was endorsed by the County Council's Cabinet at their November meeting. In addition to County Council endorsement, the LCA SG is being recommended for endorsement by each of the City, Borough and District Councils in Worcestershire, to supplement planning policies within their current and emerging local plans. This should help ensure that a consistent approach to protecting and enhancing landscape character is achieved.

4.4 The LCA SG will be reviewed on a five-yearly basis in order to incorporate any policy or other changes and in the light of latest LCA development.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no financial implications.

6. LEGAL AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

6.1 The Landscape Character Supplementary Guidance would become a material consideration used to inform the development management process.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

7.1 There are no risk management issues.

8. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

8.1 There are no equality impact issues to be addressed.

9. CONCLUSION

- 9.1 In conclusion, the LCA SG will aid the understanding and application of the Landscape Character Assessment work undertaken by the County Council. Therefore the Committee is being asked to endorse it as a material consideration in the planning process.

10. CONSULTEES

- 10.1 Consultation was undertaken by Worcestershire County Council on the Draft Supplementary Guidance. Consultation was targeted at key stakeholders and other interested parties and was also published on the County Council's and the District Council's website. Copies of documents were made available in the deposit locations across Worcestershire.

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- Landscape Character Assessment Supplementary Guidance Draft.
- Consultation Statement.
- Sustainability Appraisal Statement.
- Sustainability Appraisal Report.
- Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report.

Landscape Character Assessment

SUPPLEMENTARY GUIDANCE



This Supplementary Guidance (SG) seeks to explain the modern concepts of landscape and landscape character and to offer guidance in the application of Landscape Character Assessment (LCA).

October 2011

Landscape Character Assessment

Supplementary Guidance

October 2011



CONTENTS

| | |
|---|-------|
| 1.0 INTRODUCTION | 1 |
| 1.1 How to use this document..... | 1 |
| 1.2 Who will use this document..... | 2 |
| 1.3 How this document has been developed..... | 3 |
| 1.4 Sustainability Appraisal..... | 3 |
| PART ONE - LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AND ITS APPLICATION | 5 |
| 2.0 WHY LANDSCAPE CHARACTER? | 7 |
| 2.1 Status of this document..... | 7 |
| 2.2 Aims and objectives..... | 7 |
| 2.3 The concepts of landscape..... | 8 |
| 3.0 POLICY CONTEXT | 9 |
| 3.1 General..... | 9 |
| 3.2 European guidance..... | 9 |
| 3.3 National guidance..... | 11 |
| 3.4 Local guidance..... | 11 |
| 4.0 THE APPLICATION OF LANDSCAPE CHARACTER ASSESSMENT | 15 |
| 4.1 Applications..... | 15 |
| 4.2 Local community involvement..... | 16 |
| 4.3 Future built development..... | 17 |
| 4.4 Green infrastructure..... | 20 |
| 4.5 Climate change..... | 21 |
| 5.0 THE LANDSCAPE CHARACTER ASSESSMENT EXPLAINED | 23 |
| 5.1 Background..... | 23 |
| 5.2 Rationale..... | 23 |
| 5.3 Change in the landscape..... | 24 |
| 6.0 CLASSIFICATION AND DESCRIPTION | 30 |
| 6.1 The processes and products of landscape character assessment..... | 30 |
| 6.2 Method..... | 31 |
| 7.0 ANALYSIS AND EVALUATION | 37 |
| 7.1 Methodology..... | 37 |
| 7.2 Significance..... | 38 |
| 7.3 Vulnerability..... | 38 |
| 7.4 Tolerance..... | 39 |
| 7.5 Resilience..... | 39 |
| 7.6 Sensitivity..... | 40 |



| | | |
|---|--|----|
| 8.0 | LANDSCAPE CONSERVATION, RESTORATION AND ENHANCEMENT | 43 |
| 9.0 | MONITORING | 47 |
| 9.1 | Monitoring landscape change..... | 47 |
| 9.2 | State of the environment..... | 48 |
| PART TWO - DESCRIPTIONS OF LANDSCAPE TYPES | | 53 |
| 10.0 | LANDSCAPE TYPES | 53 |
| 10.1 | Enclosed Commons..... | 54 |
| 10.2 | Estate Farmlands..... | 56 |
| 10.3 | Forest Smallholdings and Dwellings..... | 58 |
| 10.4 | High Hills and Slopes..... | 60 |
| 10.5 | Limestone Estatelands..... | 62 |
| 10.6 | Principal Settled Farmlands..... | 64 |
| 10.7 | Principal Timbered Farmlands..... | 66 |
| 10.8 | Principal Village Farmlands..... | 68 |
| 10.9 | Principal Wooded Hills..... | 70 |
| 10.10 | Riverside Meadows..... | 72 |
| 10.11 | Sandstone Estatelands..... | 74 |
| 10.12 | Settled Farmlands on River Terraces..... | 76 |
| 10.13 | Settled Farmlands with Pastoral Land Use..... | 78 |
| 10.14 | Timbered Pastures..... | 80 |
| 10.15 | Timbered Plateau Farmlands..... | 82 |
| 10.16 | Unenclosed Commons..... | 84 |
| 10.17 | Village Claylands..... | 86 |
| 10.18 | Village Farmlands with Orchards..... | 88 |
| 10.19 | Wet Pasture Meadows..... | 90 |
| 10.20 | Wooded Estatelands..... | 92 |
| 10.21 | Wooded Forest..... | 94 |
| 10.22 | Wooded Hills and Farmlands..... | 96 |
| APPENDIX A | | |
| | Historic Landscape Characterisation..... | 98 |
| APPENDIX B | | |
| | Glossary..... | 99 |



1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 HOW TO USE THIS DOCUMENT

1.1.1 This Supplementary Guidance (SG) seeks to explain the modern concepts of landscape and landscape character and to offer guidance in the application of Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) to professionals and lay persons alike. The advice offered is targeted at both planning and land management and will enable local communities to identify the landscape elements that contribute to local distinctiveness.

1.1.2 The LCA SG has been written as far as possible in non-technical language for ease of understanding and to make it accessible to any one who requires information about Worcestershire's policy and practice for the conservation, enhancement and regeneration of the rural landscape. Further factual information can be obtained from the Worcestershire County Council Landscape Website at www.worcestershire.gov.uk/lca.

1.1.3 A technical handbook has also been produced. This contains further descriptions as well as exhaustive raw data from the LCA database. A full range of definitions is included in the technical handbook but terms that are used throughout this SG are generally explained as they arise. The technical handbook provides useful analytical and background information but, of necessity is written in a less accessible style. A copy can be obtained by applying to the County Council's Strategic and Environmental Planning Unit at County Hall, Worcester. Tel 01905 766038.

1.1.4 The SG has been divided into two parts. Part 1 provides background information, sets landscape character within the planning framework and describes the processes of assessment and evaluation. Part 2 describes the Landscape Types which underlie landscape based planning, along with a brief analysis of changing character trends and guidance for future management and development.

1.1.5 In order to gain a full understanding of the LCA process the reader is encouraged to read the whole of Part One in the order it is written. However, for a quick résumé, the summary box at the beginning of each chapter paraphrases the salient points. In addition, the various figures have been designed to set out the fundamental tenets of LCA in a graphical format. A quick step-by-step guide for potential developers is included in section 4.3.1. This section could also be viewed as an indicative process for evaluating the suitability of other non-built development that will result in change in the landscape.



1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1.6 Part Two sets out the Landscape Types; each having a double page spread for ease of reference. The primary, secondary and tertiary characteristics have been derived from the detailed evaluation of "significance" which is explained in section 7.2. A thumbnail plan of Worcestershire indicates the distribution of the Landscape Type and the colours relate to those used in Fig. 11, p.49 - Map of the Distribution of Landscape Types. A second, hand-drawn, plan has been included to illustrate the typical patterns of settlement, enclosure and woodland or tree cover. For readers particularly interested in land management, the Landscape Guidelines demonstrate the broad-brush potential for conservation, restoration or enhancement of the natural landscape. Appropriate environmental gain linked to development control through the use of planning conditions should also be targeted through these guidelines.

1.2 WHO WILL USE THIS DOCUMENT

1.2.1 Increasingly it is acknowledged that landscape has the capacity to act as a unifying factor in planning for the future - providing as it does a spatial framework upon which we can map our ideas and aspirations. Landscape provides the backdrop against which we live and work, is a living record of our history and perhaps most significantly forms and is home to our natural resources and biodiversity. As a result, the range of potential uses of landscape character assessment data in planning is huge - extending through and beyond the statutory planning system to planning in other fields, as summarised in the table overleaf.

1.2.2 The widespread use of LCA is a requisite to ensure that the principles are embedded in decision-making and to protect and enhance the landscape. In order to achieve this it is important that landscape character data is fully accessible to as wide a range of people as possible. The Worcestershire County Council 'Landscapes of Worcestershire' webpages (www.worcestershire.gov.uk/lca) aim to do just that, making available documentation, maps and LCA data to all potential users. Please visit this site for the latest information on Worcestershire LCA with fully interactive mapping and planning advice relating to landscape character issues.



1.3 HOW THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN DEVELOPED

1.3.1 The Worcestershire Landscape Character Assessment was originally carried out between January 1997 and January 1999, resulting in a first draft LCA Supplementary Planning Guidance published in May 1999. Since then the LCA data has been refined, updated and made available on the County Council's web site. The original draft SPG is now out of date and will be replaced by this SG which will be adopted by the County Council and the District Councils. It is intended to review the document on a five year basis in order to incorporate any policy or other changes and to update in the light of latest LCA development.

1.3.2 The original assessment was carried out with input from a number of other organisations, particularly the District Councils, Countryside Commission (now Natural England),

Forestry Commission, Environment Agency, English Heritage and Council for the Protection of Rural England (C.P.R.E.). These organisations have also been involved with the development of this SG.

1.4 SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL

1.4.1 This document has been subject to a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) to help ensure that it maximises social, economic and environmental benefits. An SA Scoping Report was produced in 2010 to determine the method by which this SG would be assessed. This enabled an SA framework to be developed, against which the sustainability of this draft SG could be assessed. This assessment has been conducted in parallel with the SG development, and it is being consulted upon alongside this draft SG. The findings of the SA will be used to help shape the final adopted SG. Upon adoption, a summary of the SA will be produced.

Table 1 Potential uses and users

| Potential use | Potential user |
|---|---|
| • Development control planning including pre-application discussions | Development control planners, developers, agents |
| • Strategic planning | Strategic planners |
| • Forestry/woodland planting | FC, NE, Defra, landowners, Woodland Trust |
| • Habitat restoration, creation, enhancement | NE, Defra, FC, EnvAg, Wildlife Trusts, FWAG, landowners, consultants |
| • Geodiversity restoration, conservation and enhancement | Earth Heritage Trust, Local Authorities, NE, EnvAg Landowners |
| • Agri-environment scheme targeting | NE, Defra, FWAG, landowners |
| • Resource protection strategies | NE, EnvAg, Defra, landowners |
| • Climate change strategies and renewable energy | Local authorities, Defra, NE, EnvAg, developers, householders and landowners |
| • Green infrastructure and rural renaissance and blue infrastructure/flooding | NE, Defra, FC, EnvAg, local authorities, developers, service providers including transport, local businesses, landowners, local communities |
| • Tourism and countryside access | Local authorities, Defra, NE, local businesses and communities |

PART ONE

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AND ITS APPLICATION





2.0 WHY LANDSCAPE CHARACTER?

Summary

- An explanation of what the LCA will be used for
- A definition of landscape terms

2.1 STATUS OF THIS DOCUMENT

2.1.1 The Landscape Character Assessment Supplementary Guidance (LCA SG) is a non-statutory document that will provide guidance on the application of landscape character principles to development. The LCA SG will ultimately be used to help guide and determine relevant planning applications in the county. It is intended that once adopted or endorsed, the guidance will be used at both county and district levels. Whilst it will not constitute a formal part of the Local Development framework, it is intended that the final document will carry weight as a 'material consideration'.

2.2 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

2.2.1 There are a number of fundamental aims and objectives which the LCA has substantially already attained within Worcestershire. In addition, there are a growing number of applications for which the assessment is proving invaluable. These range from land use planning to land management, tourism and socio-economic initiatives and are set out in section 4.0.

The primary aims and objectives are:-

- to support the landscape policies within Worcestershire's Local Development Frameworks and thus help guide development
- to enable an understanding and appreciation of the character and diversity of the Worcestershire landscape, both in its own right and as part of the national framework.
- to identify and describe the various Landscape Character Areas within Worcestershire.
- to identify the range of Landscape Types within the county through an understanding of their inherent characteristics.
- to inform and explain the process of Landscape Character Assessment to interested professionals and members of the public.
- to enable the identification and development of landscape related strategies and priorities through an analysis of inherent character and current landscape condition.
- to enable the analysis and evaluation of landscape character and so arrive at an understanding of the resilience of different landscapes to change.
- to enable detailed analysis of landscape character areas with a view to evaluating their sensitivity to change.



2.3 THE CONCEPTS OF LANDSCAPE

2.3.1 In order to begin to understand the concepts of landscape character assessment it is necessary to start by considering the meaning of landscape and landscape character.

The landscape can be defined as:-

'An area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors.' (European Landscape Convention)

Landscape character, on the other hand, can be described as: -

'An expression of pattern, resulting from particular combinations of natural and cultural factors that make one place different from another, rather than better or worse.'
(*Countryside Agency LCA guidance*)

2.3.2 The Worcestershire LCA fully recognises the concepts that lie behind these definitions. Namely that:

- a) in order to produce a meaningful assessment of the landscape, an analysis of those components that make up the landscape must be made at a scale which is commensurate with understanding the landscape as a whole. Thus individual features within the landscape may be of interest on a site-specific scale, and help to define local distinctiveness, but they do not contribute to the overall character of the wider landscape, unless they constitute a repeated element. **Character assessment is thus, in the first instant, a strategic**

decision support tool and becomes less relevant as the scale of the area in question declines. Nevertheless, the principles of landscape character assessment should inform the analysis of even small sites, considering the various attributes as seems appropriate. There are already a number of established approaches for assessing the other individual elements or features within a site, ranging from habitat/vegetation survey to the landscape and visual impact guidance advocated by the Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Assessment.

- b) landscape character is not a purely visual phenomenon, but rather an expression of the way in which combinations of physical and cultural factors have interacted over time to produce a distinctive sense of place. Character assessment thus focuses on the nature of the land, rather than the response of the viewer, in order to convey an informed picture of the landscape without reflecting personal preference, or making subjective value judgements.



3.0 POLICY CONTEXT

Summary

- Requirements of European Landscape Convention
- Government guidance promotes the use of landscape character assessment in the planning process
- Structure Plan landscape policy
- District Council landscape policies
- Landscape policies relating to Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs)

3.1 GENERAL

3.1.1 This Supplementary Guidance is intended to take forward policy established at European and national, sub-regional and local levels. The guidance is intended to embody the principles of the **European Landscape Convention** and the government's planning objectives set out in **Planning Policy Statement 7: Sustainable Development in Rural Areas**. At county level, the guidance expands upon the landscape character policy (CTC.1) contained in **Worcestershire's Structure Plan**. This policy is one of many which have been 'saved' until such time as they are replaced through the Local Development Framework system. Generally, local level context for the guidance is provided through the District Councils' adopted Local Plan policies on landscape character (with the exception of Bromsgrove District), and through draft policies within emerging Development Plan Documents. However, Wyre Forest D.C. now have an Adopted Core Strategy (December 2011) which supersedes a number of policies within the Adopted Local Plan, including all of those policies relating to Landscape. Therefore, the Adopted Core Strategy sets out the strategic policy for Landscape Character within Wyre Forest District.

3.2 EUROPEAN GUIDANCE

3.2.1 The requirements of the European Landscape Convention (ELC) became binding in the UK in March 2007. It emphasises not only the importance of all landscapes, whether designated or not, but also our shared responsibility in guiding future landscape change. Perceiving landscape as an integrating framework for social and economic as well as environmental well being, it seeks to encourage groups, organisations and authorities to establish policies that protect, manage and plan landscapes.

3.2.2 The ELC is rooted in a democratic approach to landscapes and their management. It places a strong emphasis on the importance of all sectors of society not just central government, having the opportunity and responsibility to guide landscape change. But its overarching message is that **'all landscapes matter'**. The main purpose of the ELC is delivered in Articles 5 and 6 (general and specific measures). The four **general** measures are:

- to recognise landscape in law
- to establish and implement landscape policies aimed at protection, management and planning of landscapes
- to establish procedures for the participation of the general public, local and regional authorities and other stakeholders in the definition and implementation of landscape policies
- to integrate landscape into all relevant policies: regional and town planning, cultural, environmental, agricultural, social and economic.



3.0 POLICY CONTEXT

The **specific** measures go into more detail about how the general measures may be achieved. They may be accessed from the ELC resources section of the Landscape Character Network website at www.landscapecharacter.org.uk/elc/resources

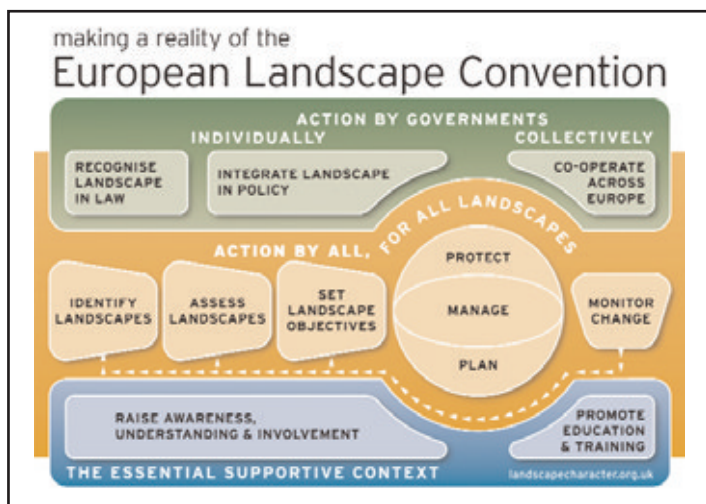
3.2.3 The Government considers that the UK is already compliant in delivering the ELC requirements but seeks to strengthen both policy and performance across all sectors. To this end, Defra has tasked Natural England with leading the implementation of the ELC in England, working closely with English Heritage and the Forestry Commission. To date, Natural England has:

- developed the first UK ELC Action Plan (which has since been joined by action plans of both English Heritage and the National Forest Company)
- established Regional Landscape Partnerships.

Worcestershire County Council sits on the West Midlands Regional Landscape Partnership alongside other local authorities from the West Midlands. The statutory agencies noted above and voluntary organisations, including the Council for the Protection of Rural England (CPRE), are also represented.

Organisations at all levels are being encouraged to produce ELC action plans and the official UK guidelines were published by Natural England in 2009.

Fig.1 'Making a reality of the ELC' diagram developed by the Landscape Character Network and Natural England after work by Michael Dower





3.3 NATIONAL GUIDANCE

3.3.1 Government guidance within Planning Policy Statement 7 Sustainable Development in Rural Areas (PPS 7), published in 2004, sets out how objectives for rural areas should be reflected in land use planning. The Government advocates the use of Landscape Character Assessment in land use planning at every level and promotes its use to understand, safeguard and enrich the quality of the whole landscape for its own sake, whilst still accommodating appropriate development. The following extracts from PPS7 indicate how government guidance is encouraging the application of LCA principles and practice in a way that has already been demonstrated by Worcestershire County Council:

- The first of the Government's objectives for rural areas, on page 6 of PPS 7 is:
 - (i) *To raise the quality of life and the environment in rural areas through the promotion of:*
 - *good quality, sustainable development that respects and, where possible, enhances local distinctiveness and the intrinsic qualities of the countryside.*
- PPS7 includes a key principle of national planning policy which states that:
 - (vi) *All development in rural areas should be well designed, in keeping and scale with its location, and sensitive to the character of the countryside and local distinctiveness.*
- Under the heading of Local Landscape Designations, PPS 7 states at section 24 that:

The Government recognises and accepts that there are areas of landscape outside nationally designated areas that are particularly highly valued locally. The Government

believes that carefully drafted, criteria-based policies in LDDs, utilising tools such as landscape character assessment, should provide sufficient protection for these areas, without the need for rigid local designations that may unduly restrict acceptable, sustainable development

- In addition, PPS5 Planning for the Historic Environment includes 'historic landscapes' that extends to Registered Parks and Gardens as well as the wider landscape.

3.3.2 This advice has encouraged many Local Authorities to carry out county-based LCAs. In the West Midlands several Local Authorities have undertaken their assessments using the same methodology as Worcestershire. This is resulting in a progressively unified system of LCA applied across the whole of the West Midlands area.

3.4 LOCAL GUIDANCE

3.4.1 Worcestershire County Structure Plan (1996-2011) stresses the need to identify the factors that contribute to the landscape character of a particular place and that measures to conserve or enhance landscape character should be an integral element of decision making relating to land use. New development should have regard to the opportunities to contribute to these objectives, avoiding elements of visual intrusion, and seeking ways to integrate with the local landscape character of the area. A positive landscape identity benefits the economy of an area, attracts investment and tourism, and creates a sought after place in which to live and work. It can also promote pride of place and a sense of stewardship towards its well-being amongst those who live there.



3.0 POLICY CONTEXT

3.4.2 The County Structure Plan Policy CTC.1 Landscape Character is a 'saved' policy within the emerging Development Plan. It states: *Proposals for development, and associated land use change or land management, must demonstrate that they are informed by, and sympathetic to, the landscape character of the area in which they are proposed to take place. In considering development proposals, the Local Planning Authority shall take every opportunity to safeguard, restore or enhance, as appropriate, the landscape character of the area in which they are proposed.*

The implications of development proposals relating to the landscape will be assessed having regard to the degree to which they would:

- (i) be appropriate to, and integrate with, the landscape character of the area;*
- (ii) safeguard or strengthen the features and patterns that contribute to the landscape character and local distinctiveness of the area with particular attention being paid to both the scale, layout, design and detailing of existing buildings and other man made features; and to the semi-natural vegetation characteristic of that area; and*

Table 2 Local Authority Policies

| Local Authority | Local Plan Policy | Core Strategy Policy |
|--------------------------------|---|--|
| Bromsgrove District Council | (Jan 2004), Policy C1 Designation of Landscape Protection Areas, Policy C4 Criteria for Assessing Development Proposals | Draft Core Strategy 2, CP17: Natural Environment |
| Redditch Borough Council | Local Plan No. 3 (May 2006), Policy B(NE)1 Overarching Policy of Intent, Policy CS2 Care for the Environment, Policy CS8 Landscape Character | Preferred Draft Core Strategy, Policy BE.3, Landscape Character, Policy BE5 Trees, Policy SC7 Infrastructure |
| Wyre Forest District Council | Local Plan (Jan 2004), No relevant policies saved | Core Strategy, (Adopted December 2010), Core Policy 12 Landscape Character, Core Policy 14 Providing Opportunities for Biodiversity and Geodiversity |
| Malvern Hills District Council | (July 2006), Policy DS1 The Location of Development, Policy DS3 General Development Requirements, Policy QL1 The Design of New Buildings and Related Development, Policy QL21 Landscaping, Policy QL24 Landscape Character | South Worcestershire Development Plan, SWDP1 Development Strategy and Settlement Hierarchy SWDP3 Overarching Sustainable Development Requirements SWDP5 Strategic Green Infrastructure SWDP22 Rural Employment SWDP26 Design SWDP33 Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople |
| Worcester City Council | (October 2004), Policy NE5 Landscape Protection | SWDP34 Replacement Dwellings in the Open Countryside and Re-use of Agricultural Buildings SWDP35 Dwellings for Rural Workers SWDP36 Tourist Development SWDP37 Visitor Accommodation SWDP38 Static and Touring Caravans, Chalets and Camping Sites SWDP39 Waterfronts SWDP40 Marinas and Moorings |
| Wychavon District Council | (June 2006), Policy ENV1 Landscape Character Policy ENV2 Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Policy ENV4 Sites of Special Scientific Interest Policy ENV7 Protection of Wider Biodiversity Policy ENV11 Historic Parks and Gardens | |



(iii) relate to the sensitivity of the particular landscape, and location, and to accommodate change.

Development, or associated land use change or land management, which would adversely affect the landscape character of an area will not normally be allowed.

3.4.3 District Local Plans all contain policies that seek to protect, preserve and enhance landscape character. Wyre Forest District Council adopted its Core Strategy in December 2010 and as a result all of the adopted Local Plan policies relating to landscape character have now been superseded. At the time of writing the rest of the District Councils within Worcestershire are in the process of preparing their Core Strategies. The policies shown in Table 2 illustrate how landscape protection and enhancement has been addressed at District level.

3.4.4 The Management Plans for Malvern Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and the Cotswolds AONB address the need to conserve and enhance landscape character at a local scale. The AONB designation is a national landscape designation, based on the notion of natural beauty and designed to protect the natural landscape. The County Structure Plan and the Local Plans of districts whose areas fall wholly or partly within the AONBs include policies relating specifically to the AONBs, giving them added protection and restricting development. The AONB Management Plans provide an overriding vision for the future of the AONBs and provide more detailed guidance on achieving the aspirations of the respective Partnerships. The landscape element of the Malvern Hills AONB Management Plan is based on the County LCA but provides greater detail at a local scale.

The Cotswolds AONB have produced their own LCA which is compatible with the relevant County LCAs. In all cases the management prescriptions seek to conserve and strengthen the key characteristics of the landscape.

3.4.5 The Cotswolds AONB Management Plan 2008-13 sets out: **Policy**

LP1: To conserve and enhance the character, diversity and distinctiveness of the Cotswolds landscape and ensure rigorous assessment of the impact of all major proposals based on appropriate landscape character assessments.

LP8: To ensure that inappropriate development does not take place which would individually or cumulatively diminish the special landscape character of the AONB.....

LP9: To monitor the effects of landscape change throughout the AONB and its surroundings.

3.4.6 The Malvern Hills AONB Management Plan 2009-14 sets out:

Guiding principles

LP1 Change is inevitable in the landscape - it has been changing for thousands of years. However, change should be managed in a way that maintains and enhances the core elements of landscape character.

LP2 Landscape Character Assessments and Historic Landscape Characterisation should be used to improve understanding of the landscape and the processes of change within the landscape, and to inform decision-making and strategic planning.



3.0 POLICY CONTEXT

Strategic objectives

LO1 *Conserve and enhance the distinctive landscape elements and features identified in Landscape Character Assessments and Historic Landscape Characterisations, particularly those that are most sensitive or have little capacity for change.*

LO2 *Restore distinctive landscapes and landscape features that have been significantly degraded.*

LO3 *Identify and promote opportunities for positive landscape change to landowners, managers, government and all those with an influence over land.*

LO4 *Undertake survey and research to better understand and monitor the condition, and rate of change, of landscape character within the framework of the Landscape Character Assessments and Historic Landscape Characterisation.*

LO5 *Seek resources to promote landscape management and improvements.*

LO6 *Promote greater awareness and appreciation of the landscape attributes and character of the AONB among residents and visitors, providing opportunities for them to be involved in identifying and conserving locally distinctive features, views and landscapes.*



4.0 THE APPLICATION OF LANDSCAPE CHARACTER ASSESSMENT

Summary

- Community involvement and opportunities to use the LCA
- Step by step guidance for those considering new development proposals
- The role in Green Infrastructure
- Climate change

4.1 APPLICATIONS

4.1.1 The Landscape Character Assessment is not an end in itself. Rather, it is a powerful tool which can direct land use change in ways that will prevent the destruction of the inherent landscape character or take advantage of opportunities to strengthen the character and thus enhance local distinctiveness. It is complementary to Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) which English Heritage describes as being the legibility of the past in the present landscape. (see Appendix A)

The potential applications for the LCA tool are many and varied. A representative summary is set out below:

i) Planning

- use to assess whether potential development or change is appropriate to a particular landscape, or to indicate which landscapes would be appropriate for a particular development or change to be directed to
- use during the strategic planning process to help inform development allocations

- provide an evidence base to inform Strategic Environmental Assessment and Sustainability Appraisal
- contribute to landscape capacity studies relating to land allocation at county level
- inform and underpin development policies
- contribute to the county or regional scale initiatives such as green infrastructure and climate change studies
- use to prepare design guidance for new built development
- inform development control decisions
- use to inform development at the pre-application stage, including the preparation of Environmental Impact Assessments
- contribute to the local evidence base informing and justifying changes to (or maintaining existing) designation boundaries such as Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- use to justify and enable landscape mitigation, environmental planning gain, landscape, biodiversity or geodiversity enhancement during the development control process



4.0 APPLICATION OF LANDSCAPE CHARACTER ASSESSMENT

ii) **Landscape Conservation, Management and Enhancement**

- help to guide appropriate and sustainable land use change, e.g. opportunities for biomass planting
- contribute to the appraisals of other organisations, e.g. the Forestry Commission's English Woodland Grant Scheme
- use to prepare landscape management plans
- enable sustainable and targeted grant aid
- inform the targeting of agri-environmental initiatives
- inform and support geodiversity management and conservation
- inform the production of climate change adaptation and mitigation strategy
- contribute to allied studies and initiatives such as Historic Landscape Characterisations, Parish Plans, Village Design Statements
- inform the local Biodiversity Action Plan and subsequent initiatives
- provide a framework for landscape-scale nature conservation vision mapping and habitat management initiatives
- contribute to wider initiatives which address other aspects of sustainability such as tourism and green infrastructure
- inform monitoring through the annual State of the Environment report

4.2 LOCAL COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

4.2.1 The Landscape Character Assessment has a heavy emphasis at the level of the Landscape Type. This is the scale at which most strategic planning is undertaken and is directly relevant to the work of the County Council. However, the LCA is also a powerful tool when considering the landscape at a smaller, site-specific scale, where development control decisions are made by the District Councils.

4.2.2 For strategic planning, the LCA analysis enables an overview of the 'robustness' of the landscape to be gauged. The analysis identifies those landscapes where proposals for change are most likely to coincide with the potential for the greatest detrimental impact upon the character of those landscapes. LCA therefore provides a sound basis for the preparation of strategic guidance for the future of the landscape of Worcestershire, defining a clear vision for each Landscape Type, together with clear priorities, objectives and actions. The assessment can have a positive role in guiding landscape change in situations as diverse as influencing the landscaping conditions for reinstatement of mineral workings, or informing decision making with regard to the routes of new highway schemes.



4.2.3 At the level of Landscape Description Units (LDUs) or Land Cover Parcels (LCPs) the supporting database contains useful detailed information. Landscape evaluation of individual sites or small tracts of land may however require more detailed survey information, particularly of unique features that may not be picked up in the database. It is at this stage that additional information, taking into account the site's history, people's memories, cultural associations, special site features and so on can be included. Local community involvement is therefore vital, as much of the supporting 'evidence' for the area's distinctiveness will be locked into local people's memories and folk lore. This is too detailed to be covered by the county LCA and provides a level of information that can only be achieved on a site by site basis.

4.2.4 During the preparation of studies such as Parish Plans or Village Design Statements, the Landscape Type descriptions can be used as the basis for understanding the landscape character, with additional information from the LCA database. However, this must be considered to be an over-view to which the local community will need to add the finer grain of detail in order to produce a meaningful and useful document.

4.2.5 Development control planning at the District level should make full use of community-based plans and statements as well as using the full range of landscape character analysis techniques within the county LCA (as described in section 7).

A web-based analysis tool has been developed by the County Council to aid planning officers in the use of these techniques, as it is recognised that LCA is a specialist subject that may be daunting if not used regularly. Further information about this is available from the County Council's Strategic and Environmental Planning Unit at County Hall, Worcester. Tel 01905 763763.

4.3 FUTURE BUILT DEVELOPMENT

4.3.1 Aspects for Planning Officers to address

In order to reflect the findings of the LCA, potential development should be assessed against the steps set out below. This will enable both planning officers and developers to assess the landscape character potential for development and the most appropriate design treatment. Discussion at pre-application stage may usefully centre on these steps. Fig 2, p.22 shows this process in more detail.

- Identify the Landscape Type in which the site is located (see Fig.11, p.49 - *Map of the Distribution of Landscape Types*).
- Assess whether this is an **unsettled landscape** (see Fig.4, p.32 - Settlement Pattern). If the proposal is for built development within an unsettled landscape there would be, in landscape terms, a **high presumption against** new development.



4.0 APPLICATION OF LANDSCAPE CHARACTER ASSESSMENT

- If the site is not located within an unsettled landscape, assess whether the proposals conform to the Landscape Type's settlement pattern. (see Fig.4, p.33 - Settlement Pattern). Ideally, built development, particularly housing, should respect the inherent settlement pattern and avoid imposing an inappropriate pattern on the landscape.
- Assess whether the site specific character of the landscape conforms to the generic Landscape Types used in LCA. The Landscape Description Unit descriptions and the Land Cover Parcel data (see Chapter 6), available on line can aid in this assessment. If it is clear that the site in question is untypical a different analysis should be made. (see paragraph 5.3.9 Untypical Sites)
- Other planning applications that do not constitute built development should consult the description of the relevant Landscape Type (see Part Two), in order to ensure that they are consistent with the relevant key characteristics.
- Ensure that detailed proposals fully take into account all site features and that mitigation and enhancement measures, such as green infrastructure, conform to and strengthen the key characteristics of the landscape.

4.3.2 Examples

a) A developer has purchased a plot of land on the edge of a village with the intention of developing it for residential use. The land is within the Landscape Type Principal Timbered Farmlands. This is a settled landscape and therefore potentially acceptable for development.

This Landscape Type has a wayside settlement pattern but the plot of land, being made up of three fields, is roughly triangular in shape and therefore not conducive to a linear pattern. The developer's architect researches the historic settlement pattern of the village and designs a layout that generally accords with this and is an acceptable compromise. The key characteristics of this Landscape Type are the thick hedgerows, densely scattered hedgerow oaks and small areas of woodland. The site has excellent thick boundary hedges, another thick internal hedge and a second internal hedge which has not been properly maintained and is thin and gappy. There is also a small field pond in one corner and a strong row of hedgerow oaks along one boundary. The architect's layout provides public open space and links this up with a network of footpaths through green infrastructure based on the existing hedgerow pattern, so preserving the organic enclosure pattern. The field pond becomes the focus of a large area of green open space with an awkward corner of the site planted up as a small copse. The landscape planting of the green infrastructure concentrates on gapping up and thickening the poor hedge and planting many more oak trees along the hedges.



The planting associated with the housing concentrates on hedges along roadsides, with oak trees wherever there is room and locally sourced native planting wherever there are opportunities for it. In this way, although the site has become an extension of the existing village, the underlying characteristics of the landscape have been preserved and strengthened and the development will relate more sympathetically to its surrounding rural setting.

- b) A house-owner who lives in a small cottage with an orchard and two paddocks wishes to build another house on one of the paddocks. The Landscape Type involved is Forest Smallholdings and Dwellings whose character relies on its small scale and random layout of small cottages interspersed with domestic orchards and paddocks. The proposed dwelling is a substantial 5 bedroom house with integral double garage and paved forecourt, accessed directly from the lane.

Planners and the local community are concerned that the proposed house is out of scale and will detract from the distinctive character of the area. The applicant is persuaded to revise his proposal to a smaller house, built of brick to match the existing dwellings and of a similar exterior design. The new cottage is re-located at an angle to the lane and the fore-court is re-designed as a smaller gravel access that is less intrusive. The garage is re-designed as a separate, brick building, looking very much like one of the outhouses or small barns that are already present in the area. The new house is surrounded by a

densely planted hedge and fruit trees are planted in the garden. The applicant also agrees to restore his ancient orchard and to plant some more hedgerow trees around his untouched paddock.

By preserving and restoring the orchard and one of the paddocks and re-siting the proposed dwelling, the low density, random nature of the original settlement pattern has been retained. The character of the area is also preserved and strengthened by the additional planting and the use of vernacular building materials.

- c) A farmer owns a badly drained field and has applied to the Forestry Commission for grant aid to plant it with a crop of poplar trees. The field lies within the Landscape Type, Wet Pasture Meadows and is readily visible from a number of public vantage points. Wet Pasture Meadows are unwooded landscapes where the tree cover is represented by linear patterns of trees along watercourses and ditches. The poorly drained nature of the soil often leads to a botanically interesting wetland grass sward. A plantation of poplar trees would therefore be totally contrary to the character of the landscape and, since the site is so visible, would be visibly intrusive. The Forestry Commission therefore decline the application to grant aid the work.



4.4 GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

4.4.1 Natural England defines green infrastructure as *'a strategically planned and delivered network comprising the broadest range of high quality green spaces and other environmental features. It should be designed and managed as a multifunctional resource capable of delivering those ecological services and quality of life benefits required by the communities it serves and needed to underpin sustainability. Its design and management should also respect and enhance the character and distinctiveness of an area with regard to habitats and landscape types.'*

Green infrastructure includes established green spaces and new sites and should thread through and surround the built environment and connect the urban area to its wider rural hinterland. Consequently it needs to be delivered at all spatial scales from sub-regional to local neighbourhood levels, accommodating both accessible natural green spaces within local communities and often much larger sites in the urban fringe and wider countryside.'

4.4.2 Current concerns about the consequences of climate change and environmental sustainability underlie the emphasis on providing green infrastructure throughout new development schemes. The protection and enhancement of natural habitats and features has always been a primary consideration of landscape design, and Landscape Architects strive to incorporate linked up green amenity spaces through the masterplanning process. The consideration of green infrastructure is now a generally accepted intrinsic element of the design process, providing

amenity open space, based as far as possible on natural site features such as streams, mature trees, hedges and woodland.

4.4.3 Within Worcestershire, green infrastructure strategy is being developed by the Sub-regional Green Infrastructure Partnership. This is a partnership between the County Council, District Councils, Natural England, Environment Agency and the voluntary sector, including Worcestershire Wildlife Trust. The Partnership is working towards producing a Green Infrastructure Strategy for the county, and is currently producing a series of Green Infrastructure Framework Reports. These compile a review of the existing evidence bases and information sources for green infrastructure, landscape character being one of the principal elements. The Strategy will be published in 2012. Landscape character, biodiversity and the historic environment also form the basis for the Green Infrastructure Environmental Character Areas. These identify and categorise green infrastructure within the county (as poor, medium or high) according to overarching Green Infrastructure indicators and, based on the quality, determine the appropriate type of interventions; create, restore or protect. Full details of the development of Green Infrastructure within the county can be found at:

<http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/cms/environment-and-planning/strategic-planning/planning-green-infrastructure.aspxSub-regional>



4.4.4 At the strategic scale the analysis of condition, and the resulting sensitivity of those indicators that are directly relevant to green infrastructure can inform the planning process, directing new built development and its associated green infrastructure to those areas where there will be at least environmental harm and most potential environmental gain.

4.4.5 At the site scale, the siting and design of green infrastructure should be informed by the local landscape character as well as the natural site elements. For example: an area of Landscape Type Principal Timbered Farmlands might be identified for housing development. The site could be in poor condition with remnants of derelict woodland, a few remaining hedges, a small, litter-infested stream and the occasional over-mature hedgerow tree. Green infrastructure provision could:

- encompass the protection, re-planting and future management of the woods thereby also providing climate change mitigation through carbon storage.
- provide a buffering corridor of species-rich grassland and new woodland planting along the litter picked stream. This can also aid flood prevention by providing water storage areas that could encompass a sustainable urban drainage scheme (SUDS)
- re-instate the original enclosure pattern by planting new hedges and linking them to the surrounding landscape in order to achieve ecological connectivity
- gap up the existing hedges and plant a new generation of hedgerow trees to enhance and sustain landscape character and ecological habitats
- do all this in a manner that will reflect the inherent character of Principal Timbered farmlands, while providing the linked up amenity spaces required by the local community.

4.5 CLIMATE CHANGE

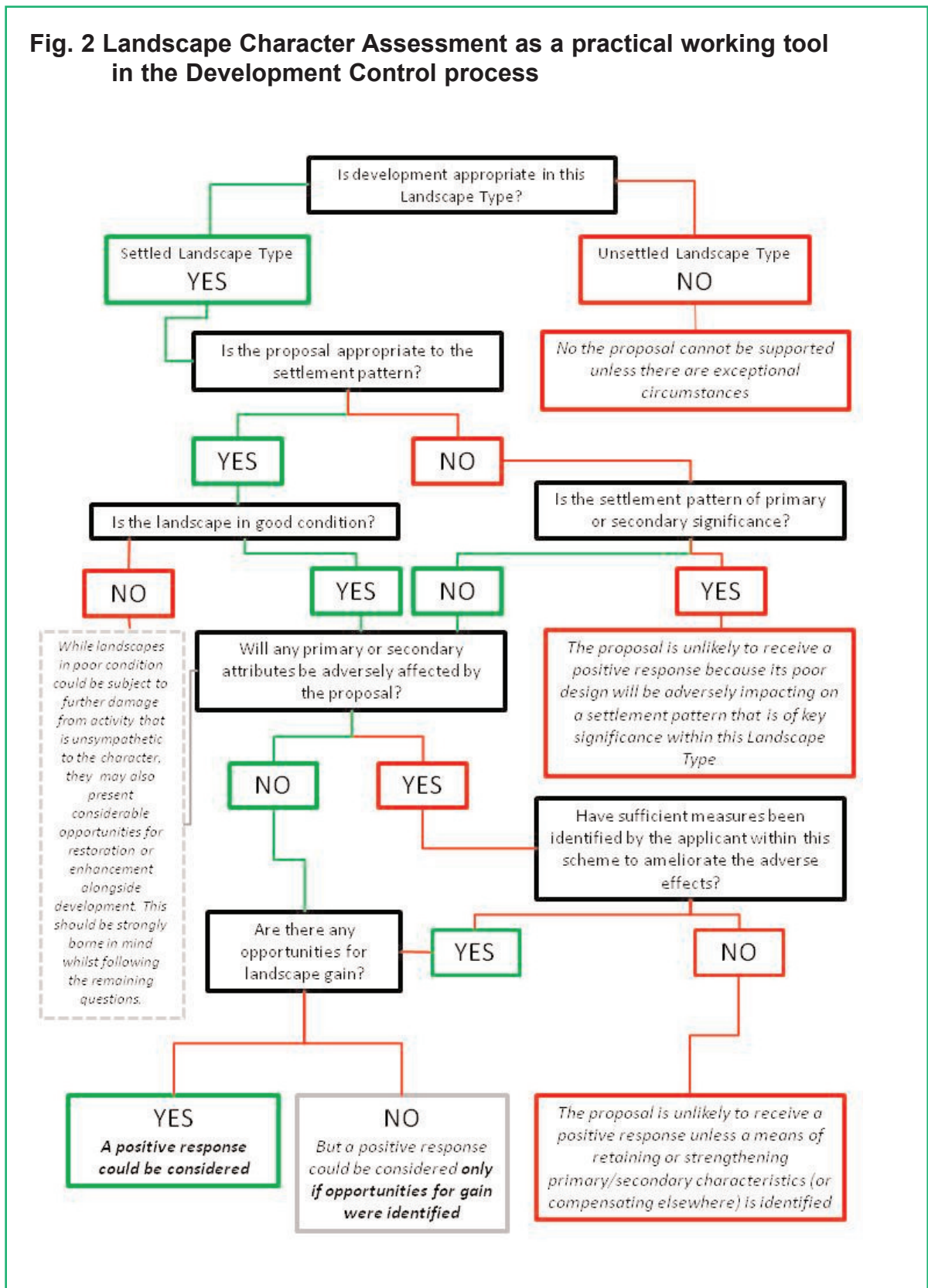
4.5.1 The UK Climate Impacts Programme (UKCIP) has been supporting organisations to adapt to climate change since 1997. UKCIP has been the main channel for providing modelling of potential change. Current concerns indicate that the UK is likely to experience more extreme weather conditions and that the distribution patterns of flora at the limit of their natural extent may be noticeably reduced.

4.5.2 The resulting impact on the landscape is likely to be one of loss of characteristic features, such as the beech hangers in Limestone Estatelands, become less prominent. Although this will result in a loss of species diversity, the impact on the overall landscape character is unlikely to be profound because it is dependent on a range of characteristics. Notwithstanding this, if one of the tree diseases currently affecting various species populations were to become as virulent as Dutch Elm Disease, the resulting adverse impact on the landscape would be significant.



4.0 APPLICATION OF LANDSCAPE CHARACTER ASSESSMENT

Fig. 2 Landscape Character Assessment as a practical working tool in the Development Control process





5.0 THE LANDSCAPE CHARACTER ASSESSMENT EXPLAINED

Summary

- The background to the LCA and its links to national work carried out by the Countryside Agency
- The nature of historical and ongoing land use change in relation to landscape character
- The twin concepts of appropriateness and resilience at both the strategic and detailed scales
- Examples of the impact of land use change on the elements of landscape character

Topic Paper 6: "Techniques and Criteria for Judging Capacity and Sensitivity" was published in final draft form in January 2004 with contributions from Worcestershire County Council. The Worcestershire LCA is quoted in the Topic Paper as one of a number of examples of practitioner best practice.

5.1.3 Although now complete, the Worcestershire LCA is capable of accommodating further data as this becomes available. The robustness of its methodology will allow continual updating of the supporting database without compromising the outcome of the assessment and hence this guidance.

5.1 BACKGROUND

5.1.1 The Landscape Character Assessment of Worcestershire was begun in 1997 by the then Hereford and Worcester County Council, and was informed by:

- "Countryside Character" undertaken by the Countryside Agency.
- "Natural Areas" carried out by English Nature.
- "Character of England" map prepared by English Heritage (1996)

5.1.2 Guidance published in April 2002 by The Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage provides the latest updated advice on LCA. This is not a prescriptive document as it acknowledges that there are various approaches to the subject, all of equal merit. Later topic papers were produced by The Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage to support their landscape character assessment guidance.

5.2 RATIONALE

5.2.1 For many years, the concept of landscape conservation, particularly with regard to its association with development plans, has been largely based upon the notion of defining, and protecting, landscapes on the basis of their 'quality'. This led to the need to identify those areas or landscapes deemed to be the most attractive, and consequently affording them some form of protection. A hierarchy of landscape designations was developed, the most important being those of national importance, followed by those of regional, and then those of local, importance.



5.0 THE LANDSCAPE CHARACTER ASSESSMENT EXPLAINED

Of the areas of national importance, Worcestershire contains parts of two landscapes defined as Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. These are the Malvern Hills AONB which extends into Herefordshire and a small part of Gloucestershire and the western extremity of the extensive Cotswolds AONB across Bredon Hill and the Cotswold scarp beyond Broadway. Historically, beneath national designations came those landscapes of regional importance, defined by the Local Authority - in Worcestershire, these were termed Areas of Great Landscape Value - followed by those of local significance, defined in District Local Plans.

As a result, the consideration given to landscape, when dealing with planning issues, has largely been related to location - focused on whether a proposal lies within an area of landscape designation or not. Proposals for development or change within a given area of landscape designation would be guided by policies indicating that the character, or special quality, of the area should be protected. Until recently however, it was rare for the character of such areas to be described, leaving it up to the individual to define these parameters. Areas outside such landscape designations invariably lacked such policy guidance. These 'undesigned' areas, often forming the greater part of a county, were invariably the lowland, developed areas where, it could be argued, the pressures for change are most acute and the need for policies to protect the landscape are equally desirable.

5.2.2 Previous Structure Plans sought to recognise the importance of the wider landscape by identifying, and seeking to protect, a range of features throughout the county that were considered to be significant to the make up of its character. These features included skylines and hill features, mixed and broadleaved woodlands, dense hedgerow patterns and linear features. This approach, however, identified such features for their own sake and failed to relate to their spatial distribution, physical nature and association with one another and so make the link to the cultural evolution of the landscape.

5.2.3 LCA makes such a link, placing the features of a particular landscape in context, providing not just a description of the different landscapes within the county, but an understanding as to why those differences, and different landscapes, are there and what they represent. It puts local decision making in the context of a strategic, character based framework that is capable of linking national policy objectives with county/district wide planning and land management activities.

5.3 CHANGE IN THE LANDSCAPE

5.3.1 The landscape is the visual manifestation of the inter-relationship between man's activities and the natural environment. These are dynamic forces, forever changing the character of the landscape. The LCA seeks to understand the inherent character of the present day landscape. There is no intention to halt these processes of change or to fossilise the landscape as it is now or to try to return it to some previous supposed perfection.



5.3.2 The landscape has evolved over time as a result of two basic influences. The first is the physical structure of the landscape, represented by its geology, topography and soils. These are permanent physiographic elements and provide fundamentally stable basic patterns to the landscape. The second influence is the result of man's endeavours to live within the constraints of these different physical conditions, producing a range of cultural patterns that are superimposed upon the basic physiographic patterns. The cultural patterns result from differences in land use, and have been heavily influenced by:

- the nature of the soil and its fertility, the slope gradient and local climate, all of which affect farming patterns.
- the relative presence or absence of tree cover.
- population densities and social organisation.
- physical restraints such as the occurrence of seasonal flooding, or social restrictions such as the presence of forest laws or other aspects of land tenure and ownership.

These patterns, based upon physiographic parameters, and the cultural responses to them, define what is called the inherent character of the landscape.

The process of landscape character assessment is to identify and describe the areas of different inherent character within the landscape.

5.3.3 It is often stated that landscapes are constantly changing. The landscape is certainly not static, but the changes most often perceived are those that are site-specific rather than those affecting large areas of comparable landscape character. In retrospect it is obvious that the pace of change has been faster at certain times of recorded history than at others. Certainly in the last 60 years, the acceleration of change in rural areas has dramatically increased. Worcestershire's Historic Landscape Characterisation, produced by the Historic Environment and Archaeology Service, has recognised that while some of the Worcestershire landscape is extremely ancient in character, much of it has been significantly altered over previous centuries and the landscape that we see now may have been changed several times (see Appendix A).

Nevertheless, the patterns of rural landscape have usually respected the physiographic nature of the land and through this have perpetuated an underlying constancy to the landscape. Modern change, due to increased mechanisation, advanced agricultural technology and the demand for development, is no longer so restrained by the demands of physical landscape characteristics. Consequently, modern change has generally resulted in dilution of character and an acceleration of the process of uniformity across the county. The underlying, inherent character of the landscape that we see today relies on the established elements of constancy, while the condition of that landscape may be strengthened, or more usually weakened, by modern change.



5.3.4 Landscape Uniformity

The twin concepts of appropriateness and resilience underpin the approach to character-based planning both at the strategic scale and at the detailed scale. Concerns about the increasing uniformity of the landscape are well-founded and LCA can provide a tool to reduce this trend.

Landscape uniformity is the result of three key influences:

- i. reduced dependency upon physical and cultural constraints, which formerly 'shaped' the character of the landscape
- ii. the loss of features that are distinctive to a particular area
- iii. the dilution and compromise of those features that remain by the addition of the commonplace or the inappropriate

This latter aspect can be compounded by the introduction of landscaping conditions, associated with planning permission, which are standardised solutions rather than tailored to reflect the character of the particular area. A similar impact results from advocating environmental principles that are 'generally beneficial' rather than 'locally specific' in such fields as forestry and countryside management. LCA provides a clear indication of those features that define the character of a particular area, together with the relative importance of those features. This provides a strong direction towards a vision or focus for the landscape of that area, which in turn can influence how the tools available in the planning and decision making processes can be best used to achieve such goals.

5.3.5 Shaping Landscape Change

A strategic awareness and understanding vision is needed in order to make rational decisions about how best to accommodate change in the countryside. **Historic patterns of settlement and woodland cover, for instance, are key determinants of landscape character and it is important that land use change should, where possible, respect these patterns (i.e. change should be appropriate to its setting and not be allowed to overwhelm and destroy the inherent character of the landscape). In landscapes that are least resilient to change the elements of landscape character are particularly sensitive and the impact of land use change, particularly new development, should be subjected to rigorous examination and resisted where that impact is seen to be unacceptable.**

5.3.6 Adoption of the concept of LCA does not equate with halting future landscape change. The underlying doctrine of LCA is to understand the process of landscape evolution, taking as read that landscapes will continue to evolve, reflecting changing economic, social and environmental forces in the process. LCA does not seek to embalm the landscape as a museum piece, set at a particular period of time. Instead it seeks to raise awareness of those aspects of landscape evolution that are pertinent to the identity of particular landscapes today, in other words, that contribute to its inherent character. The challenge lies in finding ways to guide and control change and to be able to best accommodate change, whilst recognising and respecting the inherent character of the landscape.



5.3.7 Landscape Character and Local Distinctiveness

The degree to which landscape character is influenced by change depends upon the magnitude of that change, in other words, the scale at which that change is occurring. To help understand this, it is helpful to bear in mind the difference between landscape character and local distinctiveness. Landscape character is defined by particular combinations of characteristics occurring in repeated patterns over a particular area, as opposed to the presence of individual, often unique, features, which contribute to what we regard as local distinctiveness. Landscape character defines the broad brush, generic, characteristics of areas that have shared a similar landscape evolution. For the character of a particular Landscape Type to be affected by change, that change should be evident or predictable across the Landscape Type as a whole.

5.3.8 Taking as an example a Landscape Type with the characteristics of a mixed farming land use and an absence of any woodland cover, should a landowner choose to plant an area of woodland, perhaps for shooting, or for nature conservation reasons, the eventual woodland would change the appearance of that specific locality: it would create a feature out of kilter with the general character of that (unwooded) Landscape Type. Such a change, in terms of landscape character, would not be encouraged, although it is recognised that there may be no control over such individual actions. If, on the other hand, the future of mixed farming generally ceased to be viable economically in that particular Landscape Type, and a change to a land use based on forestry appeared

to be the most feasible, such a change, affecting the Landscape Type as a whole, would be recognised and accepted as part of the inevitable evolution of that landscape. The presence of woodland cover would then become part of the evolving inherent character of that Landscape Type.

5.3.9 Untypical Sites

Throughout the landscape there are examples of sites that are not typical of the Landscape Type in which they are found. Often this is due to a site specific feature such as a medieval deer park or ornamental parkland, an historic garden, a large body of water or an historic artefact such as a hill fort or ridge and furrow land form. Sometimes the area is too small to be singled out as a different Landscape Type. This is particularly true of the many commons throughout the county. In these situations a detailed analysis of the unique character of the area should serve to guide appropriate development. **There should be no attempt to return the area to the character of the Landscape Type in which it sits as to do so would be to destroy its own distinctiveness. Decisions on siting, scale, detailing and the use of construction materials relating to built development should be made with this detailed analysis of the unique local character in mind.** The settlement pattern, on the other hand, will be informed by the characteristic attribute of the relevant Landscape Type.



5.0 THE LANDSCAPE CHARACTER ASSESSMENT EXPLAINED

5.3.10 Sometimes the site may appear to be different because its poor condition has robbed it of many of the characteristics that would have originally identified it as belonging to the Landscape Type in which it is found. **In this situation the development should seek to strengthen the inherent landscape character through appropriate mitigation. Developers should be aware that if the site in question does not appear to conform to the inherent character of its Landscape Type through loss of features or addition of inappropriate features (i.e. it is in poor condition), proposals that would exacerbate this poor condition will not be considered favourably from a landscape perspective.**

5.3.11 New Future Landscapes

There are certain types of development which, because of their scale and nature, will fundamentally alter the inherent character of the rural landscape. In Worcestershire, developments of this kind are most noticeably represented by mineral extraction. Major housing and industrial sites, while they can also overwhelm inherent character, are more often than not sited in proximity to existing urban development and thus viewed as an extension of the town or city. Future renewable energy technologies may also transform the landscape but are often of a more transitory nature, although wind farms can be highly intrusive. Mineral extraction however, can result in the profound transformation of landscape character and can only take place where economically viable deposits occur. Modern quarries are inevitably sited in rural areas where hard rock is usually to

be found on elevated hilly land and sand and gravel deposits along the river valleys. Additionally, there is potential for small locally sustainable building stone quarries and delves throughout the county. In those situations the opportunity occurs to create new landscapes that may be radically different from the original. Decisions on the long term restoration of these sites should be taken with landscape character in mind as well as taking into account future opportunities to provide new facilities such as geodiversity features or lakes which could benefit tourism, public recreation and wildlife. The character of the surrounding landscape should be assessed and the long term restoration proposals should seek to integrate the site into the existing surrounding landscape. The decision may be to restore the site to agriculture, in which case the land should be enclosed with a pattern of hedgerows that link to the existing hedges and create fields of an appropriate scale and pattern. Where the long term proposals seek to create an entirely new landscape it should fit comfortably within the existing landscape, with hedges and streams linked up and no perceived conflict between introduced and existing features and habitats.

5.3.12 The emphasis on the appropriateness of a development in a landscape, and the landscape's resilience to change (or ability to accept that development without undue harm) can only be partially assessed through the LCA. Site visits and the need for detailed visual assessment are also a vital part of both strategic land use planning and development control. (Guidance on Visual Impact Assessment has been



5.0 THE LANDSCAPE CHARACTER ASSESSMENT EXPLAINED

published by the Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Assessment in their *Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment: Second Edition*.) Additional tools such as Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic Environmental Assessment and Environmental Impact Assessment may also play an important part in this process.

Nevertheless, both strategic planning and the development control process should be guided by the LCA which is able to inform them at every stage. Fig.2, p.22 shows how the LCA can guide the development control decision-making process from initial strategic feasibility through to detailed design of individual development. It must be emphasised, however, that the impact of development on the landscape is only one aspect among many that are considered at both strategic planning and development control stages. Decisions are informed by the relevant Development Plan and any other material consideration and are a balance between social, economic and environmental concerns. Where a decision goes against the landscape character advice, the findings of the LCA can then be utilised to develop appropriate mitigation measures.



6.0 CLASSIFICATION AND DESCRIPTION

Summary

- The first stage of landscape character assessment setting out the physical, tangible aspects of characterisation and its methodology
- Landscape character areas and landscape character types are explained
- Attributes and their indicators are set out

6.1 THE PROCESSES AND PRODUCTS OF LANDSCAPE CHARACTER ASSESSMENT

6.1.1 The process of Landscape Character Assessment involves the description and classification of areas where distinctive features occur in repeated patterns. It seeks to describe what makes one area different from another, avoiding personal preferences or judgemental values.

6.1.2 There are two stages in the process of LCA and it is important that these are recognised as quite distinct. The first phase of classification and description sets out the physical, tangible aspects of characterisation and is described in this section of the SG. The second phase is an analysis of this character and forms the basis of judgements and decisions taken with landscape character in mind. This is described in section 7.0.

6.1.3 The process of characterisation identifies two types of unit:

- Firstly, there are landscape character areas at a variety of scales, which in the Worcestershire Landscape Character Assessment are called Regional Character Areas, and Landscape Description Units (LDU). The larger areas are at a county scale while the smaller LDUs are at a local scale and are further divided into the smallest units known as Land Cover Parcels (LCP). These are all individual, unique areas with their own identity and character. These areas are identified by description and given appropriate local names such as the Vale of Evesham Regional Character Area, with Fladbury Principal Village Farmlands LDU being one of a number of LDUs found within it. Their individual descriptions are held in the Technical Handbook.
- Secondly, there are landscape character types. These have been identified through assessing the characteristics that make up landscape character. Thus, different combinations of these characteristics will result in different landscape character types (called Landscape Types in the Worcestershire LCA). Since this is a generic classification, the same combination of characteristics will always result in the same Landscape Type wherever it is found in the country.



Fig. 3 Hierarchy of landscape character units

- Regional Character Areas
- Landscape Types
- Landscape Description Units
- Land Cover Parcels

6.2 METHOD

6.2.1 The LCA was carried out through a combination of desk study and field survey, backed up by consultation with specialists such as ecologists and historical geographers.

6.2.2 Identifying Landscape Description Units (LDUs)

Initially, a desk-based study systematically divided the countryside into discrete and relatively homogenous units of land within which the constituent physical and cultural elements occurred in repeated patterns and shared certain visual characteristics. These units of land are the Landscape Description Units (LDUs) and are the building blocks of landscape character. They form the basis on which all subsequent classification and evaluation takes place.

6.2.3 The LDUs were defined by a combination of three earth science and three cultural indicators, known as 'definitive indicators' because they defined the boundaries of the LDUs. The three earth science indicators of geology, topography and soils were identified through reference to specialist maps. These are known as 'permanent definitive indicators' since they are not generally subject to change through man's influence. They are jointly the most influential factors that contribute to the character of the landscape.

Three cultural definitive indicators were identified as providing base-line descriptive information. These are tree cover character, land use and settlement pattern. They are not permanent definitive indicators as they are subject to change, being a reflection of man's influence on the landscape, but they are always applicable to the landscape.

The desk study relied heavily on map analysis to arrive at a simple broad brush indication of the range of ways in which each indicator could be expressed in the Worcestershire landscape. The analysis of historical maps played a particularly important role in analysing the patterns of settlement, tree cover and land use.

Simplified map overlays were prepared for each indicator, which, when related to one another, enabled patterns to be distinguished. These, in turn, made it possible to begin to understand the relationship between the different indicators. This greatly assists in the understanding of how a particular landscape has developed and is the key to assessing landscape character.



6.0 CLASSIFICATION AND DESCRIPTION

6.2.4 Each indicator is broken down into its constituent attributes. Thus, for example, settlement pattern in Worcestershire can be described as:

- Nucleated - discrete, usually large villages with a low level of dispersal. There is little settlement beyond the village boundary and the farmsteads are contained within the fabric of the village. Buildings beyond the village boundary are usually restricted to 'new' farmsteads created at the time that the former open fields were enclosed.
- Clustered - discrete settlement nuclei (small villages and/or hamlets) associated with a moderate to high level of dispersal. Dwellings are centred around an inner core, often the church, but farmsteads are situated outside the village in open countryside.
- Wayside - small clusters or strings of roadside dwellings associated with a moderate to high level of dispersal.
- Dispersed - scattered farmsteads and rural dwellings associated with a low to moderate density of dispersal.
- Scattered - a very low dispersal of individual farmsteads and rural dwellings.
- Unsettled - landscapes lacking human habitation

6.2.5 Once the LDUs had been defined, additional descriptive information about the landscape, especially what it looks like on the ground, was gathered from a combination of further desk study and field survey. An additional six descriptive indicators were thus added to the original six definitive indicators. These address spatial character, indicative ground vegetation, field boundaries, enclosure pattern, tree cover pattern and other distinctive special characteristic features such as building style. Each of these indicators is also broken down into a number of attributes. Field boundaries for example, could be walls, fences, hedges, or hedge/ditches. In other parts of the country there will be other local characteristic boundary features. Unlike the definitive indicators, the descriptive indicators are not relevant in all areas and therefore not always applied. For example, tree cover pattern is not applicable on the higher slopes of the Malvern Hills as these have an unwooded character.



Fig. 4 Settlement pattern

There are five unsettled Landscape Types in Worcestershire, the remainder are settled.

UNSETTLED LANDSCAPE TYPES

- High Hills and Slopes
- Riverside Meadows
- Unenclosed Commons
- Wet Pasture Meadows
- Wooded Forest

SETTLED LANDSCAPE TYPES

Scattered settlement pattern

- Limestone Estatelands
- Principal Wooded Hills
- Settled Farmlands on River Terraces

Dispersed settlement pattern

- Enclosed Commons
- Principal Settled Farmlands
- Principal Timbered Farmlands
- Settled Farmlands with Pastoral Land Use
- Timbered Plateau Farmlands

Wayside settlement pattern

- Forest Smallholdings and Dwellings
- Timbered Pastures

Clustered settlement pattern

- Estate Farmlands
- Sandstone Estatelands
- Wooded Estatelands
- Wooded Hills and Farmlands

Nucleated settlement pattern

- Principal Village Farmlands
- Village Claylands
- Village Farmlands with Orchards

6.2.6 Identifying Land Cover Parcels (LCPs)

During the process of field survey it was apparent that there was often a minor variation of attributes within a LDU. This was particularly true of land use and the historic patterns of field enclosure. The LDUs were therefore subdivided as necessary into smaller sub-landscape units called Land Cover Parcels (LCPs). The field survey provided additional detail that could not be derived from mapped sources. Such details included those of hedgerow species composition, woodland structure and the presence of trees along hedgerows or watercourses. It also enabled the degree of visual unity to be assessed. If two adjacent LCPs possessed no visual differences on the ground, they would be merged together to form one.

The field survey also provided an opportunity to gather information about the condition of the landscape, which is regularly updated, for example - whether hedgerows are well-maintained, overgrown or deteriorating and gappy, or whether hedgerow tree populations exhibit a healthy variation in age structure or primarily consist of over-mature specimens.

The data from both the desk study and the field survey is held in a database at the LCP scale. Thus each LCP is a totally homogeneous unit within which there are no variations of attribute and within which the landscape is a visual entirety.



6.0 CLASSIFICATION AND DESCRIPTION

6.2.7 Since the LDUs and LCPs are individual, site specific areas, it is possible to produce written descriptions of the landscape character for each. This enables the identification of special site features such as orchards, ponds or traditional hay meadows which are not picked up by the definitive or descriptive indicators. These are landscape features which contribute to the local landscape character and may be extremely important in defining local distinctiveness. However, they are not consistent throughout the landscape and therefore do not contribute to the definition of Landscape Types.

Fig. 5 Unwooded landscapes

There are two Landscape Types where trees and woodland are not characteristic
 High Hills and Slopes
 Unenclosed Commons

There are eight Landscape Types where woodland is not characteristic although there are individual trees.
 Forest Smallholdings and Dwellings
 Principal Settled Farmlands
 Principal Village Farmlands
 Riverside Meadows
 Settled Farmlands with Pastoral Land Use
 Settled Farmlands on River Terraces
 Village Claylands
 Village Farmlands with Orchards

6.2.8 Identifying Landscape Types
 Having completed both the field survey and desk study, it was then possible to group the LDUs into visually coherent Landscape Types, based on the visual prominence of the indicators that defined each LDU. Prominent indicators are those that have an immediate visual impact when viewed from the LDU and

can be described as the primary characteristics of the Landscape Type. Thus the primary characteristics of Landscape Type "Wooded Forest" are:

- Tree cover character is ancient broadleaved woodland.
- Tree cover pattern is of continuous tree cover.
- This is an unsettled landscape.
- There is an intimate spatial character with views restricted by the close proximity of trees.

6.2.9 Twenty two rural Landscape Types have been identified in Worcestershire:

- Enclosed Commons
- Estate Farmlands
- Forest Smallholdings and Dwellings
- High Hills and Slopes
- Limestone Estatelands
- Principal Settled Farmlands
- Principal Timbered Farmlands
- Principal Village Farmlands
- Principal Wooded Hills
- Riverside Meadows
- Sandstone Estatelands
- Settled Farmlands on River Terraces
- Settled Farmlands with Pastoral Land Use
- Timbered Pastures
- Timbered Plateau Farmlands
- Unenclosed Commons
- Village Claylands
- Village Farmlands with Orchards
- Wet Pasture Meadows
- Wooded Estatelands
- Wooded Forest
- Wooded Hills and Farmlands



It should be noted that an assessment of urban landscape character has yet to be undertaken and for the moment all urban landscapes are grouped together. The Landscape Types are described in more detail in Part Two of this document but their distribution throughout the county is shown in Fig.11 p.49 - Map of the Distribution of Landscape Types.

6.2.10 Thus LDUs and LCPs are site specific units within which the elements that make up the character of the landscape have been identified by predetermined indicators and their accompanying attributes. They are referenced to their location e.g .LDU MH 07 Ankerdine Principal Wooded Hills. Landscape Types on the other hand, represent the various combinations of those visually prominent attributes. They

are therefore not site specific since the same combination of attributes can occur in a number of places. In fact many of the Landscape Types found in Worcestershire are also found throughout the rest of the country. Using a common nomenclature for Landscape Types, together with a common methodology for their definition, a compatible landscape character analysis at regional and national levels can, in theory, be achieved. In practise this has not yet happened.

Fig. 6 Landscape indicators

Definitive Indicators

Topography
Geology } Earth Science
Soils

Land Use (farm type)
Settlement Pattern } Culural
Tree Cover Character

Descriptive Indicators

Characteristic Features
Enclosure Pattern
Field Boundaries
Indicative Ground Vegetation
Spatial Character
Tree Cover pattern

Fig. 7 Landscape attributes

LAND USE (FARM TYPE)

Rough
Pastoral
Mixed
Woodland
Cropping
Arable

SETTLEMENT PATTERN

Unsettled
Scattered
Dispersed
Wayside
Clustered
Nucleated

SPATIAL CHARACTER

Exposed
Large
Medium-open
Medium-framed
Small
Intimate
Variable

INDICATIVE GROUND VEGETATION

Heathy/acid grassland
Wetland

FIELD BOUNDARIES

Hedges
Hedge/ditch
Walls

ENCLOSURE PATTERN

Unenclosed
Organic
Variable
Sub-regular
Planned

TREE COVER CHARACTER

Unwooded
Ancient
Planned
Trees

TREE COVER PATTERN

Continuous
Linked
Discrete
Linear
Tree groups
Scattered trees

CHARACTERISTIC FEATURES

Building style
River
Parks



6.2.11 Identifying Regional Character Areas

At a larger scale, LDUs may also be grouped together in areas that reflect a perceived common cultural unity. These are primarily identified by the earth science indicators of geology, topography and soils, although the other three definitive indicators of tree cover character, land use and settlement pattern also play a role. These broad brush areas are defined only by description. They have been called Regional Character Areas (aka National Character Areas) and generally equate with those identified in the national programme of Countryside Character undertaken by the Countryside Agency (now Natural England). The greater degree of detail that can be gained from a county as opposed to a national character assessment enables the boundaries of these Areas to be defined more accurately, and, where appropriate, to further subdivide them. Regional Character Areas define areas of physiographic and cultural identity at a very broad brush level of detail, invariably transcending the administrative boundaries of local authorities and so creating a regional and national framework within which the finer scale of evaluation at county level can take place. Regional Character Areas in this study are used primarily to provide a simple geographical framework within which to present the range and distribution of Landscape Types in a comprehensive manner.

6.2.12 The Vale of Evesham is an example of a Regional Character Area. The public relate to this generic area and have certain perceptions about its landscape, particularly pertaining to its cultural attributes, notably its land use, and, to a lesser extent, to its topography. The Vale of Evesham actually comprises a range of Landscape Types:

- *Principal Village Farmlands*, representing the core areas of horticulture and cropping.
- *Village Farmlands with Orchards*, representing those areas where orchards and soft fruit growing are dominant.
- *Riverside Meadows*, flanking the River Avon.
- *Village Claylands*, representing the areas of heavier clay soils where arable land uses are less dominant.

6.2.13 The location and list of Regional Character Areas is shown in Fig. 12, p.51 - Map of the Distribution of Regional Character Areas. The descriptions of both these and the LDUs are available in the Technical Handbook which accompanies this SG. Since they are site specific descriptive areas they are not considered directly pertinent to this planning guidance but they do provide valuable additional information which will be vital in the future preparation of documents such as management plans and design guides.



7.0 ANALYSIS AND EVALUATION

Summary

- The second stage of landscape character assessment setting out the evaluation methodology to enable the development of landscape strategies and priorities for action
- Indicators are explained in terms of their significance to landscape character and their vulnerability, tolerance and resilience to change
- The concepts of condition and sensitivity are explained

7.1 METHODOLOGY

7.1.1 Having completed the classification and description of the landscape, it is essential to direct this understanding in ways that will achieve the principles of sustainability and sense of place promoted in PPS 7. The classification and descriptions alone still place a great onus on individual interpretation. Therefore, an evaluation methodology has been formulated to enable the development of landscape strategies and priorities for action. This methodology is also essential when making development control decisions based on Landscape Character Assessment (LCA). The fundamental maxim of all decisions based on LCA is:

- to identify those attributes of landscape character about which we should be most concerned. In other words, in each Landscape Type, would the loss of certain attributes be more damaging to landscape character than others?

- to assess whether some landscapes have a greater capacity to accept change than others. In other words, should we be more concerned about proposals for change in some landscapes than in others?
- to anticipate likely changes in landscape character and take a proactive approach to the strategic development of such areas, in order to guide change for multi-purpose benefit.

The principles of analysis and evaluation are set out briefly within the main text of this SG. The Technical Handbook contains further explanation.

7.1.2 Of the six definitive indicators of landscape character, the three relating to physiography (soils, topography and geology) are considered to be stable, permanent components. They are less likely to be significantly affected as a result of proposals for development or other forms of change. By way of contrast, the nature of the three cultural indicators could alter due to damage or loss, or by dilution as a result of the introduction of inappropriate replacement or additional characteristics. Changes to some of the descriptive indicators are similarly possible. The process of analysis therefore concentrates on the following cultural and descriptive indicators that are readily subject to alteration:

- Land Use
- Tree Cover Character
- Tree Cover Pattern
- Enclosure Pattern
- Boundary Type
- Settlement Pattern



7.0 ANALYSIS AND EVALUATION

7.1.3 The descriptive indicator of 'Spatial Character' was excluded from the analysis as the various components that together contribute to spatial character - tree cover, enclosure etc. were already being assessed individually. The descriptive indicators of 'Indicative Vegetation' and 'Additional Characteristic Features' were also excluded from the analysis as the presence or absence of these tended to be of a more inconsistent nature and therefore not necessarily a pertinent contribution to the assessment of resilience or condition.

7.1.4 It was recognised that by analysing and evaluating the six chosen indicators, an understanding can be achieved of their significance, vulnerability, tolerance and resilience to change. This ability to systematically define the key characteristics that distinguish the various Landscape Types makes it possible to carry out comparative analyses of these landscapes. The analysis and evaluation described below was all carried out at the scale of the Landscape Types. At a more local scale, the information on condition held in the landscape database enables an analysis of sensitivity to change at the Land Cover Parcel (LCP) scale.

7.2 SIGNIFICANCE

7.2.1 Within each Landscape Type certain attributes may play a more **significant** role than others in defining the character of that landscape. The contribution that a particular indicator makes to the character of the landscape is dependent on the extent or consistency of its relevant attribute and its visual prominence. This analysis was carried out in the field and enabled the grouping of Landscape Description Units (LDUs) into Landscape Types.

7.2.2 The various combinations of the consistency and visual prominence defined each indicator of each Landscape Type as a primary, secondary or tertiary characteristic.

The primary and secondary characteristics of each Landscape Type are clearly set out in the descriptions contained in Part Two of this SG.

7.3 VULNERABILITY

7.3.1 Within each Landscape Type, certain attributes may be more vulnerable to change than others. On the basis of the field survey information, together with subsequent analysis, an assessment was made of the relevance or function of each attribute and the likelihood of change, expressed as the trend. Vulnerability is assessed by analysing the combination of function, trend and significance of each attribute. It can be defined as the likelihood of change to an attribute, or the landscape as a whole, as expressed by the significance of predicted trends in relation to function.

7.3.2 When assessing function, each attribute within the relevant indicators for each Landscape Type was considered in relation to the combination of circumstances that originally gave rise to that attribute. The resulting analysis graded attributes into three categories.

- still functional in today's landscape in its traditional form
- only functional in today's landscape in a modified form or only likely to be maintained in its traditional form with support



- cosmetic, since the original or historic function is now redundant. In other words these attributes are a relic of the past preserved only for their non-practical aesthetic, sentimental or historic value

7.3.3 The attributes were then considered with regard to their trends - certain attributes may be declining, others may be considered to be stable or improving. An informed judgement was made regarding the likelihood of future change, based on knowledge of current and past change.

7.4 TOLERANCE

7.4.1 Tolerance can be defined as the degree to which change is likely to cause irreparable damage to the essential components that contribute to landscape character.

7.4.2 Tolerance can be assessed by considering the replaceability of individual attributes in relation to their significance in the landscape as a whole. Within each Landscape Type, the degree to which different attributes are **replaceable** may vary - both in terms of timescales for the replacement to be considered achieved and in terms of the replacements being sufficiently comparable to the original. Replaceability addresses the potential for re-creating an attribute should it be damaged or destroyed as a result of land use change

7.5 RESILIENCE

7.5.1 Resilience is a measure of the endurance of landscape character, defined by the likelihood of change in relation to the degree to which the landscape is able to tolerate that change.

It is assessed by considering vulnerability (which includes significance) and tolerance together. The resilience assessment is generic for a given Landscape Type.

7.5.2 A comparative scale of resilience can be created to illustrate the ability of the different Landscape Types to tolerate change. This final analysis of the Landscape Types proves valuable when assessing the potential for, and the landscape impacts of, new built development, forestry, mineral extraction, transport routes etc. within the strategic planning process.

7.5.3 This map-based analysis can also be carried out for individual indicators so that, for example, the potential for large-scale forestry creation can be assessed on a landscape character basis. In this case the resilience of the attributes for tree cover character and tree cover pattern would be assessed and then the condition of the LCP would be taken into account. This would enable the capacity of the landscape to accept new woodland without compromising its character to be assessed. So, for example, the ancient wooded character and the discrete woodland pattern of an LCP of the Landscape Type Wooded Hills and Farmlands would be seen as resilient and therefore, in theory, new woodland planting would be acceptable. However, if the LCP were in good woodland condition, already containing large discrete blocks of woodland, it may not have the capacity to accept more woodland without detriment to its character. Similarly, if the LCP were in poor condition through lack of woodland then woodland may be welcome, although with large-scale elements the whole LDU would need to be assessed in order to maintain the optimum proportion of woodland to mixed farming.



7.0 ANALYSIS AND EVALUATION

7.5.4 It is therefore apparent that landscape character analysis enables the individual attributes that determine the low resilience of a particular landscape to be identified. It may well be possible therefore, even in landscapes of least resilience, to enable some change or development to take place providing the low overall resilience of that landscape is recognised and respected, and that the attributes that determine its low resilience are safeguarded.

Similarly, even landscapes that are highly resilient still have their weaknesses, in the sense that individual attributes may be of low resilience (i.e. of high significance, high vulnerability, low tolerance, or in decline). **High overall resilience does not give 'carte blanche' to ignore the impact of land use change on the landscape. Development or other change in these landscapes should still take note of the attributes that define them in order to respect and reflect them, and particularly to safeguard those attributes that are of low resilience within them.**

7.5.5 For the first time, this approach presents a breakdown of the character of all landscapes. It does not dictate a given conclusion, but simply provides a structure enabling a planning officer, or other user, to make an informed decision. The process is flexible in that it can accommodate changing perceptions of the landscape. For example, should it be felt that a previously functional attribute has ceased to be so, and may even now veer towards the cosmetic, the vulnerability analysis can be readily revised to accommodate such a changing status.

As stated above, resilience analysis (which takes account of significance, trend, vulnerability and tolerance) has been applied at the Landscape Type level. Landscape Type is therefore assessed by analysis of its constituent elements. Such a process also enables comparisons between different Landscape Types to be made. Fig. 9, p.42 - Overall resilience of each Landscape Type, illustrates the range of resilience between different Landscape Types, but also indicates the differing resilience of attributes within a given Landscape Type, and also comparison of the resilience of a particular attribute across the range of Landscape Types.

7.6 SENSITIVITY

7.6.1 In order to assist the considerations of development control and to allow informed choice, a more detailed level of information, often at a site specific level is usually required. This can be achieved by analysis of the smaller and more detailed LCPs, at which scale information on the condition of the landscape is held. The condition of the landscape - the degree to which the described character of a particular Landscape Type is actually evident today -will vary from LCP to LCP, or even within the LCP. Based on the assumption that within a landscape of high resilience (taken from the Landscape Type analysis), those parts of that landscape which are deemed to be in good condition (i.e. the inherent character is strongly represented) are more susceptible to change than those where the inherent character is already diluted or poorly represented, a more prescriptive approach to guiding land use change or development can be achieved.



7.6.2 The assessment of condition involves two fundamental components:

- i. **Representation** - which considers how well the landscape attributes are represented today and if there has been any loss or deterioration
- ii. **Modification** - which considers how the landscape may have been modified e.g. with incongruous, uncharacteristic additions

7.6.3 Once the condition of the landscape can be measured, the final piece of the jigsaw fits into place, the **sensitivity** of the landscape can be identified. **Sensitivity is the measure, or reflection, of the inherent resilience of a Landscape Type that is represented in the landscape today.**

Obviously, an area of landscape within a Landscape Type of high resilience, in which the attributes are well represented, is going to be more sensitive than an area within the same Landscape Type where the same attributes are in decline, damaged or lost. Such an indication of actual sensitivity, as opposed to the theoretical sensitivity of a landscape, is the tool that is most relevant to the more area-specific (as opposed to strategic) aspects of the planning process.

7.6.4 Whilst the measures of vulnerability and tolerance, and therefore resilience, are likely to be subject to only a slow change over time, and therefore can be regarded as 'constant', the condition of an LCP can be subject to rapid change. Condition can be measured and integrated with resilience at any time. Such flexibility is particularly beneficial as it enables an accurate analysis of the current situation i.e. the condition of the

landscape can be taken into account at the time that a decision about it needs to be made. It is desirable, however, to have, at an early stage, an overall analysis of the condition of the landscape of the whole county. Such a baseline level of information is necessary in order to:

- place the sensitivity of a particular LCP in context
- enable monitoring of landscape change.

A condition assessment of all the county LCPs has now been completed and the variation in condition of each of them is reflected in a range of sensitivity 'scores'. The sensitivity of a particular LCP will be most meaningful if it can be related to this range, therefore enabling its relevance in a county, district or more local context to be established. It must, however, be stressed that the condition of an LCP should always be checked on site before any decision is made as changes can rapidly take place.



7.0 ANALYSIS AND EVALUATION

Fig. 8 Flow chart illustrating the relationships between calculations in the analysis and evaluation phase of LCA.

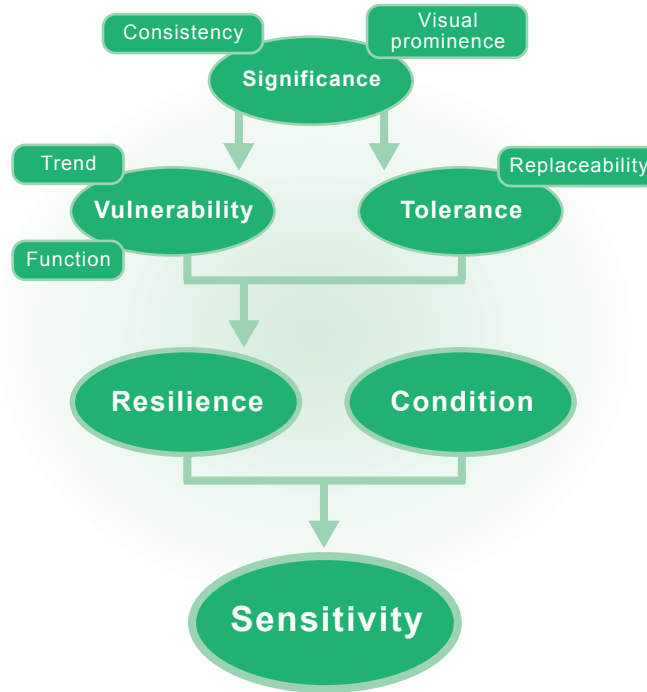
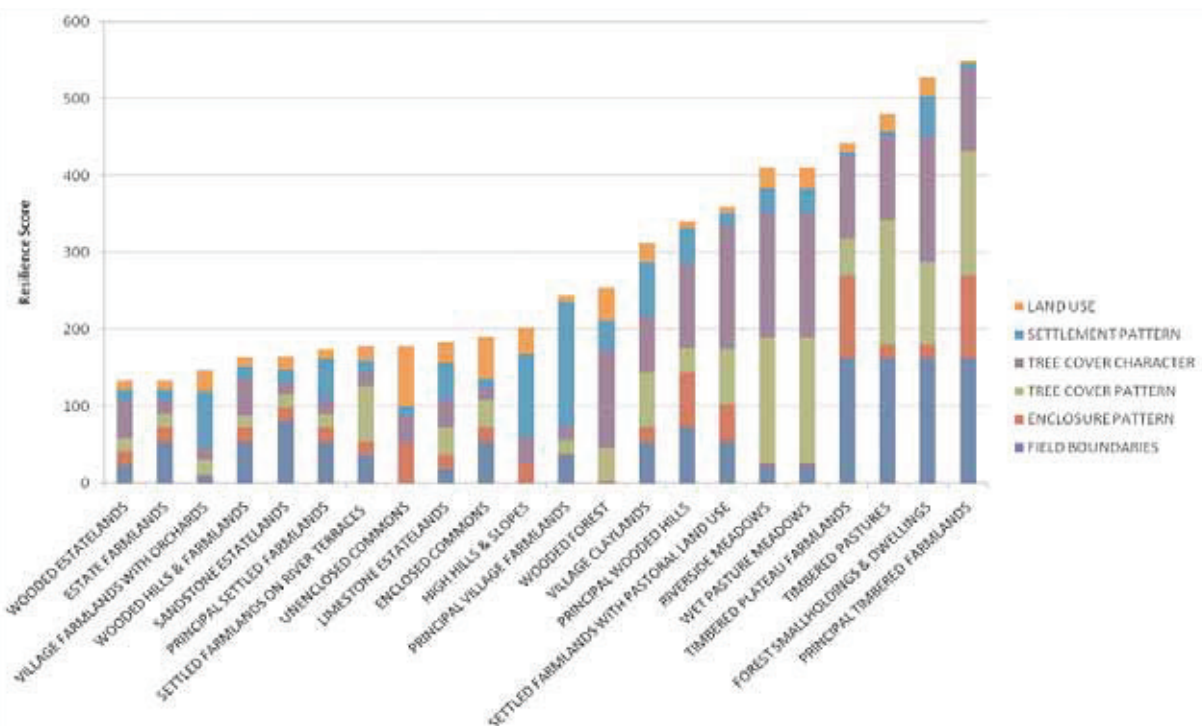


Fig. 9 Overall resilience of each Landscape Type in ranked order from most resilient (lower scoring) to least resilient (higher scoring). The chart also illustrates how the resilience scores of each individual indicator contributes to the overall score.





8.0 LANDSCAPE CONSERVATION, RESTORATION AND ENHANCEMENT

Summary

- The role of the LCA in influencing land management is explored and the concepts of conservation, restoration and enhancement are explained

8.1 Farmers and other land managers play a vital role in maintaining the health and character of the landscape. Future land management can help to direct change so that the character of the landscape is not compromised. The descriptions of the Landscape Types in Part Two of this SG include a brief analysis of the way in which the landscape is changing in the 21st century. Unfortunately, this often leads to a weakening of landscape character and loss of local distinctiveness but it is possible to strengthen the character of the landscape by appropriate management. Again, it is the twin principles of appropriateness and resilience which underpin both acceptable land management and development.

8.2 Opportunities for future beneficial land management can be considered under the three banners of conservation, restoration and enhancement. Where an attribute provides a significant contribution to landscape character (i.e. is a primary or secondary key characteristic) and is well represented the priority should be to **conserve**. An example of this might be the ancient wooded character in Landscape Type Principal Wooded Hills or well-represented hedgerow tree cover where this is a primary indicator of character. Where the significant attribute is in poor condition, such as few remaining hedgerow trees, or if the tree

population comprises virtually all over-mature specimens, an incentive to generate an interest in reviving and **restoring** the hedgerow tree population is needed. Any means to secure such benefits through planning controls or conditions should be sought. In some cases the conservation of existing features and their restoration is inappropriate or insufficient to noticeably strengthen the landscape character. In these cases the opportunity to **enhance** the landscape character should be pursued. This may be achieved by removing inappropriate features or introducing or strengthening lost or weak key characteristics in order to optimise the inherent landscape character, or a combination of both. An example might be in Landscape Type Unenclosed Commons where ornamental tree planting is removed, previously ploughed arable land is returned to rough grazing and a small pond is created for the benefit of grazing animals and wildlife.

8.3 These concepts of conservation, restoration and enhancement have been set out as a broad-brush approach relating to the Landscape Types. However, they are even more relevant when considering the management of individual sites where the local landscape character may be dependant on unique features or may be untypical of the Landscape Type. The detailed description of the LDU could be a useful tool in this situation, as are the standard processes of landscape survey, analysis and evaluation. New built development should also address this threefold



8.0 LANDSCAPE CONSERVATION, RESTORATION AND ENHANCEMENT

approach. **There are often opportunities on development sites for mitigation measures to conserve landscape features such as trees, to restore features such as boundary hedges and to enhance the landscape character by other means such as off-site planting and the use of local native plant species. The preparation of management plans, whether allied to development sites or not, should address these three aspects in relation to the local landscape character and the relevant Landscape Type.**

8.4 The further analysis of vulnerability, tolerance and resilience *together* enables a greater refinement of this broad guidance. Priorities can be fine-tuned specifically to target those attributes which are either unlikely to be replaced without particular encouragement (those that have lost, or are losing, their function), together with those that can be replaced only with difficulty over a long period of time. Such analysis can be influential in the assessment and review of available initiatives in order to see if they actually provide sufficient incentive to achieve the required results on the ground. If they fail to do this, some new form of incentive will be urgently required.

8.5 The concept of vulnerability, in particular, enables future trends to be discerned, and this opportunity to be predictive enables planning control, and landscape management in general, to become more pro-active rather than re-active. Instead of waiting for landscapes to deteriorate and then responding to that situation, the key declining influences can be determined and measures put into place to try to remedy such decline before it actually manifests itself in the landscape.

Taking the vulnerability (v), tolerance (t) and resilience (r) summary for a particular Landscape Type, for example Principal Timbered Farmlands: The significance analysis indicates that the primary cultural attributes that define the character of the Timbered Farmlands are:

- Hedgerow boundaries to the fields
- Ancient character of the woodlands/tree cover
- Dominant representation of tree cover in the pattern of scattered trees (the detailed descriptions indicate that hedgerow trees define the primary patterns and those along water courses also having relevance)
- Organic enclosure pattern

The v.t.r. analysis shows that of these, the scattered (hedgerow) tree populations are of greatest concern as these display high vulnerability, low tolerance and low overall resilience. The key priority in these landscapes should therefore be to safeguard this attribute and encourage its **restoration**.

The v.t.r. analysis also indicates many other attributes that give cause for concern. The Principal Timbered Farmlands Landscape Type, it must be remembered, is one of the ancient landscapes and, broadly speaking, the ancient landscapes are far less resilient to change than the more recent planned landscapes. In the Principal Timbered Farmlands, it is evident that the future of the organic pattern of enclosure is also of prime concern. Bearing in mind the fact that the conditions relating to the evolution of the organic pattern no longer apply, efforts to safeguard the existing attribute will be particularly important.



The ancient character of the woodlands/tree cover is also highlighted - whilst there may be initiatives (through the Forestry Commission) that may enable these woodlands to remain economically viable (and therefore moderately functional), should the ancient character be lost, the impact on landscape character can take a long time to repair - hence the low replaceability rating of this characteristic. The need to retain hedgerows as the characteristic field boundaries, together with respect for aspects of the characteristic brick and timber building style often associated with the settlements in these landscapes, is also relevant.

8.6 Guidance for restoration and conservation priorities can therefore be gauged relatively easily from the processes of landscape character analysis. The notion of enhancement of landscape character is a little more difficult to embrace. 'Enhancement' has been interpreted in different ways in other landscape studies, and in the process is often confused with restoration. If elements of landscape character are in poor condition and are being reinstated or repaired to improve the inherent character, the process is considered to be that of restoration. To enhance something implies that it is being made better or different in some way. To 'improve' the landscape may be charting difficult waters as there would need to be sound reasons to explain:

- why the landscape was deemed to be in need of improvement as opposed to restoration
- the nature of the guiding principles that define the manner in which a landscape is 'enhanced'.

Fig. 10 Principal Timbered Farmlands attribute analysis

| Principal Timbered Farmlands | | Significance | v | t | r |
|------------------------------|-----------|--------------|---|---|---|
| Land Use | Mixed | Tertiary | M | H | H |
| Field Boundaries | Hedges | Primary | M | M | M |
| Tree Cover Character | Ancient | Primary | M | L | L |
| Tree Cover Pattern | Scattered | Primary | H | L | L |
| Enclosure | Organic | Secondary | H | L | L |
| Settlement | Dispersed | Tertiary | H | M | H |



8.0 LANDSCAPE CONSERVATION, RESTORATION AND ENHANCEMENT

8.7 To expand the latter point, the process of landscape character assessment is to identify similarities in landscapes, to recognise repeating patterns of attributes that reflect commonalities of evolution and justify their grouping into Landscape Types. To allow a free hand to develop a new palette of characteristics for a particular area could well go against such principles and point towards change on a random, or chance, basis. Furthermore, it is likely that it would be those landscapes which had deteriorated beyond the 'point of no return', those which had been devastated, with their primary attributes destroyed, which would be the prime candidates for enhancement. This raises concern about the message this conveys about commitment to perpetuating landscape character. It might well appear that the benefits to be gained from doing little to look after the character of the landscape outweigh those for seeking to perpetuate it. Certainly, working within the confines of landscape character, particularly in landscapes of ancient character, is likely to impose far greater constraints, than working in a 'new', custom-designed, functional landscape.

The promotion of landscape enhancement is therefore treated with caution, although the relevance of the concept is recognised and appreciated in *certain situations*.

There will be cases where change occurs within Landscape Types that coincide with opportunities to influence change to the character of those landscapes. It must be stressed that change in this context is something that manifests itself, or has the potential to manifest itself, throughout the area covered by a particular Landscape Type (as opposed to a change that occurs at one particular site). An example

of such a change might be that related to sand and gravel extraction in the Landscape Type 'Settled Farmlands on River Terraces'. In Worcestershire, such extraction is occurring at several locations within this Landscape Type and in such instances large bodies of open water are invariably introduced into the landscape as a result of the extraction and restoration processes. Large bodies of open water are not a characteristic of any Landscape Type within Worcestershire, with the exception of the lakes created for aesthetic reasons in the parklands associated with country houses and their estates, which can sometime reach considerable proportions e.g. Westwood Pool.

In recognising and accepting the water bodies as part of the 20th/21st century evolution of these landscapes, opportunities to introduce or modify other attributes, perhaps tree cover, or to encourage an expression of natural vegetation associated with these features, arise primarily as a means to help integrate the water bodies within the wider landscape. Whilst such opportunities for enhancement are accepted, it is desirable that such enhancement accords with landscape guidance for that particular situation, in that particular character area. This will help ensure that such enhancement translates into patterns that are repeated, and can be recognised within the landscape, so conforming to landscape character principles. Landowners, and others with appropriate interest in the land, may, however, still be able to introduce expressions of individuality and, in so doing, contribute to the local distinctiveness of an area.



9.0 MONITORING

Summary

- Aspects of monitoring the landscape are explored
- The relationship with the State of the Environment report

9.1 MONITORING LANDSCAPE CHANGE

9.1.1 The evaluation of landscape character provides a very effective mechanism for monitoring landscape change. The definition and analysis of key attributes of landscape character provides a ready data base for which further data collection on a regular basis can be undertaken. The attributes are clearly defined and the approaches to measuring the relevant aspects associated with them, such as resilience and condition, have been identified. These attributes should be regarded as the critical indicators associated with the landscape and, as such, act as a barometer to reflect the wider state of the environment and can be used to indicate, and to predict, changes to that state.

9.1.2 Monitoring landscape change is a particularly pertinent issue as it provides a means to gauge the effectiveness of landscape policies and the means by which they are interpreted and implemented, so contributing to policy review. Monitoring will also enable wider landscape change to be detected and predicted and will help gain an understanding of the factors that are influencing landscape change, the spatial differences relating to such changes and the rate at which change is taking place. Such information will, in turn, contribute to guiding the effective targeting and prioritisation of resources in such fields as countryside management and forestry.

9.1.3 Climate change, while currently resulting predominantly in localised damage e.g. storm damage to trees, will inevitably impact more widely on the character of the landscape. Already, the traditional length of the winter planting season has been dramatically shortened as autumns stay warmer and springs arrive early. The works carried out to contain unpredictable flash flooding and, conversely, to provide irrigation during summer droughts, will impact on the landscape; at a local level initially, but at a more general level as these features become more widespread. When considering woodland it is likely that large woodland blocks, which can create their own micro-climate, will be more resilient to extreme weather than smaller, more fragmented woodlands. Similarly, the species composition of both woodland and grassland may alter as species at the limit of their range find the more frequent extreme weather events too challenging. Landscape monitoring can provide a county-wide overview of the impact of climate change and inform the debate regarding mitigation and damage limitation.



9.0 MONITORING

9.1.4 Monitoring methodology

The methodology is applied to an established sample of Land Cover Parcels within each Landscape Type to produce an indication of how far landscape condition has improved or declined. Landscape change is measured by re-assessing the landscape character condition scores for a sample of 6 Land Cover Parcels within each Landscape Type and comparing them with their baseline condition scores. This amounts to 132 LCPs in all; selected from urban fringe and rural locations across the county. The baseline assessment was undertaken for the whole county (912 LCPs) using the 2005 aerial photographs and updated in 2010/11.

9.1.5 Landscape condition is assessed by a combination of site visits and viewing the most up to date aerial photographs to assign scores to each LCP for each of the 6 landscape indicators of:

- field boundaries
- enclosure pattern
- tree cover pattern
- tree cover character
- land use
- settlement pattern

Based on these total scores, parcels are then assigned to high, medium or low condition categories. During the reporting process, the selected parcels are reassessed and it is noted if their score changes sufficiently to move them up or down a condition category (e.g. high to medium, low to medium, medium to high, medium to low etc.).

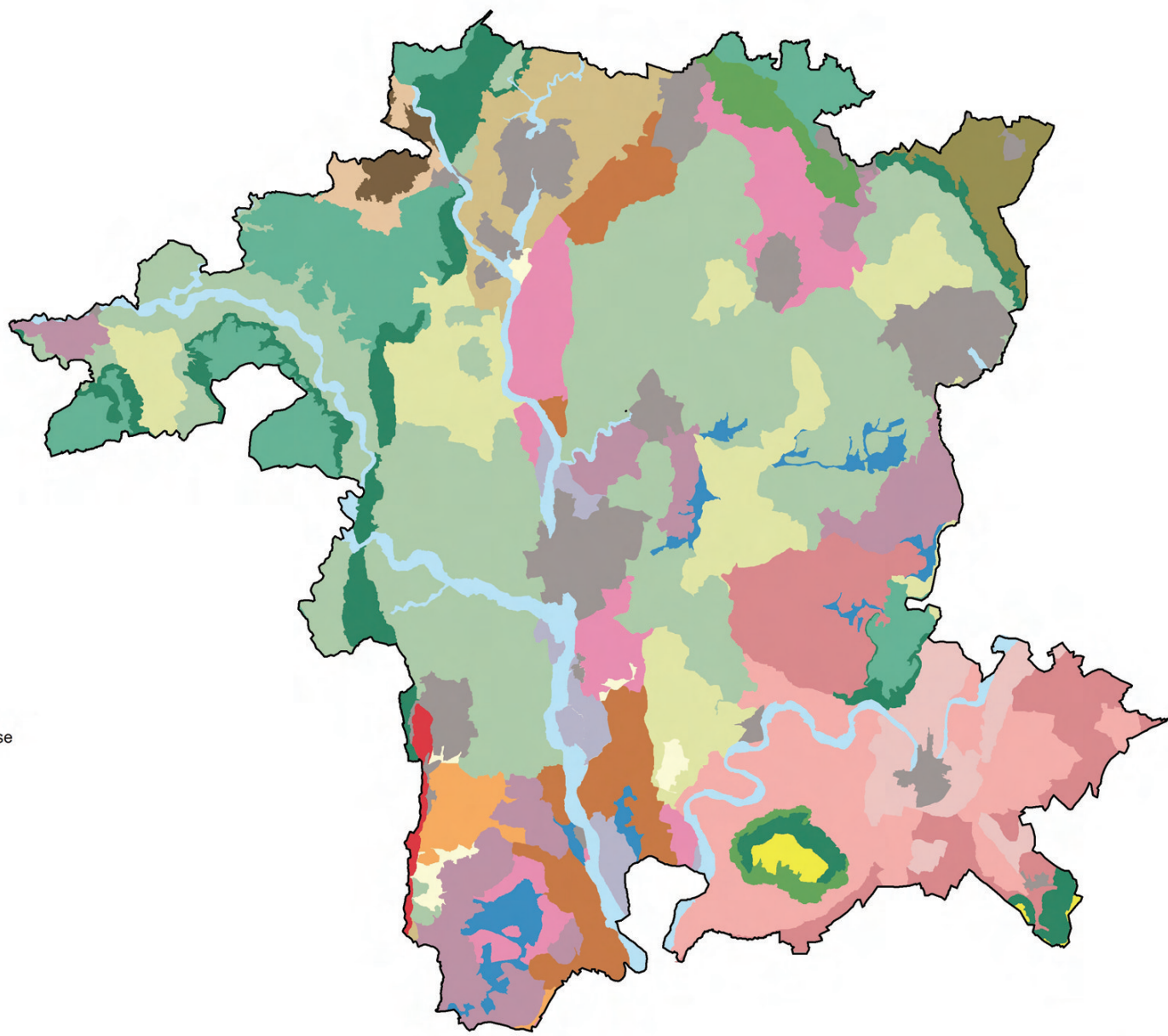
9.2 STATE OF THE ENVIRONMENT

9.2.1 The results of the Landscape Character Assessment's monitoring of landscape change is used to inform the Worcestershire Partnership's State of the Environment (SoE) report. The research forms part of a suite of indicators within the SoE report, the relevant indicator for landscape being 'The number of landscape units (Land Cover Parcels) in which the condition has changed.' Re-assessment is undertaken as and when updated aerial photography becomes available and will normally be within a 5 year period. Further information on the SoE report is available at:

<http://www.worcestershirepartnership.org.uk/cms/theme-groups/environment-group/state-of-the-env-report.aspx>

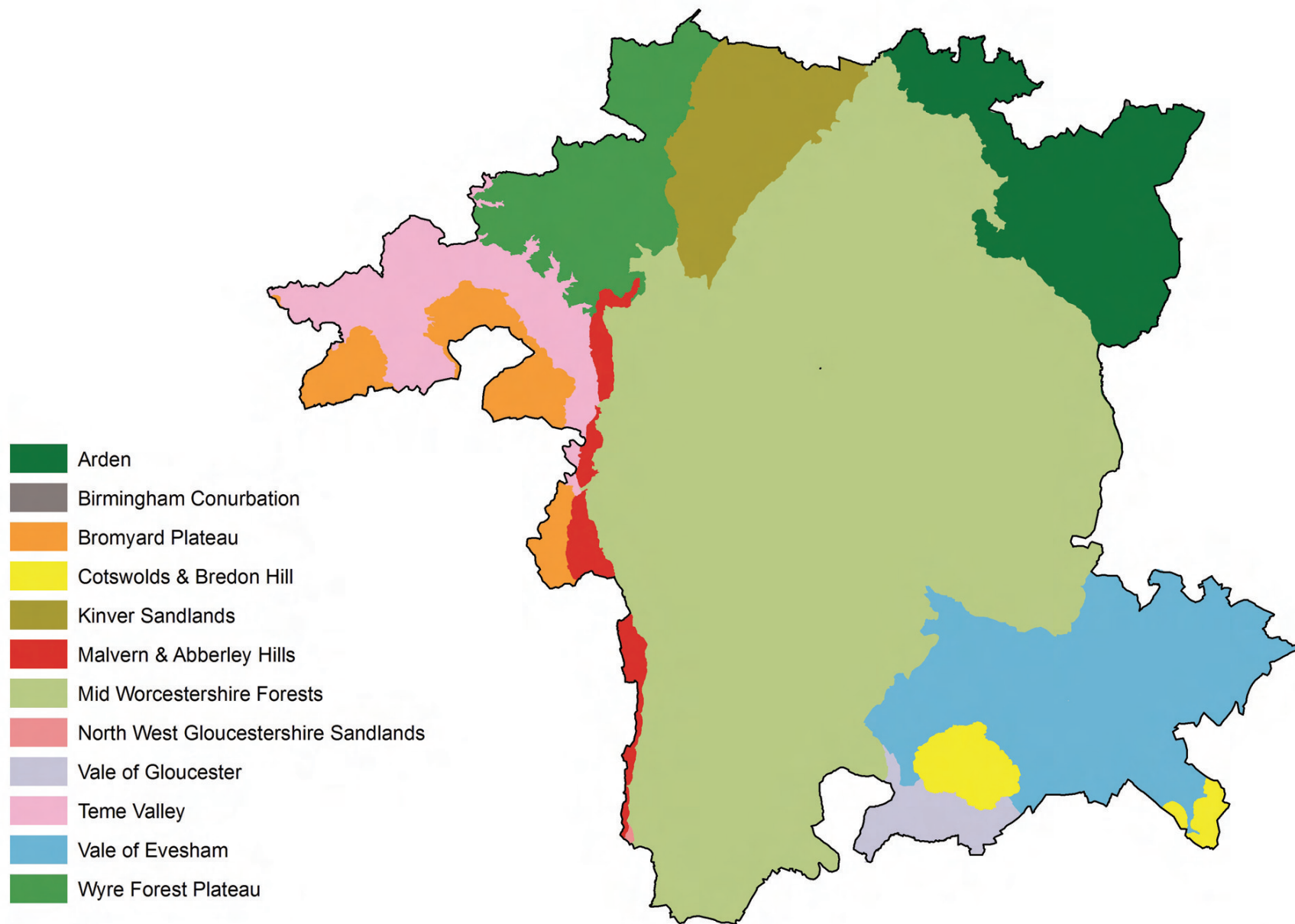


- Enclosed Commons
- Estate Farmlands
- Forest Smallholdings and Dwellings
- High Hills and Slopes
- Limestone Estatelands
- Principal Settled Farmlands
- Principal Timbered Farmlands
- Principal Village Farmlands
- Principal Wooded Hills
- Riverside Meadows
- Sandstone Estatelands
- Settled Farmlands with Pastoral Land Use
- Settled Farmlands on River Terraces
- Timbered Pastures
- Timbered Plateau Farmlands
- Unenclosed Commons
- Village Claylands
- Village Farmlands with Orchards
- Wet Pasture Meadows
- Wooded Hills and Farmlands
- Wooded Forest
- Wooded Estateland
- Urban



2.5 250 2.5 Kilometers

Fig. 11 Map of the distribution of Landscape Types



2.5 250 2.5 Kilometers



Fig. 12 Map of the distribution of Regional Character Areas

PART TWO

DESCRIPTION OF LANDSCAPE TYPES



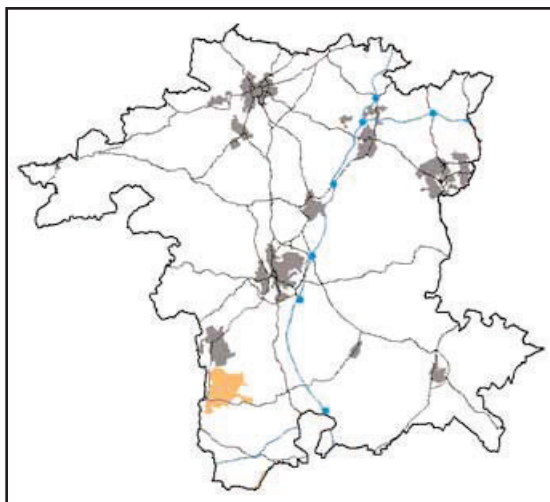


10.1 ENCLOSED COMMONS

10.1 ENCLOSED COMMONS

CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

This is a landscape of very similar character to the Sandstone Estatelands, with the same ordered pattern of large fields of regular outline, straight roads and estate plantations. It is an open, formal landscape with a visual clarity primarily defined by the straightness of the field boundaries. These are patterns that the Historic Landscape Characterisation shows have arisen as a result of late enclosure from former commons and wasteland.



KEY CHARACTERISTICS

Primary:

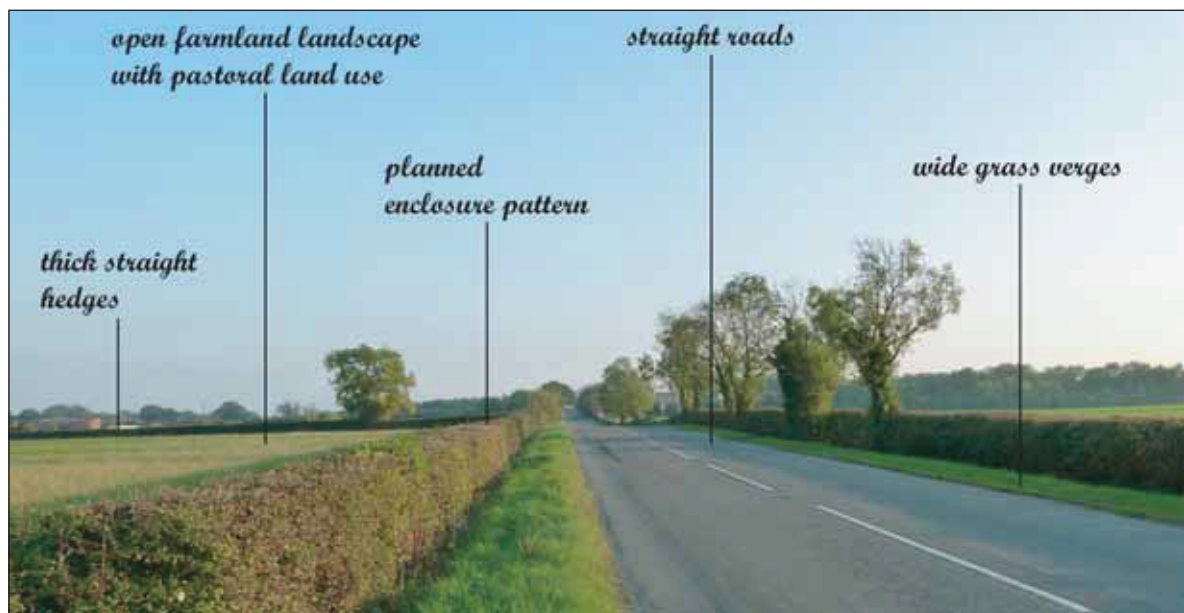
- Hedgerow boundaries to fields
- Planned enclosure pattern of straight boundaries and roads

Secondary:

- Pastoral land use
- Planned woodland character
- Woodland pattern of discrete blocks (estate plantations)

Tertiary:

- Gently rolling topography
- Open farmland landscape
- Impoverished soils
- Dispersed pattern of isolated farmsteads and scattered wayside dwellings





DETAIL

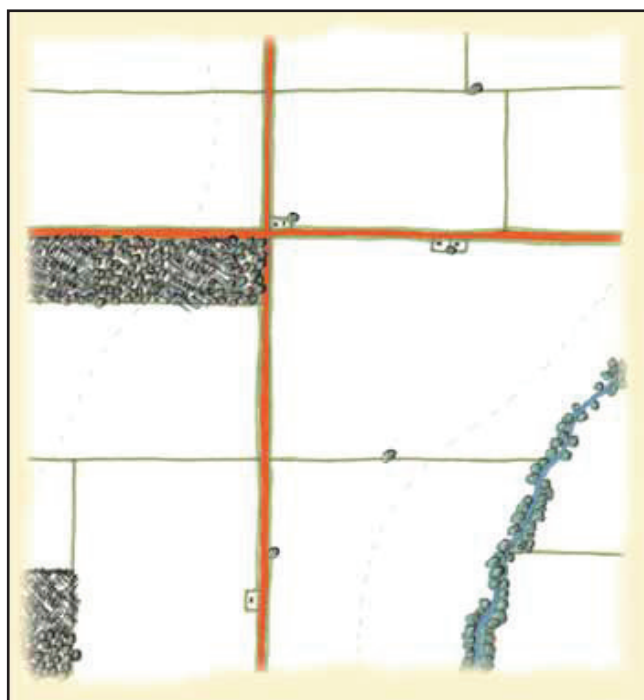
This is a planned landscape with a notably regular pattern, defined by the straightness of its hedge lines, roads and the outlines of its woodlands. This regularity is strongly expressed visually, the general openness of the landscape enabling the pattern to be clearly evident.

Tree cover along watercourses can contribute significantly to the landscape structure but hedgerow tree cover is generally far less significant.

The presence of wayside dwellings corresponds to the historic evolution of these landscapes from areas of former waste and common land. Scattered farmsteads can also be a characteristic feature today. These landscapes are often located adjacent, or close, to areas which remain today as unenclosed common land.

Parkland and ornamental grounds, together with associated estate villages can contribute to the landscape diversity of the enclosed commons.

These are farmed landscapes with an inherent land use of mixed agriculture, although recent increases in arable dominance may be evident. If such a trend continues, the functional value of hedgerows could be significantly reduced. Any loss or deterioration in the hedgerow structure could dilute the visual clarity of these landscapes.



MODERN IMPACTS ON CHARACTER

Settlement Pattern:

The low density wayside settlement pattern of small cottages and occasional farmsteads is gradually being altered as cottages are enlarged and new dwellings built. In principal, these landscapes can accept additional wayside dwellings if the proposals are in accordance with policy, but the density should remain low and any new building must respect the style, materials and the small scale of the traditional cottages.

Enclosure Pattern:

The former common land was enclosed in a planned manner to create a geometric pattern. The removal of hedgerows has led, in some places, to a change in landscape scale and disruption of pattern.

Tree Cover Pattern:

This is a sparsely wooded landscape where trees are restricted to occasional hedgerow trees, discrete plantations and tree cover along watercourses. Efforts to introduce more hedgerow trees would be misguided here.

LANDSCAPE GUIDELINES

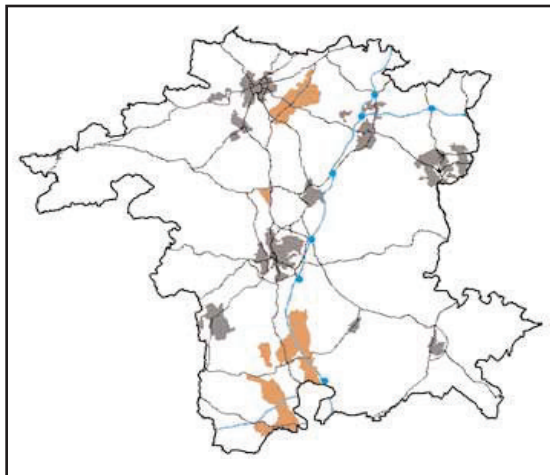
- Conserve and restore the distinctive hedgerow pattern with priority given to primary hedgerows.
- Conserve and enhance the tree cover along water courses.
- Conserve the scale, spatial patterns and specific character of wayside dwellings.
- Promote the creation and appropriate management of natural vegetation communities on non-farmed areas and along highways.
- Conserve and enhance the spatial pattern and scale of the landscape.
- Promote the development of wide field margins for wildlife benefit.



10.2 ESTATE FARMLANDS

CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

This is an ordered agricultural landscape characterised by a sub-regular pattern of medium to large sized fields, small geometric plantations and groups of ornamental trees associated with large country houses. Settlement is largely restricted to discrete clusters of dwellings and occasional small estate villages.



KEY CHARACTERISTICS

Primary:

- Hedgerow boundaries to fields
- Planned woodland character

Secondary:

- Mixed farming land use
- Discrete settlement clusters and small estate villages
- Medium-framed views

Tertiary:

- Semi-regular pattern of medium to large fields
- Small geometric plantations and belts of trees
- Large country houses set in mature grounds
- Rolling lowland with occasional steep-sided hills and escarpments

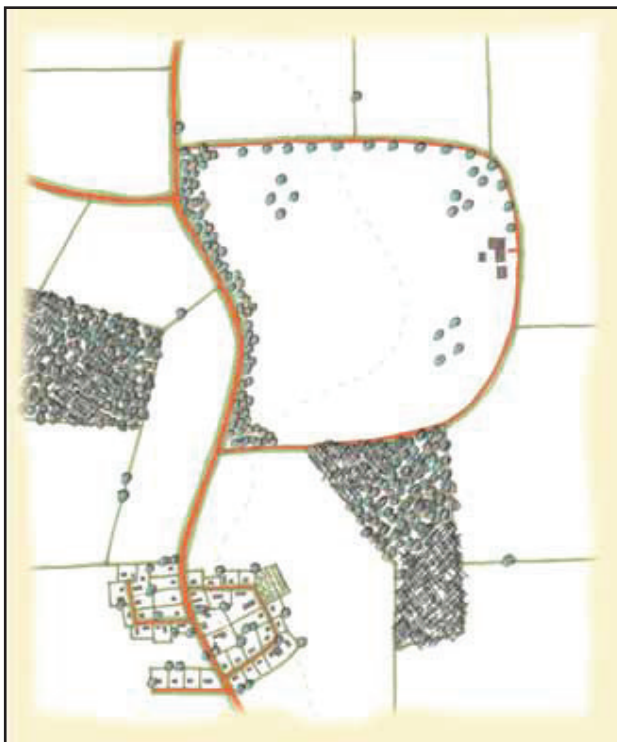




DETAIL

This is a landscape depending upon tree cover and field pattern to provide its structure and scale. The character is based upon the small plantation woodlands and tree features associated with large country house estates and ornamental parklands, and relates to a field pattern that lacks the strong geometric framework of some other Landscape Types. The eighteenth and nineteenth century enthusiasm for landscape design is often evident in this Landscape Type where tree planting has been designed specifically to enhance, frame or screen designed views. Croome Park is a particularly striking example.

This is a landscape of increasingly dominant arable land use where hedgerow loss and deterioration is apparent and accelerating. In some localities, such as Croome and Pirton, the relics of extensive parkland plantings still remain, now often located amidst arable land. Estate villages with distinctive architectural styles and detailing are often associated with such areas but face dilution of their distinctive character by modification and new development. These are landscapes that have restricted opportunities for wildlife but have the potential to accommodate considerable new woodland planting which would be of benefit in strengthening the overall landscape structure as well as increasing their ecological interest. The restoration of tree cover associated with parkland and ornamental grounds together with improving the tree cover along watercourses should also be encouraged.



MODERN IMPACTS ON CHARACTER

Settlement Pattern:

The settlement pattern of clustered groups of dwellings, often estate villages, could theoretically accept new development if in accordance with policy. However, the siting of new development should be undertaken with extreme care in order to avoid compromising the visual integrity of distinctive estate villages.

Enclosure Pattern:

The tendency towards arable conversion is gradually changing the character of this Landscape Type. Hedgerow loss and deterioration are very often associated with an arable land use change, as hedgerows are no longer required for their primary function of stock containment.

Tree Cover Pattern:

The specimen tree planting and small plantations associated with large country houses and ornamental parkland is generally over a century old now and inevitably in decline, although it should be borne in mind that old or veteran trees can be of considerable wildlife and historical interest.

LANDSCAPE GUIDELINES

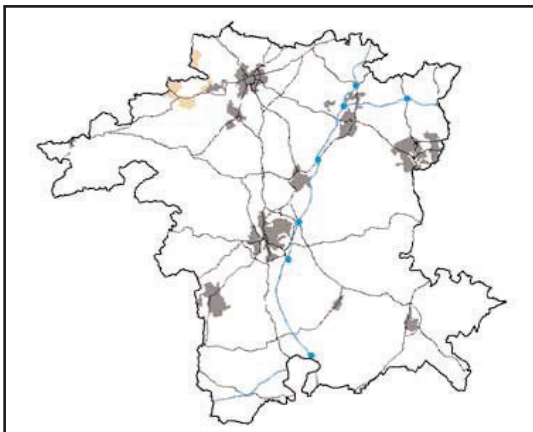
- Enhance tree cover through further planting of small scale plantations and tree belts.
- Conserve the pattern of hedged fields, with priority given to primary hedgelines.
- Conserve and restore parkland and the tree cover associated with large ornamental grounds.
- Conserve and enhance the tree cover along water courses.
- Promote the development of wide field margins for wildlife benefit.
- Conserve the integrity of estate villages.



10.3 FOREST SMALLHOLDINGS AND DWELLINGS

CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

Occurring in Worcestershire solely around the fringes of the Wyre Forest, this is an intimate, densely settled landscape characterised by strings of wayside cottages and associated smallholdings. These nestle within a complex, matrix of pastoral fields and narrow interlocking lanes, usually defined by prominent dense hedges with hedgerow trees. The consistency of human activity in these distinctive, small scale landscapes has resulted in a unified, palpably domestic character.



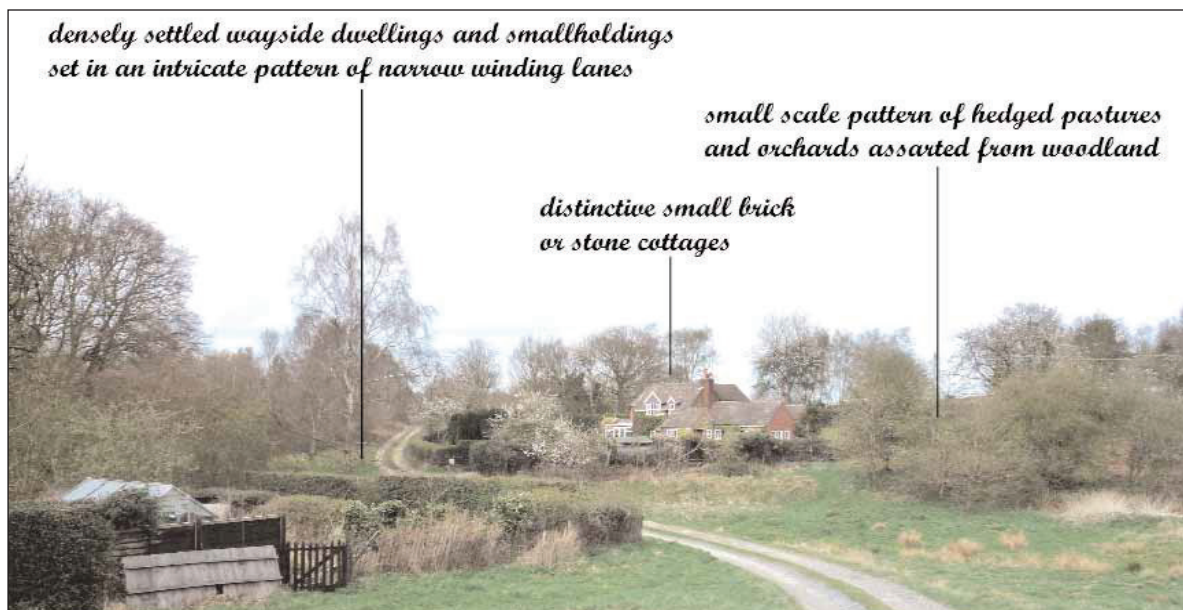
KEY CHARACTERISTICS

Primary:

- Hedgerow boundaries to fields
- Scattered hedgerow and garden trees
- Intimate spatial character
- Intricate network of narrow, interlocking lanes
- Densely settled pattern of wayside dwellings
- Distinctive building style - small cottages of brick or stone

Secondary:

- Variable enclosure pattern of small fields
- Heathy/acid grassland ground vegetation - widespread bracken and gorse
- Pastoral land use





DETAIL

These distinctive landscapes owe their character to the incremental assarting and subsequent settlement of areas of former woodland and waste. The settlement pattern has developed in a random, opportunistic manner, the corresponding density, scale and ad hoc pattern of both dwellings and lanes being distinctive characteristics today. The associated, usually small, parcels of pasture, orchard and pockets of rough ground with heathy/acid grassland are also important, reinforcing the scale and providing reminders of the origin of these landscapes. The hedgerows usually have significant associated tree cover and provide an important structural element to the landscape.

The pastures are often of considerable nature conservation interest yet this can be easily lost through inappropriate management. This is especially true where they are used as paddocks for ponies and horses, a change of use that can be accompanied by degradation and loss of hedgerows. These landscapes possess a unique element of rustic charm which is destroyed by excessive "tidiness".

The overall management strategy should be based on the conservation of the distinctive, small scale, settled, rural character of the landscape.



MODERN IMPACTS ON CHARACTER

Settlement Pattern:

The settlement pattern and the character of individual dwellings are vulnerable to expansion and modification to an urban character. The small scale plots and pastures provide considerable scope for infilling which in turn changes the character of these landscapes.

Enclosure Pattern:

The varied, small scale enclosure pattern is under threat from amalgamation of pastures and orchards as hedges are allowed to fall into disrepair.

Tree Cover Pattern:

The verdant quality of this landscape depends on the mature hedges, hedgerow trees, traditional small orchards and garden plantings. As orchards and hedgerow trees age they are not being adequately replaced so that a tidy sub-urban character is gradually encroaching.

LANDSCAPE GUIDELINES

- Conserve the pattern, scale and detailing of settlements, including the open spaces within them.
- Conserve the small scale enclosure pattern of hedged fields through appropriate management.
- Encourage the retention and appropriate management of permanent pasture.
- Conserve the pattern of narrow winding lanes.
- Conserve and enhance the tree cover within the landscape, giving particular attention to hedgerow trees.

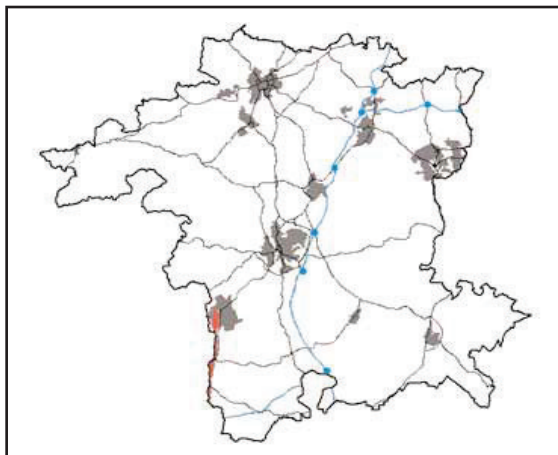


10.4 HIGH HILLS AND SLOPES

10.4 HIGH HILLS AND SLOPES

CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

This is an unenclosed "highland" landscape characterised by its steeply sloping topography, shallow mineral soils and extensive tracts of rough grassland and heath. The large scale and open, exposed character is heightened by the dramatic form of the topography creating a wild and invigorating quality of place. This is a simple, yet visually distinctive landscape, not least for the contrast which it provides with the surrounding, less dramatic, enclosed agricultural landscapes.



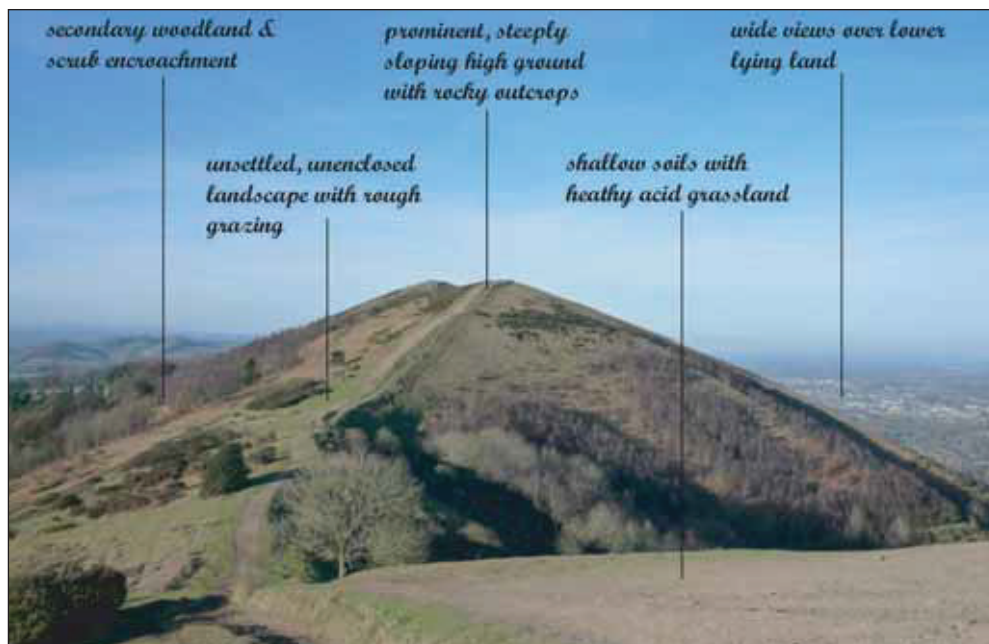
KEY CHARACTERISTICS

Primary:

- Prominent, steeply sloping highland topography
- Hard rock geology with localised prominent rocky outcrops
- Unsettled landscape with few signs of human habitation
- Wide views over surrounding, lower lying farmland
- Shallow mineral soils supporting extensive areas of acid grassland and heath
- Unenclosed landscape

Secondary:

- Rough grazing land use
- Absence of woodland, though there may be localised patches of secondary woodland and scrub



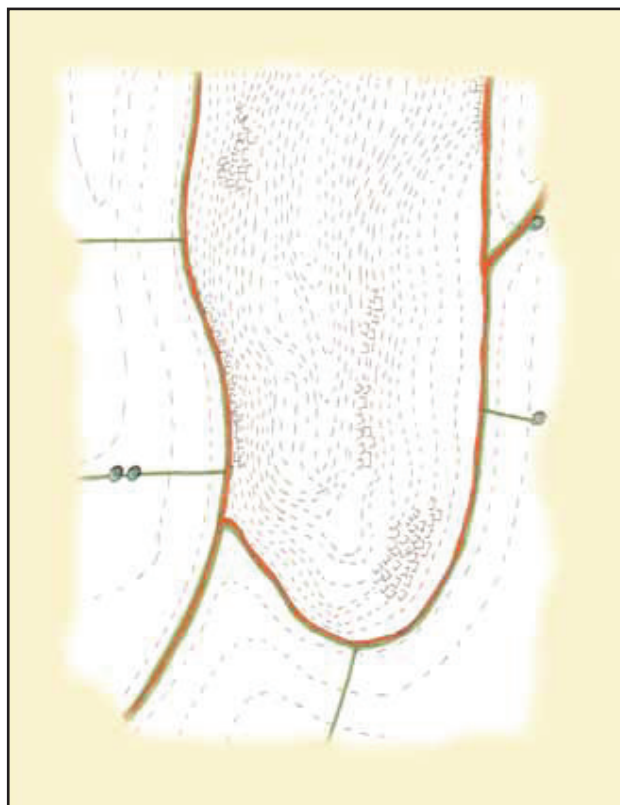


DETAIL

This is a landscape that owes its character to a combination of past management and physical structure. In Worcestershire, this Landscape Type is restricted to the summits and upper slopes of the Malvern Hills. Here the ridge of hard Precambrian schists and gneisses is one of the country's most striking landforms, while the Iron age hillforts built along the ridge provide an even more distinctive silhouette. This is an area that, in the past, has been an unenclosed expanse of commons and rough grazing. The stocking levels would have been sufficient to keep scrub encroachment at bay and so maintain its distinctive open character, producing a close, botanically valuable sward in the process. It is an area that has a much greater diversity of vegetation today, with significant areas of bracken together with scrub and secondary woodland, particularly on the lower slopes. It is an area that tends to be bordered by roads, rather than crossed by them, the sparse settlement that exists being associated with the few roads.

In order to facilitate the maintenance and possible expansion of the open grassland area, the long term sustainable management of the central ridge should be a priority. The notable ecological status of the area, particularly the habitat requirements of certain rare species must strongly influence the eventual management strategy of the area, but a degree of consultation to appreciate public perceptions of this particular landscape should also be included.

The future management of areas of scrub and woodland should be led by biodiversity priorities where a compromise approach, accepting a degree of woodland and scrub cover and endeavouring to maximise habitat diversity within the matrix of habitats present will be most appropriate.



MODERN IMPACTS ON CHARACTER

Settlement Pattern:

Modern planning controls should safeguard the unsettled character but where dwellings already exist there is a tendency towards suburbanisation.

Enclosure Pattern:

The enlightened management guidelines provided by the Malvern Hills AONB discourage any further enclosure.

Tree Cover Pattern:

It is important for ecological, historical and visual reasons that the existing areas of open grassland are retained. A severe reduction in stocking levels over the years has led to the advance of bracken and scrub, and the character of the landscape is likely to change enormously if this encroachment is allowed to continue. Allowing the establishment of woodland cover would have the effect of wiping out the historical record of the landscape, destroying the essential scale and openness in the process.

LANDSCAPE GUIDELINES

- Conserve all remaining areas of semi-natural grassland.
- Restore areas of former grassland whilst acknowledging the need to retain other habitats of importance for endangered species.
- Enhance the nature conservation interest of the whole area through appropriate sustainable management, with particular emphasis placed on restoring grazing at the necessary stocking densities.
- Conserve the simple unity of the area, avoiding enclosure, built development and urban influences.

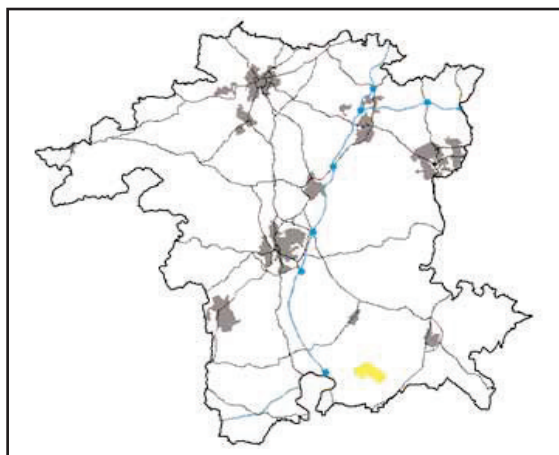


10.5 LIMESTONE ESTATELANDS

10.5 LIMESTONE ESTATELANDS

CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

This is a sparsely populated "upland" landscape characterised by thin limestone soils, estate plantations and large rectilinear fields defined by drystone walls. Although still retaining a remote character, the stone walls convey a sense of human presence and the reddish soils a sense of warmth to this landscape. Closely associated with the higher parts of the Cotswold escarpment, this is a well ordered landscape of large open spaces framed for the most part by woodland edges and belts of trees.



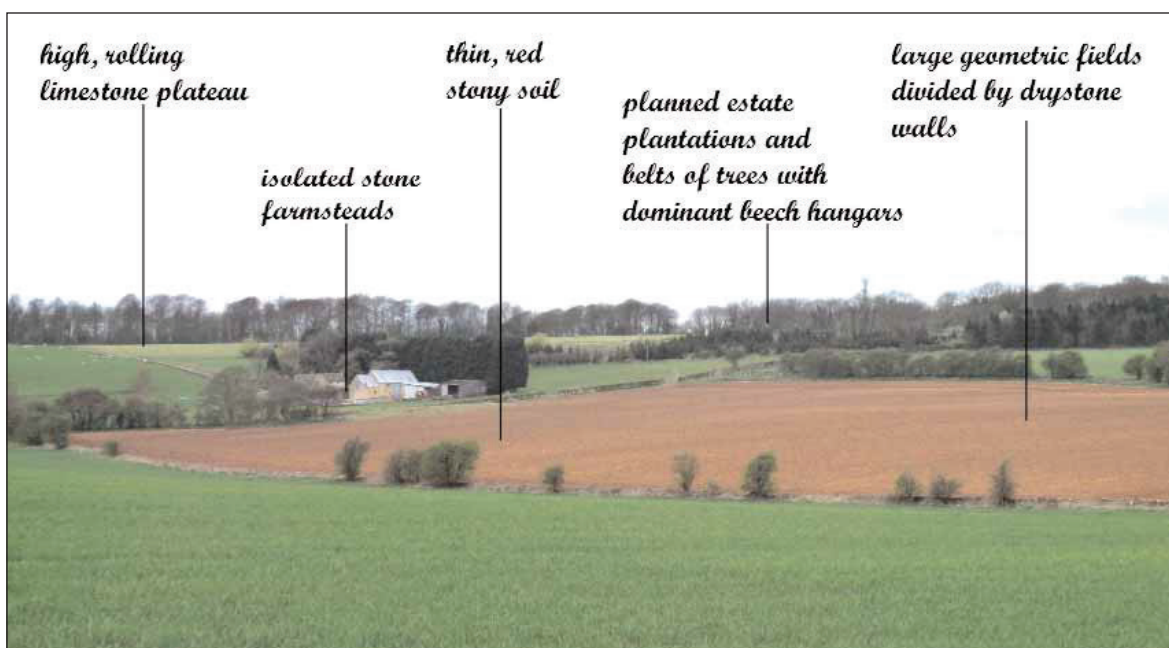
KEY CHARACTERISTICS

Primary:

- Upstanding rolling plateau, capped by oolitic limestone
- Thin, stony soils with characteristic orange colouring
- Large rectilinear fields defined by drystone walling
- Dominant use of local stone for building
- Woodland of planned character - estate plantations and belts of trees

Secondary:

- Scattered settlement, largely restricted to isolated stone farmsteads
- Discrete woodlands with dominance of beech in woodland composition

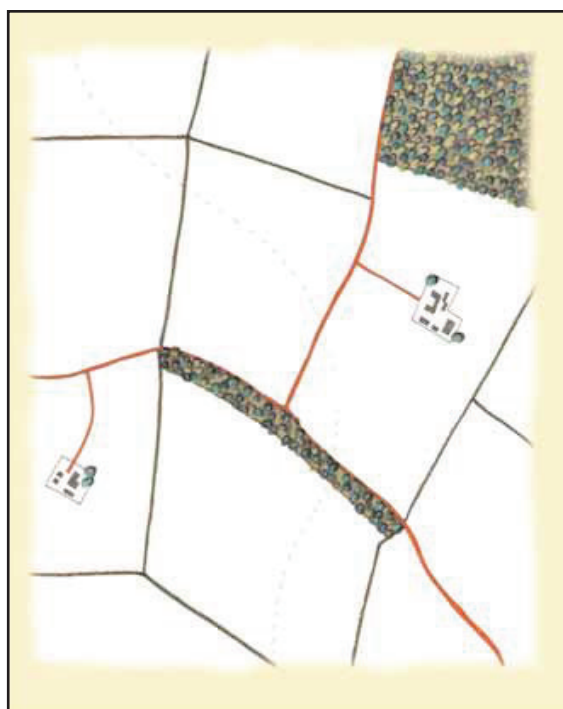




DETAIL

The key factors that define this landscape are its topography, its large scale and open character and the estate like influence of large regular fields, plantations and belts of trees. The undulating form of the plateau is emphasised by the openness and long distance views. This is a landscape formerly associated with extensive sheep walks, although much of the permanent pasture has now been lost to arable uses. It is a landscape that was probably cleared of its tree cover by Roman times, and with its favoured light and easily cultivated soils, has been farmed ever since, with little opportunity for the natural re-establishment of woodland except along the steeper valleys. The tree cover today comprises plantation woodlands and tree belts, the shape of which emphasise the regular pattern of fields. It is an area of intensive agriculture with settlement tending to be confined to the valleys and lower ground, with the exception of occasional farmsteads. The dominance of local stone as a building material for buildings and field boundary walls provides further unity and distinction to the landscape.

This is a landscape where priority should be given to ensuring that the large scale, open pattern of regular fields is retained. The essence of these landscapes is their large scale and spaciousness which could become fragmented and diluted by land use changes. Reinforcement and expansion of the characteristic belts of trees could usefully strengthen the structure and scale of the landscape. The planting of further large plantations should be considered, in order to enhance the estate character of the landscape, providing care is taken to recognise and conserve the dominance of large open spaces. Initiatives to secure the ongoing repair and maintenance of the network of stone walls with appropriate local stone should be encouraged.



MODERN IMPACTS ON CHARACTER

Enclosure Pattern:

Ongoing deterioration of the field boundary walls gives cause for concern for the long term perpetuation of this distinctive characteristic.

Tree Cover Pattern:

Whilst these areas can accommodate considerable amounts of new woodland planting, the siting and scale of such woodland will be a critical factor in order to ensure that the dominance of the landform and the open visual expanse of the landscape is not compromised. This is a landscape where plantation woodlands are a feature, rather than being a landscape that is classed as wooded. The introduction of too much new woodland planting on the plateau area could easily result in closing down the views and creating a sense of enclosure which is uncharacteristic of this landscape.

LANDSCAPE GUIDELINES

- Maintain the large scale estateland character of the farmed land by conserving the strong rectilinear field pattern.
- Enhance the structure of the landscape by encouraging new woodland planting whilst retaining the long distance views and open character of the plateau.
- Conserve and restore field boundary walls especially along roadsides, using locally sourced stone.
- New, or replacement, tree planting should be predominantly broadleaved, favouring beech, together with oak and ash, as the major species.
- Strengthen and expand the linear pattern of tree belts.

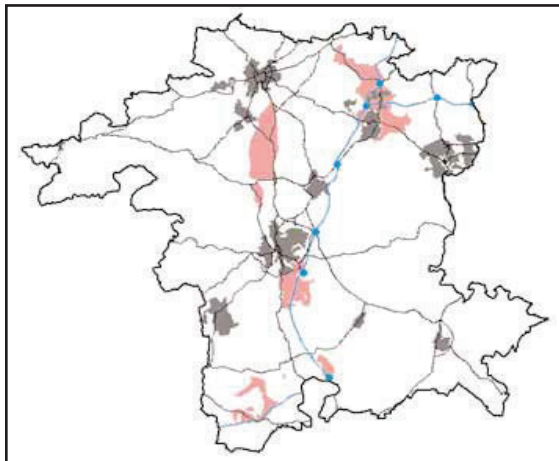


10.6 PRINCIPAL SETTLED FARMLANDS

10.6 PRINCIPAL SETTLED FARMLANDS

CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

These are small to medium scale, settled agricultural landscapes of scattered farms, relic commons and clusters of wayside dwellings. These buildings are linked by a network of narrow, winding lanes which nestle within a matrix of hedged fields. Tree cover is largely restricted to thinly scattered hedgerow trees and groups of trees around dwellings. The land use is primarily one of mixed farming.



KEY CHARACTERISTICS

Primary:

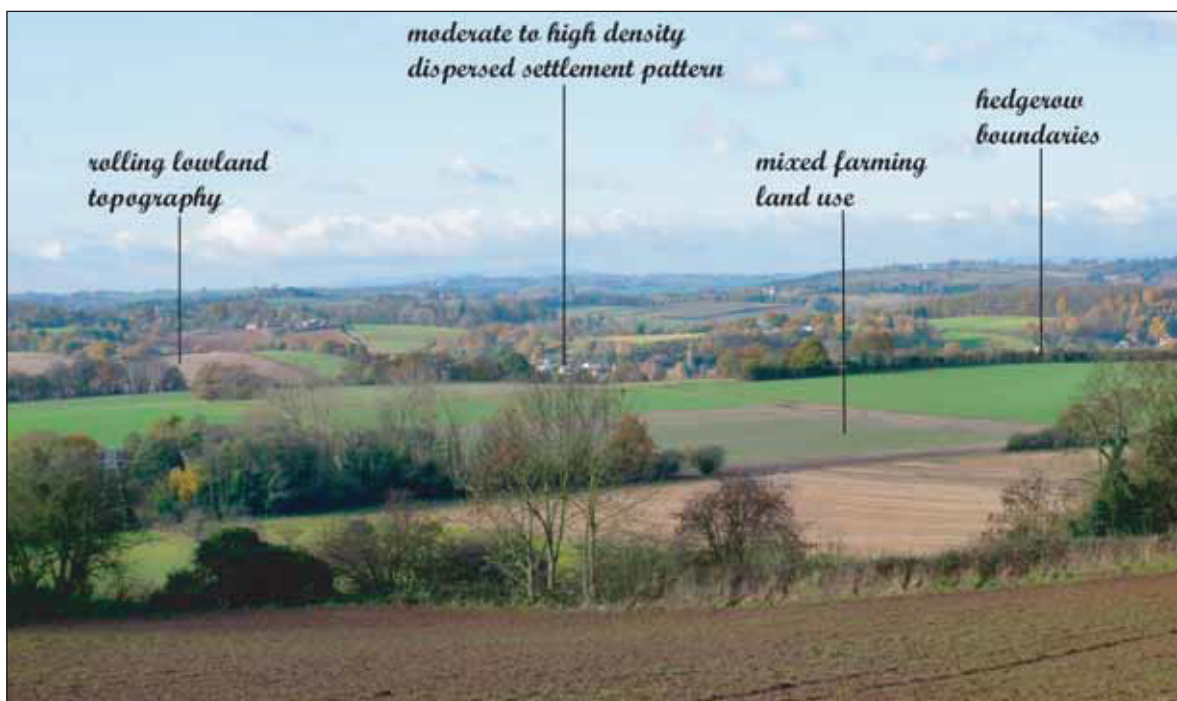
- Hedgerow boundaries to fields
- Moderate-to-high density settlement pattern of farmsteads and rural dwellings dispersed throughout the area

Secondary:

- Mixed farming land use

Tertiary:

- Irregular enclosure pattern of small and medium-sized fields
- Scattered hedgerow trees

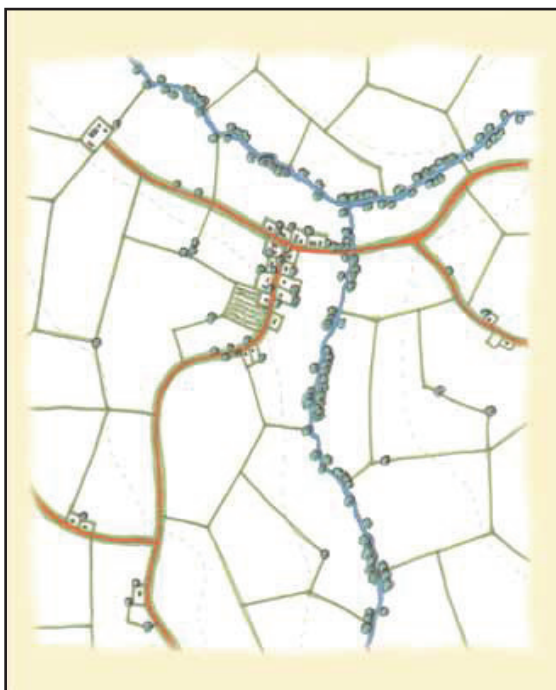




DETAIL

In Worcestershire, these landscapes are located in areas of former Royal Forest and their 'hybrid' characteristics, between Timbered Farmlands and Village Farmlands, may be the result of the late clearance of these forest areas following contraction of the Royal Forest boundaries. The subsequent withdrawal of the associated Forest Laws, which had previously influenced and restricted their land use would have enabled a wider farming remit leading to mixed farming which now characterises the land use. These are landscapes with a notably domestic character, defined chiefly by the scale of the field pattern, and the moderate to high density dispersed settlement pattern of farmsteads and hamlets. Principal Settled Farmlands are thought to have developed from areas of extensive open field that were established from cleared forest later than the open fields associated with Village Farmlands. The field pattern tends to be of a sub-regular nature, supporting the suggestion of early enclosure of areas of open field.

Woodlands are not characteristic of these landscapes and the introduction of such features tends to dilute their identity. Opportunities for new tree planting are best concentrated along watercourses, strengthening the linear pattern of these features. It is desirable to encourage additional tree cover in the vicinity of farmsteads and other settlements, in so doing, emphasising the domestic scale of the landscape. The small scale fields of permanent pasture found within these landscapes can often be of significant nature conservation interest, the increasing change in land use in favour of arable farming can threaten such sites and initiatives to safeguard remaining areas of permanent pasture should be strongly promoted in these areas.



LANDSCAPE GUIDELINES

- Conserve and enhance the pattern of hedgerows.
- Retain the integrity of the dispersed pattern of settlement.
- Conserve and enhance tree cover along watercourses.
- Enhance patterns of tree cover associated with settlement.
- Seek opportunities to conserve all remaining areas of permanent pasture.

MODERN IMPACTS ON CHARACTER

Settlement Pattern:

There are pressures for development in many of these areas and a danger that concentrations of new development could arise, resulting in the creation of a pattern approaching the nucleations of other Landscape Types. However, the dispersed settlement pattern of farmsteads and hamlets is capable of accommodating limited low densities of new development if it is in accordance with policy.

Enclosure Pattern:

The pattern of small to medium sized hedged fields is vulnerable to change as the tendency towards arable dominance reduces the functional worth of hedgerow boundaries. Hedgerow loss and deterioration is already in evidence locally, with corresponding dilution of the essential scale of these landscapes.

Tree Cover Pattern:

Tree cover is most notable along stream sides, with only scattered tree cover along hedgerows. Groups of trees and orchards are often associated with settlements. Woodland is not a characteristic feature of this Landscape Type and its introduction in many places has weakened the landscape character.



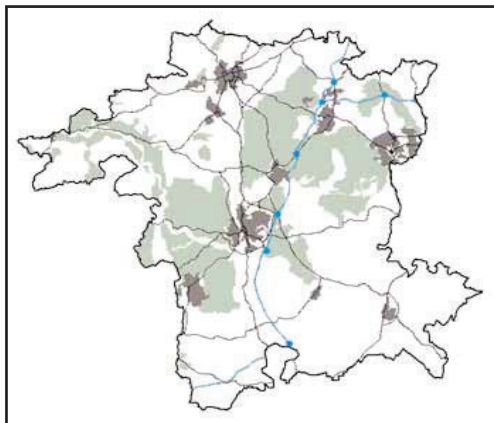
10.7 PRINCIPAL TIMBERED FARMLANDS

10.7 PRINCIPAL TIMBERED FARMLANDS

CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

Principal Timbered Farmlands are rolling lowland landscapes with occasional steep sided hills and low escarpments. They have a small scale, wooded, agricultural appearance characterised by filtered views through densely scattered hedgerow trees. These are complex, in places intimate, landscapes of irregularly shaped woodlands, winding lanes and frequent wayside dwellings and farmsteads.

The Principal Timbered Farmlands are characterised by a mosaic of agricultural land cleared directly from woodland, on a piecemeal basis, together with land enclosed from former localised areas of open fields, resulting in their dispersed pattern of farmsteads and wayside cottages and lack of strong settlement nuclei.



KEY CHARACTERISTICS

Primary:

- Notable pattern of hedgerow trees, predominantly oak
- Hedgerow boundaries to fields
- Ancient wooded character

Secondary:

- Organic enclosure pattern
- Small-scale landscape with hedgerow trees creating filtered views
- Brick and timber building style of older properties
- Rolling lowland with occasional steep-sided hills and low escarpments

Tertiary:

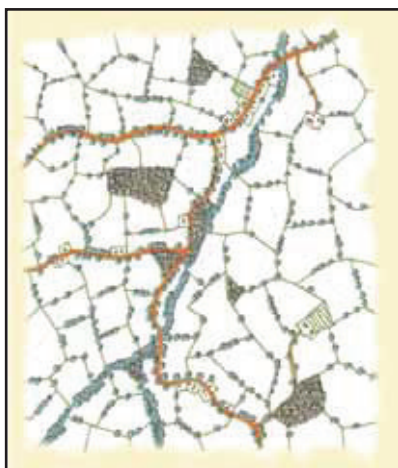
- Mixed farming land use
- Dispersed settlement pattern





DETAIL

The key element of these landscapes is the strongly unifying presence of tree cover in the guise of woodlands, hedgerow trees, and linear, stream side tree cover. The combined presence of these tree cover components creates the underlying sense of scale and enclosure, together with the filtered views that are distinctive in this landscape. The resulting woodland character is essentially that of mixed native broadleaves, with oak the dominant species, lines of mature oak being a particular feature of the hedgerows as befits a landscape with strong links to its woodland origins. The scale and shape of the woodlands is also important, the woodlands ranging in size from small field corner copses to those of a size exceeding that of the surrounding fields. The pattern of hedgerows is also important, not only in providing the basic fabric for the hedgerow tree populations, but also in emphasising scale and enclosure, the hedgerow composition being complex and rich in places where the links to woodland origins are strongest. The irregular outline of many of the woodlands, together with the pattern of hedgerows and winding lanes, contributes to the overall organic character of this landscape. A densely dispersed pattern of farmsteads and wayside cottages is typical with a notable number of buildings constructed out of brick and timber.



LANDSCAPE GUIDELINES

- Maintain the tree cover character of hedgerow oaks, and enhance the age structure of the hedgerow oak population.
- Conserve all ancient woodland sites and restock with locally occurring native species.
- Seek to bring about coalescence of fragmented relic ancient woodlands.
- Encourage the planting of new woodlands, reflecting the scale, shape and composition of the existing ancient woodland character, favouring oak as the major species.
- Conserve and restore tree cover along water courses and streamlines.
- Seek opportunities to enhance tree cover along highways and other non-farmed locations.
- Conserve and restore the pattern and composition of the hedgerow structure through appropriate management, and replanting.
- Conserve the organic pattern and character of the lane networks.
- Maintain the historic dispersed settlement pattern.

MODERN IMPACTS ON CHARACTER

Settlement Pattern:

Additional individual dwellings could be accommodated within the dispersed settlement pattern as long as they do not occur in sufficient density to convert the pattern to wayside or clustered status. Modern development favouring groups or clusters of new houses would not be appropriate in this landscape.

Enclosure Pattern:

Though traditionally a landscape of mixed farming, a gradual increase in arable land use is leading to the demise of the hedgerow structure. It is vital for the retention of landscape character that the organic pattern of enclosure is preserved and that a geometric pattern is not superimposed by subdividing fields or enlarging others and employing straight fence or hedgelines.

Tree Cover Pattern:

The accelerating loss of scale and structure in the landscape is due mainly to the decline and fragmentation of the elements of tree cover, particularly the hedgerow trees. The age distribution of hedgerow oak is unbalanced, with the majority classed as mature or veteran. The distribution of woodlands is also uneven and the streamside cover fragmented in places. There is scope for additional small-scale woodland planting but large scale planting or linking up existing fragmented woodlands to form large blocks would not be appropriate.

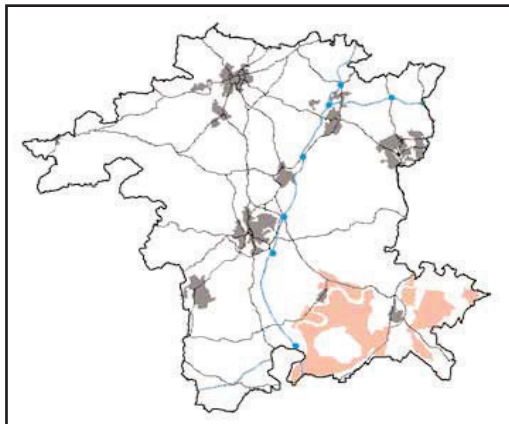


10.8 PRINCIPAL VILLAGE FARMLANDS

10.8 PRINCIPAL VILLAGE FARMLANDS

CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

Principal Village Farmlands are open, rolling landscapes characterised by a nucleated pattern of expanded rural villages, surrounded by large arable fields, often sub-divided into a series of smaller plots. This is an intensively farmed landscape associated with fertile, free draining soils which give rise to high quality farmland used for growing a wide variety of cash crops. This is a landscape of contrasts, the intensely functional, yet often very open and empty character of the farmland and the focused, communal density of the villages.



KEY CHARACTERISTICS

Primary:

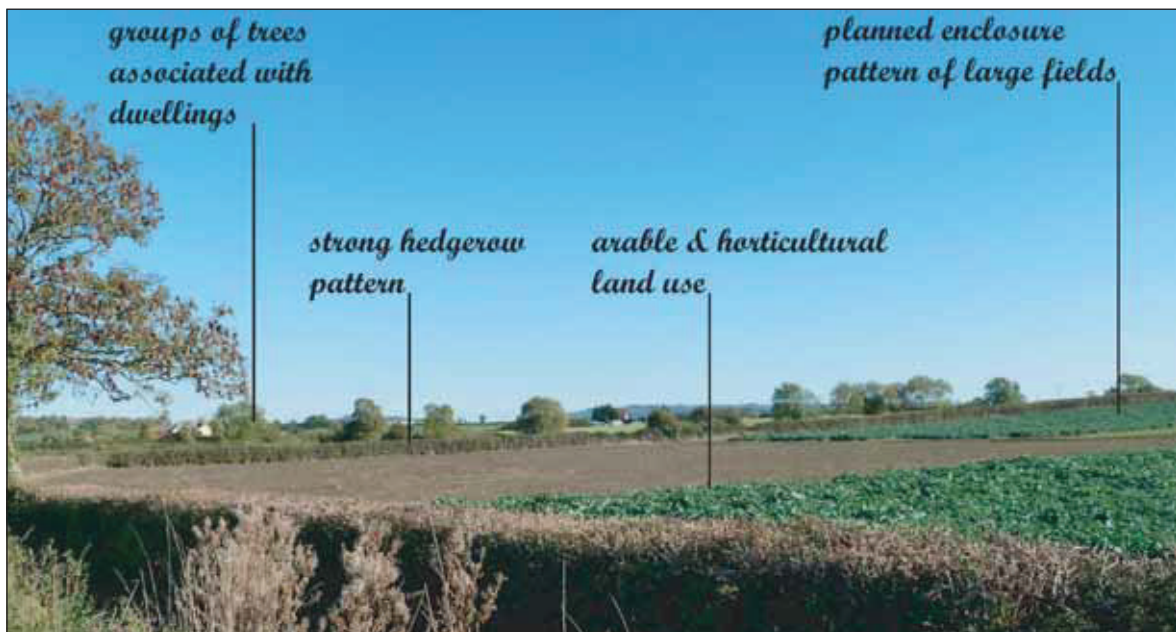
- Nucleated pattern of expanded rural villages
- Arable/cropping land use - cereals and field vegetables on fertile, free-draining soils

Secondary:

- Hedgerows define field boundaries
- Rolling lowland topography

Tertiary:

- Planned enclosure pattern of medium-to-large scale fields
- Groups of trees associated with dwellings





DETAIL

These are landscapes which the Historic Landscape Characterisation (see Appendix A) shows are derived from vast expanses of former open field, which have remained under intensive cultivation following their enclosure and within which the regeneration of woodland and tree cover has never re-established to any significant degree. The exception being elm, which was formerly a dominant hedgerow tree, now almost completely lost to Dutch Elm Disease. These are relatively open, large scale landscapes, where the key elements are the settlement pattern and land use. It is important to try to retain the notable contrast between the concentrations of dwellings and farmsteads in the villages and the relatively unsettled land between them. The land use in these areas is very strongly based on cropping and horticulture, with characteristic concentrations of tunnels and greenhouses associated with such uses. Orchards are a distinctive feature, occurring throughout the area on a domestic scale, with lines of fruit trees, usually damson, growing in the hedges.

The characteristic traditional orchards of standard trees are gradually disappearing in certain areas, being replaced by bush stock. Associated with this is the loss of many of the old fruit tree varieties, many with close links to the County.



LANDSCAPE GUIDELINES

- Retain the pattern of strongly nucleated villages with associated low dispersal of settlement between.
- Conserve and enhance the hedgerow structure, with emphasis on the primary hedgelines.
- Conserve and enhance tree cover along watercourses.
- Encourage opportunities for tree planting in and around villages.
- Conserve and restore old orchards around villages, with an emphasis placed upon the fruit type and varieties associated with different localities.
- Conserve and restore lines of hedgerow fruit trees.
- Promote the development of wide field margins for wildlife benefit.
- Promote the management of roadside verges for wildlife benefit.

MODERN IMPACTS ON CHARACTER

Settlement Pattern:

The nucleated settlement pattern lends itself to modern housing development where dwellings are constructed in clusters within the existing village envelope.

Enclosure Pattern:

The hedgerow network provides structure in places but has often largely lost its function, and the resulting scale is derived from the patterns of cropping rather than the boundaries between them. Although it is desirable to try to retain the full hedgerow structure for visual and wildlife reasons, it is most viable to focus on the primary hedges in these landscapes where the hedgerow function is generally in decline.

Tree Cover Pattern:

Woodland cover is not a characteristic of the Village Farmlands and the prospect of new woodland planting in these areas would dilute their distinctive character. The regeneration of elm continues in the hedgerows but still eventually succumbs to disease at a certain size. After much consideration, it has been decided to promote the planting of oak and ash substitutes for the original densely planted hedgerow elms.

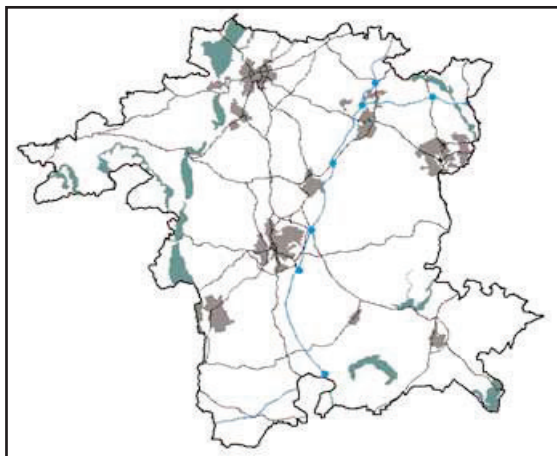


10.9 PRINCIPAL WOODDED HILLS

10.9 PRINCIPAL WOODDED HILLS

CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

These are upstanding, wooded landscapes with a sloping, in places steeply undulating topography, often on the edge of higher ground. These are landscapes of large, irregularly shaped ancient woodlands and wooded streamlines, typically forming an interlocking pattern with surrounding hedged fields. The flowing woodland cover is a key visual element within the landscape, resulting in a strong sense of unity and visual integration.



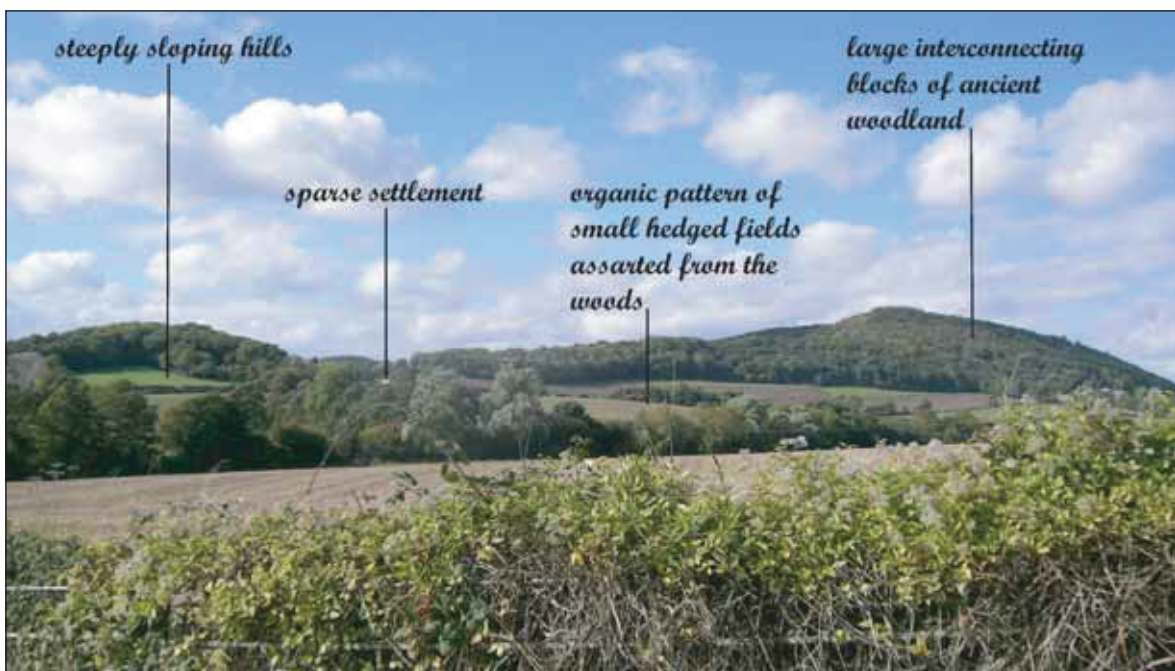
KEY CHARACTERISTICS

Primary:

- Varied, often steeply sloping, topography
- Large, often interconnecting, blocks of ancient woodland

Secondary:

- Organic pattern of hedged fields, derived from assarting the adjacent woodland
- Frequent, narrow, wooded valleys or dingles
- Medium-framed views
- Patches of rough grassland and scrub
- Sparsely settled pattern of farmsteads and wayside dwellings





DETAIL

In these landscapes the nature and steepness of slope has inhibited clearance for agricultural use in the past. Consequently, they have retained a significant proportion of ancient semi-natural woodland into which only slight clearances, usually of an assarted nature, have taken place. Woodland cover usually occurs in extensive interlocking belts and is the dominant land use, typically extending to 60 - 70%, although a lower proportion might be more appropriate in the Cotswold Wooded Hills where a greater amount of historical piecemeal clearance took place and where many of the grasslands are of significant nature conservation interest. Where clearance has taken place in the past, the presence of strong hedge lines with good a representation of hedgerow tree cover contributes to the visual integration of the landscape. The ancient semi-natural status of these woodlands confirms their nature conservation value.

The visual cohesion of these landscapes is critical. They are very visible landscapes, tending to frame long distance views, and as such their composition and unity is particularly important. Hedgerow trees and wooded streambanks are a vital component in achieving visual integration between the areas of historic clearance and the denser woodland. In these areas, the hedgerow tree stock tends to be dominated by mature and veteran trees, and the visual integration will become diluted if tree populations are not perpetuated.



LANDSCAPE GUIDELINES

- Conserve and restore the ancient broadleaved character of all woodlands.
- Seek to restore the wooded character of the area through large scale woodland planting in areas where the interlocking pattern has become diluted.
- Conserve and restore the irregular pattern of assarted fields.
- Strengthen the wooded character of hedgelines and streamlines through replanting or natural regeneration.
- New woodland planting and felling coupes should be carefully designed to take particular account of their visual impact.

MODERN IMPACTS ON CHARACTER

Settlement Pattern:

The sparsely scattered settlement pattern consists of occasional dwellings which were traditionally small forestry workers cottages. An occasional additional dwelling could be assimilated if it is in accordance with policy, but the density should remain extremely low.

Enclosure Pattern:

The organic enclosure pattern is made up of irregularly shaped pastoral fields bounded by hedges, often cleared from the adjoining woodland. Any changes to woodland cover, either through felling or new planting, should respect the historical significance of the old patterns of woodland clearance and ensure the conservation of these patterns along with boundary hedges of assarted origin.

Tree Cover Pattern:

The woodland component has become fragmented in places by recent clearances which damage the unity of the landscape.

The development of woodland shapes that are unsympathetic to the topography, together with the modification of the mixed broad leaf composition of the woodlands, most notably through the introduction of conifer blocks, can severely interrupt the unity of the landscape. The presence of conifer dominated skylines is particularly damaging. The nature conservation value of the woodlands is also significantly reduced by deviations from their inherent species composition.

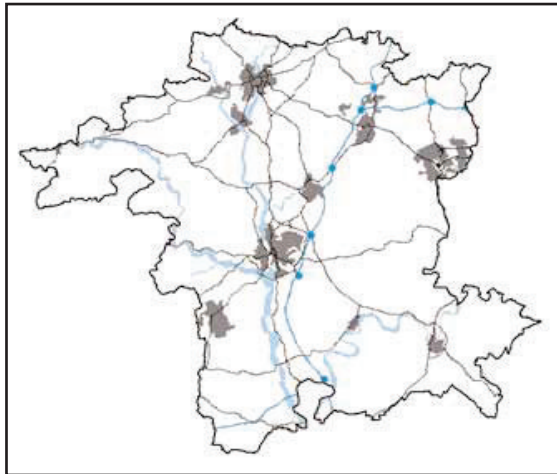


10.10 RIVERSIDE MEADOWS

10.10 RIVERSIDE MEADOWS

CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

Riverside Meadows are linear riverine landscapes associated with a flat, generally well-defined alluvial floodplain, in places framed by steeply rising ground. These are secluded pastoral landscapes, characterised by meandering, tree-lined rivers, flanked by alluvial meadows which are defined by hedge and ditch boundaries. Settlement is typically absent.



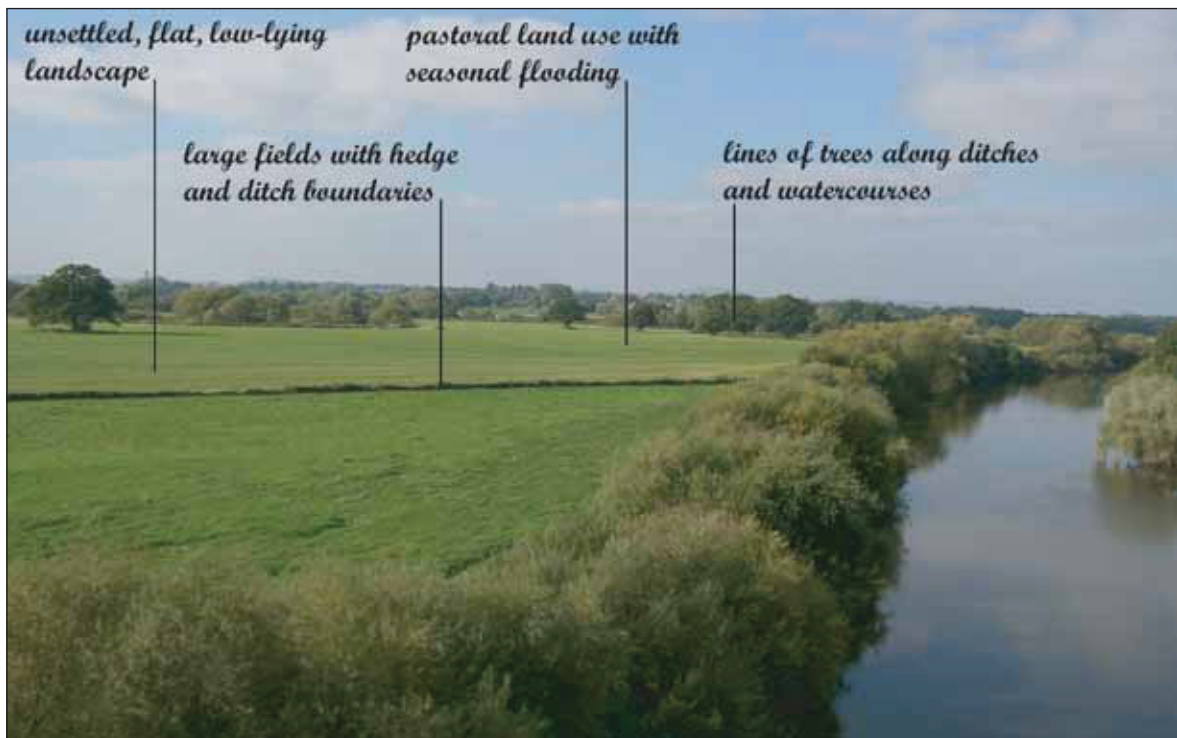
KEY CHARACTERISTICS

Primary:

- Flat, low-lying topography
- Pastoral land use, including seasonal grazing meadows
- Tree cover character of individual trees rather than woodland
- Tree cover pattern of linear tree belts along ditches, watercourses and in hedgerows

Secondary:

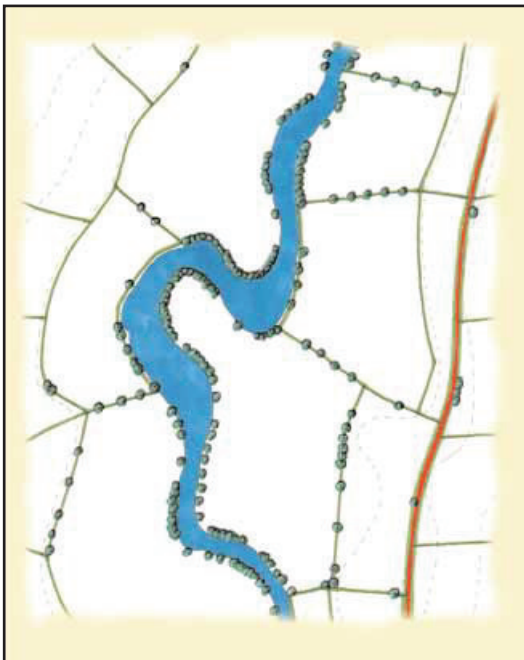
- Unsettled with few roads
- Seasonally flooded alluvial floodplain
- Meandering river channel
- Medium-to-large fields with hedge and ditch boundaries
- Rushes, reeds and other wetland vegetation





DETAIL

Throughout these landscapes, the presence of extensive areas of waterside meadows, used for seasonal grazing, has in the past provided a strong sense of visual and ecological unity. These are landscapes that accommodated a degree of annual flooding, a factor which was reflected in the patterns of land use, the lack of settlement and development (except for the occasional water mill), and the representation of species and habitats tolerant of such waterlogged conditions. Tree cover is a notable element of Riverside Meadows, usually in a linear pattern along the hedge and ditch lines and along the banks of watercourses. Typical species are alder and willow, the latter often pollarded.



LANDSCAPE GUIDELINES

- Seek to retain the unity of the linear form of these landscapes.
- Conserve all existing areas of permanent pasture.
- Seek opportunities to encourage the conversion of arable land back to pasture.
- Conserve and enhance continuous tree cover along hedgelines, ditches and watercourses.
- Conserve existing wetland habitats and seek opportunities for further wetland habitat creation.
- Avoid building or road construction works.
- Avoid further drainage of waterside meadows.
- Explore opportunities to return to patterns and processes of natural flooding cycles.

MODERN IMPACTS ON CHARACTER

Land Use:

The strong unity derived from the presence of watermeadows and pasture is becoming fragmented by the encroachment of arable land uses. The decline in the traditional practices of seasonal grazing and haymaking have diminished the nature conservation interest of the remaining areas of pasture. Similarly, modification of the natural shape and profile of water courses and drainage channels has reduced their wildlife value and produced a functional, somewhat urban appearance. These are essentially linear landscapes, relying on extensive views along the length of river corridors. New roads have been constructed on embankments directly across the flood plain, notably in the vicinity of Worcester, fragmenting the visual unity of the riverside meadow corridors as a result.

These are landscapes where the remaining areas of pasture should be conserved and opportunities sought to convert areas of arable land back to pasture. Wetland habitats are nationally scarce today and opportunities to restore or re-create them should be encouraged and in areas where property would not be at risk, a return to annual flooding cycles could be considered in order to achieve this.

Tree Cover Pattern:

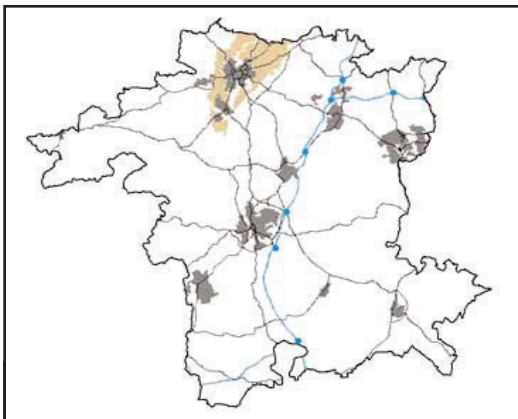
There is little to indicate that woodlands have been a characteristic feature of these landscapes since their use as grazing meadows evolved. Therefore, opportunities to introduce new tree planting should respect the inherent linear patterns of tree cover, although there may be some limited opportunity for wet woodland creation.



10.11 SANDSTONE ESTATELANDS

CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

These are open, rolling landscapes characterised by an ordered pattern of large, arable fields, straight roads and estate plantations. Fields are typically defined by straight thorn hedges, reflecting the late enclosure of much of this landscape from woodland and waste. This historic land use pattern is also reflected in the occurrence of isolated brick farmsteads and clusters of wayside dwellings, interspersed with occasional small villages. Despite the fact that this is a functional landscape, the consistent geometric pattern can convey a strong sense of visual unity.



KEY CHARACTERISTICS

Primary:

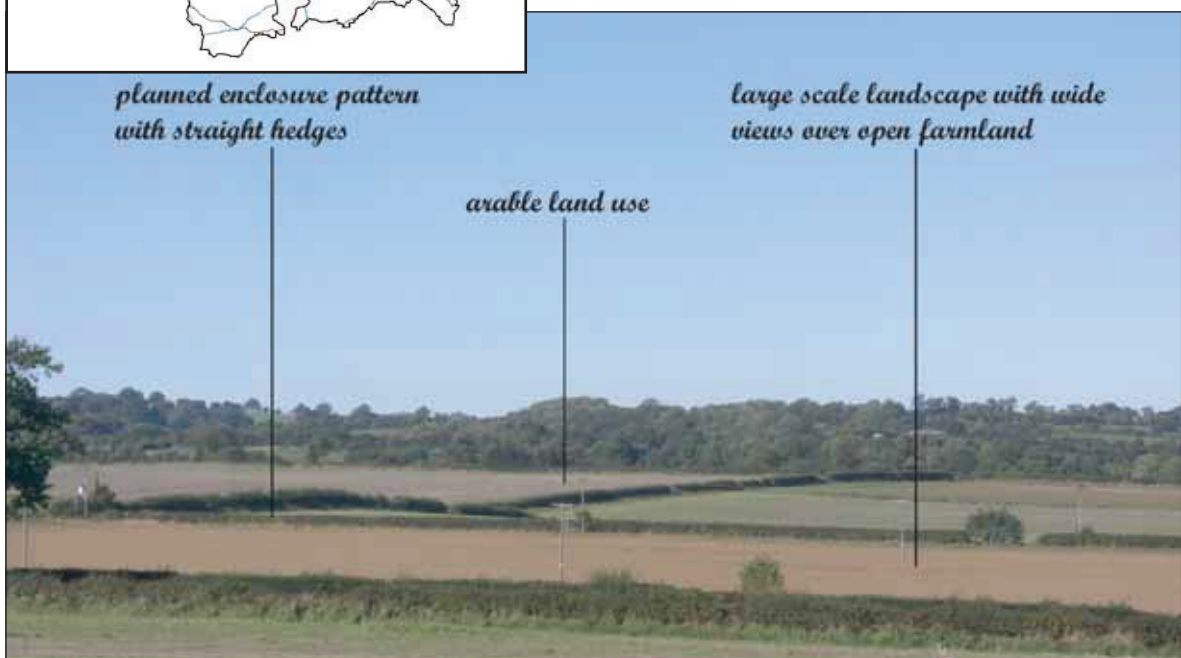
- Arable land use
- Hedgerow boundaries to fields
- Planned enclosure pattern - straight roads and field boundaries

Secondary:

- Woodland pattern of discrete blocks
- Planned woodland character - estate plantations and groups of trees
- Large-scale landscape with wide views over open farmland
- Impoverished soils with relic heathy vegetation
- Dispersed pattern of isolated farmsteads and scattered wayside dwellings
- Discrete settlement clusters often in the form of small estate villages

Tertiary:

- Rolling topography with occasional low escarpments

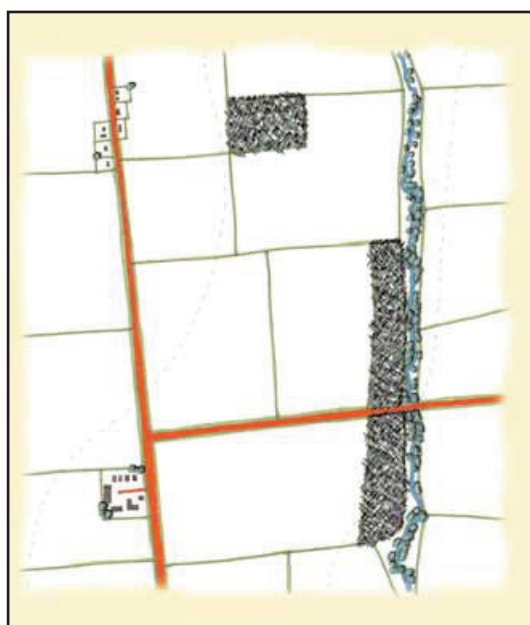




DETAIL

This is an ordered landscape in which strong, regular patterns - in terms of field layout, road networks and woodland shape - play a dominant structural role. Large plantation woodlands provide a notable structural component to the landscape, although it is the field pattern that provides the overall unity. Further structure is provided by tree belts and linear tree cover along watercourses, although this is essentially a fairly open landscape, the tree cover providing a framework to views rather than producing a sense of enclosure and blocking them. Parkland features and associated ornamental planting, together with estate villages, can all contribute to the diversity of these landscapes.

These are landscapes of arable dominance in which the hedgerows have largely lost their function. Hedgerow loss and deterioration is already apparent in places to the detriment of landscape scale and character. The deterioration and reduced size of parklands is often evident, with parkland trees now located in areas of arable cultivation. These are landscapes that have a particularly distinctive natural vegetation of heathy/gorse communities that are seldom expressed, being too often suppressed by management, particularly in such non-farmed locations as roadside verges.



LANDSCAPE GUIDELINES

- Conserve and restore the distinctive hedgerow pattern with priority given to primary hedgerows.
- Identify opportunities for further large scale planting of woodlands and tree belts to strengthen the regular patterns of the landscape.
- Conserve and restore parklands.
- Conserve and enhance tree cover along watercourses.
- Conserve the integrity of estate villages.
- Promote the creation and appropriate management of natural vegetation communities along highways and other non-farmed areas.
- Promote the development of wide field margins for wildlife benefit.

MODERN IMPACTS ON CHARACTER

Settlement Pattern:

The settlement pattern varies between isolated brick farmsteads, clusters of wayside dwellings and occasional estate villages. There may be limited opportunities for new development that conforms to policy and local character.

Enclosure Pattern:

The conservation of hedgerows remains a priority but, bearing in mind the overall loss of hedgerow function, focus should be placed on primary hedgerow patterns. The opportunities for wildlife can be restricted in large scale arable landscapes such as these, and scope for improving wildlife habitats and corridors, particularly the development of wide field margins and the continuous tree cover along watercourses should be encouraged.

Tree Cover Pattern:

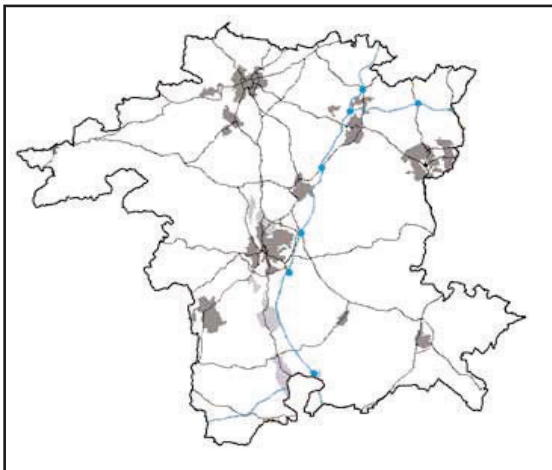
Tree cover is predominantly provided by large, discrete plantation woodlands and tree belts. These are often planted with conifers, poplars or other quick cropping species. The Sandstone Estatelands have the capacity to accommodate considerable areas of new woodland planting. With the decline and fragmentation of the hedgerow pattern, the development of a cohesive woodland structure, with woodland shape reflecting the pronounced regular landscape pattern, would considerably help to retain a sense of unity and scale to the landscape.



10.12 SETTLED FARMLANDS ON RIVER TERRACES

CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

This is a medium scale, settled agricultural landscape where horticulture and cropping is the dominant land use, reflecting the fertile free draining soils. The settlement pattern is represented by scattered farms and clusters of wayside dwellings, linked by a matrix of winding lanes. Fields are bounded by hedgerows, with tree cover largely concentrated in groups associated with dwellings.



KEY CHARACTERISTICS

Primary:

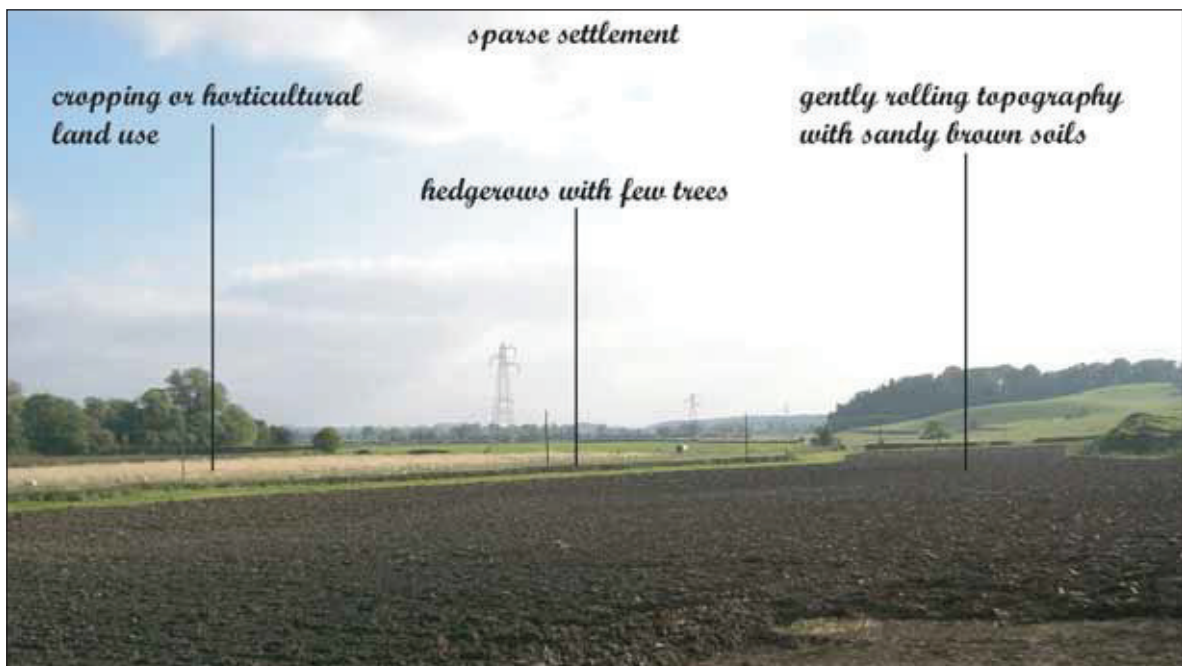
- Cropping/horticultural land use
- Landscape of medium scale
- Gently rolling lowland topography
- Sandy brown soils

Secondary:

- Hedgerow boundaries to fields
- Dispersed settlement pattern of farmsteads and clusters of wayside dwellings
- Tree groups associated with settlement

Tertiary:

- Sub-regular enclosure pattern



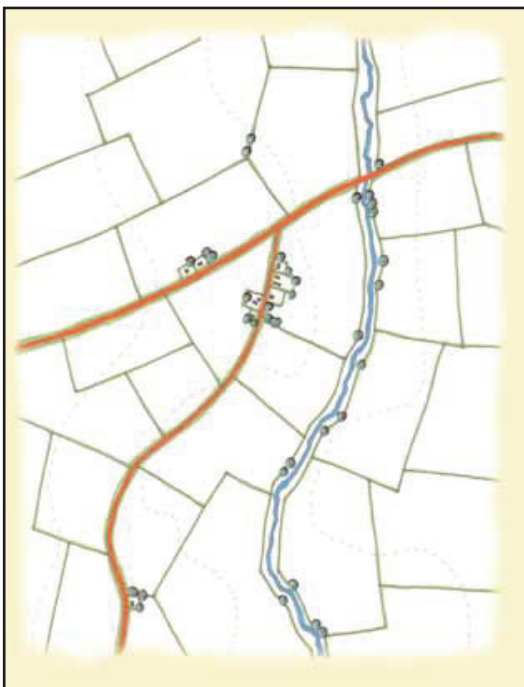


DETAIL

This landscape is similar to Principal Settled Farmlands and shares many of the characteristics of the latter, in terms of the absence of woodland, the pattern of dispersed settlement, and hedged fields. The topography too is similar, but typically of a more gently rolling nature. The field pattern tends to be sub-regular, suggesting early enclosure from areas of open field.

The defining characteristic lies in its land use - this landscape is primarily found on the river terraces, where free-draining, highly fertile sandy brown soils support an arable land use dominated by cash crops and market gardening. In Worcestershire, this Landscape Type is located on the river terraces of the Severn.

These landscapes are of medium scale with an open nature, tree cover being most strongly represented along watercourses and in association with settlement. Woodland is not characteristic of the Settled Farmlands on River Terraces. These areas have always been amongst the most fertile and productive agricultural land and were consequently probably cleared early and maintained under cultivation, and as a result have been devoid of woodland for a substantial period of time.



MODERN IMPACTS ON CHARACTER

Settlement Pattern:

Settlement tends to be sparsely distributed, comprising wayside dwellings and small clusters. The same dense network of interlinking lanes, as found in the Principal Settled Farmlands, is usually present.

Enclosure Pattern:

The pattern of hedged fields is very vulnerable to change as the functional worth of these boundaries becomes reduced, coupled with the increasing demands of modern horticulture. There is a consequent increase in openness and scale of the landscape as these features become fragmented. Several areas already have a notably depleted hedgerow pattern.

Tree Cover Pattern:

Hedgerow trees have become reduced in number, due to their incompatibility with modern arable farming, and tree cover is now largely concentrated in the vicinity of settlement and in association with watercourses. This is not a landscape where woodland is characteristic and opportunities for new tree planting are best focused on strengthening the linear pattern of cover along watercourses, together with augmenting the tree cover associated with farmsteads and other settlements.

LANDSCAPE GUIDELINES

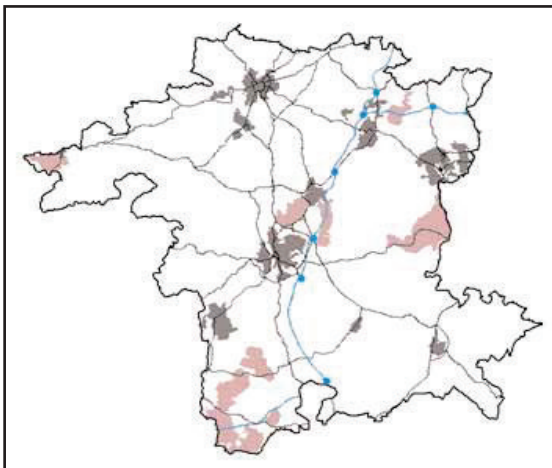
- Retain the integrity of the dispersed settlement pattern.
- Conserve and enhance tree cover along watercourses.
- Seek to maintain cropping/horticultural land uses.
- Enhance patterns of tree cover associated with settlement.
- Conserve and enhance patterns of hedgerows.



10.13 SETTLED FARMLANDS WITH PASTORAL LAND USE

CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

These are small-scale rolling lowland, settled agricultural landscapes with a dominant pastoral land use, defined by their hedged fields. Hedgerow and streamside trees, together with those associated with settlement provide tree cover in a landscape with a notable network of winding lanes, scattered farms and clusters of wayside settlements.



KEY CHARACTERISTICS

Primary:

- Pastoral land use
- Small-scale landscape defined by prominent pattern of hedged fields
- Tree cover character of individual trees rather than woodland

Secondary:

- Tree cover pattern of scattered trees along hedgerows and watercourses
- Dispersed settlement pattern of farmsteads and groups of wayside dwellings
- Sub-regular enclosure pattern, with small and medium sized fields
- Rolling lowland with occasional steep sided hills and escarpments

Tertiary:

- Gleyed soils

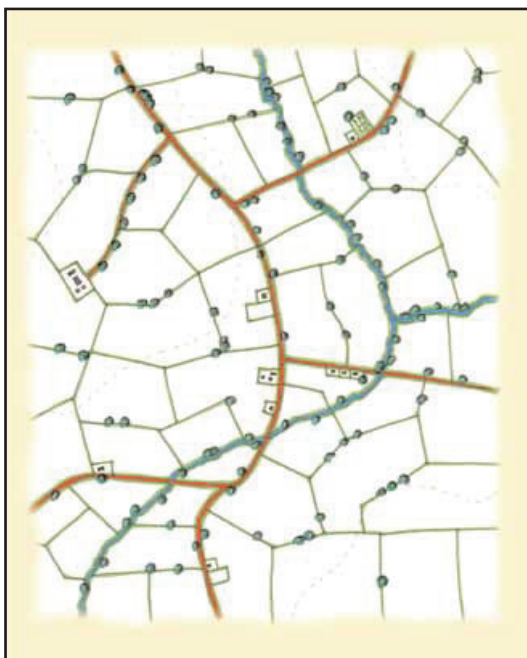




DETAIL

The Settled Farmlands with Pastoral Land Use share many characteristics of the Principal Settled Farmlands. They are both lowland agricultural landscapes, with hedged fields, and a dispersed settlement pattern but the primary defining characteristic relates to soils and to the subsequent land use. These are landscapes of heavy or poorly drained soils associated with a predominantly pastoral land use. The field pattern follows that of the other Settled Farmlands, tending to be sub-regular, suggesting early enclosure from areas of open field, but the size of the fields tends to be smaller, and the pattern more prominent.

Tree cover is primarily represented by hedgerow trees and by trees along watercourses. In both instances these can be notable in their numbers and, combined with the field size, results in a landscape of much smaller, more intimate, scale than the other Settled Farmlands categories. The same pattern of dispersed farmsteads and wayside dwellings occurs in association with a dense network of lanes.



LANDSCAPE GUIDELINES

- Conserve and enhance the pattern of hedgerows.
- Maintain overall pastoral land use.
- Seek opportunities to conserve all remaining areas of permanent pasture.
- Conserve and enhance tree cover along watercourses.
- Conserve hedgerow tree populations and promote new hedgerow tree planting.
- Retain the integrity of the dispersed pattern of settlement.

MODERN IMPACTS ON CHARACTER

Land Use:

The defining pastoral land use is becoming diluted due to increased arable cultivation, which in turn has an impact upon the scale and enclosure pattern of these landscapes. The remaining areas of permanent pasture can often be of significant biodiversity interest, and this can be threatened by the increasing change in land use in favour of arable farming. Initiatives to safeguard remaining areas of permanent pasture should be strongly promoted.

Enclosure Pattern:

Over the past years hedgerows have been removed, resulting in larger fields and a change in the scale of the landscape and, although the Hedgerow Regulations should now reduce such direct damage, deteriorating management is likely to continue.

Tree Cover Pattern:

Woodlands are not characteristic of these landscapes and hedgerow trees, together with linear tree cover associated with watercourses, are particularly important, providing the defining tree cover element. The existing patterns of tree cover should be conserved, and opportunities for new tree planting should be focused on strengthening and restoring hedgerow tree populations and the tree cover associated with watercourses.

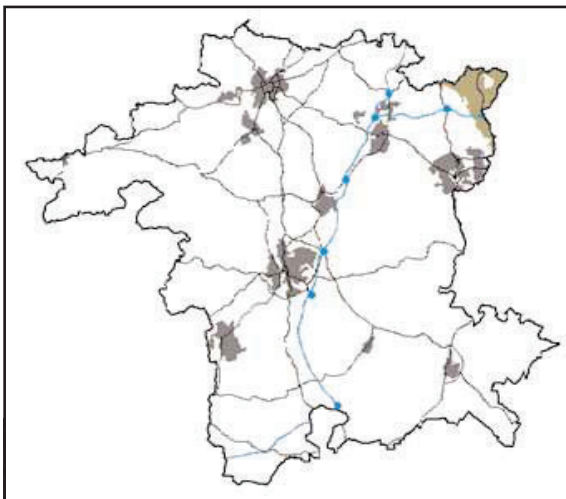


10.14 TIMBERED PASTURES

10.14 TIMBERED PASTURES

CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

Timbered Pastures are small-scale, settled, pastoral landscapes characterised by filtered views through densely scattered hedgerow trees. The oak trees convey a sense of scale and stature combined with a feeling of maturity and history. This is a complex landscape of relic commons and former wood pasture, reflected today by an intermixed pattern of irregular fields and scattered farms occurring next to areas of geometric enclosure, straight roads and strings of wayside dwellings.



KEY CHARACTERISTICS

Primary:

- Notable tree cover pattern of mature hedgerow oaks
- Ancient wooded character
- Small-scale landscape with well-defined pattern of small, hedged fields

Secondary:

- Pastoral land use
- Dense network of minor lanes

Tertiary:

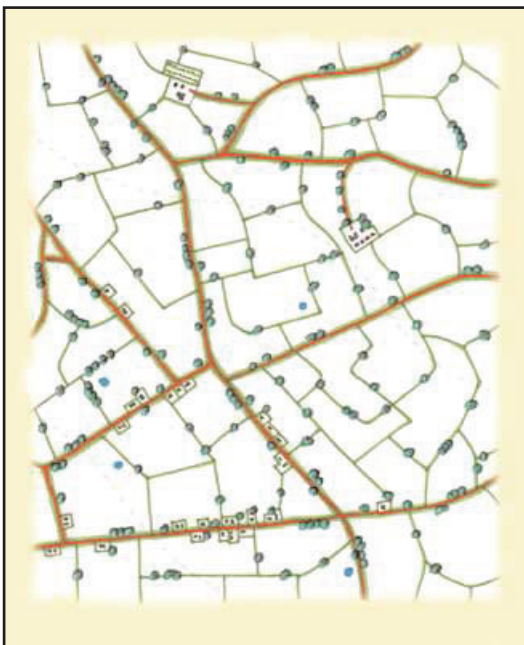
- Impoverished, poorly draining soils with wet heathy vegetation
- Variable enclosure pattern
- Dispersed settlement pattern of farmsteads and strings of wayside cottages





DETAIL

This is a landscape of considerable ecological and historical interest, comprising a matrix of former areas of commonland and areas of woodland assarted origins. The key feature, providing its character and structure, is the dominant presence of dense lines of mature hedgerow oaks, which in turn rely upon the presence of hedgelines for their continued existence. The tree cover emphasises the small scale pattern of enclosure, overriding local differences in hedgerow pattern, regular where the fields are derived from the late enclosure of commonland, irregular where associated with fields of assarted origin. The dominant pastoral land use is also a notable feature. This is a landscape that can contain considerable nature conservation interest, the presence of areas of unimproved permanent pasture together with the high densities of small field ponds associated with former marl pits, being particularly relevant.



LANDSCAPE GUIDELINES

- Conserve the dominant presence and density of hedgerow oak trees.
- Conserve and restore the small-scale pattern of hedged fields, through appropriate management.
- Conserve the pastoral land use character.
- Conserve the distinctive pattern and character of wayside dwellings.
- Maintain the distinctive density of ponds.
- Seek opportunities to reintroduce the character of unenclosed commons through creative design.
- Conserve the distinctive pattern and character of narrow, winding lanes.
- Seek opportunities to enhance tree cover along highways and other non-farmed locations.

MODERN IMPACTS ON CHARACTER

Land Use:

Change over to arable farming and an increase in the grazing of horses are becoming evident, both of which can have a detrimental effect upon the hedgerow structure, and in turn on the perpetuation of hedgerow trees.

The decline in the dominance of permanent pasture dilutes the unity of this landscape and opportunities to both conserve and restore this land use should be sought. This is a landscape which formerly included a distinctive concentration of unenclosed commons, the essential character of which could be integrated into any new development proposals for the area, in order to facilitate opportunities for recreation

Significant numbers of field ponds are being lost due to infilling. This landscape is subject to many pressures due to the proximity of the conurbation, not least through the modification of the characteristic wayside dwellings as a result of modernisation and enlargement. Pressures to modify the narrow winding complex of lanes could become a priority as traffic volumes increase.

Tree Cover Pattern:

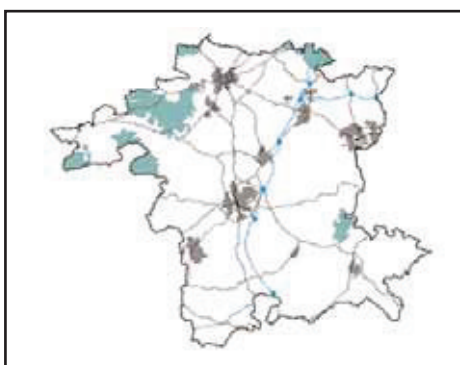
Emphasis needs to be placed upon promoting the importance of hedgerow oaks to this landscape, developing appropriate new incentives to encourage the initiation of new populations. Alternative opportunities to introduce tree cover within farmland, such as field corner plantings, are unlikely to achieve the distinctive density and consequent sense of enclosure created by the existing oaks.



10.15 TIMBERED PLATEAU FARMLANDS

CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

The Timbered Plateau Farmlands are varied, mixed farming landscapes of hedged fields, scattered farms, woods and wooded valleys associated with upstanding areas of undulating relief. The landform conveys a sense of strength and dominance which tends to override the pattern of tree cover and fields. Variations in landform within this landscape create a changing sequence of visual perspectives, ranging from open vistas on plateau summits to more secluded scenes along valley bottoms.



KEY CHARACTERISTICS

Primary:

- Upstanding plateau of rolling topography dissected by broad valleys
- Filtered medium/long distance views
- Woodland of ancient character
- Mixed hedges with scattered hedgerow oaks

Secondary:

- Organic enclosure pattern of medium-to-large fields
- Linear tree cover pattern of wooded valleys often associated with streamside habitats
- Mixed farming land use

Tertiary:

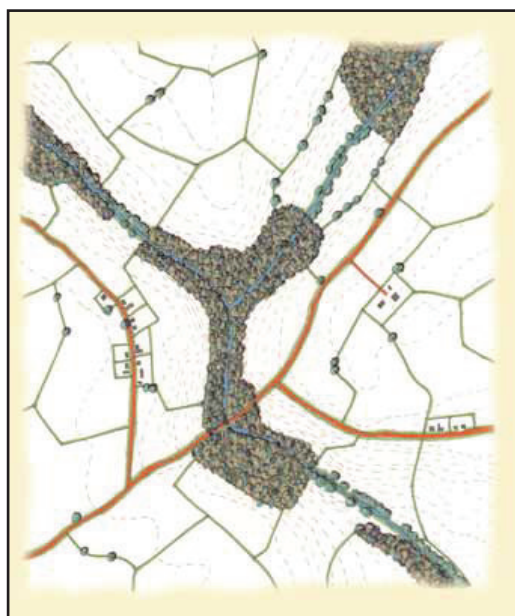
- Dispersed settlement pattern of farmsteads and hamlets





DETAIL

The key elements of the Timbered Plateau Farmlands are topography and woodland. These are landscapes that have developed from a mosaic of piecemeal clearance of woodland and localised areas of open field, and retain a strong association with their woodland origins. The tree cover, consequently, is essentially of ancient semi-natural character, with oak as the dominant species. Unlike the Principal Timbered Farmlands, the lowland equivalent of this Landscape Type, the role of hedgerow trees and their influence in creating filtered views is less significant in the Timbered Plateau Farmlands. The more pronounced topography tends to throw the pattern of woodland and hedgerows into greater visual prominence. The woodland cover provides the major structure to the landscape, the hedgerow pattern defining the scale. These are landscapes containing woodlands of varying size, the dingles associated with the valley streams being a particular characteristic. The settlement pattern is a variable one of dispersed farms and hamlets with occasional villages or wayside cottages. The land use tends to be a patchwork of mixed farming with pasture often dominating the areas where topography limits intensive cultivation.



MODERN IMPACTS ON CHARACTER

Tree Cover Pattern:

The deterioration of the overall structure of tree cover tends to be the major issue in these landscapes with corresponding loss of landscape unity. Woodland cover is not always a prominent component of the landscape today, the streamside tree cover can often be fragmented and the hedgerow tree cover composed of primarily mature or veteran trees. The fragmentation of hedgerows can result in the remaining woodlands becoming isolated from other areas of tree cover. The gradual change from a landscape of mixed agriculture to one dominated by arable farming, suggests that the function of hedgerows will become increasingly reduced, rendering the whole linking structure of hedgerows and tree cover, upon which the landscape character depends, increasingly vulnerable. The Timbered Plateau Farmlands are landscapes that could accommodate a considerable amount of new woodland planting. In some places a doubling of the woodland cover could be considered in order to retain and emphasise the woodland associations and origins of these areas, and to give greater structure to the landscape. New planting should aim to perpetuate the characteristic wide range of woodland size.

LANDSCAPE GUIDELINES

- Conserve and manage all ancient woodland sites, restocking with locally occurring native stock.
- Promote the coalescence of fragmented remnants of ancient woodland.
- Promote new woodland planting, favouring native broadleaves with oak as the major species.
- Promote infilling of gaps in tree cover along watercourses and dingles.
- Conserve hedgerow oaks and promote the importance of veteran trees.
- Conserve and restore the pattern of hedgerows throughout the area, giving priority to primary boundaries and boundaries of assarted origin.
- Conserve and restore existing parkland areas.
- Encourage new populations of hedgerow oaks, particularly through natural regeneration.
- Maintain the characteristic dispersed settlement pattern, avoiding the formation of pronounced settlement nuclei.



10.16 UNENCLOSED COMMONS

10.16 UNENCLOSED COMMONS

CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

This is a category of landscape that offers tremendous variety of scale and size, the overriding characteristics being the lack of enclosure and, usually, a land use of rough grazing. The smaller unenclosed commons are ranked as features within other Landscape Types but a few are considered to be of sufficient extent to warrant separate classification. Settlement, where present, is usually restricted to wayside dwellings situated around the perimeter of the common.

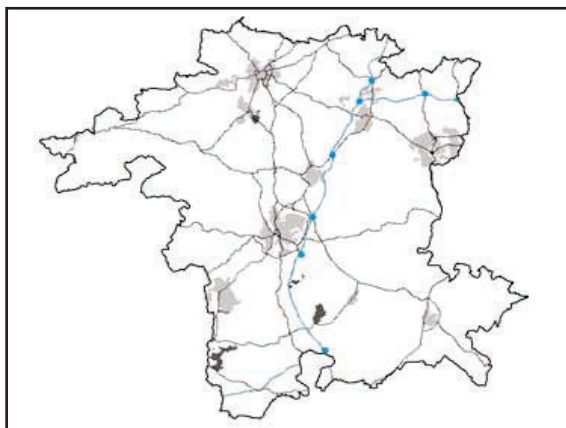
KEY CHARACTERISTICS

Primary:

- Unenclosed land
- Rough grazing land use

Secondary:

- Unsettled, but with wayside dwellings of distinctive scale and style, located on the perimeter of commons
- Unwooded, but small plots associated with dwellings often afford scattered tree cover
- Acid grassland/heath very often associated with these landscapes

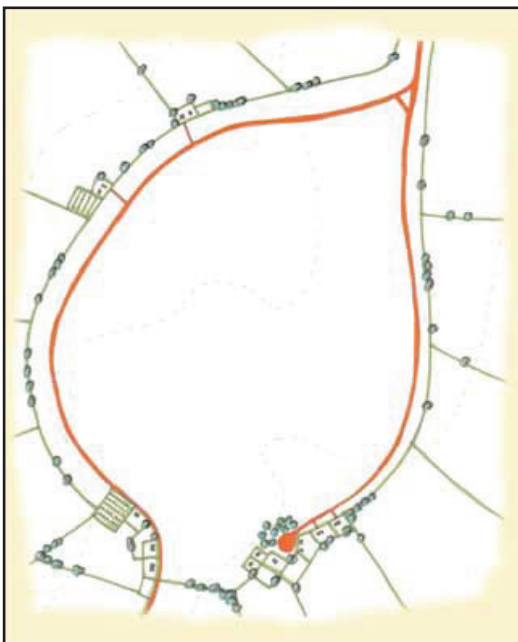




DETAIL

The character of these landscapes has, in the past, developed as a result of the activities of local people with commoners' rights. Different activities have resulted in rather differing identities. They are, as a group, notable for their lack of enclosure and their overall sense of wilderness. There is frequently an element of settlement associated with these commons, the style, scale and pattern of which is particularly distinctive, typically being small, wayside cottages, often white-washed, set in small plots of irregular shape. In many cases, tree cover is largely restricted to the plots and gardens associated with these cottages. The traditionally grazed commons are invariably associated with a high nature conservation value due to their unimproved status.

There would appear to continue to be a general lack of motivation to restore active pursuance of rights of common today, factors of economic benefit, disturbance and danger to grazing stock from busy roads, dogs and people together with increased regulations associated with animal husbandry perhaps contributing to such reluctance. The demise in the exercising of commoners' rights has resulted in reversion to scrub in many places. Elsewhere commons are valued for their recreation potential and managed in a municipal fashion, with regular cutting of the sward and sometimes associated planting of ornamental trees. There have, however, been successful instances of community approaches to restoring grazing stock on commonland, Monkwood Green being an example. Long term sustainable management initiatives are clearly needed for these landscapes and the success of such existing schemes should be widely promoted and encouraged elsewhere.



LANDSCAPE GUIDELINES

- Conserve and enhance the visual distinctiveness of open common areas.
- Conserve and enhance the spatial pattern, scale and specific character of wayside dwellings associated with commons.
- Recognising that each common will have a different historical profile, seek to define management objectives to integrate wildlife benefit, current recreational interests and other uses, together with the historical interest.
- Seek to avoid municipal/tidy approaches to management.

MODERN IMPACTS ON CHARACTER

Settlement Pattern:

These are fundamentally unsettled landscapes, but over the years an element of settlement has built up. The degree of settlement varies but is usually of small wayside cottages dotted around the periphery of the common. The cottages are often whitewashed and set in small, irregularly shaped gardens with occasional paddocks. Modern enlargement and remodelling has often resulted in an uncharacteristic sub-urban character.

Enclosure Pattern:

All methods of enclosure are inappropriate although peripheral temporary stock fencing may sometimes be necessary

Tree Cover Pattern:

Tree cover is typically restricted to the gardens and small orchards associated with the surrounding cottages. However, the character of these commons varies widely and some have a significant number of trees, either as individual specimens, groups, or areas of grazed woodland. In addition, those commons that are no longer adequately grazed have a problem of encroaching scrub and secondary woodland. Generally, additional tree planting is not appropriate on Unenclosed Commons.



10.17 VILLAGE CLAYLANDS

10.17 VILLAGE CLAYLANDS

CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

These are open, gently rolling agricultural landscapes characterised by an ordered pattern of hedged fields and discrete rural villages connected by a network of minor roads. These are landscapes of heavy, poorly drained soils, typically associated with broad clay vales backed by steeply sloping escarpments. Ridge and furrow, a relic of medieval farming practice is often distinctive. The field pattern tends to define the scale of the landscape.

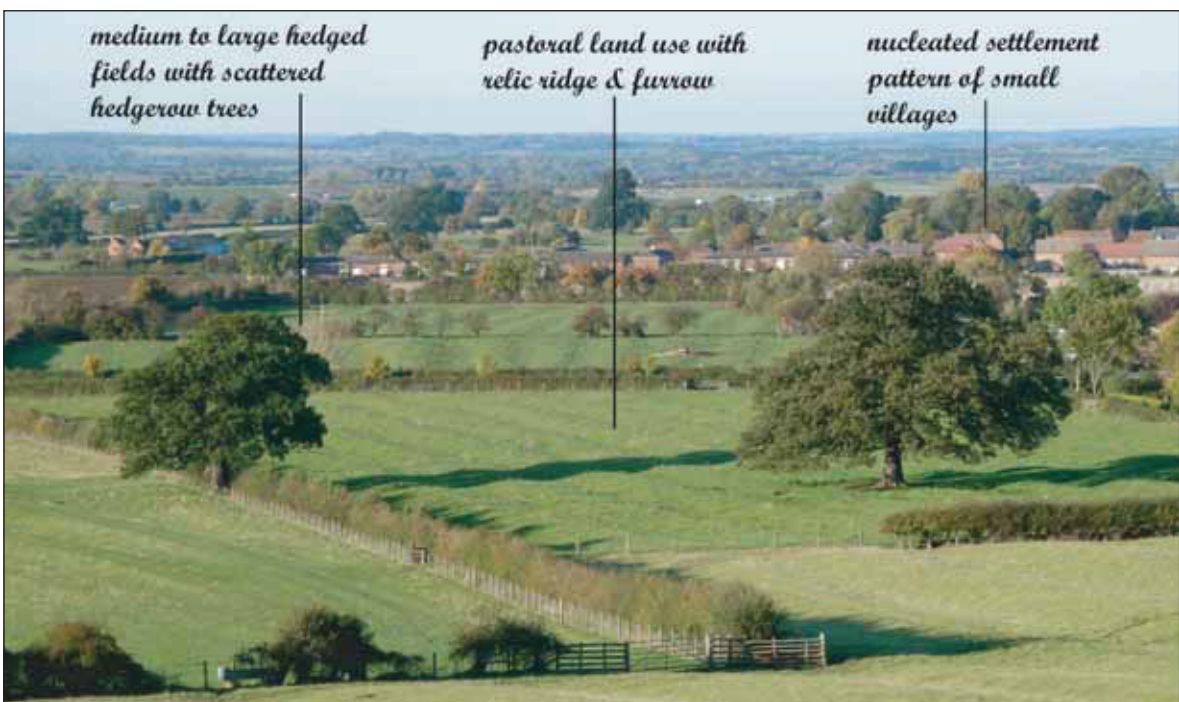
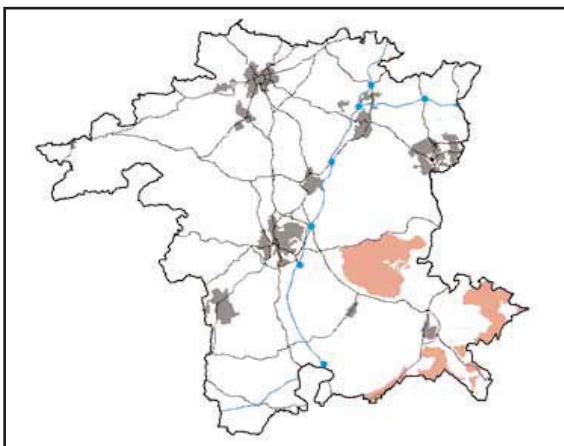
KEY CHARACTERISTICS

Primary:

- Hedgerow boundaries to fields

Secondary:

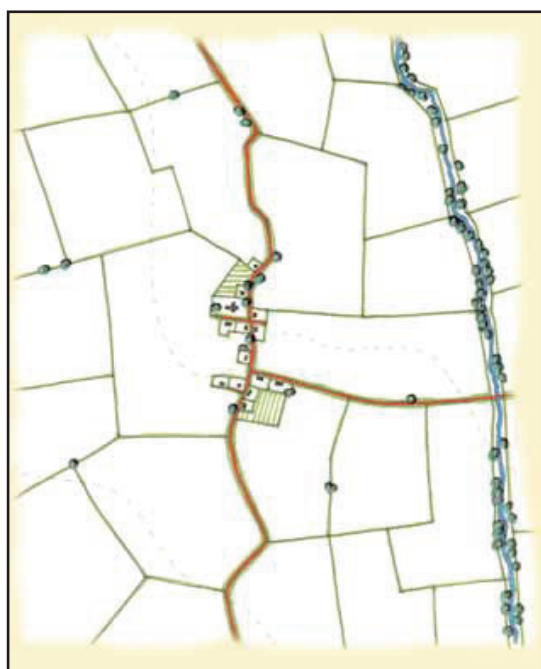
- Pastoral land use with relic ridge and furrow
- Gently rolling lowland topography
- Heavy, poorly drained soils
- Medium-to-large scale field pattern
- Rural lanes with uniform grass verges
- Scattered hedgerow and streamline trees
- Nucleated settlement pattern, usually of small, rural villages





DETAIL

The pastoral land use is one of the key elements of this landscape, together with the pattern of settlement and hedged fields. These are landscapes derived from former extensive areas of open fields, but, because of their heavy soil, were less favoured for continued arable cultivation becoming predominantly converted to pasture at the time of enclosure. There are still significant areas of permanent pasture in some localities, often with notable representation of ridge and furrow. The pattern of hedged fields defines the scale of the landscape which until recently would have conveyed a more pronounced sense of structure and enclosure. These landscapes were often bastions of hedgerow elm tree cover in the past, and the composition of many hedges is still dominated by this species. The impact of Dutch Elm Disease has left them significantly lacking in tree cover. Originally, it was thought that rather than use an alternative species to restore the distinctively dense tree cover associated with the elm it would be left for a degree of natural resistance to emerge that would enable regeneration of this species to arise from the remaining hedgerow stock. However, after 40 years there is no evidence of any emergence of natural resistance. The decision has therefore been taken to attempt to replicate the originally heavily treed landscape by promoting the planting of oak and ash hedgerow trees.



LANDSCAPE GUIDELINES

- Conserve the pattern of hedgerow boundaries.
- Conserve all remaining areas of permanent pasture.
- Conserve and enhance tree cover along water courses.
- Conserve and enhance the scattered populations of hedgerow trees.
- Seek to retain the integrity of the distinctive settlement pattern of small villages.
- Encourage the planting of tree groups in association with settlements.
- Opportunities for conversion of arable land back to pasture should be given consideration.

MODERN IMPACTS ON CHARACTER

Settlement Pattern:

The nucleated settlement pattern reflects the organised community structure associated with open field culture of long standing where farmsteads were located within the village, not in the open countryside. However, the villages have often declined in size or even become abandoned, reflecting the decline in status of the areas for farming.

Enclosure Pattern:

An increase in the proportion of arable land is evident which dilutes the distinctive land use and results in damage to the nature conservation and archaeological interest if areas of unimproved meadow are destroyed in the process. The increase in arable land uses also reduces the functionality of hedgerows, with consequent dilution of landscape scale and structure as hedges become lost or fragmented.

Tree Cover Pattern:

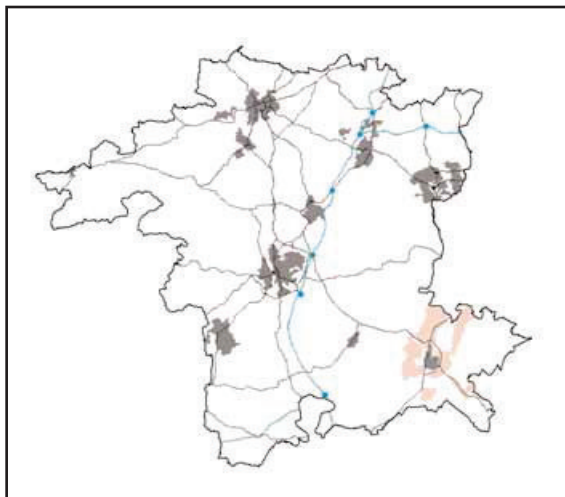
Woodland is not a characteristic of these 'planned' landscapes. Trees are now primarily represented by watercourse lines of willow and alder with limited hedgerow ash. The restoration of tree cover along the watercourses is to be encouraged along with the planting of tree groups in and around settlement to enhance the character and to help emphasise the distinctive settlement pattern



10.18 VILLAGE FARMLANDS WITH ORCHARDS

CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

This is a distinctive planned lowland agricultural landscape with a notably dominant orchard land use. It is an intensively cultivated landscape characterised by a nucleated pattern of expanded villages surrounded by large cultivated fields.



KEY CHARACTERISTICS

Primary:

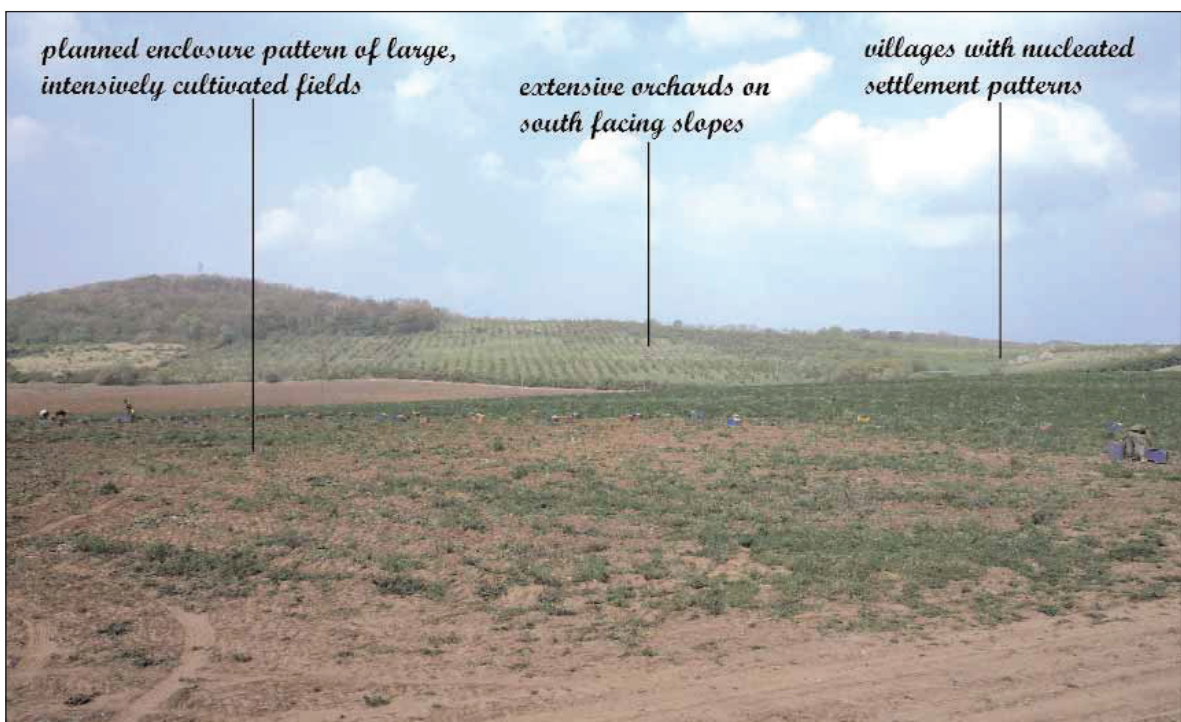
- Extensive apple and plum orchards on south facing slopes

Secondary:

- Nucleated settlement pattern

Tertiary:

- Gently undulating topography
- Planned enclosure pattern of medium- to large-scale fields
- Crops of cereals and field vegetables



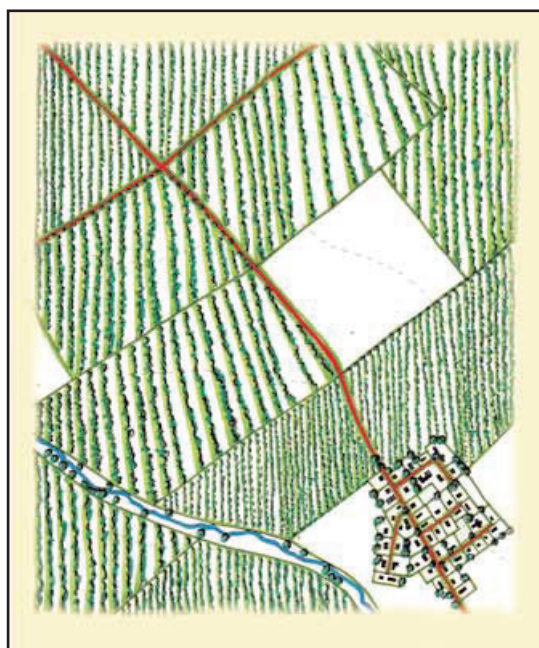


DETAIL

The Village Farmlands with Orchards are planned, lowland agricultural landscapes with a strongly nucleated settlement pattern, sharing many of the characteristics of the Principal Village Farmlands with which they have a similar evolution. The primary defining characteristic lies in the land use. These landscapes tend to be located in areas of slightly more pronounced topography, where the south facing slopes are ideal for fruit growing. Orchards are a primary land use, apple, plum and gage being particularly notable. Unfortunately, the characteristic traditional orchards of standard trees are disappearing in some areas, with many old traditional fruit tree varieties being lost as a result. The economic worth of certain types of orchard - such as damson and plum - appears to be in decline and could hamper prospects of replacement once the old trees have declined. New orchard planting/restoration, notably of apple, often uses bush stock, the smaller stature of which has an impact upon the scale of the landscape.

Fields are bounded by hedgerows, typically of a regular, planned pattern, although the pattern becomes subsidiary to the structure of orchard cover, and is less evident visually than in the Principal Village Farmlands.

Lines of hedgerow fruit trees, particularly damson, are a distinctive local feature. Scattered tree cover along water courses, together with tree presence within the villages, provides the remaining tree cover character of these landscapes.



MODERN IMPACTS ON CHARACTER

Enclosure Pattern:

The functionality of many hedgerows has now declined and, whilst appreciating both the landscape and wildlife value of retaining the full hedgerow structure, it would appear most viable to give priority to the conservation and restoration of primary hedgerows.

Tree Cover Pattern:

Woodland is not characteristic of any of the Village Farmlands and new woodland planting in these areas would dilute their distinctive character. Elm was formerly a dominant tree species, providing a distinctive landscape feature. The regeneration of elm continues in the hedgerows but still eventually succumbs to disease at a certain size. After much consideration, it has been decided to promote the planting of oak and ash substitutes for the original densely planted hedgerow elms.

LANDSCAPE GUIDELINES

- Conserve and restore traditional orchards, with emphasis placed upon the fruit type and varieties associated with different localities.
- Conserve and restore lines of hedgerow fruit trees.
- Retain pattern of strongly nucleated villages with associated low dispersal of settlement between.
- Conserve and restore hedgerow structure with emphasis upon the primary hedge lines.
- Conserve and enhance tree cover along watercourses.
- Encourage opportunities for tree planting in and around villages.
- Promote development of wide field margins for wildlife benefit.
- Promote management of roadside verges for wildlife benefit.

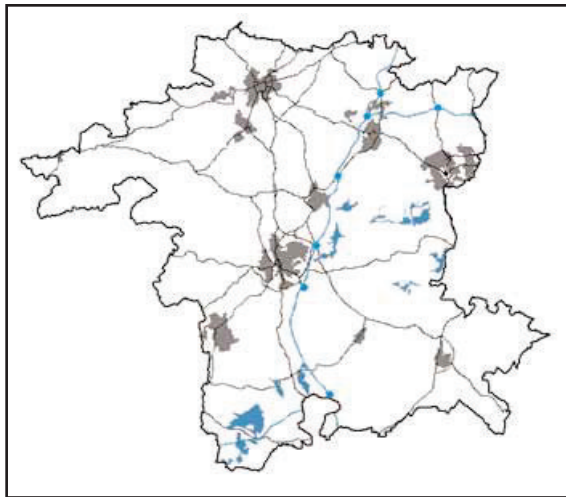


10.19 WET PASTURE MEADOWS

10.19 WET PASTURE MEADOWS

CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

A flat, low-lying, largely uninhabited landscape associated with irregularly shaped, poorly draining basins fringed by low hills or scarps. This is a secluded pastoral landscape characterised by a regular pattern of hedged fields and ditches fringed by lines of willow and alder. Pollarded willows are often a distinctive feature.



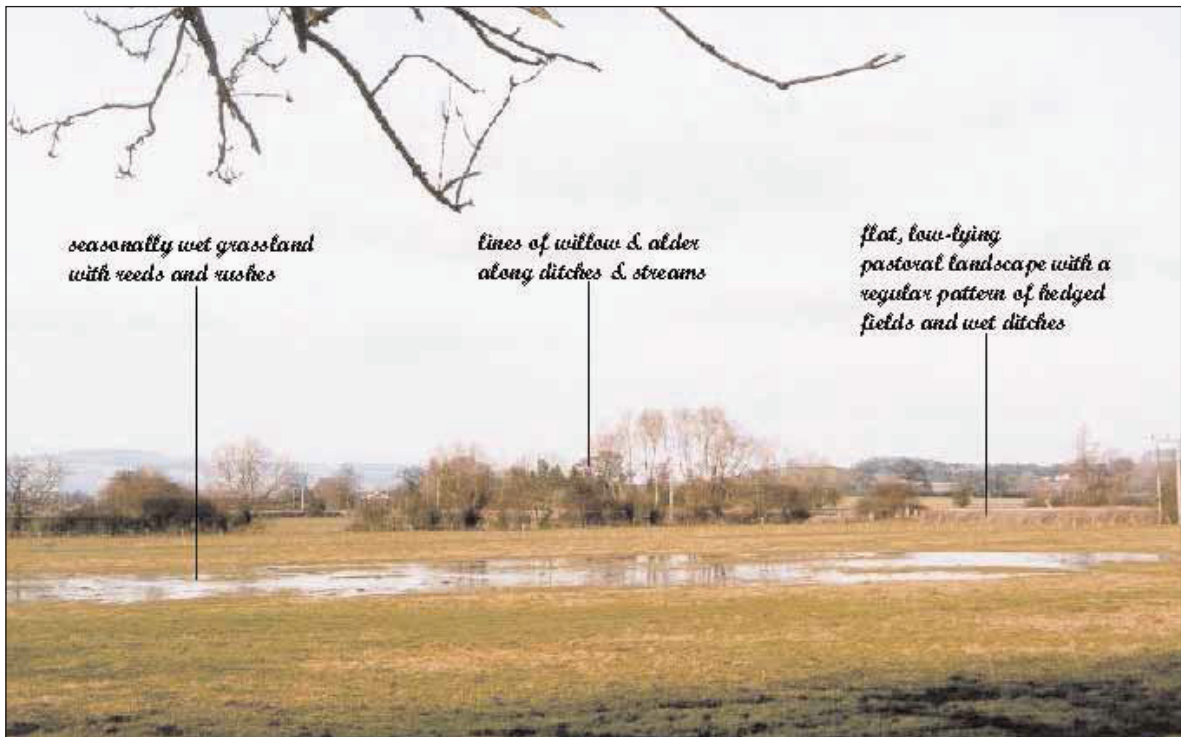
KEY CHARACTERISTICS

Primary:

- Flat low-lying topography
- Pastoral land use with patches of wet grassland
- Tree cover character of individual trees as opposed to woodland
- Tree cover pattern of linear tree belts along ditches and watercourses - particularly lines of alder and willow

Secondary:

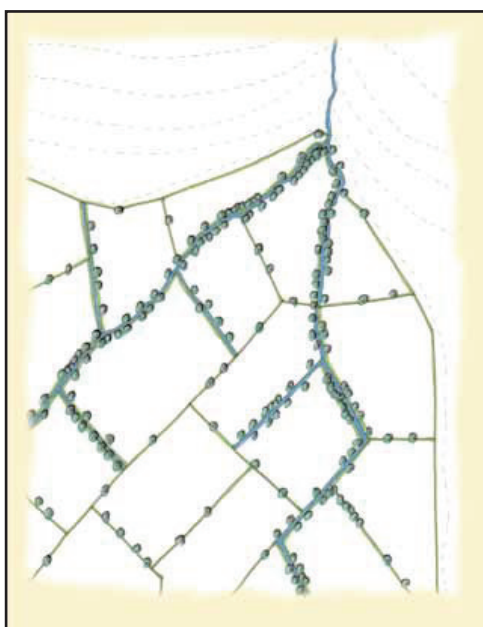
- Regular pattern of hedged fields with ditches
- Rushes, reeds and other marginal/aquatic vegetation
- Unsettled with few roads





DETAIL

These are flat, low lying and largely uninhabited landscapes. They are found where the land form has naturally created poorly drained, low lying basins collecting water from the surrounding low hills or scarps. These are landscapes which, in the past, have been protected from change by the difficulty of cultivating soils with such poor drainage. They have consequently been avoided as sites for settlement and roads, and have often not been considered economically viable for agricultural improvement. This, together with the widespread pastoral land use, and associated traditional methods of management, has favoured the retention of wetland habitats of considerable wildlife interest and a certain wilderness quality. The patterns of hedged fields provide structure to the landscape, the hedge lines invariably associated with ditches. Further structure is provided by linear tree cover along the ditches. These are usually alder and willow, with pollarded willows being a distinctive feature in places. The sustainable land use for these areas would appear to be pastoral, which in turn is compatible with the great ecological potential these landscapes possess and the exciting opportunities they offer for wetland creation or restoration.



LANDSCAPE GUIDELINES

- Conserve all permanent pasture.
- Conserve and restore linear tree cover along watercourses, ditches and hedgelines.
- Seek opportunities to encourage the conversion of arable land back to pasture.
- Encourage the retention and appropriate management of existing wetland habitats.
- Encourage the creation of new wetland habitats.
- Discourage activities likely to increase the drainage, or lower the water table of these areas.
- Discourage any building or construction works in these landscapes.

MODERN IMPACTS ON CHARACTER

Settlement Pattern:

These are unsettled landscapes where development is not appropriate in landscape terms. They should be regarded primarily as areas of conservation and the unsettled, undeveloped character perpetuated.

Land Use:

These landscapes are particularly vulnerable to changing agricultural practices. Many Wet Pasture Meadows have been drained in order to increase their productivity. This has led to agricultural improvement of the sward, changes from hay making to silage production, or arable conversion. All such changes result in a significant impoverishment of landscape character and ecological value. Similarly, the transformation of some of these areas to deeper water by excavating features such as lakes and irrigation reservoirs will have inevitably destroyed wetland habitats of greater ecological interest.

Tree Cover Pattern:

Unfortunately, the traditional management of pollarding willows is often neglected, leading to deterioration and loss of the linear tree cover. Woodland is not appropriate in Wet Pasture Meadows.

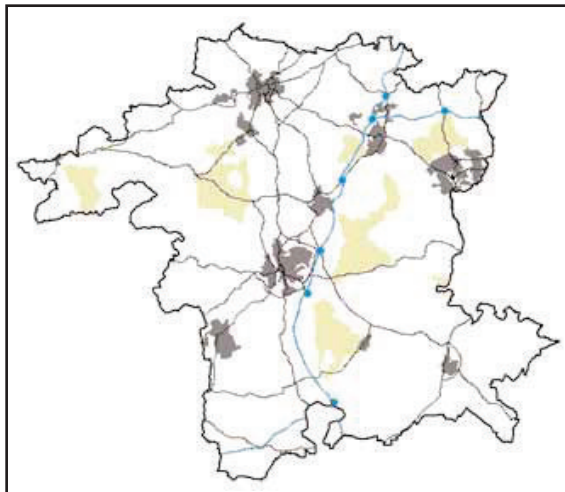


10.20 WOODDED ESTATELANDS

10.20 WOODDED ESTATELANDS

CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

This is a large scale, wooded agricultural landscape of isolated brick farmsteads, clusters of wayside dwellings and occasional small estate villages. The key visual element in this landscape is the frequent large, irregularly shaped ancient woodlands, often prominently situated on low crests. It is a landscape that, due to its scale, lacks intimacy and can appear rather functional.



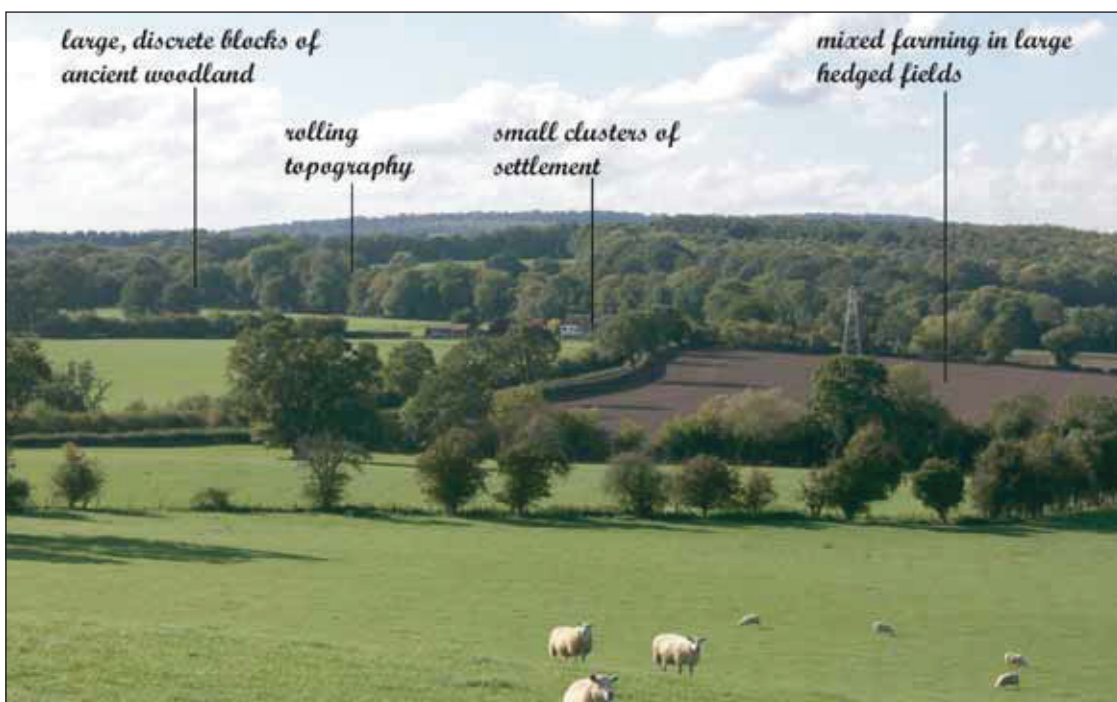
KEY CHARACTERISTICS

Primary:

- Large discrete blocks of irregularly-shaped woodland
- Mixed farming land use

Secondary:

- Rolling topography with occasional steep-sided hills and low escarpments
- Semi-regular pattern of large, hedged fields
- Woodland of ancient character
- Discrete settlement clusters often in the form of small estate villages
- Medium distance framed views
- Large country houses set in parkland and ornamental grounds

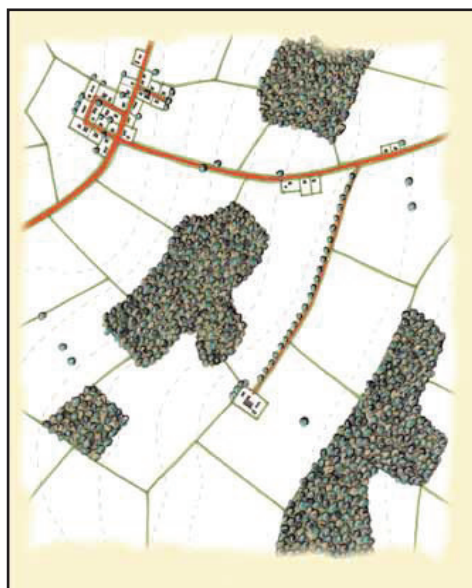




DETAIL

These are wooded agricultural landscapes of isolated farmsteads, clusters of wayside dwellings and occasional small estate villages. Mixed farming is the dominant land use, with woodland comprising about 30-40% of the land cover. This Landscape Type relies heavily upon its woodland component as the critical element in defining its character. The size, shape and composition of the woodlands are all important, being generally large, discrete woods of ancient semi-natural character and irregular or semi-regular outline. They frame the views and are often prominently situated on low crests. The prominent hedgerows are also important in defining the scale and providing the structure to the landscape. Ornamental grounds and parkland associated with large estates can be a noticeable feature in these landscapes. Groups of mature ornamental trees planted in parks or gardens are often significant visual landmarks. Similarly, medieval parkland and its associated ancient woodland is often a feature. Estate villages may also be associated with these areas, and invariably possess a strong character as a result of their style, layout and detailing. It is not an intimate landscape and, due to its fairly large scale, can sometimes appear rather functional.

The landscape character is dependant on a small number of strongly defined characteristics. It could easily lose its integrity and become muddled and confusing if the range of features associated with it were to be increased. The introduction of small scale elements would do as much harm to the character as the loss of the inherent features.



MODERN IMPACTS ON CHARACTER

Settlement Pattern:

These landscapes generally have a clustered settlement pattern of wayside dwellings or estate villages. Isolated farmsteads are also a feature. New development would be appropriate if it is in accordance with policy but it must be carefully sited in order to protect the visual integrity of the estate villages.

Land Use:

Hedgerows provide a unifying presence in this landscape by linking the large blocks of woodland. The intensification of arable farming has resulted in the loss and deterioration of many of the hedgerows and thus the fragmentation of landscape character.

Tree Cover Pattern:

The introduction of conifers to the woodlands has weakened the inherent character of the landscape. The many parklands often originating from medieval deer parks have been significantly reduced in size, frequently leaving the former parkland trees marooned amongst arable cropping.

LANDSCAPE GUIDELINES

- Conserve all ancient woodland sites and restock with locally occurring native species.
- Promote new large scale woodland planting.
- New woodland planting should be of native broadleaved species, favouring oak as the dominant species and relate to the scale and spatial pattern of the Landscape Type.
- Conserve and restore the hedgerow pattern, particularly primary hedgerows and hedgerow tree cover.
- Seek to ensure hedgerow linkage to all woodland blocks, for visual cohesion and wildlife benefit.
- Conserve and restore parkland including historically correct ornamental planting and with an emphasis on arable reversion.
- Conserve the integrity of estate villages and their associated tree cover.



10.21 WOODED FOREST

10.21 WOODED FOREST

CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

In Worcestershire this Landscape Type is only represented in Wyre Forest. This is a landscape dominated by dense tree cover, predominately woodland of ancient character, effectively blocking all but immediate short distance views. It is essentially unsettled although occasional wayside cottages occur, often with adjacent small fields of assorted origin. This is an uncomplicated landscape where the unrelenting mass of woodland and restricted views creates a strong character which can feel overwhelmingly remote and confined.

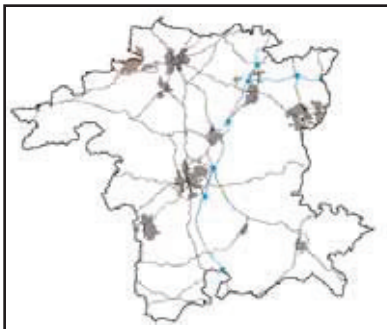
KEY CHARACTERISTICS

Primary:

- Continuous woodland cover of ancient character, woodland being the dominant land use
- Intimate spatial character

Secondary:

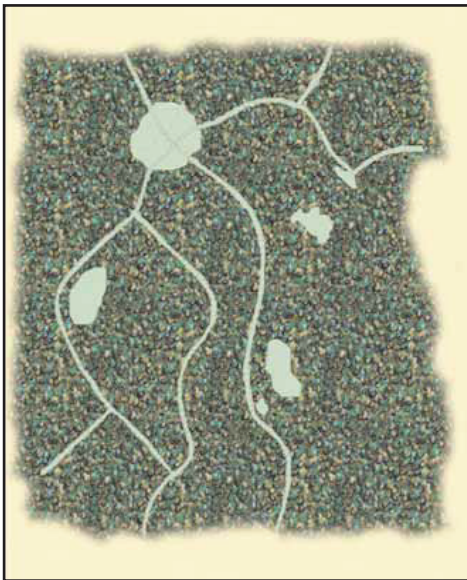
- Generally an unsettled landscape, except for occasional wayside cottages
- Infrequent roads, access generally poor
- Occasional clearings of small fields associated with cottages





DETAIL

The overriding characteristic of this landscape is the dominance of woodland cover. These are areas that may have been briefly cleared for agricultural purposes at the height of agricultural expansion in the late 13th/early 14th centuries. Any clearance would have been likely to be of a piecemeal nature with woodland re-colonisation following the contraction of the area of cultivated land after the Black Death. The relative lack of settlement relates to the absence of a prolonged period of agricultural activity, the scattered cottages probably relating to occupations linked to the woodland. The interdependence of woodland and the charcoal and smelting industries has been a major factor in the survival of such a large concentration of forest. The woodlands are of ancient character and the whole woodland landscape is one of notable nature conservation value. The underlying impoverished sandy soils give rise to a heathy/acid grassland ground vegetation, which is of considerable botanical interest in its own right.



MODERN IMPACTS ON CHARACTER

Settlement Pattern:

This is fundamentally an unsettled landscape but one that accommodates the occasional small scale wayside dwelling. The character and integrity of these cottages and their associated land parcels is important to the integrity of the landscape and should be conserved; any increase to the size, appearance or scale of such properties should be avoided. Additional settlement is not appropriate in this landscape.

Enclosure Pattern:

This is an unenclosed landscape of continuous woodland. Additional clearance or enclosure should be resisted.

Tree Cover Pattern:

Previous conifer plantings have resulted in some dilution of woodland character. However, the acknowledged importance of the nature conservation interest and the increasingly sympathetic approach towards landscape and wildlife interests promoted in current national woodland management guidance suggests that the restoration of the ancient wooded character is already a priority, and that further deterioration of the woodland character is unlikely. The existing guidance for the management of ancient woodland sites should be strongly promoted and supported in this area, coupled with priorities identified for nature conservation.

LANDSCAPE GUIDELINES

- Conserve all ancient woodland sites and restock with appropriate locally occurring broadleaved trees, favouring oak as the major species.
- Conserve the unsettled woodland character, avoiding any urban influences.

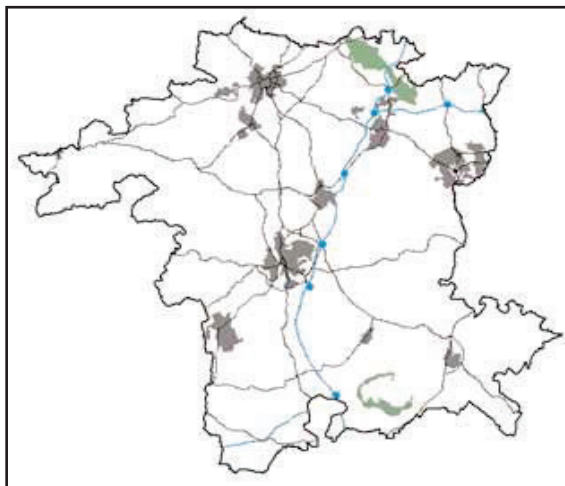


10.22 WOODED HILLS AND FARMLANDS

10.22 WOODED HILLS AND FARMLANDS

CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

These are medium to large scale upstanding, wooded landscapes with a sloping topography and well defined character. They are similar to the Principal Wooded Hills, but with more of an emphasis on farmland. The woods tend to occur as discrete blocks framing larger areas of enclosed fields. The latter are often associated with a small village or hamlet. There is a sense of balance, with a character that is less extreme than the Principal Wooded Hills.



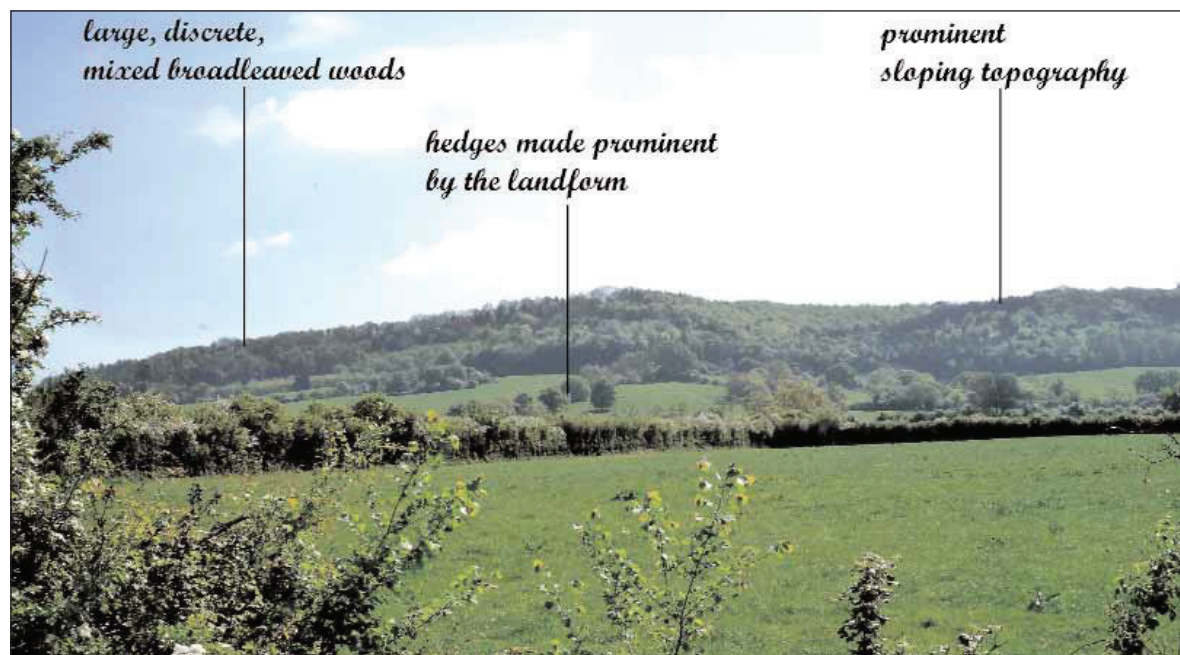
KEY CHARACTERISTICS

Primary:

- Prominent sloping topography
- Hedgerow field boundaries are an important element in defining landscape scale
- Tree cover pattern of large, discrete woodland blocks

Secondary:

- Woodland of ancient character
- Mixed farming land use
- Medium-framed views
- Sparsely clustered settlement pattern associated with areas of former open fields

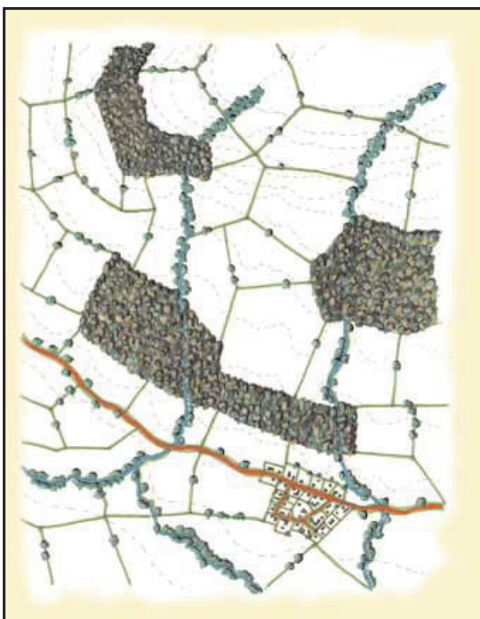




DETAIL

These are landscapes with an inherently large scale and strength due to their patterns of substantial woodland blocks and large hedged fields. The steepness of slope is generally less severe than the Principal Wooded Hills and therefore has been less of a constraint for agriculture. They contain a significant proportion of farmland, considered to be derived from former areas of open field, and which is usually associated with settlement clusters. The historic origins of these areas should be recognised and their visual cohesion conserved. The dominant land use is of mixed farming, interspersed with large, ancient semi-natural woods that frame the views. The hedgerow structure and streamside tree cover is particularly important in providing visual unity to these areas, linking the woodland blocks and integrating them with the areas of farmland. Within the farmed areas, the upper slopes may include areas of permanent pasture of botanical interest.

These are landscapes that often lack a strong sense of visual cohesion today, due to the variable amount of woodland cover and the decline in both hedgerow pattern and fabric. The mixed broadleaf composition may also have been diluted by the presence of conifer planting. The strength and scale of the landscape becomes diluted if the large woodland blocks become fragmented if the structure of hedgerow and streamlines broken, or if features of an inappropriately small scale are introduced.



MODERN IMPACTS ON CHARACTER

Settlement Pattern:

Settlement in these landscapes is usually clustered dwellings associated with the areas of open fields. Small villages and hamlets are therefore typical but are sparsely dispersed through a landscape that does not feel well populated. Opportunities for additional housing should be in accordance with policies and should respect the settlement pattern and be concentrated on the existing clustered communities in order to maintain the low settlement density.

Enclosure Pattern:

The sub-regular enclosure pattern reflects the scale of woodland clearance and historical land enclosure. Loss of hedges will disrupt this pattern, as will the addition of hedges or fences seeking to subdivide fields.

Tree Cover Pattern:

There are considerable opportunities for planting new large woodland blocks particularly in areas of recent clearance. At the same time, the importance of the patterns of historical land clearance should be recognised and conserved. Emphasis should also be placed on perpetuating the corridors that link the woodlands together.

LANDSCAPE GUIDELINES

- Conserve existing blocks of woodland.
- Seek opportunities to restore the balance of woodland cover throughout these landscapes.
- Conserve and restore the ancient woodland character of all woodlands.
- Conserve the historic pattern of large hedged fields, with priority being given to strengthening and restoring primary hedge lines.
- Enhance tree cover along watercourses and dingles.
- Conserve all remaining areas of permanent pasture.



APPENDIX A: HISTORIC LANDSCAPES

A.1 Historic Landscape Characterisation

Additional data sets that support LCA: Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC), Historic Environment Assessment (HEA) and The Farmsteads Project.

A.1.1 Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) is a process that is reciprocal to Landscape Character Assessment (LCA). English Heritage describes the HLC in terms of time-depth, this being the legibility of the past in the present landscape.

A.1.2 Worcestershire Historic Environment and Archaeology Service (WHEAS) are currently undertaking an HLC of Worcestershire as part of English Heritage's national programme of HLC. The Worcestershire HLC project aims to improve the understanding of the County's landscape, and provide a context for its archaeological sites and monuments. HLC will also provide a framework for informed landscape management strategies, spatial planning, development control and conservation issues at a local, regional and national level. It will underpin historic environment advice given to district councils and other environmental or conservation agencies, enabling future changes within the historic environment to be monitored. The Worcestershire HLC project is split into four stages:

- **Stage 1.** Pilot study. The purpose of this stage is familiarisation with sources and assessment of the project methodology;

- **Stage 2.** Data collection through HLC mapping for the remainder of the county using a refined project methodology;
- **Stage 3.** Review, analysis and interpretation of the data. Secondary sources will be used to assess and inform emerging patterns and trends within the Stage 2 data;
- **Stage 4.** Preparation of a report, archive and dissemination of the results.

A.1.3 The Historic Landscape Characterisation is complementary to the Landscape Character Assessment. The two studies have different perspectives, the former being concerned with the underlying historical anthropogenic processes influencing landscape while the latter is primarily concerned with the combination of physical and cultural factors that are expressed visually in the landscape. However, these factors include historic landscape attributes such as the historic patterns of enclosure. It was originally thought that the two studies could share the same Land Cover Parcel boundaries but this has proved to be impractical. The historic study addresses the element of time-depth, this being the way that earlier landscapes and change can still be seen in the present-day landscape, while the landscape study encompasses a broader range of character- defining factors. This fundamental difference has led to the two studies being unique in their boundary definitions. The HLC has given us a much greater understanding of the derivation and evolution of the landscape that we see today.



APPENDIX B: GLOSSARY

| | |
|--|---|
| Ancient Woodland Character | Wooded landscapes characterised by mixed broadleaved woodlands with a varied age structure, often of ancient origin (as defined on the ancient woodland inventory). This pattern often displays clear signs of piecemeal woodland clearance, such as irregular woodland outlines, woodland place names etc. |
| Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) | A statutory designation intended to conserve the natural scenic beauty of an area. Identified by the Countryside Commission and administered by Local Authorities. |
| Areas of Great Landscape Value (AGLV) | A regional planning designation, identifying those areas that are considered to be of special landscape quality and meriting special protection. These areas are shown in County Structure Plans and Local District Plans. |
| Attributes | The individual qualities that make up an indicator, eg. settlement pattern may be unsettled, clustered, wayside, dispersed or scattered. |
| Biodiversity | The total variety of life on earth or within any given part of it. |
| Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) | A plan setting out the current status, issues and threats for a species or habitat and a programme of specific and timed actions with identified responsible agencies to restore, maintain and enhance the biodiversity interest. |
| Buffer Zone | An area or zone that helps to protect a habitat from damage, disturbance or pollution. |
| Characteristic Features | The presence of natural or heritage features that recur with sufficient frequency to be considered an integral part of a particular landscape. |
| Conservation | The wise use, protection and thus continuance of a valued resource. |
| Consistency | The degree to which an attribute is recognisable and consistently represented throughout the landscape c - Consistent - clearly recognisable and consistently represented. v - Variable - not clearly recognisable and/or variably represented. |
| Corridor | A strip of a particular type that differs from the adjacent land on both sides (corridors have several important functions, including conduit, barrier and habitat). |



APPENDIX B: GLOSSARY

| | |
|--|--|
| Cropping | Dominance of arable farming characterised by field vegetables and/or market gardening. |
| Discrete Woods | Separate and clearly defined blocks of woodland. Some linkage may be afforded by hedgerows. |
| Ecology | The science of the inter-relationships between living organisms and their environment. |
| Enclosure Pattern | The form of the cultural dimension of the landscape as defined by the inherited pattern of fields and lanes. |
| Environment | The external surroundings (ie. physical and chemical conditions) that impact on every aspect of life on earth. |
| Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) | A statutory procedure requiring the application of a full assessment of environmental impacts for certain major categories of development proposal. |
| Exposed Spatial Character | Extensive areas, often unenclosed, where the lack of three dimensional elements allows wide, distant views which give a strong impression of sky and space. |
| Farmland | Areas occurring on a wide variety of soil types which have been under main-stream cultivation for a long time and which lack the distinct relic plant communities which would have a significant contribution to landscape character. |
| Farm Type (landuse) | The dominant type of farming enterprise that reflects the inherent capability of the land. |
| Field Boundaries | The physical boundaries defining the perimeter of agricultural fields. |
| Function | Is the combination of factors which gave rise to the attribute still relevant in today's landscape, in other words, does the attribute have a function today in the landscape? e - Economically and practically functional, potentially maintained without financial support. s - Functional but only maintained with support. c - Cosmetic, no practical or economic function but may have an aesthetic value. |
| Geodiversity | The variety of rocks, fossils, minerals and natural processes. |
| Geographic Information System (GIS) | A computer facility that enables the layering of map based information. |
| Green Infrastructure | A strategically planned and delivered network comprising the broadest range of high quality green spaces and other environment features. |



| | |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| Groups | Areas where the pattern of tree cover is solely characterised by discrete groups and/or small assemblages of trees, usually associated with farmsteads and or rural settlements. |
| Habitat | A place in which a particular plant or animal lives. Often used in a wider sense, referring to major assemblages of plants and animals found together, such as woodlands or grasslands. |
| Heath/acid grassland | Plant communities typically developed on free draining, nutrient poor soils. Indicator species may include gorse (Ulex), bracken(Pteridium), ling (Calluna), Purple heather (Erica cinerea). Localised areas of poor drainage may be present. Indicator species may include cross leaved heath (Erica tetralix) and rush (Juncus sp). |
| Heathy/acid grassland relic | Remnants of former plant communities developed on free draining nutrient poor soils, now represented by a restricted range of indicator species - gorse or bracken usually found along roadsides or woodland edges. |
| Hedges | A general category embracing hedgerows of single and mixed species composition. |
| Hedge and ditch | As above, with associated man made dry or wet drainage channels. |
| Indicative Ground Vegetation | Semi-natural plant communities (excluding woodland, scrub and hedges) that visually contribute to the interpretation of the landscape character. |
| Indicators | Individual aspects that make up landscape character. These are geology, topography, soils, tree cover character, tree cover pattern, landuse, enclosure pattern, settlement pattern, indicative ground vegetation, field boundaries, spatial character and special characteristics features. |
| Intimate Spatial Character | A landscape of restricted views where there is a consistently small field pattern (less than 4 hectares) and the close proximity of other elements creates a strong sense of enclosure. |
| Key Characteristics | Those attributes that prominently and consistently define the landscape character. |



APPENDIX B: GLOSSARY

| | |
|---|---|
| Land Cover Parcel (LCP) | These are the sub-landscape units arising from the subdivision of the Landscape Description Units based on variations in modern land use and the historic patterns of field enclosure. They are totally homogenous units within which there are no variations of attribute. |
| Landscape | The human perception of the land at a scale that is smaller than the global environment but larger than the individual site. |
| Landscape Character | An expression of pattern, resulting from particular combinations of natural (physical and biological) and cultural factors that make one place different from another. |
| Landscape Character Assessment | An analysis of the character of the landscape based on predetermined objective criteria and characteristics. |
| Landscape Description Unit (LDU) | <p>A Landscape Description Unit is a representation of a Landscape Type in a specific location. These are the basic building blocks of the landscape and are defined by a combination of six key characteristics relating to geology, topography, soils, tree cover character, land use and historic settlement pattern.</p> <p>LDU's are identified by description and those with similar visual characteristics are grouped into Landscape Types.</p> |
| Landscape Management Plan | A document that sets down the tasks that are necessary to achieve and sustain long term objectives for a site or area of landscape in order to maintain, enhance and strengthen its landscape character, natural habitats and design criteria. |
| Landscape Type (LT) | These are identified by certain combinations of the twelve characteristics, which define landscape character. Landscape types are areas that are visually different from one another, those differences being defined by particularly dominant key characteristics. |
| Large Spatial Character | Open areas usually with a large scale enclosure pattern (field size consistently greater than 8 hectares). The pattern defined by field boundaries and/ or other three dimensional elements such as woodland. |
| Linear | Areas where the tree cover is characterised by lines of trees or narrow bands of woodland normally associated with streams, ditches or other linear water features. |



| | |
|--|---|
| Linked | Frequent woodland blocks and/or wooded corridors forming physically or visually linking patterns, creating the impression of a heavily wooded landscape. |
| Meadow | Land, usually level and low lying, devoted to grasses and short herbs, which is mown annually for hay. |
| Medium-framed Spatial Character | Areas with medium to large sized fields, (consistently greater than 4 hectares), where views are typically framed by discrete blocks of woodland or lines of trees. |
| Medium-open Spatial Character | Open landscapes with a medium scale enclosure pattern (field size consistently greater than 4 hectares) defined by field boundaries and/or other three dimensional elements. |
| Mitigation | Measures taken to reduce adverse impacts, e.g., the provision of suitable planting to screen a development. |
| Mixed Landuse | Farming enterprises that have both a mix of arable and pasture land uses. |
| Moorland | Plant communities associated with peaty soils and impeded drainage in highland areas. Indicator species may include cotton grass (Eriophorum) or purple moor grass (Molinia). |
| Native Species | A species that occurs naturally in an area, not having been introduced by humans either accidentally or intentionally. |
| Organic Enclosure Pattern | A piece-meal enclosure pattern associated with an irregular network of winding lanes. |
| Parks | An area of land characterised by groups and/or individual mature trees usually associated with a castle or large country house. Ornamental planting, lodges, lakes etc are usually a feature. |
| Pastoral | Grassland landscapes characterised by grazing animals associated with dairying and/or stock rearing. |
| Pasture | An area of land dominated by grass, which is used only for grazing, as distinct from a meadow that is mown. |
| Planned Enclosure Pattern | An ordered pattern of lanes and rectilinear fields with mainly straight boundaries. |



APPENDIX B: GLOSSARY

| | |
|---|---|
| Planned Woodland Character | Wooded landscapes characterised by estate plantations and/or belts of trees with regular outlines, a predominately even age structure and a limited range of non-ornamental native or exotic species. |
| Planning Policy Guidance Notes (PPG) | Central Government guidance on all aspects of planning law and policy. |
| Regional Character Areas | Individual, unique areas at a broadbrush, regional scale which are identified by description. |
| Replaceability | <p>The degree to which it is possible to replace an element in its original form.</p> <p>l - Possible to replace in its original form over the medium to long term (15-50 years).</p> <p>m -Only possible to replace in a modified form. This modification may reflect the lack of time depth association with the attribute.</p> <p>s - Possible to replace in its original form in the short term (up to 15 years).</p> |
| Resilience | <p>Vulnerability x Tolerance (at Landscape Type level)</p> <p>A measure of the endurance of landscape character, defined by the likelihood of change in relation to the degree to which the landscape is able to tolerate that change.</p> |
| Rough Grazing | Landscapes characterised by low intensity grazing of rough pasture associated with poor soils. |
| Scattered Tree Cover Pattern | Pattern defined by densely or thinly scattered trees most often associated with hedgerows, sometimes in association with woodlands. |
| Scattered Settlement Pattern | A very low dispersal of individual farmsteads and rural dwellings. |
| Sensitivity | <p>Resilience x Condition (at Land Cover Parcel level)</p> <p>The degree to which the Resilience of a landscape is influenced by its current condition.</p> |



| | |
|--|--|
| Significance | <p>Consistency x Visual Prominence (Then Converted To Primary, Secondary Or Tertiary)</p> <p>The degree to which an attribute contributes to the overall character of a landscape as defined by its consistency and visual prominence.</p> <p>P - Primary - both consistent and prominent.</p> <p>S - Secondary - either consistent and apparent or variable and prominent.</p> <p>T - Tertiary - either has insignificant prominence or a variable pattern that is apparent.</p> |
| Small Spatial Character | <p>A landscape of small to medium sized fields (field size consistently less than 4 hectares) where scattered trees and/or small woods and copses create filtered views.</p> |
| Spatial Character | <p>The visual perception of spatial character as defined by the combination of open spaces, views and elements that make up the landscape.</p> |
| Sub-regular Enclosure Pattern | <p>An interlocking, regular pattern of fields and lanes with curving boundaries.</p> |
| Supplementary Planning Guidance | <p>Additional planning guidance on individual topics to enable a greater understanding of Local Authority policies and strategies.</p> |
| Sustainable Development | <p>Defined by the Brundtland Report (1989) as development that meets the needs of present generations without compromising its potential to meet the needs and aspirations of future generations.</p> |
| Tolerance | <p>Replaceability X Trend X Significance</p> <p>The degree to which change is likely to cause irreparable damage to the essential components that contribute to landscape character.</p> |
| Tree Cover | <p>Relates to the overall cover of individual trees or woodland of the area.</p> |
| Tree Cover Character | <p>Relates to the origin and overall composition of tree and woodland cover.</p> |
| Tree Cover Pattern | <p>Relates to the spatial juxtaposition of individual trees and woodland cover and the shapes of woodlands.</p> |
| Trees | <p>Landscapes in which trees rather than woodland comprise the dominant visual element of cover.</p> |



APPENDIX B: GLOSSARY

| | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| Trend | <p>The likelihood of future change to the inherent character of the landscape based on an analysis of recent and present day change.</p> <p>< - An improvement in the quantity or quality of a particular attribute. st - Attribute is stable. > - A decline in the quantity or quality of a particular attribute.</p> |
| Unenclosed | <p>Open, usually rough mountain , marsh or common grazing land. Includes rough land sub divided into very large enclosures.</p> |
| Unwooded | <p>Areas where tree cover is virtually absent. These are areas in which past and present management practices have generally precluded the establishment of tree cover. The regeneration of tree cover may be evident if management practices are removed or reduced. Elsewhere poor soil depth or accumulations of peat may inhibit tree growth today.</p> |
| Veteran Tree | <p>A tree which is of interest biologically, aesthetically or culturally because of its age.</p> |
| Visual Impact Assessment | <p>A procedure designed to identify the visual impact on short, medium and long distance views of any particular development proposal.</p> |
| Visual Prominence | <p>The degree to which the defined attribute is visually prominent in the landscape.</p> <p>p - Prominent - having an immediate visual impact. a - Apparent - making a moderate contribution to the visual character of the landscape. i - Insignificant - making little or no contribution to visual character.</p> |
| Vulnerability | <p>Function X Trend X Significance</p> <p>The likelihood of change to an attribute or the landscape as a whole as expressed by the significance of predicted trends in relation to function.</p> |
| Water Meadow | <p>A riverside meadow laid out in such a way that the river water could be used to regularly irrigate the land.</p> |
| Wetland | <p>Plant communities associated with seasonally or permanently waterlogged soils. Indicators species may include rush or common reed (Phragmites).</p> |
| Woodland | <p>Land covered by trees that supports other physical, biological and cultural resources.</p> |

If you require this document in alternative formats
please contact: Dale Bristow; Tel: 01905 766727.

Planning, Economy & Performance Directorate
Worcestershire County Council
County Hall
Spetchley Road
Worcester WR5 2NP

www.worcestershire.gov.uk